

**BLACK DIAMOND CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**Special Meeting of March 8, 2025 - Retreat**  
**Hybrid Meeting Via Zoom and In-Person**  
**Council Chambers, 25510 Lawson Street, Black Diamond, Washington**

**CALL TO ORDER, FLAG SALUTE:**

Mayor Benson called the special meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Councilmembers Deady, Nielsen, Peterson, Mulvihill, Young

**ABSENT:** Councilmembers Jones and Page

Staff present: Rob Reed, IS Manager; Jake Kapsandy, IT Tech II; and Brenda L. Martinez, City Clerk/HR Manager.

Mayor Benson welcomed everyone, and Mayor Pro-Tem Deady provided an overview of the retreat's purpose and the tasks to be accomplished today. The meeting was then handed over to our facilitator, Jim Reid from The Falcon Group.

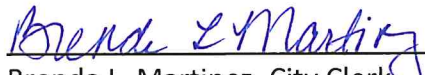
For meeting content and discussion, attached is the meeting summary which is incorporated into the minutes.

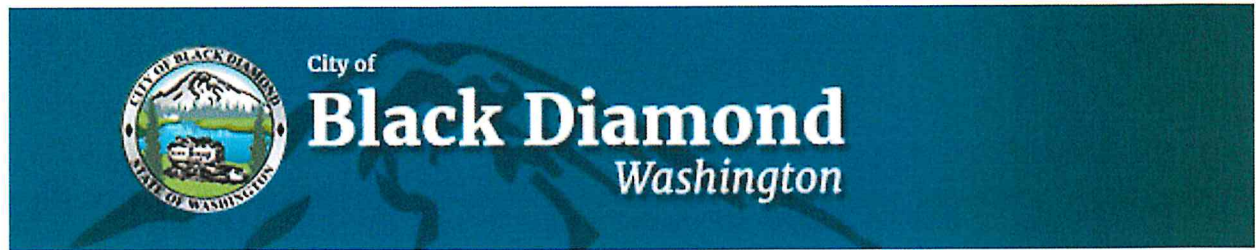
**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting ended at 3:35 p.m.

  
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Carol Benson, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brenda L. Martinez, City Clerk



## CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL RETREAT

**Saturday, March 8, 2025, 8:30 a.m. – 3:35 p.m.**

Black Diamond City Hall  
25510 Lawson St., Black Diamond

# SUMMARY

## OF THE MEETING'S MAJOR DISCUSSIONS AND AGREEMENTS

**ATTENDED:** Mayor Carol Benson; Councilmembers Tamie Deady, Leih Mulvihill, Sara Nielsen, Darcey Peterson, Jesse Young; Brenda Martinez, City Clerk; Jim Reid, The Falconer Group, Facilitator.

### RETREAT BEGAN BY WORKING WITH ANN MACFARLANE ON PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

This meeting was held in the wake of major changes in the Council's membership. Councilmember Darcey Peterson joined the Council late last summer; Councilmembers Sara Nielsen and Jesse Young joined last month. The changes in the Council prompted Mayor Carol Benson, Council President Tamie Deady, and City Clerk Brenda Martinez to suggest that the retreat open with a session on parliamentary procedure. They were interested in having all the elected officials learn how parliamentary procedure can strengthen teamwork, ensure transparency, and produce high quality decisions.

Fortunately for public officials in the Pacific Northwest, one of the leading authorities on parliamentary procedure resides in Shoreline. Ann Macfarlane is a credentialed Professional Registered Parliamentarian and noted author and trainer. Her session, "Jurassic Parliament," includes serious discussion and valuable role play exercises interspersed with humor and playfulness. For two-and-a-quarter hours Ann lectured and answered the Council's questions. Her presentation included 206 slides, and the handouts included a 35-page reproduction of the slides, a role play exercise, the "Eight Steps to Process a Motion," a "Cheat Sheet: Language Tips for Meeting Management," and other brief guidelines. She also recommended books and pamphlets to enhance the Council's understanding of and comfortability with parliamentary procedures.

