

**CITY OF COVE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
May 5, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.
504 ALDER STREET
COVE, OR 97824**

- **Call to Order**
- **Pledge of Allegiance**
- **Council Roll Call**
- **Additions/Changes to the Agenda**
- **Public Comment for Items on the Agenda**- 3 minutes per person; Must Sign the Speakers Roster
 - Community members may address issues observed on the agenda and may ask council for additions for consideration to be added to the current agenda.
- **Consent Agenda**
 - April 7, 2026, Council Minutes
 - Approval of Bills to Be Paid
- **Correspondence**
 - Union County, Planning Department – Notice of Planning Commission Hearing
- **Old Business**
 - Presentation of Cove Beautification Award
 - Surplus Vehicles Update
- **Public Hearing 7:30 p.m. Conditional Use and Variance: Ascension School Pool**
 - Open Hearing
 - Staff Report
 - Applicant's Testimony
 - Proponent's Testimony
 - Opponent's Testimony
 - Applicant's Rebuttal
 - Close Hearing
 - Council Deliberation & Final Decision
- **New Business**
 - Employee Performance Reviews
 - Appoint Budget Officer and Committee and Confirm Budget Committee Meeting
 - Councilor Availability for Clean Up Day and Advertising on School Marquee Sign
- **City Council Working Committee Report**
 - TSP – Land Use Development Code
 - Cove Beautification Pilot Project
- **City Recorder Report**
- **Public Works Director Report**
- **Mayor's Report**
- **Student Councilor Report**
- **Good of the Order**
- **Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda**– 3 minutes per person; Must Sign the Speakers Roster
 - This is the place allowed for the public to comment on anything they wish to have addressed by council or discuss their feelings towards any matter before the council, which is not already scheduled for discussion on the meeting agenda.
- **Suggestions for Future Work Sessions & Meeting Agendas**
- **Upcoming Meetings**
- **Adjournment**

To submit public comment in writing, or questions about accommodations for persons with disabilities please send an e-mail to cityadmin@cityofcove.org at least four (4) calendar days prior to the meeting. To join the meeting virtually from your computer, tablet, or smartphone see the link below:
<https://meet.goto.com/CityofCove>

You can also dial in using your phone:
United States (Toll Free): [1 877 309 2073](tel:18773092073)
United States: [+1 \(312\) 757-3129](tel:+13127573129)
Access Code: 566-891-733

**City Of Cove
Council Meeting Minutes
April 7, 2026**

Call to Order

Council President, Matt McCowan, called the regular session of the Cove Common Council to order at 7:00 p.m. located at City of Cove City Hall, 504 Alder St., Cove, Oregon, 97824. Remote access to the meeting was active.

Council Members Present: Council President, Matt McCowan, Councilors, Alexis Cannon, Cheryl Hargrove, Shawn Parker, Boss Parker, and Student Councilor, Emma Carson.

Council Members Present Remotely: There were no council members present remotely.

City Staff Present: City Recorder, Lana Shira, Public Works Director, Dave Johnson, Billing Clerk, Kerri McCowan.

City Staff Present Remotely: There were no city staff present remotely.

Council Members not Present: Mayor, Sherry Haeger, Councilor, Eric Stone.

City Staff not Present: All city staff were present.

Public Present: Dennis Nostrant, Donna Beverage, Charlie Kirksey.

Public Present Remotely: There was no public present remotely.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council President, Matt McCowan.

Council Roll Call

Roll call was performed by Lana Shira, City Recorder. A quorum was determined to be present.

Additions/Changes to the Agenda

The Public Hearing scheduled for this meeting was cancelled.

Public Comment

No public comment was made at this time.

Consent Agenda

- March 3, 2026, Council Minutes
- Approval of Bills to Be Paid
Council President McCowan asked if the city will be reimbursed for the money spent on advertising for the public hearing since it was cancelled. Lana noted we will discuss this during the discussion of the reason for the cancellation. However, she reported the bill has already been received.

Motion: Council Shawn Parker moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilor Hargrove seconded. Motion carried.

- **Correspondence**

There was no correspondence presented at this meeting.

