

New Plymouth City Council Meeting Minutes
MONDAY
August 18, 2025
6:00 P.M.
New Plymouth City Council Chambers

On the 18th of August 2025, the New Plymouth City Council meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M.

Pledge of allegiance.

Roll call was taken with councilors Davis, Hughes, Evans, and Mayor Martinez present.

Staff members in attendance were City Clerk Marianne Gatchell, City Treasurer Stephanie Johnson, Public Works Superintendent Beau Ziemer, City Engineer Andy Gehrke, City Attorney Jill Holinka and Librarian Melanie Cope present.

August 4th, 2025, City Council Minutes

Councilor Davis moved to approve the minutes from August 4th, 2025, City Council Meeting with the amendment of vote on agenda item g. Davis, yes. Hughes, no. Councilor Evans seconded the motion. All in Favor. Motion carried.

Claim Approvals

Councillor Evans moved to approve the claims for August 18th, 2025, in the amount of \$48,913.54. Councillor Hughes seconded the motion. Roll call vote. All in Favor. Motion carried.

Citizen Comments

Toni Blacketter-5187 SE 1st Ave NP- Asked that we please use the microphones during the meeting.

Mayor & Council Comments

Councillor Evans suggested that we let the dust settle. In the military there is a saying “Slow is Smooth and Smooth is Fast”. I suggest we be methodical on making decisions.

New Business

- a. Self-Recognition of Open Meeting Law Violation- Interim Mayor Martinez commended Virginia Barton and Councilor Evans for bringing this violation to his attention. We want to be accountable to the people. By correcting this action that is us doing the right thing. City Attorney Jill Holinka explained the violation. Idaho Statute 59-909 is what was handled incorrectly in the previous meeting. Allowing Lisa Grace to break the tie after she had resigned from mayor was incorrect.
- b. Recission of Interim Mayor Appointment- In effort to make things right Ron Martinez is rescinding his appointment to Interim Mayor. With this action he goes back to being Council President.
Councilor Davis moved to accept the recission of Ron Martinez as Interim Mayor. Councilor Evans seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.
- c. Deem Surplus Items for Auction – City Clerk Gatchell explained to the council that these items Superintendent Beau Ziemer has chosen to send to auction. These items are the last three items on the list of Auctioned Items.
Councilor Hughes moved to approve the Deemed Surplus Items for Auction. Councilor Evans seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.
- d. Public Hearing FY2025-26 Budget-
Councilor Evans moved to open the Public Hearing for FY2025-26 Budget. Councilor Davis

seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried. Public Hearing open 6:15 pm

City Treasurer Stephanie Johnson said there are not a lot of changes from the Preliminary Budget. I received the numbers from Payette County on our revenue sharing. When you are working on the budget you estimate a tad higher to make sure you have enough to take that full 3% in property taxes. If you don't estimate higher and we get the full amount, we can't go back and take it later. We estimated a tad high, which was approximately \$6000.00 over. Stephanie said to me this, being the first time doing the budget I consider this a win. We feel that we can find ways to make up for that difference within the administration budget. The Budget as presented takes the annual 3% on levies. Councilor Evans had questions about wages and raises. Will the treasurer and city clerk be taking an additional raise? Treasurer Johnson replied, no. What is included is the standard 3% COLA raise, given to all the staff. Councilor Hughes had a question about engineering costs. Asking what the additional \$5000.00 discrepancy is. Is that part of the emergency fund? Treasurer Johnson confirmed that it is part of the emergency fund.

Open to public comments.

Dale Williamson- 510 E Idaho St NP- He was wanted to know what is the total budget? Treasurer Johnson answered with the amount of \$3,568,626. It is located on the last page of the budget.

Penny Kovick- 4157 NW 1st Ave NP- I am on the Planning & Zoning Commission. I have questions about the budget. Asked about the prosecuting attorney being paid \$12,000.00 and our city attorney paid \$18,000.00. Why do we pay two attorneys? City Attorney Holinka answered that most cities have two attorneys, one for prosecuting and one for the other city business. Jill said that it depends on the abilities of your city attorney. I am not a skilled prosecutor, so I wouldn't be handling any criminal cases. A question on the P&Z budget operations \$0 and publishing \$0. P&Z hasn't been able to make any changes of ordinances. Evans said that she has a concern about that as well. There were a lot of changes that happened after we took office. Things that took precedence over things like ordinances. Kovick asked about the funding for operations and publishing, as well as the funding for Comp Plan. City Clerk explained that the Comp Plan of \$50,000 is included in this year's budget. The printing costs for P&Z are covered in line items for publishing and printing in the administration budget. Some of those costs do come from the fees for the applications. Councilor Davis added the previous mayor said once the comp plan is completed, we would start to focus on the ordinances. Councilor Evans added that she feels it is important to work on the updating of ordinances as well. She would like to get this done before the end of the year when a new office will take over. Councilor Martinez has this on his list of things to start chipping away on. Kovick asked about the wages for clerk, treasurer and deputy clerk. Clarification on how the wages are paid by PW Superintendent Ziemer & Treasurer Johnson. The wages are split between multiple funds, as positions within the city do work for multiple funds. The wages include hourly wage plus the benefit package. The library fund has increased as the librarian will become a full-time. Kovick ended saying she just wants what is best for this city.