## COUNCIL'S CONSENSUS AGREEMENTS:

Following Ann's work with them, the Council and Mayor Benson discussed three issues of interest, importance, and urgency to them all: 1) the Council Action Plan; 2) their vision for Black Diamond's future; and 3) communications between the City and the public it serves. Here is a summary of those discussions, highlighting the consensus agreements that emerged.

### COUNCIL AGREES TO REFINE THE STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL ACTION PLAN

Council President Deady initiated the discussion of the Council Action Plan (CAP) by reviewing it and highlighting the changes to the plan since the Council's February 2024 retreat. The discussion that ensued resulted in these consensus agreements:

1. When Councilmembers want to propose a new item for the CAP, they should present it to the appropriate Council committee. A benefit of this procedure is that the staff in attendance at the committee's meeting would also hear the proposal.

If the committee agrees that it should be included in the CAP, the question it will be brought forward to the full Council for consideration. A majority of the Council will be needed to place the item on the plan.

2. The Guiding Principle that each CAP item is intended to advance should be identified on the plan.
3. Once an item is completed, it should be moved to the end of the plan and stated underneath the year in which it was completed. The current plan lists five items that were completed in 2023 under the banner "Completed in 2023." During the discussion of the plan, it was noted that a number of items were completed last year. Therefore, a "Completed in 2024" list should be created and moved toward the end of the plan. This list should be placed ahead of "Completed in 2023" so that the most recently completed items come first. Early next year a new list under "Completed in 2025" should be incorporated into the plan and placed ahead of the list of projects completed in 2024 and 2023.
4. Some items may be completed in one year and yet could be ongoing. This should be noted. For example, an item completed in 2024 could be listed under the headline "Completed in 2024." If it is recurring, or an element will be completed in 2025, it could also be listed as a project for this year.
5. One of the items in the plan for 2024 is "Onboarding packet update for Councilmembers." It was spearheaded by former Councilmember Brad Douglass. It's essentially completed, and City Clerk Brenda Martinez is putting it onto the SharePoint site so that it is accessible to all Councilmembers. It could soon be listed as "Completed in 2025."
6. The CAP should provide the estimated quarter (Q1, Q2, Q3, or Q4) of the year for completion of each item. The existing plan identifies in which quarter projects were completed in 2024. But items for 2025 and 2026 state "Completion in 2025" or "Completion in 2026." For these items there should be an estimated quarter of the year when they will be completed.

Beyond those two years, items may include the note that they are further into the future, have not been started, and a completion date is not known.

An example is item #19 of the CAP, the “Be Kind Campaign.” Under Councilmember Mulvihill’s leadership, the campaign has been launched and activities completed. The list, “Completed in 2024,” could include launching the kindness campaign. Because November of each year is “Kindness Month,” a 2025 item could be adopting a Council proclamation recognizing November 2025 as such. In addition, the City may undertake being designated as a “Kindness City.” That effort could be listed as an item for 2025 or ’26, with an estimated completion date, or if achieving this designation is expected after 2026, it could be listed later in the CAP as “ongoing.”

7. The Council should update the CAP at the end of each quarter. In addition, a system should be put into place to track the meetings at which CAP items were discussed.
8. Although the assignment of a year and quarter when an item will be completed infers prioritization of the items, the CAP should reflect a more strategic or conscious prioritization by the Council. For example, looking ahead to the rest of 2025 and ’26, the Council could review the items to be accomplished between now and the end of 2026, and strategically prioritize them. The stated goals were to ensure that projects get done and the Council is motivated to continue to use the CAP as a guideline or tool.

An idea was suggested and considered by the Council during this discussion: Revive the “Make a Difference Day,” which could take the form of designating a day in which volunteers would participate in a citywide cleanup. Building upon this idea were the suggestions that on a specific day residents could bring to the City items for the dump or could help clean creeks, parks, or roadways. The five Councilmembers at the meeting did not agree that this idea should be included in the plan because of concerns about resources and capacity. But they said a Council champion of the idea could bring it to the appropriate Council committee for further discussion and consideration.