- **Old Business**

- **Next Steps for Remaining Surplus Vehicles and Update on Hyundai Tucson Bid**
It was explained that the Hyundai was not sold to the highest bidder because the bidder backed out. The second highest bidder was still interested in purchasing the vehicle, so it was sold to the second highest bidder. Dave noted there are other options for selling the other two vehicles. The Ranger is non-running so we can sell it to B&K for scrap value, which would be approximately \$500. There is also an option for an on-line bidder called Public Surplus On-line Auctions which would be of no cost to us and items are advertised nationwide. It was recommended to pursue the on-line bidder option for both vehicles.

- **Possible Purchase and Pricing of Road Sander or Second Snowplow**
Discussion ensued. Dave noted it would be great to have a sander and then pursue another plow in the future.

- **Business Oregon - Water/Wastewater Fund - TA Grant Application & Supplement**
The Business Oregon - Water/Wastewater Fund - TA Grant Application & Supplement was presented for informational purposes. The mayor signed the application, and it has been sent to the appropriate entity. We have not yet received notification of approval.

- **Annual Statement of Economic Interest Filing Reminder**
Lana reminded all councilors who have not filed the SEI that they need to file by April 15, 2026.

- **Public Hearing 7:30 p.m. Minor Partition Request: 410 Mill Creek Rd, Cheryl and James Kinley**

The application from Cheryl and James Kinley for a Minor Partition at 410 Mill Creek was withdrawn by the Kinley's on April 6, 2026. Lana noted the reason it was withdrawn was because the lot had already been partitioned in 2000. The Kinley's need to file paperwork with the County Assessor's office to complete the process to segregate the taxes.

It was discussed that the Kinley's paid a \$300 fee for the minor partition request, and council needs to decide whether to refund the fee in total or reimburse them minus the city's fees for advertising. It was agreed to refund the fee minus the cost for advertising.

Motion: Councilor Cannon moved to approve a refund to the Kinley's of \$170 which is the amount of the minor partition fee minus the \$130 cost for advertising. Councilor Boss Parker seconded. Motion Carried.

- **New Business**

- **STCU Interest Earning Accounts**
Lana reported she met with a banker at STCU, and he suggested putting some of the General Fund money into a money market account. She reviewed the information she discussed with the banker and recommended opening a money market account with \$250,000 from the General Fund. Discussion ensued regarding interest rates and deposit amounts, and it was determined to pursue opening a money market account with STCU.

Motion: Councilor Shawn Parker moved to approve moving funds in the amount of \$250,000 to a STCU money market account to grow at 2.5%. Councilor Cannon seconded. Motion carried.

- **Public Purchase and Public Surplus On-line Auction Programs**
Lana reported this is the online option Dave spoke about during Old Business discussion of the surplus vehicles.
- **Ascension School Pool Development Discussion**
Lana reported that the Ascension School is moving forward with pool development. They will need a conditional use approval for an outdoor recreation facility, and a variance for parking because of what our current zoning rules allow. She also noted they have already designed their parking lot to accommodate the ADA parking spaces needed.

Dave reported the Fire Marshall has gotten involved because of the need for more fire hydrants. The current line is not big enough to service the hydrants needed. He noted the city may need to upgrade from at least the corner of High Valley to Church Street. He reviewed the estimation for the cost of the project and noted the Ascension School is willing to participate in the cost of upgrading the water line. The sewer line will also have to be extended. It was noted the water line will have to be budgeted in next year's budget. It was further discussed that the Ascension School has submitted their application to start the permitting process with the city and intend to start construction this summer. Therefore, the city should consider starting the line upgrades this year.

City Council Working Committee Report

- **TSP – Land Use Development Code Follow-Up**
Lana reported she was sent the model for small cities from the Land Conservation Development Dept. It is, in her opinion, very clear and organized and covers exactly what we need. She suggested a work session for all councilors to receive a copy for review. It was discussed that it is a template and we would put in the details specific to Cove, which we've already done with our current draft. Discussion ensued and it was recommended all councilors receive a copy of the template for review and then schedule a work session. Lana will provide hard copies to all council members.
- **Cove Beautification Pilot Project**
Lana reported that the yard sign and gift certificate will be presented to the award winners of the Cove Beautification Pilot Project at next month's meeting.

