

COLFAX CITY COUNCIL
January 5, 2026

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Retzer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL:

Golden, McRae, Schaefer, Mackleit, Guenther, Sevedge and Huntwork: Present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was entered by Golden, seconded by Schaefer to approve the minutes from the December 15, 2025 Council meeting. Roll Call: McRae, Schaefer, Mackleit, Guenther, Sevedge and Golden: Yes. Huntwork: Abstained.

GOOD OF THE CITY:

There will be a benefit for Colfax High School Basketball Coach Reece Jenkin Saturday January 10th girls varsity starts at 3:00 p.m. with the boys following at 4:30 p.m. If you were not able to purchase one of the shirts for the fundraising efforts, you are encouraged to wear purple to show your support.

BILLS AND CLAIMS:

A motion was entered by Schaefer, seconded by McRae to approve all bills and claims as presented. Roll Call: All Yes.

CLAIMS	PAYROLL
#11405, 11417-11445 & EFT	#11406-11416 & EFT
\$435,472.01	\$94,494.25

GRAND TOTAL: \$529,966.26

CITIZENS REQUEST:

PUBLIC HEARING:

Ordinance 26- -Vacate Old Orchard:

Retzer opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m. to hear the petition to vacate a portion of Old Orchard.

Building Inspector Shawn McSweeney stated he received the application October 23, 2025. Council approved Resolution 25-22 on December 1, 2025 setting the public hearing for tonight's meeting and council members received the packet last week for review before the meeting tonight.

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Retzer asked for public comment for the proposed street vacation.

Tom Stirling, 813 S Meadow:

Stirling stated on the surface this could make sense but would cause the landowners to lose access to their secondary lots, effectively leaving them landlocked. Stirling who works for SynTier Engineering continues to work through challenges of building a street for the Solbrack's, this proposal could halt those future plans.

Diane Solbrack, 510 W Moller Road:

Solbrack would like to continue the possibility of a road to service the 14 platted lots on their property, this would not be possible if the street was vacated. Old Orchard also allows access to the back side of houses off Ann Street.

Retzer asked for public comment against the proposed street vacation.

Greg Nolan, 806 W Summit:

Nolan spoke about the congested area stating the stretch from Ace Hardware to the top of Orchard is a one-lane road that is currently struggling to service the existing volume of traffic. There are 15 houses from Ace to the mailboxes at the intersection of Cromwell, Cherry and Deanway and 15 houses from the mailboxes to the top of Orchard.

Nolan went on to say there is already a significant shuffle required for vehicles to navigate the area. Additionally, he is concerned regarding the ability of Fire and EMS services to safely and effectively access the area.

Diana Gass Proctor stated there is a path people have used for years to access the back of their property on Ann Street. The platted Old Orchard is not passable and vacating will not impact land owners; they will still have access to the back of their property.

Stirling reiterated that while it is understandable that there is a desire to have the area closed, doing so would give zero access to their back lots. Using Ruble Street as an alternative is not feasible as it is impossible to climb.

With no additional comments Retzer closed the public hearing at 7:15 p.m.

Golden asked if Ruble is impossible or more difficult to climb.

Hammer stated our code allows for an 11% grade and you wouldn't be able to get that on Ruble Street.

Schaefer asked why we wouldn't vacate, the plans presented to council for a street do not meet the necessary requirements for our fire and emergency personnel according to insurance

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guidelines. Schaefer agreed we don't want to take property away or cause landlock but the lots are currently part of the property that isn't landlocked.

Hammer stated with the current property owners adjacent to Old Orchard are unwilling to work with the Solbracks at this time, a new owner may be more open to collaboration if the land changes hands in the future. If vacated now, there will be no possibility for future negotiations.

Huntwork stated we can't go back after vacating, you can't take property away from citizens once it is given to them.

Sevedge stated the proposed road is not beyond feasible. Sevedge noted 10% is not up to the 20-foot requirement. It would not make sense to vacate and say it could never happen.

Golden noted that the city has since consulted with our insurance provider. They would not support or cover a road that is less than 20 feet.

Guenthner stated this could be solved in the future, vacating would shut any possibility down. There is no reason to give up or sell city property to settle a property dispute.

A motion was entered by Mackleit seconded by Huntwork to approve Ordinance 26-01 Vacate Old Orchard. Roll Call: Golden and Schaefer. Yes. Mackleit, Guenthner, Sevedge, Huntwork, Golden and McRae. No. The motion failed.

PRESENTATION/WORK STUDY:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

2026 Committee Assignments:

Finance committee: Mackleit will swap with Guenthner, moving forward Guenthner will now serve as the alternate.

Finance:	Mackleit, Schaefer, McRae.	Alt: Guenthner
Personnel:	Guenthner, Sevedge, Huntwork	Alt. Mackleit
Public Works:	Golden, Schaefer, Sevedge	Alt: McRae
Public Safety:	McRae, Mackleit, Huntwork	Alt: Golden

Mayor Pro Tem: Huntwork

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Police:

Chief Michael Melcher reported there is still one in the background process.

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January 29th will be the next oral boards for new entry level candidates.

Melcher reported recent activity with the department included 5 arrests which included the following: 2 assault, 2 malicious mischief, 1 warrant and 1 theft.

Melcher will give an update on the death investigation on South Palouse River Road in the coming weeks.

Huntwork asked if we promote hiring statewide.

Melcher explained that we use Public Safety Testing for our hiring process, this allows for a broader and more diverse selection of candidates.

Public Works:

Hammer is working out the specifics on the water improvement plan.

DOT is moving forward with the roundabout project this spring.

Sevedge asked about the caution tape in front of the Warwick building and suggested we alert the public of the potential danger of the concrete falling into the flood control.

Hammer stated the city put the cones and tape up as a courtesy. However, the matter is currently at a standstill as neither the State nor is the landowner is taking responsibility for the situation.

Administration:

Kramlich reported it has been business as usual and reminded the council the next meeting will be Tuesday January 20th as Monday is Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

COMMITTEE/BOARD/COMISSION REPORTS:

OTHER BUSINESS:


CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

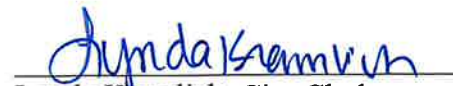
MAYORS REPORT:

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Retzer adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.


Jim Retzer, Mayor


Lynda Kramlich, City Clerk