

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Paul Helenberg called the special meeting of the Castle Rock City Council to order at 6:02 PM.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Helenberg led the Pledge of Allegiance.

b. Roll Call

Councilmembers present: Art Lee, Lee Kessler, and John Whalen.

Staff present: Police Chief Charlie Worley, City Attorney Frank Randolph, Public Works Director Dave Vorse, Public Works Senior Operator Tyler Stone, and Clerk-Treasurer Carie Cuttonaro.

2. WORKSHOP

a. Discuss the 2025 budget, including projects and capital assets.

Discussion for the 2025 budget included several pedestrian safety improvements, sewer repairs, completion of specific sidewalks, construction of Carpenter Rd Pump Station, reservoir cleaning & inspections, continuation of 3-mile raw water line easement planning, replacement of water plant filters, composting yard debris area and availability of future dredge spoil site, possibility of adding new police officer position, construction of an impound storage area, and vision server replacement.

Other discussions included English Ivy growing on trees located on "The Rock". The ivy is overtaking the trees and will eventually kill them. Several maple trees need to come down, as they are becoming danger trees. Councilmember Kessler would like to see the invasive non-native plants removed.

Public Works will clean up the area on the trail that collects a lot of dog waste.

Future of the Castle Rock Library. The library levy (special excess) has failed eight times in a row from 2019 to 2022, with the general election in 2022 resulting in the need of 64 more 'yes' votes, with zero more 'no' votes to pass the supermajority requirement of 60%. Libraries are not in the schools any longer. Instead they have "media centers". Council consensus is to learn how many residents (inside/outside city limits) utilize the library and how many of the residents are only using the library for the computer/internet? If the future is to close the library, there are historical documents would need to be digitized. Historical Society may be able to help.

Cowlitz County granted 1% of the lodging tax equally to the cities. This equates to \$30,000 each.

Mayor Helenberg would like to see \$15,000 of that to go to CRCDA (Castle Rock Community Development Alliance) to pay for the director position at the Visitor Center, which is a paid position through CRCDA. The funds must be spent on tourism, which includes events such as Festival of Lights.

Senior Center will need new siding soon.

Guardrail replacement is paid for by an individual's insurance if there is a police report/known individual. There are several damaged guardrail replacements planned.

"City of Smiles" signs needs to be reviewed again. City Hall sign needs to be included in budget.

Trees located near sidewalks replacement plan? Ideally, slower growing and smaller trees would be best, with roots that go straight down, rather than outward, would help prevent sidewalk damage. The existing trees are large, and their roots are growing outward rather than downward. A tree ordinance could be helpful. AIB (America in Bloom) asks about the existence of a tree ordinance.

3. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Helenberg adjourned the meeting at 7:06 PM.

Mayor Paul Helenberg

Clerk-Treasurer Carie Cuttonaro