City Recorder Report

Lana provided a verbal report:

- Student Councilor applications were sent to the school and there are copies available at City Hall. The deadline is May 31st and the new Student Councilor will be chosen at the June council meeting.
- Clean Up Day is scheduled for May 16th. Fliers will be sent out next week.
- She requested input on the definition of a multi-family dwelling. She reported she has a current application that fits in somewhat of a gray area and provided details. Discussion ensued. It was determined that since there will not be a separate address and separate water meters, the application should not fall under a conditional use permit.
- She provided a verbal review of the P&L. She drew attention to the Hydro account and noted we are short on income for Hydro. Dave interjected noting we will likely make that income up this May and June.

Public Works Director Report

Dave provided a verbal report:

- Hydro plant is up and running as of March 17th. They are still having issues with the meter and have been estimating until today when the issues were resolved.
- Ramping up on First and Water Street paving. He is ready to get bids out and back for the next meeting.
- Employee evaluations need to be scheduled. He noted this is usually done in March. A three-person committee will need to be formed to evaluate Dave and Lana. It was discussed it may be the same people on the committee for each position. Council President McCowan, and Councilors Boss Parker and Cheryl Hargrove will form the committee. Lana will send the evaluation form to the committee, and they will need to schedule a time to perform the review with Dave and Lana.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Haeger was not present to provide a report.

Student Councilor Report

Emma provided a verbal report:

- The ASB started a clothing swap. They are taking donations for clothing and will offer the clothes to anyone who needs them. She noted this was started as a community service project, and was advertised at Dollar's Store, the Cove Post Office and in a few places in La Grande.
- A meeting has been scheduled with all the current sophomores and juniors at the school to present details on the City of Cove Student Councilor position.

Good of the Order

- Councilor Shawn Parker complimented Lana on always finding ways to increase the city's income.
- Councilor Cannon reported she will likely not be at the May meeting.
- Student Councilor Emma Carson volunteered to be on the Budget Committee.

Public Comment

Donna Beverage announced she is once again running for County Commissioner. She reviewed her accomplishments as a past County Commissioner, including working with Buffalo Peak on a loan that she was able to help change from an escalating interest rate to fixed. She detailed other accomplishments as a past County Commissioner and highlighted the work she has done in a volunteer capacity since.

Suggestions for Future Work Sessions & Meeting Agendas

A work session will be scheduled in May to discuss the TSP.

Upcoming Meetings

Regular council meeting scheduled for May 5, 2026.

Adjournment

Council President McCowan adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

Matt McCowan, Council President

Kerri McCowan, Billing Clerk

Lana Shira, City Recorder

DRAFT

2025-2026

May Bills Paid by ACH

Approved May 5, 2026

Name		Description	Amount	Budget	Arrives		Paid Date
					Via		
Bonneville Power Administration		EIM Services - Transmission Final Bill	\$ 2,552.00	09-6430	e-mail		5/11/2026 QB
Bonneville Power Administration		Transmission Bill - Final (Rerun Audit)		09-6430	e-mail		
Bonneville Power Administration		Misc. Income CREDIT (\$)	\$ -	09-4200	e-mail		
CIS - - Pd on 5th		Life & Disability -	\$ 139.84	01-6125	On-line		
Payroll - Net Pay		Employees	\$ 15,392.00	multi	e-mail	est	
Federal Tax -		Federal Tax, SS, Medicare	\$ 4,207.00	multi	e-mail	est	
State Tax -		State Tax, Transit, State WC	\$ 1,450.00	multi	e-mail	est	
OTEC - 3414-007 split bill		Mill Crk Lane - Hydro - Wheeling	\$ 2,887.17	09-6430			
OTEC - 3414-007 split bill		Mill Crk Lane - Hydro - Electri	\$ 247.00	09-6100			
TOTAL on next bank Statement		3/5/2026 - 4/3/2026 Total \$3,134.17			Mail		4/27/26 QB
SAIF - A100068137 - General WC			\$ -	01-6125	Online		
Verizon		Dave & Jason cell phones	\$ 91.16	01-6145	Online		
			\$ 26,966.17				

DRAFT

March 15 - April 14, 2026

Bills Paid by City Credit Card

Approved May 5, 2026

Paid Check:

