

City of Forks
Council Meeting Minutes Regular Session
City Council Chambers
September 22, 2025 7:30 p.m.

Part I **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND CALL TO ORDER**

0:04 Mayor Fletcher led the Pledge of Allegiance and then called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

1:06 **ROLL CALL**

Council members present: Patel, Wood, Soha, Gingell, Coleman, and Mayor Fletcher. Staff present: Simons, Deputy Clerk, Fleck, Attorney/Planner, Rowley, Police Chief, and Hampton, Public Works Director.

MODIFICATIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1:29 **Motion** to approve the agenda as presented by Soha, second Gingell, motion carried.

FERGUSON APPEAL

1:41 Mayor Fletcher provided a general summary of proceedings to follow and introduced Charlotte Archer, Special Legal Counsel to the City Council.

2:34 Ms. Archer explained quasi-judicial procedures, conflict of interest and appearance of fairness disclosures, and the Council's role in a closed-record appeal of the Planning Commission's decision of July 18, 2025.

5:06 As a matter of public record, Ms. Archer noted that all Council members have had contact with the City Clerk and City staff regarding meeting materials and scheduling. She also stated that all Council members have received public comment pertaining to this matter at previous meetings, noting that public comments are available on the City's website and communications between the City Clerk and City staff have been provided to the Appellant and his representative.

5:48 Ms. Archer explained a series of questions she would be asking the Mayor and City Council to address elements of the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine and how responses to the questions would be handled.

6:30 Ms. Archer began her questions. The Mayor and Council satisfied the elements of the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine.

7:30 Ms. Archer asked the public if anyone present wished to challenge any Council Member's disclosures or participation in the hearing on an appearance of fairness grounds. There were no challenges.

- 8:09 Ms. Archer explained the scope of the hearing and the procedures to be followed pursuant to Forks Municipal Code 17.90.050, RCW 36.70B.050, and WAC 365-196-845 (11) .
- 3:13 Ms. Archer explained the process for preliminary motions associated with this matter.
- 14:35 Ms. Archer asked if there were any preliminary requests from either party.
- 15:48 Vertical Bridge representative Meridee Pabst asked for a dismissal for the untimeliness of the appeal per Forks Municipal Code 17.90.
- 17:32 Mr. Ferguson's representative Sarah Ferguson said their remote location was the reason for the delay.
- 18:11 In her rebuttal, Ms. Pabst said the Appellant was aware his appeal was denied on July 1, leaving sufficient time to file his appeal to the City Council prior to the written decision.
- 18:54 Ms. Pabst asked permission to use a short plat map already in the record to which she had added some details in her presentation.
- 20:24 Ms. Ferguson said the map Ms. Pabst presented is not the current map she and the Appellant received when they purchased their property two years ago.
- 20:50 In her rebuttal, Ms. Pabst said the short-plat map was previously in the record for review and was prepared in 2023, so may differ from what the Fergusons received when they purchased the property.

Closed Session

- 20:23 Council entered into Closed Session for 10 minutes to deliberate Appellant Ferguson's appeal at 7:55 p.m. to end at 8:05 p.m. Only the Mayor, City Council and Deputy Clerk Simons remained in chambers for the deliberation.

Part II

- 1:32 Ms. Archer reconvened the meeting at 8:05 p.m.
- 1:44 Ms. Archer asked Council if they would like to take any motion on the Applicant's request for a dismissal of the action on the basis of timeliness, or take the matter under advisement for later deliberation.
- 2:01 Gingell said they would like to take the matter under advisement for later deliberation. Council agreed.
- 2:13 Ms. Archer asked Council if they would like to take any motion on the Applicant's request for the admission of illustrative exhibits, or take the matter under advisement for later deliberation.

- 2:31 Soha said they would like to take the matter under advisement for later deliberation. Council agreed.
- 2:37 Ms. Archer said this item is challenging to take under advisement as the exhibit is for use in the hearing.
- 2:45 **Motion** to admit the Applicant's illustrative exhibits into the record by Gingell, second Soha, motion carried.
- 3:08 Ms. Archer confirmed there were no additional preliminary matters to be heard from either party.
- 4:22 Sarah Ferguson presented the Appellant's case to the Council, quoting from or referencing Article 1, Section 3 of the Washington State Constitution, RCW 42.36, RCW 36.70C.130, and RCW 7.48.010, and asking Council to 1) overturn the Planning Commission's approval, 2) prohibit misuse of the utility easement, 3) require a new, accurate SEPA review and consider less harmful sites, and 4) correct the conflict of interest in the process.
- 13:10 Ms. Pabst, representing the Applicant Vertical Bridge, presented their response to Appellant Ferguson's statement and case, referencing Forks Municipal Code 17.90 and various property maps to address each of the Appellant's arguments, and asking Council to deny the appeal.
- 22:25 Mayor Fletcher asked the Appellant if they had a rebuttal to the Applicant's statement. Ms. Ferguson declined.

