

City of Forks
Council Meeting Minutes Regular Session
City Council Chambers
January 26, 2026 7:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND CALL TO ORDER

0:05 Mayor Fletcher led the Pledge of Allegiance and then called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Council members present: Patel, Soha, Pearson, and Mayor Fletcher. Absent: Kimball and Gingell. Staff present: DePew, Clerk/Treasurer, Fleck, Attorney/Planner, and Hampton, Public Works Director. Absent: Rowley, Police Chief.

MODIFICATIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1:05 **Motion** to approve the agenda as presented by Soha, second Patel, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1:22 Armistead Coleman said he is interested in a community watch program for certain parts of town.

1:46 Anna Matsche, owner of Native to Twilight and the Hard Rain Café, offered her thoughts on tourism and funding of the Visitor Information Center and Forever Twilight in Forks Collection.

3:56 Pat Neal, fishing and river rafting guide, spoke on behalf of tourism.

5:02 Gary Peterson spoke on Forks' past and the benefits of the Visitor Information Center and tourism, stating that Forks has become a year-round destination.

9:05 Lissy Andros, Director, Forks Chamber of Commerce says she and local businesses have come up with some ideas to increase tourism in the off-season by requesting lodging tax revenue to hire staff to develop off-season events and ensure their smooth operation. She also presented some rough statistics on tourist spending.

11:11 Twila Noble said the median income in Forks is higher than that of the rest of the county.

12:37 Cynthia Barajas, Executive Director, Quileute Tribal Enterprises spoke on behalf of the Forever Twilight in Forks Festival.

- 13:23 Glenda Peterson Shad spoke about the number of visitors to the Hoh and the Hoh Rain Forest, and said we need to face the fact that we live in the most beautiful place on Earth, and people will come.
- 17:26 Erin Queen, Forks Avenue Real Estate, said the Forever Twilight in Forks Collection and visitors to it have made our town look vibrant and alive, and it has her full support. She also spoke in support of the Forever Twilight in Forks Festival, and said she would like the City to give the Chamber of Commerce more so the restrooms at the Rainforest Arts Center could be open to the public.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Council Meeting Minutes

- 21:31 **Motion** to approve minutes from the January 12, 2025 Regular Meeting by Patel, second Soha, motion carried.

2. Expenditures

- 21:53 **Motion** to approve payroll checks 45311 through 45327 in the amount of \$91,511.90, claim checks 45328 through 45343 in the amount of \$49,151.05, and claim checks 45344 through 45362 and EFTs as included in the total amount of \$455,446.10 by Patel, second Soha, motion carried.

3. Park Master Plan Contract Authorization

- 22:46 Attorney/Planner Fleck explained the process used for the City Park Facilities Master Plan RFP, and asked Council to authorize the City to enter into a contract with Beckwith Consulting Group for a City Park Facilities Master Plan.
- 24:48 **Motion** to authorize the Mayor and staff to enter into a contract with Beckwith Consulting Group for a City Park Facilities Master Plan by Soha, second Patel, motion carried.

4. Geolocation Data License Authorization

- 25:24 Attorney/Planner Fleck reminded Council about the lodging tax application the City submitted for acquiring data on those visiting Forks. He said the request for quotes resulted in just one response, and that he is asking the Council to authorize the City enter into a contract CityData Inc. for a license/access to geolocation data regarding visitors to Forks. Council considered the request.
- 27:38 **Motion** to authorize the City enter into a contract CityData Inc. for a license/access to geolocation data regarding visitors to Forks by Soha, second Patel, motion carried.

5. Resolution No. 532: 2026 Legislative Positions and Objectives

- 28:09 Attorney/Planner Fleck introduced proposed Resolution No. 532.
- 29:06 **Motion** to approve Resolution No. 532, 2026 Legislative Positions and Objectives, by Soha, second Pearson, motion carried.

6. Resolution No. 533: SB5974 Opposition

- 29:23 Mayor Fletcher introduced and read proposed Resolution No. 533 suggested by former Council member, John Hillcar.
- 31:24 **Motion** to approve Resolution No. 533 opposing SB5974 by Soha, second Patel, motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

31:41 1. 4th Quarter 2025 Reports

Council reviewed the Sales & Lodging Tax, Building Permit, Jail Statistics Reports, as well as Visitor Information Center Statistics provided by the VIC.

2. Lodging Tax Bill

- 32:28 Attorney/Planner Fleck introduced a letter from the City to Representative Adam Bernbaum, which was sent last year, asking for greater flexibility for smaller cities with a low median income in the use of lodging tax revenue to address the impacts of tourism. He said Bernbaum was very responsive and immediately got to work on HB270, which was introduced during the 2025-2026 Regular Session. Discussion ensued.

3. RAC Floor Resurface

- 38:19 Attorney/Planner Fleck informed Council that a request for bids on RAC floor resurfacing was issued and that the Mayor awarded the contract to Gold Rock Investments LLC, which had the lowest responsible bid of \$17,980.00. He said work is scheduled to begin in February.

4. Council Member Reports

- 40:04 **Council Member Soha** said he is frustrated about misinformation and misunderstanding regarding City funding of the Visitor Information Center and Chamber of Commerce activities through lodging tax revenue, and invited community members to speak with him about it.
- 42:09 **Council Member Pearson** asked about several aspects of jail statistics presented as part of Discussion Item 1. Police Chief Rowley addressed each of her questions in detail. She then said she was excited about a new park master plan and associated projects tentatively scheduled to start in 2027 or 2028. She also reported having spoken with law enforcement and hospital staff about issues associated with “the burn”.

5. Staff Reports

- 56:41 **Public Works Director Hampton** said his crew is still working on E Street.
- 56:56 **Police Chief Rowley** asked the community to come out and support the high school basketball teams.
- 57:22 **Attorney/Planner Fleck** reported having been a guest speaker at the last Chamber of Commerce meeting, and then added to various aspects of Police

Chief Rowley's answers to questions posed by Pearson. He then said some revisions to the proposed City of Forks 2025–2045 Comprehensive Plan were required based on comments received from various entities, which will result in adoption delays.

1:02:53 Pearson suggested delays in emergency response times to local indigenous communities due to the impact of tourism be emphasized with petitions to Olympia for greater flexibility in small communities' use of lodging tax revenue. Attorney/Planner Fleck said that, as a result of a discussion with the Hoh Tribe, local emergency management entities will be holding a tabletop (simulation) of a multi-casualty accident in western Jefferson County.

1:05:34 Finally, he said staff will have a suggestion for award of the Industrial Park insulation project at the next meeting.

1:06:36 **6. Mayor's Report**

Mayor Fletcher said that diversity has always been a part of our community, and that tourism is part of that diversity that we must accept. He thanked those working toward year-round tourism for their efforts.

7. ADJOURNMENT

1:07:38 **Motion** to adjourn by Soha, second Patel, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.



Caryn DePew, Clerk/Treasurer



Tim Fletcher, Mayor