Charges	Description	Amount Paid	Budget #
Google	Workspace - Thru 4/2026	\$ 33.60	01-6120 Q
Go To Meeting	On-line meeting host- thru 4/30/26	\$ 19.00	01-6120 Q
Microsoft	On-line service - thru 3/4- 4/4/2026	\$ 42.00	01-6120 Q
Microsoft	On-line service - thru 3/4- 4/4/2026	\$ 37.50	01-6120 Q
Ubiquiti	Well phone 1 line 3/27-4/27/2026	\$ 9.99	04-6100 Q
Ubiquiti	City Hall 4 lines - 3/27-4/27/2026	\$ 39.96	01-6100 Q
Every Door Direct	Postage for Clean Up Day flier	\$ 160.55	14-6105 Q
TRC Electronics	battery	\$ 53.35	Q
Tractor Supply	Articulating Spot Light	\$ 189.96	Q
Cannon Water Technology Inc	Anti-siphon Valve	\$ 66.76	Q
Host Gator	1 Year renewal of domain	\$ 21.19	01-6120 Q
BMI		\$ 200.00	Q
BMI		\$ 200.00	Q
Amazon		\$ 25.11	Q
Starlink	equipment - (Hydro replace Ziply)	\$ 20.00	Q
Starlink	initial set up - (Hydro replace Ziply)	\$ 99.00	Q
IDRIVE.com		\$ 199.50	Q
Amazon		\$ 15.97	Q
Total		\$ 1,433.44	

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2025-2026

May Bills Paid by Check

Approved May 5, 2026

Name	Description	Amount	Budget	Via	PD	Check #
Anderson Perry-				email		
City of Union	Water Tests 3/17 & 3/25	\$ 110.00	04-6215	Mail	5/5	QB
Card Services*	*see bills to pay by credit card	\$ 1,433.44	multi	Mail	5/5	QB
D & B Supply - Custmer ID C21300			01-6155	receipts		
DEQ - permit 2026-2027	Water Quality-waste wtr Annual Permit	\$ 2,168.40	05-6435	mail	5/5	QB
Dollars Corner - Charges	fuel	\$ -	multi-6200	P/U		
Eagle Office Concepts	copier maintenance contract	\$ 62.51	01-6105	e-mail	5/5	QB
Ed Staubs			04-6100	Mail		
Eastern Oregonian	Ad Conditional Use Hearing 5/5/26	\$ 74.75	01-6110	Mail	5/5	QB
Hancock Timberland XI - Manulife	Easement lease - March	\$ 180.41	09-6129	e-mail	5/5	QB
Hancock Timberland X - Manulife	Easement lease - March	\$ 130.65	09-6129	e-mail	5/5	QB
H.D. Fowler	Sewer DrainPSM, Couplings, Cap	\$ 289.05	05-9155	mail	5/5	QB
Home Town Hardware		\$ -		mail		
KIE Supply		\$ -		rcpt		
Leaf	Copy Machine Monthly Lease	\$ 39.50	01-6170	on line	5/5	QB
Mill Creek Meadow Farms	Gift Cert. Beautification Award	\$ 50.00	01-6999	receipt	4/22	11747
Napa Auto Parts		\$ -	01-6165	email		
OAWU-OR Assc of Water Utilities	Training - Jason Jayne	\$ 205.00	04-6135	email	5/5	QB
OATI - Smart Tag Service	Monthly service - April 2026	\$ 980.61	09-6120	email	5/5	QB
OTEC - 3414-001	Cove Street Lights	\$ -	01-6150	Mail		
OTEC - 3414-002	Church St Co - City Hall	\$ -	01-6100	Mail		
OTEC - 3414-004	Conley Road - Lagoon	\$ -	05-6100	Mail		
OTEC - 3414-005	Haefler Lane - Well #2	\$ -	04-6100	Mail		
OTEC- 3414-006	Cemetery Well	\$ -	04-6100	Mail		
Total - on next bank statement	\$1,000.00	\$ -				
OXARC		\$ -	05-6240	Mail		
Quill	Office supplies, Clean Up Day fliers	\$ 119.33	01/14-6105	email	5/5	QB
Waste Pro -			01-6100	email		
Ziply - 541-568-4350	4/27-5/27/2026	\$ -	09-6100	mail		
Grand Total		\$ 5,843.65				

