The Common Council of the City of Bellevue, Idaho met at a regularly scheduled Meeting on Monday, January 12, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the City of Bellevue Offices, located at 115 E. Pine Street, Bellevue, ID 83313.

Call to Order: Mayor Giordani called the Regular Meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. (00:00:03 in video)

Roll Call:

Christina Giordani, Mayor – Present
Diane Shay, Council President – Present
Tammy E. Davis, Council Member – Present – joined at ???
Suzanne Wrede, Council Member – Present
Shaun Mahoney, Council Member – Present
Tom Bergin, Council Member – Present
Jessica Obenauf, Council Member – Present

Staff Present:
Amy Phelps, City Clerk
Brian Parker, Community Development Director
Carter Bullock, Planner

Shelly Shoemaker, Treasurer

Greg Beaver, Fire Chief

Rick Allington, Legal Counsel

1. **Notice of Agenda Compliance**: *00:01:10 in video)*

The posting of this regular meeting agenda complied with Idaho Code §74-204. The Regular meeting agenda was posted within forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting at the Bellevue City Hall, Post Office, and on the City website on *January 8, 2026.*

Motion: **Council Member Shay** moved that the agenda notice was in compliance with Idaho Code §74-204. **Council Member Obenauf** seconded, and **the motion passed unanimously.**

2. **CALL FOR CONFLICT** (AS OUTLINED IN IDAHO CODE **§74-404**): **ACTION ITEM**

No conflict was noted at this time.

3. **MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORT** (01:26: 57 in video)

Mayor Giordani explained that the Council recently held the first of two strategic planning special meetings to begin the new year and that she wanted to highlight several housekeeping items discussed.

She stated there is a general desire to keep regular meetings to two hours, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., recognizing they may occasionally run longer. She further explained the goal is to be respectful of Council and community members' time, with additional meetings scheduled if needed. She also said there will be a strong push to deliver Council packets by Wednesday each week to allow Council, staff, media, and the public more time to review materials and prepare. She explained these efforts are intended to improve efficiency and transparency.

Council Member Shay said she, Brian Parker, Community Development Director and Carter Bullock, Planner met that morning with Mark Sindell of GGLO to begin laying the groundwork for improving and redeveloping several dead-end rights-of-way. She said the meeting generated many good ideas and positive energy.

Council Member Obenauf asked Council Member Shay for an update on City Hall Re-painting. Chris Johnson, Public Works Director explained the initial bid came in around the mid $80,000 mark and the budget was set at $30,000.

Council Member Obenauf also raised a concern about Slaughterhouse Canyon, noting that increased hiking activity has led to significant dog waste along the trail from the parking lot to the water tower. She said some hikers, including herself, have had to carry waste home She suggested adding dog waste stations and bags along the trail to help reduce the problem.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT: FOR ITEMS OF CONCERN **NOT** ON THE AGENDA – **(COMMENTS ARE LIMITED TO 3-*5 MINUTES*)**

No public comment was made at this time.

5. ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT: ACTION ITEM

Motion: **Council Member Bergin** moved to elect Council Member Shay as the Council President for the 2026 Calendar year. **Council Member Obenauf** seconded. Council Members Voting Aye: Council Member Obenauf, Council Member Bergin, Council Member Shay, Council Member Ard, Council Member Davis, Council Member Wrede. Council Members Voting No: None. **The Motion Passed.**

6. CONSENT AGENDA: ACTION ITEMS

a. Approval of Minutes: September 8, 2025, September 22, 2025, and October 14, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes: Amy Phelps, City Clerk

b. Approval of Claims: December 8, 2025 through January 12, 2026: Shelly Shoemaker, Treasurer

c. Department Head Reports

d. Water Project Update: Merrick and Company

Council President Shay said she had a few minor corrections to the minutes, mostly typos she had already pointed out to the City Clerk. Treasurer Shoemaker made a title correction on the claims report to reflect the correct input dates of 12-16-25 to 1-12-26.
Councilmember Obenauf then asked about the vendor American Legal, specifically regarding the web hosting fee. The City Clerk Clarified that fee was for the webhosting of the Codified City Ordinances.

