

City of Gold Bar

EST. 1910



107 – 5th Street, Gold Bar, WA 98251

City of Gold Bar Council Meeting Minutes Tuesday, May 19, 2026

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 included Chief Whalen, Public Works Director Norris, and Clerk Stowe. Office Manager Beaston attended via Zoom.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Councilmember Sears moved to adopt the agenda as presented and with a second by Councilmember Russell, the motion carried.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Yarbrough said there will be a meeting for Gold Dust Day next Tuesday and they are still in need of volunteers. Councilmember Lie asked if councilmembers were covered by city insurance if someone was sued regarding injuries. Councilmembers are covered by city insurance if acting in their capacity as a councilmember.

STAFF REPORT

Chief Whalen talked about a recent incident involving threats and reckless driving at high speeds. The driver was stopped with a pit maneuver and arrested. There was also a reckless driving incident involving a motorcycle and a rescue call for a hiker. He also spoke about the possibility of the fire department merging with the Skykomish fire department and how that might impact deputies. The council agenda includes a presentation for bridge services related to domestic violence that he feels would be valuable and beneficial for Gold Bar. Councilmember Russell asked if drugs or alcohol were involved in the incident involving threats, but this was believed to be a mental health issue and Chief Whalen hopes the person will get the services they need. Councilmember Russell then asked about the threats made during the traffic incident and Chief Whalen stated that the threats had been made against employees of the marijuana businesses.

Director Norris spoke briefly about the service line leak during the last council meeting and how valuable the vac trailer is in those situations. He said the playground is being used, the chlorine sensor at well 3 is up and running and sensor work for well 4 will be completed this summer. Councilmember Lie asked when the playground equipment will be installed at Mooring Park. This will happen after well 4 work is done. Councilmember Lie then asked about the crosswalk to be installed by the Department of Transportation. The last update Director Norris had was that the project was going out for bid.

Clerk Stowe encouraged council members to sign up for direct deposit.

Office Manager Beaston reminded the council that the city hall will be closed May 25th for Memorial Day. She also reminded people to license their dogs and keep them restrained.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Lie talked about Snohomish County Tomorrow, the need for a bike rack at city hall, and that he would like to see the city regulating the use of e-bikes and safety equipment.

Councilmember Russell also talked about the importance of safety gear on e-bikes.

CITIZEN COMMENTS - none

BRIDGE COORDINATION SERVICES

Tiffany Krusey talked about services offered by Bridge Coordinating Services relating to domestic violence. Her presentation included an overview of domestic violence services, impact to the community, coordinating with police departments and prosecuting attorney offices, different types of advocacy, the need to create dialog with law enforcement, how to enhance safety, and statistics for Gold Bar. Discussion with the council included how to work with the fire department, agreements in place with other entities, regional services vs. individual cities, rates and hours for service, what services would look like, and remote services. After discussion, Councilmember Sears would like to see this on a future agenda for further discussion and would also like to have the city reach out to Sultan and Index. Councilmember Lie would also like further discussion with Chief Whalen.

PUBLIC HEARING

Clerk Stowe called the public hearing to order at 8:06 pm for the purpose of discussing Ordinance #793 banning short-term rentals (STRs). She reviewed the public hearing process and no councilmembers disclosed any reason to be recused from the hearing.

An email from a resident opposing a ban and a letter from a legal firm cautioning action banning short-term rentals were entered into record.

Mayor Yarbrough does not believe the small number of STRs would have much effect on affordable housing, that restricting rather than banning would be a better compromise, and that restricting would lower the risk of legal challenges. He also said he would not like Gold Bar to be a guinea pig for legal challenges.

Councilmember Lie said he was not concerned about a threat from an attorney, that the council was ignoring citizens, the risk of using recreational vehicles, affordable housing, and that restricting rather than banning could also be considered a 'taking'.

Councilmember Sears asked if the city was familiar with the legal firm that sent the letter, which no one is. He said he knew he had been the swing vote for introducing the ban but after review he is leaning toward restricting instead. He said if restricting protects the city more legally that he would rather do that. He disagreed that the council isn't listening to citizens and felt that was unfair, that staff have spent a great deal of time on this subject, and that he would like to spend money on needed things rather than legal fees.

Councilmember Russell said if you have money you can find an attorney to say anything, that existing rules could also be seen as a 'taking', that he likes the ban because it is clean, and feels outside sources are bullying. Clerk Stowe reminded him that the city attorney had the same caution regarding bans standing up to legal challenges.

Councilmember Craig said no impact analysis was done and talked about the loopholes in bans, how other entities changed their bans because of loopholes, enforcement concerns, and how to track violations. She also asked about how municipal code could be changed to add wording around licenses being revoked after a certain number of violations.

Danielle Paliga reiterated her previous comments opposing STRs. She agreed with Councilmember Lie regarding listening to citizens, was frustrated with seeing different cars regularly and never knowing who would be in the home, and would like to see a stricter ban that includes ways for business licenses to be revoked for violations.

Matthew Rhodes wants to see a full ban go through and said he was adamant that it would stand up to legal challenges and felt that attorneys are just making money, that citizens are not happy and are united and this issue needs to be dealt with before more comes.

After discussion, Councilmember Lie moved to accept Ordinance #793 banning short-term rentals for a second reading and adoption as presented. Councilmember Russell seconded the motion and a vote was called. Councilmembers Lie and Russell voted in favor. Councilmembers Sears, Craig, and Martin voted opposed and the motion failed.

Councilmember Sears then moved to hold a public hearing for the ordinance restricting short-term rentals and with a second by Councilmember Lie, the motion carried.

With no further discussion, Councilmember Sears moved to adjourn the public hearing and with a second by Councilmember Craig the hearing was adjourned and the regular agenda returned to at 8:33 pm.

CONTINUED BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 26-05 Purchase and Procurement Policy. Clerk Stowe said the resolution had been reviewed by the city attorney and revised based on their recommendations. Councilmember Lie moved to table the resolution until the next agenda and with a second by Councilmember Russell, the motion carried.

FINAL COUNCIL COMMENTS/OTHER BUSINESS

Councilmember Craig will miss the next meeting.

COUNCIL MINUTES APPROVAL

Councilmember Sears moved to approve the May 19th, 2026 minutes as presented and with a second by Councilmember Russell the motion carried.

VOUCHER APPROVAL

Councilmember Martin moved to approve checks numbering 39187 through 39211 with \$67,878.05 for claims and \$1,000.00 for payroll and taxes, for a grand total of \$68,878.05 and with a second by Councilmembers Sears and Russell, the motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Sears moved to adjourn the meeting and with a second by Councilmember Russell, the motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Steve Yarbrough, Mayor

Lisa Stowe, Clerk/Treasurer