2025-2026

March Bills Paid by ACH

Approved March 3, 2026

		Arrives			
Name	Description	Amount	Budget	Via	Paid Date
Bonneville Power Administration	EIM Services - Transmission Final Bill	\$ 2,434.00	09-6430	e-mail	3/9/2026 QB
Bonneville Power Administration	Transmission Bill - Final (Rerun Audit)		09-6430	e-mail	
Bonneville Power Administration	Misc. Income CREDIT (\$)	\$ -	09-4200	e-mail	
CIS - - Pd on 5th	Life & Disability -	\$ 139.84	01-6125	On-line	3/05/2026 QB
Payroll - Net Pay	Employees	\$ 15,566.30	multi	e-mail	2/27/2026 QB
Federal Tax -	Federal Tax, SS, Medicare	\$ 4,327.18	multi	e-mail	3/13/2026 QB
State Tax -	State Tax, Transit, State WC	\$ 1,465.79	multi	e-mail	3/13/2026 QB
OTEC - 3414-007 split bill	Mill Crk Lane - Hydro - Wheeling	\$ 200.00	09-6430		
OTEC - 3414-007 split bill	Mill Crk Lane - Hydro - Electri	\$ 47.00	09-6100		
TOTAL on next bank Statement	Total \$247.00	\$ -		Mail	2/26/2026 QB
SAIF - A100068137 - General WC	9/25/2025	\$ 412.14	01-6125	Online	3/25/2026 QB
Verizon	Dave & Jason cell phones	\$ 91.16	04-6145	Online	3/28/2026 QB
		\$ 24,683.41			

USDA Rural Development

Annual Loan payment - sewer loan 2014

\$ 56,864.00 \$25,902.91 principal 05-7015 QB

ACH - March 12, 2026

\$30,961.09 interest 05-7020 QB

\$81,547.41



UNION COUNTY

Planning Department

Inga Williams
Planning Director

1001 4th Street, Suite C La Grande, OR 97850 • Phone (541) 963-1014 • www.UnionCountyOR.gov
IWilliams@Union-County.org • PTracy@Union-County.org • PHall@Union-County.org

NOTICE OF PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING

You are receiving this notice because you represent an agency that may be interested in this application or are an adjacent property owner within 250 feet of the parcel that is the subject of the application explained below. The Planning Commission will act on this application in a public hearing on May 18, 2026. The Planning Commission meeting begins at 7 PM. You can attend in person or by remote web access. A remote access link is available on the website listed further down this page.

Any interested person may submit written testimony to the Planning Department prior to the public hearing and attend the public hearing to provide verbal comments for or against the application. **You must include your name and address with the written testimony**, please also cite the application # below.

A decision by the Planning Commission may be appealed to the Board of County Commissioners within 30 days of the Planning Commission's decision. Failure to raise an issue by letter or in the public hearing, or failure to provide statements or evidence sufficient to afford the decision makers an opportunity to respond to the issue precludes appeal to the Land Use Board of Appeals based on that issue.

Application #	2026-0007
Purpose of the Application:	A major partition which extends Longview Lane to the west and creates two additional parcels.
Applicable Criteria:	Union County Zoning Partition and Subdivision Ordinance (UCZPSO) Article 7.00 Rural Residential Zone; UCZPSO Article 25.00 Land Division
Property Location:	A property located at T03S R40E Section 15BB Tax Lot 100. The situs address for the subject property is 69733 Highway 97, Cove, OR 97824.
Property Owner & Applicant:	Josh & Caitlin Russell 237
Zone Designation:	Rural Residential, R-2
Staff Contact:	Inga Williams, Planning Director