## COUNCIL ARTICULATES A VISION FOR BLACK DIAMOND’S FUTURE

Each Councilmember and Mayor Benson articulated a vision for the future of Black Diamond. There was a lot of overlap; these were the common themes:

- Black Diamond retains its small-town feeling, no matter how much it grows.
- Any sense of “us vs. them” gives way to unity, inclusiveness, common purpose, and pride.
- Black Diamond honors its history and heritage while symbolizing a small town in America in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- Black Diamond is a vibrant community—in the identity of its neighborhoods, in the charm of its downtown, in the robustness of its local businesses, including along Highway 169, and in its walkability, which creates connections throughout town.
- The town is welcoming, active, accessible, and personable. Long-time celebrations, such as Miners’ Day and Labor Day, new cultural events, and parks, trails, and sidewalks are open and accessible to everyone. A new City Hall and the bridge over Covington Creek bring people together and create connections. The employees of the City, particularly police officers and fire fighters, are known to the residents from their participation in civic events.

- Lots of people are actively involved in the community and offer friendship, support, and encouragement to their neighbors. We stand together for what is right.
- Together the residents of Black Diamond navigate change and work for a better future for us all.

*Potential Action step: Does the Council want to refine these ideas into vision and mission statements?*

## COUNCIL DISCUSSION GENERATES IDEAS TO STRENGTHEN PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

After the discussion about the community's future, Mayor Benson provided a verbal update of key projects, and Councilmembers asked questions and offered comments. The discussion produced one *potential action item*:

- Establish a temporary Council committee to address parks and, more specifically, funding for parks from Oakpointe, the developers of Ten Trails.

The conversation then evolved into a discussion about communications. Here are the agreements of the Council:

1. Continue to read all eight Guiding Principles at each Council meeting to call attention to them.
2. Produce an Annual Scorecard that summarizes the key accomplishments during the year under each of the Guiding Principles. It could be published in the City's newsletter and on the website.
3. This coming autumn, the City should hold a Town Hall event during which Mayor Benson delivers the "State of the City" address. It should become an annual event sometime in the fall.
4. As Brenda has been doing, post City news and business matters on social media. When resources allow, consider how to expand the City's platforms and presence.
5. Post the City's Guiding Principles, vision and mission, CAP, and other important information on bulletin boards and "reader boards" across town.
6. Investigate a custom App for Black Diamond that residents, businesses, and other interested parties could download to obtain information exclusively about the City and community.

*A potential action item* that was suggested was to create a communications committee consisting of Brenda, IT employees, and one or two representatives of the Council.

## APPENDIX A

### COUNCIL MEMBERS' INTERESTS IN SERVING THE COMMUNITY

At the very beginning of the retreat, Council members and Mayor Benson answered this question: "What important experience in your life has led you to become an elected official?"

**Darcey Peterson:** My family has always volunteered in the community. My parents were role models in this regard. I want to develop friendships in this community.

**Mayor Benson:** My public service in Black Diamond began when I became involved by testifying against Ten Trails before I was elected to office. I participated in the hearings on the Master Plan Development (MPD) and, subsequently, during Council meetings. Today, as Mayor, I oversee the implementation of the development agreement between the City and Oakpointe. My financial background may have gotten me appointed to the Council. I became the President of the Council, and when the Mayor resigned in December 2014, I stepped up to become Mayor.

**Tamie Deady:** I am a third-generation resident of Black Diamond. I ran for office even though I am not a political person. I love talking to people and doorbelling. My heart and soul are in this community. I want the best for everyone.

**Leih Mulvihill:** I love this city! I have a heart for service and love serving on the City Council. As a child and young person, I moved often and did not feel I belonged to any community or group. I love this community and building consensus.

**Jesse Young:** My dad worked for the State of Minnesota and I visited the State Capitol in St. Paul with him. I would also accompany him to town halls. My family moved to a very small town and from second grade through my senior year in high school, I felt like the new kid. Through the inspiration and support of a high school teacher, I was selected to represent our school at Boys State. I interviewed US Senator Russ Feingold of Wisconsin and a member of the House of Representatives. All this adds up to being in public service. Black Diamond is a great place to raise a family, and I love talking to people.

**Sara Nielsen:** I raised my two children to be politically minded. I arrived in Black Diamond knowing no one. I decided to launch Sarah 2.0, and here I am. I've reached out, made new friends, and I am excited to serve on the Council.