Council Member Bergin asked about the public works report regarding spreading crushed rock on South 2nd Street to improve the road surface. Public Works Director Chris Johnson noted the clay road is thin, slippery, and has caused delivery trucks to slide off recently. He said the City is considering applying heavier stone while the ground is frozen, followed by a three-quarter inch mix in the spring to firm it up.

Council Member Obenauf asked the City Clerk about the progress made with the records and historical documents previously talked. Clerk Amy Phelps explained that she was working through the older documents to prepare them for scanning. It was clarified that while there was money budgeted for records management software, no formal contracts had been signed with any records management company.

Council Member Obenauf also brought up the proposed library district. She noted that if approved, the Bellevue Library could be open six days a week with two to three staff, providing a space for community connection, especially for parents with young children who feel isolated. Mayor Giordani said she and others plan to attend an informal meeting next Tuesday to discuss the district and hopes to provide a detailed update at the next Council meeting, including information for the Council packet if the library representative cannot attend.

Councilmember Bergin asked whether the draft facility plan for the water team has been submitted and when more information would be available. Public Works Director Chris Johnson said he has a meeting with the Merrick and Company team lead on Wednesday to confirm timelines and rollout dates. He said the plan should be coming out soon and that the next Water Team meeting, which will be open to the public, will be scheduled once they are aligned.

Motion: (00:17:48 in Video) **Council President Shay** moved to approve the consent agenda. **Council Member Obenauf** seconded. Council Members Voting Aye: Council Member Obenauf, Council Member Bergin, Council Member Shay, Council Member Ard, Council Member Davis. Council Members Voting No: Council Member Wrede. **The Motion Passed.**

7. PRESENTATIONS

a. City of Bellevue Fiscal Year End 2025 Audited Statements and acceptance by council: Dennis Brown, CPA, Workman and Company | **ACTION ITEM**

Dennis Brown, CPA, said his firm finalized the City of Bellevue's financial statements for FY25 and issued a clean opinion dated December 5, 2025.

He said the general fund—covering city operations like streets, fire, law enforcement, and planning—had a fund balance of $776,000, with $242,000 assigned by Council but still available for future use. He noted that operational costs were about $2.268 million, leaving roughly 22–34% unreserved carryover, which he said is adequate for managing cash flow during lean months before property taxes arrive. He highlighted that the City spent less from reserves than budgeted, reflecting prudent financial management.

Regarding the utility funds (water and wastewater), he said these operate as for-profit enterprises, needing to generate revenue to maintain and replace infrastructure. He said the funds currently have healthy carryover balances, which are important for unexpected system repairs, upgrades, or future large projects. He emphasized that the Council is prudently overseeing these funds and that the audited financials demonstrate sound financial management.

Council Member Davis asked if Dennis Brown had presented to the City of Bellevue before, which he confirmed he had. She then asked whether an outcome-based budget—focused on results rather than just expenses—would change how he reviews the City's financials. Dennis Brown explained that, as an auditor, he must follow generally accepted auditing standards for governmental financial statements, which are dollar-driven, so his review focuses on revenues and expenditures rather than outcomes.

Davis also clarified that the City's water and wastewater funds are proprietary funds, not for-profit operations, meaning fees only cover operating costs and depreciation. Mr. Brown acknowledged her point, apologized for using the term "for-profit" for simplicity, and confirmed the funds are proprietary, with user fees set by public hearings and reserves managed prudently for future system needs.

Councilmember Bergin asked about two items on page 25 of the audit report: the City's lack of a deposit policy and the absence of a policy regarding interest rate or concentration of credit risk, noting that about $380,000 of City bank balances were exposed at year-end.

Dennis Brown explained that most small cities do not have formal policies for these risks. Cash management is generally handled by the finance department, with funds moved between checking accounts and LGIP accounts (backed by government securities) to reduce risk. He noted that the FDIC insures only $250,000 per account, so some risk is inevitable. He said active cash management is effectively a full-time job, which smaller cities cannot fully staff.