Closed Session

- 23:08 Council entered into Closed Session for 15 minutes to deliberate Appellant Ferguson's appeal at 8:34 p.m. to end at 8:49 p.m. Only Mayor Fletcher, the City Council, and Deputy Clerk Simons remained in chambers for the deliberation.

Part III

- 00:10 Mayor Fletcher reconvened the Regular Meeting at 8:49 p.m.
- 00:32 **Motion** to affirm the Planning Commission's decision of July 18, 2025 by Wood, second Coleman, motion carried 3–0 with Soha and Coleman abstaining.
- 1:23 **Motion** to authorize the Mayor to execute decision documents by Soha, second Patel, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- 2:20 Lissy Andros, Director Forks Chamber of Commerce, thanked the City employees and everyone involved in the FTF Festival for their help with the event, reminded Council that it is now Hickory Shirt/Heritage Days, and reported a slower, but still busy Visitor Information Center.

ACTION ITEMS

- 4:44 **1. Minutes of Regular Meeting held August 25, 2025**
Motion to approve minutes of the Regular Meeting held August 25, 2025 by Wood, second Patel, motion carried.
- 5:09 **2. Minutes of Regular Meeting held September 8, 2025**
Motion to approve minutes of the Regular Meeting held September 8, 2025 by Patel, second Coleman, motion carried 4–0 with Wood abstaining.
- 5:31 **3. Expenditures**
Motion to approve payroll checks 44834 through 44849 in the amount of \$88,810.78, claim checks 44850 through 44889 and EFTs as included in the total amount of \$161,237.63, and manual EFT in the amount of \$18.00 by Wood, second Gingell, motion carried.
- 6:15 **4. Capital Improvement Plan 2026–2031**
A. Public Hearing
- 6:20 Mayor Fletcher opened the public hearing at 8:57 p.m.
- 6:43 Lissy Andros said she would like to see more money directed toward the ICN building.
- 7:59 Mayor Fletcher closed the public hearing at 8:58 p.m.
- 8:10 **B. Resolution No. 529**
- 8:21 **Motion** to approve Resolution No. 529 Capital Facilities Improvement Plan 2026–2031 by Wood, second Coleman, motion carried.
- 8:41 **5. Decker Annexation**
A. Public Hearing
- 8:53 Mayor Fletcher opened the public hearing at 8:59 p.m.
- There were no comments.
- 9:30 Mayor Fletcher closed the public hearing at 9:00 p.m.
- 9:38 **B. Ordinance No. 685**
- 9:41 **Motion** to approve Ordinance No. 685 Decker Annexation by Gingell, second Patel, motion carried.
- 10:00 **6. July 2025 Treasurer’s Report**
- 10:25 **Motion** to approve the July 2025 Treasurer’s Report by Wood, second Coleman, motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

10:47 1. Sewer Rate Study Asset Management Plan

Council reviewed and discussed the City's Asset Management Plan for the wastewater collection and treatment system prepared by the Rural Community Assistance Corporation.

2. Council Member Reports

13:02 **Council Member Wood** reported attending the Clallam Transit Board meeting the previous week, and that a firm has been hired to find a new General Manager for Clallam Transit System. He also said InterLink use on the West End has skyrocketed, and while it isn't enough to require a second vehicle yet, they are keeping an eye on it.

13:41 Mayor Fletcher asked whether a shuttle to the rainforest had been discussed. Wood said it has been discussed, but won't be happening any time soon.

14:30 **Council Member Soha** said the old radio station tower has been removed, and that the Lions Club had more trucks than ever before and more non-members than members helping with firewood delivery with 80 cords of firewood delivered in 2 hrs. and 10 min.

16:09 **Council Member Gingell** said a Clallam Transit shuttle to Rialto Beach is in the works and should be running within a year or so.

3. Staff Reports

18:14 **Police Chief Rowley** suggested people take preemptive measures with their vehicle maintenance in advance of the rain soon to come.

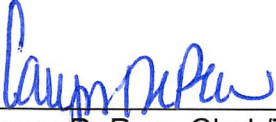
18:59 **Attorney/Planner Fleck** reported that the Opportunity Fund has approved the grant/loan for improvements at the Industrial Park, contingent on a signed list. He also said three seats will be opening up on the Planning Commission, and he thanked his staff for all of their assistance with a variety of matters over the past couple of weeks.

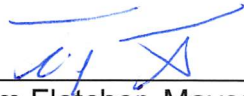
5. Mayor's Report

20:58 Mayor Fletcher thanked Attorney/Planner Fleck and his staff, as well as Charlotte Archer, for their help with the Ferguson appeal.

6. ADJOURNMENT

21:39 **Motion** to adjourn by Soha, second Coleman, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.


Caryn DePew, Clerk/Treasurer


Tim Fletcher, Mayor