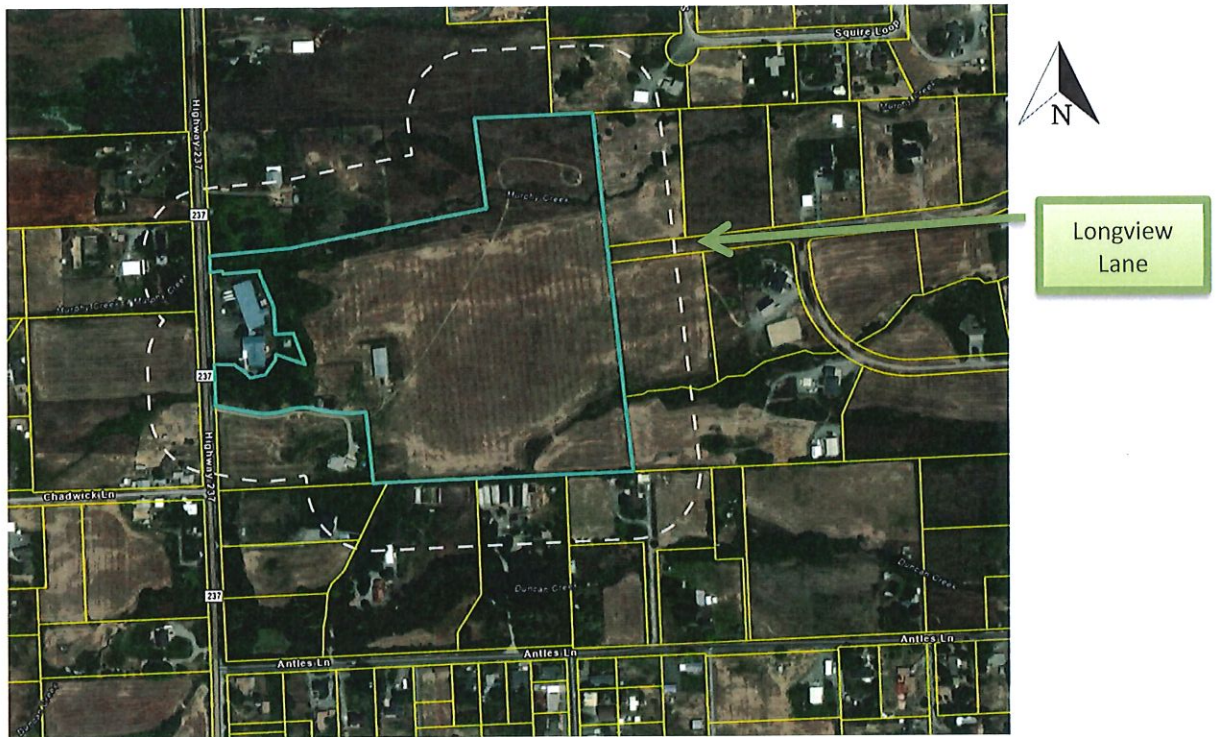
A copy of the application, all documents and evidence submitted by or on behalf of the applicant and applicable criteria are available for inspection during office hours at no cost and a copy will be provided at reasonable cost. A copy of the staff report will be available for inspection at no cost at least seven days prior to the hearing and a copy will be provided at reasonable cost. The agenda and any information being given to the Planning Commission will be placed at the following website at least 6 days prior to the meeting.

<https://unioncountyor.gov/planning-commission-meetings/>

If you wish your testimony to be included in the packet that goes to the Planning Commission, please make sure that you submit it by 5 PM on May 7. Written testimony can still be submitted after that date and will be given to the Planning Commission prior to the public hearing, but be aware that they may not have time to review it before the hearing.