Bergin also asked about liabilities, including the pension fund and leased vehicles. Mr. Brown said the largest liability is the unfunded public pension, which is required by accounting standards to be shown in the statements but is unlikely to ever require full payment beyond regular contributions. He noted that leases must be capitalized on the statements, which can make financials appear more encumbered, but this is standard practice and not unusual. He emphasized that actual cash payments are made as due, and these accounting entries do not reflect additional immediate obligations.

Dennis Brown concluded by noting that Bellevue's financial statements are relatively complex. He encouraged Council and the Mayor to contact him directly with any questions about terminology or specific items in the statements. He emphasized that these questions can be addressed one-on-one, outside of public meetings, and that his contact information is provided on page one of the audit report.

Motion: (00:37:11 in Video) **Council President Shay** moved to accept the City of Bellevue Fiscal Year end 2025 Audited Statements. **Council Member Obenauf** seconded. Council Members Voting Aye: Council Member Obenauf, Council Member Bergin, Council Member Shay, Council Member Ard, Council Member Davis. Council Members Voting No: Council Member Wrede. **The Motion Passed.**

b. Treasurer's Report for October and November FY26 and year-end report for fiscal year 2025: Shelly Shoemaker, Treasurer

Treasurer Shelly Shoemaker presented a post-audit overview of the City's Fiscal Year 2025 finances, summarizing cash balances, revenues, and expenditures. As of September 30, 2025, the City's total cash position was approximately $3.4 million, reflecting a 13% increase over the prior year. She explained that funds are being strategically placed in LGIP accounts to earn interest, currently around 4 percent, while still maintaining sufficient liquidity for operations.

She explained that in the General Fund, both revenues and expenditures came in slightly under budget. Revenues were approximately $148,000 below projections, and expenditures were about $117,860 under budget. Consistent with the audit report, the City used roughly $30,000 in carryover reserves.

She noted that 63 percent of General Fund revenues come from property tax and state-shared revenues, with property tax accounting for 37 percent and state sales tax for about 12.5 percent. Highway revenues have declined year after year. Local Option Tax revenue remains relatively small at 2.78 percent of total revenue, and she emphasized the importance of increasing that revenue source. Franchise fees have remained mostly flat, and development impact fees fluctuate depending on growth activity.

Ms. Shoemaker further explained the total expenditures for the year were below the adopted budget, with approximately $3.9 million spent compared to $4.46 million budgeted, excluding grants. Personnel costs represent 36 percent of total expenditures. Most departments were under budget, though the Marshal's Office exceeded projections due to overtime and staffing needs. Overall, the General Fund ended the year under budget.

Ms. Shoemaker then reported that the first two months of Fiscal Year 2026 appear to be on track, with no immediate financial concerns, and she introduced simplified summary sheets to make the reports easier to review, inviting Council feedback.

Council Member Bergin asked whether there had been any indication from the State about potential budget cutbacks due to the State running in the red, and how that might impact cities.
Ms. Shoemaker responded that she has not yet heard anything specific but expressed concern about possible effects. She stated that more information may be available in a few months and noted that organizations such as the Association of Idaho Cities and the Resort Cities Coalition would likely communicate any updates to member cities as soon as information becomes available.

8. PUBLIC HEARING: ACTION ITEM (00:56:34 in video)

a. Fee schedule update and consideration to adopt Resolution No. 26-02 Amending the fee schedule for The City of Bellevue: Department Heads | **ACTION ITEM**

Mayor Giordani introduced the agenda item regarding the fee schedule update and Resolution No. 26-02. She explained that the update was a collaborative effort among department heads and the City Clerk, who assessed current fees to determine if increases were needed. She noted that there has not been a comprehensive fee adjustment since 2019 and that neighboring cities review fees annually, which Bellevue now plans to do as well. She described the proposal as a substantial update, invited Council questions, and reminded everyone that this was a public hearing where public comment would be taken.

