



107 – 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Gold Bar, WA 98251

**City of Gold Bar Council Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, December 16, 2025**

**CALL TO ORDER, FLAG SALUTE, ROLL CALL**

Mayor Yarbrough called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The meeting was held in hybrid format. Present in person were Councilmembers Craig, Lie, Martin, Russell, and Sears. Staff members present in person were Chief Whalen, Public Works Director Norris, and Clerk Stowe. Office Manager Beaston attended via Zoom.

**OATHS OF OFFICE**

Mayor Yarbrough's Oath of Office was administered when he returned from vacation.

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

Councilmember Sears moved to adopt the agenda as presented and Councilmember Russell seconded the motion, which failed for lack of vote. Councilmember Lie then moved to approve the agenda as amended to move up the VFW presentation, and with a second by Councilmember Russell, the motion carried.

**VFW PRESENTATION**

Rob Jones, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post Commander for Gold Bar, presented awards of appreciation relating to safety and emergency services. Awards were presented to Josh Gjerness and Brittanie Martin with Sky Valley Fire and Skylor Grasseth with Snohomish County Sheriff's Department. Recipients were thanked for their service by Post Commander Jones, the council, and the audience.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Yarbrough thanked Councilmember Russell for his mayor pro-tem duties. He then gave a report on the Cannery Levee. The city has worked over the years to create a contingency plan with other agencies that included monitoring Lidar information. The recent rain event eroded part of the levee and as a result, Mayor Yarbrough authorized a Declaration of Emergency. This Declaration allowed the Army Corp of Engineers to complete a temporary repair. He then talked about the ownership of the levee, which is on private property, and that the city will have opportunities to help the owner with more permanent repairs. The action was taken to protect land, but the work will not impact flooding on Moonlight Drive, which does not come from water over the levee. He asked people to stay away from the levee during repairs.

Relating to the levee, Director Norris then presented Lidar images which show where flooding on Moonlight Drive comes from. Lidar also showed where water would flow if the levee failed, and one of

the concerns is that the Levee flow could create a new channel towards May Creek Road. He said it is unknown who originally installed the levee, but it was done before that area came into the city.

Councilmember Sears asked about cost. Mayor Yarbrough said the Army Corp does the work for free under the emergency, and Director Norris said the impact to the city will be after the fact as the city will have to apply for all related permits and will be responsible for those costs.

There was discussion by the council around impacts if the levee failed, which are unknown because of all the variables. Councilmember Lie was disappointed that the county dumped the levee in the city's lap and disagreed with the city taking responsibility. He felt it left a legacy for future councils to deal with. Councilmember Craig said it was good to have the Lidar imagery and would like to see if there was mitigation available for that area. This led to further discussion around contacting representatives, budget concerns, and legal risks for both taking action and not taking action.

## **STAFF REPORT**

Director Norris reminded people that the meeting on January 20<sup>th</sup> will have a public town hall meeting half an hour earlier to discuss work that will be done in the Sid Mooring park. He also talked about the upcoming comprehensive plan update and the need to update housing numbers to match county projections. Councilmember Lie asked about the radar signs and Director Norris said batteries may need replacing, and the location of one sign will be changed.

Chief Whalen reviewed calls, including water rescue, and then gave updates on road closures due to the rain event and the recent Shop with a Cop event. He spoke briefly about House Bill 2015.

Councilmember Lie asked about a recent city bill. He didn't want to make any changes to service relating to booking restrictions but just wanted people to be aware of costs.

Clerk Stowe reminded those present to sign the citizen comment form and to review the procedure for public comments during council meetings.

Office Manager Beaston said the city website has volunteer information and that it was good to have volunteers to help with weather events. Dog tags for the new year have not yet arrived.

## **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilmember Sears thanked all those who came to the meeting and talked about the importance of public involvement.

Councilmember Lie said that as a retired professional geologist he was qualified to comment on the levee. He also said that he has not yet drafted a resolution for a trail project.

