

City of Auburn
City Council Meeting
September 8, 2026

Mayor Harmon opened the meeting and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilor Cowan was absent. Student Representatives Robinson and Edwards were absent.

I. Consent Items

II. Minutes – August 17, 2026, Regular Council Meeting

Councilor Walker moved for approval, seconded by Councilor Gerry. Motion passed 6-0.

III. Communications, Presentations and Recognitions

IV. Open Session

Quentin Chapman, Eastman Ln

Kevin Dean, Auburn resident & business owner

V. Unfinished Business

VI. New Business

1) ORDER 73-09082026 – Approving the Stetson Road Apartments Municipal Development and Tax Increment Financing District #34. Public hearing. Passage requires majority vote.

Mr. Glen Holmes, Business & Community Development Director, presented the application before the Council. The developer (not present) indicated that some assistance was needed, hence the application for a TIF before the Council. It is unknown if the project could move forward without the TIF.

The benefits for the City of Auburn were outlined: The City would be able to work towards their adopted housing goal. Having a developer install and maintain utilities and roads would save the City money by expansion of sewer and water lines and other utilities. Workforce housing assistance is a value to the City. Part of the City's TIF funds would be able to provide transitional housing for victims of domestic violence.

Mayor Harmon opened this item for public hearing. Seeing no comment, the public hearing was closed.

Councilor Platz stated support for this project.

Councilor Randall spoke in favor of the project but not in favor of the CEA as proposed:

Public statement for the record - Rachel Randall City Councilor - Ward 1 9/8/26

I want to separate the development from the CEA, because I support this development. Auburn needs housing, and I welcome 160 new units and the additional tax base.

What I don't support is the CEA as it's currently proposed.

We're being asked to return up to \$4 million in future property-tax revenue to a private developer, while the affordability commitment is only 5% of the project (eight units out of 160), and I still have questions about those eight units.

They're described as serving households between 80% and 120% AMI (individual gross income of roughly \$53,600 - \$80,400 per year) but what does that translate to in actual rents?

Are any of the eight guaranteed to be targeted at the lower end of that range, or could all eight be at or near 120% AMI? And if some are initially targeted lower, what guarantees they stay there? For how long?

If tax payers are going to give a private developer a substantial financial benefit, up to \$4million, I think this taxpayers should receive a substantial public benefit in return. Eight units doesn't get me there particularly when we don't yet know how affordable those eight will actually be or how long that affordability is guaranteed.

So my preference is very simple:

Build the project. Build all 160 units. I support it. But do it without the CEA, Auburn retains the tax revenue the development generates. The developer does not need to commit to affordability.

If the developer believes the CEA is necessary, then I think we should be negotiating a very different agreement (more affordable units, deeper affordability, a smaller reimbursement to the developer, or some combination of those things).

I'm not opposed to this company making a return on its investment. That's what private development is supposed to do.

But I don't believe Auburn taxpayers should enhance that return for an affordability commitment of only eight units. 8 units at \$4,000,000 doesn't seem like a deal for taxpayers. (Its like paying \$500,000 for units that aren't really affordable and aren't guaranteed to remain that way.

I support the development. I do not support this CEA as written.

Councilor Platz moved for passage, seconded by Councilor Walker.

Motion passed 5-1 (Randall).

2) ORDER 74-09082026 – Authorizing the Finance Director to carryforward the remainder of the FY26 Property Tax Assistance Program account from fund balance into the FY27 Property Tax Assistance Program account. Passage requires majority vote.

Councilor Walker moved for passage, seconded by Councilor Platz.

Mayor Harmon opened this item for comment; there was no comment from the public.

Motion passed 6-0.

3) ORDER 75-09082026 – Initiating Zoning Map Amendment regarding Pownal Road. Passage requires majority vote.

Councilor Walker moved for passage, seconded by Councilor Duvall.

Mayor Harmon opened this item for comment; there was no comment from the public.

Motion passed 6-0.

4) ORDER 76-09082026 – Authorizing the use of EMS Capital Reserve Funds for the purpose of purchasing supplies and equipment required to meet DEA regulations for the storage and distribution of medications and controlled substances for EMS.

Councilor Walker moved for passage, seconded by Councilor Randall.

Mayor Harmon opened this item for comment; there was no comment from the public.

Motion passed 6-0.

ORDER 77-09082026– Business License Appeal Hearing (Websters Trading Co, 150 Minot Ave). Public hearing & action. Passage requires five affirmative votes.

Mayor Harmon opened the hearing. Clerk Carrington provided background on the license denial. Shawn Copeland (business owner and tenant) and Floyd Jenkins (landowner) were present to speak on the property condition.

Mayor Harmon suggested postponing this item until October 5, 2026 to give the property owner time to obtain answers and work to obtain the required permit(s).

Councilor Walker moved to postpone to 10/5, seconded by Councilor Platz.

Motion passed 6-0.

VII. Reports

a. Mayor's Report - Provided an update on the Comprehensive Plan Committee schedule; Planning Board & Council will be invited to attend a joint workshop for a presentation of the draft Comprehensive Plan. A public meeting will be held in October.

b. City Councilors' Reports – Councilor Gerry left the meeting at 8:24pm. Councilor Randall announced the annual block party to be held at the Library. Councilor Duvall gave an update on the Appointment Committee and recent vacancies and encouraged residents to apply. Councilor Butler gave an update on the Airport Committee and Parking & Traffic Safety Committee. Councilor Walker provided an update on the Age Friendly Committee's recent events; filled care packages for veterans and homeless. Councilor Platz provided an update on the School Committee – every school principal provided a report on their school; enrollment and attendance is high.

c. Student Representative Report – None.

d. City Manager Report – Construction is on track for the new public safety building; renovations occurring at Auburn Hall. 911 Communication transfer plan has been communicated; 67 Kittyhawk is complete and the admin and Fire team will be relocating to 67 Kittyhawk and 911 will be locating to Auburn Hall. 9/11 Remembrance will be held at Festival Plaza on Friday, 9/11. Blues & Brews Fest will be occurring on Saturday, 9/12.

VIII. Open Session

None.

IX. Executive Session

X. Adjournment

Councilor Walker moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Platz.

Motion passed 5-0. Adjourned at 8:32pm.

A TRUE COPY ATTEST

Emily F. Carrington, City Clerk