The City Clerk confirmed that notice for this Public Hearing was published in the Idaho Mountain Express on December 31, 2025 and January 7, 2026. The hearing notice was also posted on the bulletin board at City Hall and at the Post Office. The proposed fee schedule was posted on the website and kept at City Hall for any member of the public to view.

Council Member Obenauf inquired about the City's impact fee structure, specifically noting the absence of a separate category for multi-family or mixed commercial/multi-family residential projects. She also questioned why there is no increase in impact fees for larger residential units, asking how the City arrived at a 0% change and whether other jurisdictions incentivize smaller units by structuring fees to increase with unit size. She further asked whether impact fee studies could be completed in-house rather than by a consultant.

Community Development Director Brian Parker responded that the current fee schedule update does not include changes to impact fees because the impact fee process is comprehensive and typically requires hiring an outside consultant to evaluate costs per household and commercial use, align findings with the City's Capital Improvement Plan, and follow the committee and reporting requirements established by ordinance and state code. He noted that most cities in Idaho use consultants for this process and he is not aware of any that conduct it in-house. He added that multi-family housing was not included as a separate category in the City's last impact fee update and that, under the current structure, residential impact fees are assessed per unit.

Council Member Bergin expressed concern regarding the magnitude of the proposed Community Development fee increases, noting they appeared substantial and gave him pause. He requested additional explanation and context for how the fees were developed, particularly for those not previously involved in the process. He acknowledged the helpfulness of the supporting charts but questioned whether all associated departmental costs should be fully recouped through fees, and what potential impacts such increases might have.

He also asked for clarification regarding the difference between an annual business license fee and a business license amendment fee, specifically how amendments would apply to customers - such as changes in business leadership, address, or operations- and whether such changes would trigger additional charges.

In response, the City Clerk explained that amendments generally apply to substantial changes, such as a significant change in the nature of the business or circumstances requiring reevaluation, such as additional inspections. A change of location would typically require a new license rather than an amendment. Rick Allington, Legal Counsel further noted that, pursuant to Idaho Code Section 63-1311, fees must be reasonably related to and not exceed the actual cost of the services rendered. Fees are service-specific and are intended to recover costs such as staff time, inspections, and associated expenses, rather than generate revenue. It was confirmed that department heads calculated the proposed fees by evaluating staff time, supplies, and other necessary resources to determine the amounts included in the updated fee schedule

Council Member Bergin asked for clarification regarding the "wastewater bond fee for non-users," specifically whether it applied to properties within city limits that are not connected to sewer services. Public Works Director Chris Johnson explained that the bond fee is assessed on all lots within the City to pay for the sewer system infrastructure, including vacant or undeveloped properties with stub-outs available for future connection. Properties that are not actively using sewer services pay only the bond portion, while developed properties connected to the system pay the monthly sewer service fee (approximately $72).

Council Member Bergin also questioned the $20 late fee for utility bills, expressing concern that it seemed high compared to other utilities and asking whether it was intended as a deterrent due to past collection issues. Mr. Johnson responded that there is a grace period before late fees are assessed and acknowledged that the City has historically been lenient in collections. He further described the current notice process, including late notices and shutoff notices, and noted that most delinquencies are resolved before shutoff. It was reported that monthly late notices typically range from 20–40 accounts, with 10–25 shutoff notices at the higher end, often involving repeat offenders. Mayor Giordani emphasized efforts to work with residents experiencing financial hardship, including payment arrangements, seasonal discretion regarding shutoffs, and assistance programs such as circuit breaker-related rate relief.

Council President Shay raised concerns about substantial increases to certain application fees, including appeals, variances, and vacations. She referenced a past appeal that was administratively burdensome and costly, and asked whether publication, mailing, and related notice costs were included in the proposed fees. Mr. Parker explained that the methodology includes an overhead component to account for administrative costs (facility space, software, printing, and staff time), while third-party costs such as newspaper publication and certified mailings are invoiced separately and passed directly to applicants.

Council President Shay emphasized the importance of ensuring fees remain fair and not prohibitively expensive, particularly for applicants seeking to file appeals. Mr. Parker reiterated that the proposed fees are intended strictly for cost recovery, not profit generation, and were calculated based on estimated staff time, overhead, and processing requirements. He explained council retains discretion to adjust fees if desired, with the understanding that any shortfall would be absorbed by the City's general resources.