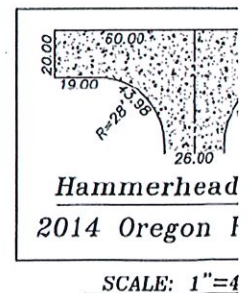
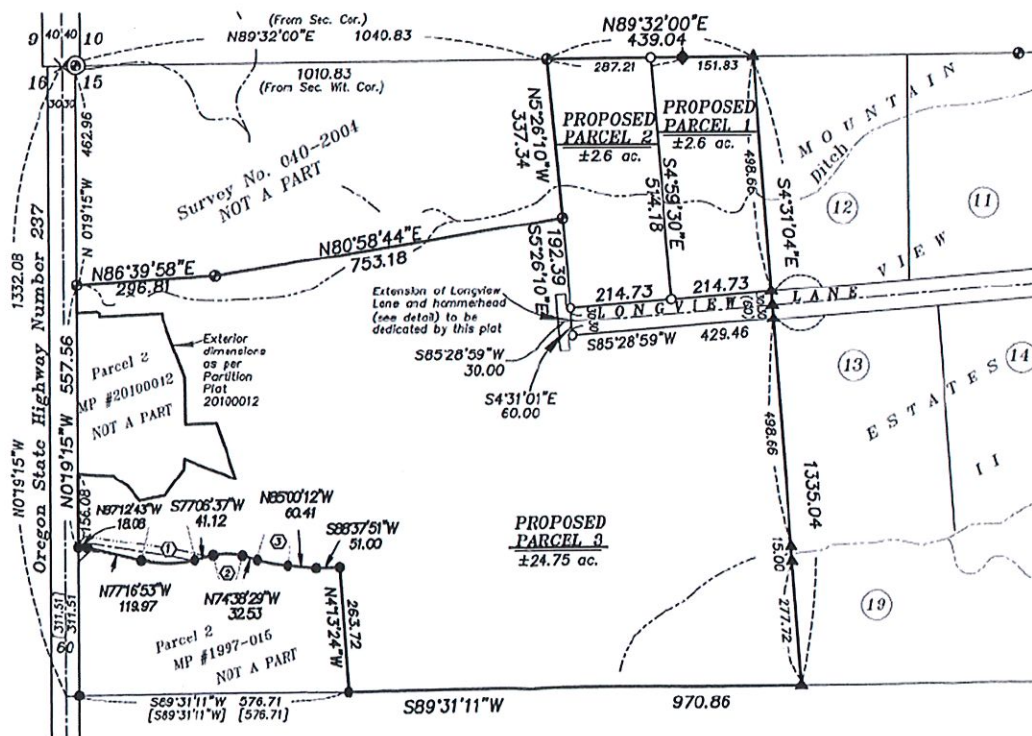
NOTICE TO MORTGAGEE, LIENHOLDER, VENDOR OR SELLER: ORS 215 REQUIRES THAT IF YOU RECEIVE THIS NOTICE, IT MUST BE PROMPTLY FORWARDED TO THE PURCHASER. The recipient of this notice is hereby responsible to promptly forward a copy of this notice to every person with a documented interest, including a renter or lessee.

The subject property is outlined in blue. The property notification boundary is the gray dashed line.



TENTATIVE PLAN PROPOSED MAJOR PARTITION PLAT

Situated in the North half of the Northwest quarter of Section 15, Township 3
South, Range 40 East of the Willamette Meridian, Union County, Oregon
Being a partition of Parcel 1 of Partition Plat 20100012
TAX LOT 103, MAP 0354015BB



Staff Report – May 5, 2026 - Conditional Use and Variance

Applicant: Ascension School/Episcopal Church of Eastern Oregon

Representative: Glancy Rockwell & Associates

Included: Site Plan and Proposal

Fee: \$150 Conditional Use and \$300 Variance combined fees were paid to City of Cove

Property: 03S40E1601300, 302 Main Street, Cove

Landowner: Episcopal Church of Eastern Oregon

Tenant: Ascension School

Zone: SP – Semi Public

Proposal: Proposes the development of a community pool within a fenced 95'x99' (9405 sq. ft.) area including a 750 sq. ft. pool house, designed for an occupancy of 139 and a gravel parking area with 8 standard parking spaces and 2 ADA compliant spaces with additional gravel overflow parking at the existing community center adjacent lot.

Reason: To provide an outdoor recreational amenity to the community.

Approval Criteria: City of Cove Zoning Ordinance 1984

Article 7.00 Public (P) / Semi-Public (SP) Zone

Section 7.02 Uses Permitted Outright.

Section 7.03 Conditional Uses.

Article 9.00 Conditional Uses.

Approval Criteria: City of Cove Zoning Ordinance 1984

Article 7.00 Public (P) / Semi-Public (SP) Zone

Section 8.08 Off-Street Parking

¶ 2a Assembly-type use, 1 space per 100 sq. ft.
of assembly area.