Councilmember Martin also thanked those who came to the meeting. She thanked Chief Whalen and deputies for their work. She then talked about the strong scent of marijuana from the local businesses. Director Norris said that he met with the fire marshal and representatives from Puget Sound Clean Air and that several violations had been written. Councilmember Martin then said Red Cross is in need of donations.

Councilmember Russell welcomed all who came to the meeting. He then talked about a recent ride-along with deputies.

Councilmember Craig thanked those attending the meeting. She encouraged them to come back and to volunteer, reviewing volunteer options both for the city and the county. She talked about where food donations were being accepted and reiterated the need to not drive around flood barriers.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Tricia Ann Foster spoke about the levee and funding.

Madison Berry talked about the history of their house flooding, the agencies she has worked with and the consequences of that, actions by residents, a deputy telling people to evacuate, city staff causing wakes in the water, and the need for the city to take flooding seriously.

Jessi Beyer gave a handout on crisis response and spoke about the East County Response Program and House Bill 2015 which will utilize a sales tax to integrate mental health professions with law enforcement.

Zack Greenberg talked about the number of children in the neighborhood impacted by flooding and said that while they were not in the city limits they attended the school. He also questioned why the city was worried about the budget.

Chelsie Wallin acknowledged the work currently underway and was grateful for the effort. She then talked about law enforcement asking residents to evacuate, changes in the levee over the years and the need for transparency.

Demi Phillips-Hall talked about the ownership and responsibility of the levee.

### **CONTINUED BUSINESS - none**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

*Ordinance #791 Amending Title 5.* This ordinance relates to changes in licensing thresholds for businesses that do not have a bricks-and-mortar presence in the city, but do business within city limits. Councilmember Lie moved to accept Ordinance #791 for an introduction and first reading and with a second by Councilmember Craig the motion carried.

### **FINAL COUNCIL COMMENTS/OTHER BUSINESS**

Councilmember Sears thanked those who came to the meeting and said he knows this is a trying time for all, and that the county, mayor, and staff are doing the best they can. He encouraged people to go to county council meetings or send letters.

Councilmember Lie said the levee is a regional issue, bigger than the city, and needs involvement by the county and state.

Councilmember Martin thanked those present for coming and sharing their opinions. She said donations were also being accepted for evacuated animals.

Councilmember Russell said the levee was something he learned about when he first became a councilmember and that there was a plan in place then. He talked about the need to ask questions before something becomes an emergency and repeated the fact that the levee work will not fix flooding on Moonlight Drive as that is a separate issue. Susan Burch asked to speak. Councilmember Lie moved to

allow this and with a second by Councilmember Craig the motion carried, with Councilmember Russell abstaining. Ms. Burch then said she felt insulted and directed her comments to Councilmember Russell. Clerk Stowe stepped in to remind people of the process for public comments and instructed the council to return to the agenda.

Councilmember Craig talked about federal grants and the need to move forward from this flood event. She said agency responses are moving from response to recovery and that recovery plans would be discussed at the Startup Event Center.

Councilmember Lie would like to see the sales tax initiative on the next agenda.

Councilmember Craig asked about fire department sirens and Assistant Chief Ernie Walters said they are being rebuilt.

### **MINUTES APPROVAL**

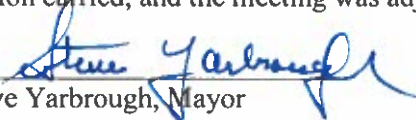
Councilmember Lie moved to approve the December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, minutes as presented and with a second by Councilmember Russell, the motion carried with Councilmember Sears abstaining.

### **VOUCHER APPROVAL**

Councilmember Martin moved to approve checks numbering 38849 through 38867 with \$36,097.39 for claims and \$1,000.00 for payroll and taxes, for a grand total of \$37,097.39 and with a second by Councilmember Sears, the motion carried.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Councilmember Russell moved to adjourn the meeting and with a second by Councilmember Martin the motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 pm.

  
Steve Yarbrough, Mayor

  
Lisa Stowe, Clerk/Treasurer