Council Member Obenauf expressed concerns about staff workload, rising operational costs, and ensuring that applicants pay an appropriate share of actual service costs, particularly given limited development opportunities and growth pressures in the Wood River Valley.

Council Member Obenauf asked why fees for use of O'Donnell Park had not been increased, noting that landscaping costs for the park alone were approximately $11,000 the previous year. She observed that other park fees reflected percentage increases while O'Donnell Park showed a 0% increase, and questioned whether fees were keeping pace with the cost to maintain the sports fields and related facilities.

Staff responded that several events had been held at the park the prior year, some of which requested fee waivers. It was acknowledged that adjustments had been made to other park fees, including adding weekly and daily rates where none previously existed. The City Clerk indicated the O'Donnell Park fee may need to be reevaluated and agreed to review whether an update had been inadvertently missed. Additional discussion addressed prior Parks Committee recommendations. It was noted that research had previously been conducted comparing Bellevue's park fees to those of nearby jurisdictions, and that recommendations were forwarded during earlier discussions. Some suggested charges—such as fees for additional portable restrooms—were intended to be passed directly to event organizers rather than built into the general park fee schedule. The discussion concluded with agreement to revisit the O'Donnell Park fees and confirm whether further adjustments are warranted to ensure maintenance costs are appropriately supported.

Council President Shay asked whether any statutory changes had occurred at the state level that would make processes like variances or right-of-way vacations more cumbersome. Community Development Director Brian Parker confirmed that, to his knowledge, state requirements have not changed; however, there have been some recent adjustments at the city level.

Council Member Bergin asked about comparative costs, noting that understanding how Bellevue's fees compare to other jurisdictions—such as South Central Idaho, Sandpoint, McCall, or Coeur d'Alene—would be helpful. Mr. Parker explained that while a direct comparison to Valley jurisdictions had not been done, staff had used contract planning analysis from Great West to estimate staff hours for development applications, which drives cost. Consultant fees, when applicable, are billed directly to the applicant in addition to staff time.

Mayor Giordani opened public comment at (01:27:02 in video)

David Spencer, Safe Built:

David Spencer addressed the council regarding the proposed contract building fees listed on page 192 of the fee schedule. He noted that Ordinance 2006-17 and Ordinance 2021-09 set certain fees at identical amounts, but in the current proposal, those same fees appear to be reduced. He requested clarification from the council and staff on the reason for the apparent reduction.

With no further comments, Mayor Giordani Closed public comment at (01:28:47 in video).

Mayor Christina Giordani noted the council's expressed need for more documentation and discussion regarding the proposed fee schedule. She highlighted that several fees had been specifically called out for possible adjustment, either up or down. She recommended continuing the public hearing to a later date to allow further review and discussion. It was confirmed with legal counsel that if any changes are made that raised fees beyond what was originally noticed, a re-noticing process would be required—particularly if adjustments exceed 5%. The council agreed to continue the hearing to the next City Council meeting on January 26, giving staff and council members time to gather additional information.

Mr. Allington asked about the annexation fee, and Mr. Parker clarified that the current fee covers only initial application processing, with additional costs billed separately throughout the annexation process.

Motion: (01:32:00 in Video) **Council President Shay** moved to continue the public hearing on the new proposed fee schedule to a date certain of January 26, 2026. **Council Member Obenauf** seconded. Council Members Voting Aye: Council Member Obenauf, Council Member Bergin, Council President Shay, Council Member Ard, Council Member Wrede. Council Members Voting No: none. **The Motion Passed.**

9. **NEW BUSINESS**
   a. SAFEbuilt Services Proposal and Consideration of Resolution No. 26-03 to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with SAFEbuilt, LLC for On-Call Building Official Services: Rochelle Lewis, David Spencer, and Alan Chambers, SAFEbuilt and Brian Parker, Community Development Director **ACTION ITEM**

Mayor Christina Giordani introduced a proposal for the City of Bellevue to enter into a professional services agreement with SafeBuilt LLC for on-call building official services, as outlined in Resolution 26-03. She noted that feedback from the recent building season indicated community dissatisfaction with the City's current building official services, making the proposal particularly timely.