Article 10.00 Variances

Notice: Notice of a Public Hearing to address the approval of the Conditional Use and Variance application was mailed to all landowners within 300 feet of the said property, was posted in three public locations, and published in the legal notices of the East Oregonian newspaper and on-line formats.

Basic Findings:

- The location of the pool project is adjacent to the existing Community Center building (formerly the Gun Club building) and will use the existing Community Center driveway off of Main Street for access. No new street, road, or driveway is needed.
- The property has access to City water and sewer.
- All permitting will be administered through the City of La Grande Building Division.

Ultimate Findings: Conditional Use

- The proposed project site is zoned (SP) Semi-Public. A community pool is not listed as permitted outright in this zone; however, the proposed use is consistent with Goal VIII Recreation Needs of the City of Cove Land Use Plan 1983.
- The proposed project is compatible with adjacent land use practices and enhances community well-being and supports neighborhood cohesiveness.
- The proposed project has the ability to meet all utility needs, water, sewer, electricity.
- Fire Code requires the addition of a fire hydrant which the City will be responsible for implementing.

Approval Conditions:

The City Council may approve, conditionally approve or deny a conditional use application.

Ultimate Findings: Variance

- The City of Cove Zoning Ordinance 1984 referring to Off-Street parking for assembly-type use requires 1 space for every 100 sq. ft. of assembly area. The proposed fenced pool area of 9405 sq. ft. would call for 94 parking spaces; an excessive number of parking spaces.
- The proposed project provides 8 standard parking spaces and 2 ADA compliant spaces with additional gravel overflow parking at the existing community center adjacent lot.
- A variance from the required 94 parking spaces to the proposed 10 parking spaces, plus overflow parking, will not materially alter the land use pattern of the area, nor will it be detrimental to the purpose of this Ordinance, nor injurious to other property in the zone nor the city development plan. The variance is a minimum modification from the standards of this Ordinance.

Approval Conditions:

The City Council may approve or conditionally approve a modification to the development standards of the City of Cove Zoning Ordinance 1984 where it can be shown that the interpretation of this ordinance would cause unnecessary hardship. In granting a variance the Council may attach conditions which it finds necessary to protect the best interests of the surrounding neighborhood.

2026 Social Security COLA Increase

The Social Security Administration (SSA) set the 2026 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) at 2.8%, effective starting in January 2026 [CBS News](#) . This is slightly higher than the 2.5% COLA in 2025 and was announced on October 24, 2025 [CBS News](#) .

What the 2.8% COLA Means

- **Average monthly benefit increase:** About \$56 for most retired workers, raising the typical check from \$2,015 to \$2,071 in January 2026 [The United States Social Security Administration](#)
- **SSI recipients:** First COLA increase in December 2025, raising the federal maximum from \$967 to \$994 per month [The United States Social Security Administration](#)
- **Other program changes:** The 2026 taxable maximum for Social Security is \$184,500, and Medicare Part B premiums rise to \$202.90/month, which will slightly reduce the net increase for many beneficiaries

How COLA Is Calculated

The COLA is tied to the **Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W)**, which measures inflation for goods and services typically purchased by workers. The SSA compares the average CPI-W for July–September of the current year to the same period last year

Context and Outlook

- The 2.8% rate reflects modest inflation in 2025, with the CPI-W up about 2.8% over the third quarter of 2024–2025
- Advocates note that while this adjustment helps keep pace with inflation, many seniors feel it's still below what they need to maintain their lifestyle, especially given rising food, energy, and healthcare costs
- For 2027, projections vary: the Senior Citizens League expects another 2.8% COLA, while some analysts, like Mary Johnson, forecast a higher 3.2% due to surging gasoline prices and broader inflation

Bottom line: If you receive Social Security benefits, you'll see a **2.8% increase in 2026**, adding roughly \$56 per month to your average check. This is the official rate, but future COLAs will depend on inflation trends in the coming year.

Social Security sets its 2026 COLA increase at 2.8%. Here's what that ...

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/social-security-cola-2026-increase-cost-of-living-adjustment-inflation/>

The United States Social Security Administration

2026 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Fact Sheet | News | SSA

<https://www.ssa.gov/news/en/cola/factsheets/2026.html>

*Possible discussion during
Employee Performance Reviews*