Virginia Barton- 205 W Canal NP- She appreciates the owning of mistakes and admires that we went forward with correcting the issue. She is bringing up transparency with payroll. She gave the council and staff a handout of general wages for clerk/treasurer off the web. She believes we are paying our clerk and treasurer \$90,000. The council is the policy making body. How do we have the changes with the deputy clerk, which is now a part-time job with no benefits. How we have a change in the library for a full-time librarian. This was not done in a public meeting. She shows state averages for certified clerks are between \$36,000-\$41,000. Our staff is not certified. We need a training budget for our staff. No references for impact fees, changes in law enforcement. Previous mayor said we don't need more law enforcement. Although our comp plan survey says we are concerned about law enforcement, code violations, and traffic enforcement. Councilman Davis said that we don't control the sheriff's office and what they do. Barton said we need to pay more. It is up to the council to make them do more. If we don't respond to public interest, we aren't putting anything in the budget to allow them to do more. Councilmember Martinez said

he will meet with the sheriff to address these issues. Barton said it isn't addressed in the budget. When we pass the budget, we are locked in for what we have for the next year. Barton does not find this satisfactory. Martinez thanked her for her comments.

Councilor Hughes moved to close the FY2025-26 Budget Public Hearing. Councilor Davis seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried. Close Public Hearing 7:03 pm.

- e. Approval of FY2025-26 Budget Ordinance 230- AN ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2025, APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF \$3,568,726 TO DEFRAY THE EXPENSE AND LIABILITIES OF THE CITY OF NEW PLYMOUTH, IDAHO FOR SAID FISCAL YEAR, AUTHORIZING A LEVY OF SUFFICIENT TAX UPON THE TAXABLE PROPERTY AND SPECIFYING THE OBJECTS AND PURPOSES FOR WHICH SAID APPROPRIATION IS MADE.

Treasurer Johnson said tonight she is looking for approval of the FY2025-26 Budget Ordinance 230. Councilor Evans asked if the budget could be amended after approval? City Attorney Jill Holinka said that budgets can be amended, it takes going through the same process as tonight with public hearing notice. Typically, it is only done for unexpected expenditure or revenue.

Councilor Evans moved to approve FY2025-26 Budget Ordinance 230 with the ability to amend if something comes up and more information comes to light. Councilor Davis asked city clerk where the training money has come from in the past, has there been a specific budget for this? Clerk Gatchell said yes, we have a training line item in our budget. Typically, the training we receive is through AIC and ICCTFOA, which is a yearly conference we attend. We also have our financial software Black Mountain, which is a service we already pay for. If our treasurer wanted to receive additional accounting certification, the council would want to approve of this separately as that could be quite pricey. Davis, clarification so everyone in here knows, have you in the past year taken any of those training courses online that we are paying for? Clerk Gatchell explained that I use black mountain relentlessly. We in the office contact them often. I have watched modules through AIC and have called them for assistance with things I am not sure about or just need additional instruction on. I am hoping this year that both Stephanie and I will be able to attend ICCTFOA. But it might be more important in my opinion and perhaps the councils to have our new treasurer attend the ICCTFOA conference. If the council would like me to do additional training, I would have no problem with that. Treasurer Johnson added that she does have some background as a graduate of University of Idaho with a bachelor's degree. She also just finished up the 9-course training with AIC online through BSU for clerks and treasurers. She is putting together the paperwork to receive her ICCTFOA certification. So, I am not without my own credentials. Councilmember Davis said now the public knows that the staff get trained at different times during the year. Beau Ziemer added that the clerk's association doesn't offer a state license certification. Like our guys, we must be state certified on multiple levels which takes many years. The clerks/treasurers get paper accreditation, but it isn't a state or national accreditation. Councilmember Martinez said that in the future we can look into creating a line item for additional accreditation for our staff. **Councilor Davis seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Councilor Davis moved that we dispense with the rule requiring ordinances to be read on three separate days and one in full, and that the ordinance be read once by title one. Councilor Evans seconded the motion. Roll call vote. Councilor Davis, aye. Councilor Hughes, aye. Councilor Evans, aye. Councilor Martinez, aye. Treasurer Johnson read aloud FY2025-26 Budget Ordinance 230. Motion carried. Councilor Davis moved to approve the ordinance. Councilor Martinez seconded the motion. Roll call vote. Councilor Davis, yes. Councilor Hughes, yes. Councilor Evans, yes. Councilor Martinez, yes. Motion carried.

- f. Executive Session 74-206 (1) (b) and (f)- (b) To consider the evaluation, dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent, or public school student. (f) To communicate with legal counsel for the public agency to discuss the legal ramifications of and legal options for pending litigation, or controversies not yet being litigated but imminently likely to be litigated.

Councilor Evans moved to enter Executive Session for the reasons specified on the agenda.

Councilor Davis seconded the motion. Roll call vote. Councilor Davis, yes. Councilor Hughes, yes. Councilor Evans, yes. Councilor Martinez, yes. 7:17 pm.

Councilor Davis moved to exit Executive Session. Councilor Hughes seconded the motion. Roll call vote. Councilor Davis, yes. Councilor Hughes, yes. Councilor Evans, yes. Councilor Martinez, yes. Motion carried. Exit 8:09 pm.

- g. Items requiring decisions from Executive Sessions-

Councilor Davis moved to approve Severance Agreement for Employee A. Councilor Martinez seconded the motion. Roll call vote. Councilor Davis, yes. Councilor Hughes, yes. Councilor Evans abstained from voting for personal reasons. Councilor Martinez, yes. Motion carried.

- h. Nomination for Interim Mayor.

Councilor Evans moved to appoint Ron Martinez as Interim Mayor. Councilor Hughes seconded the motion. Roll call vote. Councilor Davis, yes. Councilor Hughes, yes. Councilor Evans, yes. Motion carried. Oath of office given to Mayor Martinez by City Clerk Marianne Gatchell.

Department Reports

Library Report- Librarian Melanie Cope said it's been a great month, Summer Reading Program finished in July, we had a record number of people come through the door.

Adjournment

Councilor Evans moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Hughes seconded the motion. Motion carried by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

Approve:

Attest:

Ron Martinez, Council President

Marianne Gatchell, City Clerk