David Spencer, Director of Operations for SafeBuilt, introduced the team and outlined the company's client-focused approach. He explained that services are provided on an as-needed, on-call basis, with a minimum hourly rate for inspections and plan review. Minor inspections like re-roofs or mechanical permits are generally completed within the hour, while larger projects, such as framing inspections for large homes, may take longer. Spencer highlighted the use of Remote Video Inspections (RVI) for smaller or cost-effective projects, emphasizing that safety criteria must be met. Plan review services are structured around three rounds—initial review plus two cycles for corrections—with the plan review fee calculated as a percentage of the city's established fee schedule. Additional services, such as meetings or work not tied to a permit, are billed at an hourly rate, and structural reviews would involve specialized engineers as needed. Spencer emphasized that SafeBuilt's pricing is designed to be transparent, practical, and fair for both the city and contractors.

Rochelle Lewis, Business Development Representative, provided an overview of SafeBuilt's 33-year history and its operations across Idaho, serving more than 1,300 municipalities. She explained that SafeBuilt supports rural and isolated communities, highlighting previous work in Ketchum and Carey. Lewis described the company's software, CommunityCore, which organizes plan reviews, inspections, and RVI services, and can be optionally utilized by the city to streamline operations. She emphasized that SafeBuilt can begin services immediately upon contract execution and will provide a smooth transition from current providers while fostering strong relationships with local contractors.

Alan Chambers, a building official with SafeBuilt, described daily operations in the Wood River Valley, including full-service plan review, inspections, and close engagement with builders. He highlighted the accessibility of SafeBuilt staff, with direct phone and email contact, and stressed the importance of building strong community relationships to reduce frustration and improve the overall experience for contractors.

Mr. Spencer concluded by emphasizing SafeBuilt's commitment to partnership with the city, noting that all staff have long-standing experience in municipal government and understand the importance of being an integrated, reliable partner in community development services. The team then invited council questions, reinforcing their readiness to provide both technical expertise and collaborative support.

Brian Parker clarified that SafeBuilt would integrate with the city's public-facing permit system, Civic Review, without creating parallel processes. Council members asked questions about the recommendation and operational performance. Parker recommended moving forward with SafeBuilt, emphasizing the consistency and reliability of their services compared to the current contractor. Council members noted that both companies considered were adequate, but past dissatisfaction with plan review and customer service made SafeBuilt the preferred choice, particularly because efficiency in plan review had been a significant pain point for the community. Concerns about state revenue and staffing shortages were raised, highlighting the need for improved service.

Alan Chambers explained that inspection requests would typically have a 4 p.m. cutoff for next-day service, offering AM or PM options and direct communication with builders to maintain accessibility and consistency. David Spencer added that plan review tracking and reporting would be improved through SafeBuilt's system, including metrics on rounds of review, timelines, and workflow visibility. He emphasized that SafeBuilt could meet the community's expectations where previous services fell short. Mr. Spencer confirmed that SafeBuilt has over a year of full-service contracts with Ketchum and around 18 months with Carey, and has experience across the Boise area since 2021.

Motion: (01:55:51 in Video) **Council Member Obenaur** moved to approve resolution No. 26-03 to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with SAFEbuilt, LLC for On-Call Building Official Services. **Council President Shay** seconded. Council Members Voting Aye: Council Member Obenauf, Council Member Bergin, Council President Shay, Council Member Ard, Council Member Wrede. Council Members Voting No: none. **The Motion Passed.**

10. ADJOURNMENT: Action Item

With no further business coming before the Common Council at this time, Council Member Obenauf moved to adjourn the meeting. Council President Shay seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 07:33 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Christina Giordani, Mayor

Attest:

Amy Phelps, City Clerk

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SEAL
BLAINE COUNTY IDAHO