

**City of Laguna Hills
City Council
Special Meeting
Minutes
Wednesday, June 25, 2025**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:02 p.m. by Mayor Sweeney.

Roll Call of City Council Members

Present:

Mayor Joshua Sweeney
Mayor Pro Tempore Don Caskey
Council Member Jared Mathis
Council Member Dave Wheeler

Absent:

Council Member Erica Pezold

Public Comments

There were no public comments on the special meeting items.

City Council Workshop Item(s)

1 Discussion of Governance Best Practices and City Council's Long-Term Vision

Recommendation: That the City Council receive governance and strategic planning training in open session, facilitated by Jacob Green and Associates, Inc. (JGA), to discuss governance best practice and to begin the process of building alignment around the City Council's long-term vision.

The City Council received a presentation from Jacob Green and Associates.

Announcement of Closed Session Item(s)

A. Public Employee Performance Evaluation

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 54957(b)(1)
Public Employee Title: City Manager

B. Public Employment

Government Code Section 54957(b)(1)
Titles: City Manager
Interim City Manager
Acting City Manager

C. Public Employee Appointment and Employment

Government Code Section 54957(b)(1)

Titles: Interim City Manager

Acting City Manager

Adjourn to City Council Conference Room or City Council Chamber

Convene into Closed Session

The City Council convened into closed session to consider the matters listed above.

Reconvene to City Council Chamber

Closed Session Report

The City Council convened into Closed Session this afternoon pursuant to the authorities listed on the Special Meeting Closed Session Agenda.

Closed Session Item “A” – No reportable action taken

Closed Session Item “B” – No reportable action taken

Closed Session Item “C” – The following reportable action was taken by the City Council:

After serving the City of Laguna Hills for three years, City Manager Jarad Hildenbrand recently announced that he will be resigning in order to accept a new City Manager position with the City of Orange. Mr. Hildenbrand submitted his letter of resignation to Mayor Sweeney yesterday, June 24, 2025. His last day with the City of Laguna Hills will be August 8th. His resignation will be effective at the end of the day, Friday, August 8th.

As a result of this afternoon’s Closed Session, the City Council voted (4-0-1 / Council Member Pezold Absent) to appoint Assistant City Manager/Public Works Director/City Engineer Joe Ames as the Acting City Manager, effective 5:01 p.m. on Friday, August 8th, pending the preparation by the City Attorney of an Interim City Manager Employment Contract. It is the intention of the City Council to enter into an Interim City Manager Employment Contract with Mr. Ames, along with an Assistant City Manager Employment Agreement with Mr. Ames, which is to become effective after Mr. Ames completes his Interim City Manager services engagement, which proposed agreements are anticipated to be presented for review, consideration, and approval by the Council at the July 8, 2025, regular City Council meeting. Upon Council approval of a proposed Interim City Manager

Employment Contract with Mr. Ames it is expected that Mr. Ames will then serve as the Interim City Manager effective 5:01 p.m., Friday, August 8, 2025.

Upon completion of his Interim City Manager services engagement, it is anticipated that Mr. Ames will continue to serve as the Assistant City Manager, pursuant to an Assistant City Manager Employment Agreement.

The City Council directed the City Attorney to prepare both an Interim City Manager Employment Agreement and an Assistant City Manager Employment Agreement with Mr. Ames for future City Council consideration and approval at a regular meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the City Council at this session, Mayor Sweeney declared the meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Jennifer Lee, City Clerk

ATTEST:

Joshua Sweeney, Mayor

Approved at meeting of July 8, 2025.