



SPECIAL MEETING OF THE MILPITAS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2025

The City Council of the City of Milpitas convened in a Special Meeting of the Milpitas City Council on October 24, 2025, in the City Council Chamber, 455 E. Calaveras Blvd, Milpitas, CA, and via teleconference/Zoom webinar.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER by Mayor and ROLL CALL by City Clerk

Mayor Montano called the Special City Council meeting to order at 11:34 AM. Roll Call was taken by City Clerk Guzzetta.

PRESENT: Mayor Montano, Vice Mayor Barbadillo, Councilmember Chua, Councilmember Lam,
Councilmember Lien

ABSENT: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Montano led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC FORUM

There were the following public speakers:

1. Rob Means

ANNOUNCEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

Acting City Attorney Creech asked the Mayor and City Councilmembers if they had any personal conflicts of interest. By roll call, there were no conflicts of interest. Acting City Attorney Creech asked the Mayor and City Councilmembers if they had any reportable campaign contributions. By roll call, there were no reportable campaign contributions.

READING OF THE CITY COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

Vice Mayor Barbadillo read the City Council Code of Conduct.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice Mayor Barbadillo asked for clarification on whether the current meeting would be superseded by the censure policy that had been initiated and voiced concern about redundancy between this agendaized meeting and the censure process. Acting City Attorney Creech clarified that the council could pursue multiple actions even with a censure request pending.

Vice Mayor Barbadillo made a motion: to adjourn the meeting to allow the censure process to proceed. Council Member Chua seconded the motion.

Council Member Lien announced she would withdraw her censure initiation to continue with today's agenda. Following Council Member Lien's withdrawal of the censure request, Vice Mayor Barbadillo withdrew his motion to adjourn. Council Member Chua had no objection to the withdrawal.

After discussion, motion: to approve the agenda.

Motion/Second: Councilmember Lien / Mayor Montano

Motion carried by the following:

AYES: Mayor Montano, Vice Mayor Barbadillo, Councilmember Chua, Councilmember Lam,
Councilmember Lien

NOES: None

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Report on Violations of the City's Code of Conduct, Council Handbook, Open Government Ordinance, and Municipal Code (Staff Contact: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager, 408-586-3050)

Interim City Manager Santana introduced the item and presented the report.

Mayor Montano emphasized the importance of adhering to rules and the city council's code of conduct. She expressed reluctance to pursue a censure and committed to addressing the matter constructively.

Councilmember Lam read a prepared statement into the record:

While I believe Councilmember Chua has the best interests of our city at heart, her action did create confusion, disrupt normal channels of communication, and undermined the trust and efficient functioning of our city hall governance structure. This is why I respectfully request that Councilmember Chua offer a public apology to the Interim City Manager, to the city staff who support the council, and to the residents of Milpitas who rely on us for transparent, inclusive, and disciplined leadership.

Rather than simply treating this as a misstep, I believe it offers a meaningful opportunity for growth. We have an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to open communication and use this moment to strengthen our shared expectations regarding meetings, coordination, staff involvement, and decision-making process. I also recommend that all City Councilmembers participate in a policy training course to further enhance our collective knowledge. It is important that everyone has confidence in the City Council's support for our staff and trust that established protocols are being followed, allowing them to perform their work with clarity, consistency, and without unnecessary pressure.

To the staff, I believe there's room for improvement in how this case was handled. We demonstrated to our community that we are open, responsible public servants who hold ourselves accountable when processes breakdown. To move on stronger and more unified, I urge all of us, Council, staff, and community to focus on moving forward from this incident. Holding on to blame will only get in the way of the important work still ahead of us.

I believe Council Member Chua is dedicated to this city and upholding the value of good governance. Her apology would not be a sign of weakness, but rather a demonstration of leadership of integrity, accountability, and respect for the role we each play.

To my fellow councilmembers and to the city staff, let's take a moment, not as a source of division but as a valued reminder of why clear process and mutual respect are essential. And to the community, please know that your local government is paying attention, learning its missteps, and moving forward with a renewed commitment to transparency, collaboration, and public service.

We have a great deal of important work ahead of us and I would like to put this matter behind us. A cooperative and professional working relationship between City Council members and staff is vital

as we move forward. Therefore, I move to remove the evaluation of the interim city manager and acting city attorney from future agendas. Thank you for your attention.

Councilmember Lam made a motion: to remove the evaluations of the interim city manager and acting city attorney from future agendas.

Mayor Montano spoke in support of the motion and her disagreement with how the evaluations were scheduled in the first place, and suggested that Option 2 in the staff report was the best path forward, noting she had requested that approach at the previous meeting.

Vice Mayor Barbadillo said he supported moving forward but defended his earlier insistence on due process, stating that full context should be reviewed before determining that a violation occurred.

Council Member Lien seconded the motion, citing the importance of using time and resources wisely.

Councilmember Chua proposed clarifying the motion so the removal applied only to the evaluations requested at the October 21, 2025 City Council meeting, not indefinitely. The amendment was accepted by Councilmembers Lam and Lien.

Motion: to remove the evaluations of the interim city manager and acting city attorney from future agendas.

Motion/Second: Councilmember Lam / Councilmember Lien

Motion carried by the following:

AYES: Mayor Montano, Councilmember Lam, Councilmember Lien

NOES: Vice Mayor Barbadillo, Councilmember Chua

Interim City Manager Deanna Santana requested clarification to ensure accurate implementation, confirming that the intent of the motion was to remove the evaluations of the Interim City Manager and Acting City Attorney from the October 28 and November 4, 2025 meeting agendas. Councilmember Lien followed up to confirm that this also meant the items would not appear in closed session on November 4.

Mayor Montano transitioned discussion back to the broader topic of the staff report.

Vice Mayor Barbadillo spoke on the report and the documentation provided by staff, noting that he had reviewed the emails released with the agenda packet. He started to address the issue of intent and perception. Interim City Manager Santana responded, noting that the emails and text messages included in the packet documented what occurred.

Councilmember Lam then spoke, expressing appreciation for the Interim City Manager's detailed explanation and stating that the discussion reinforced the importance of clear communication and adherence to process and urged the Council to take this as a "lesson in governance and respect for procedure."

Acting City Attorney Creech summarized the Council's options for further action. He clarified that if the Council wished to adopt Councilmember Lam's statement into the record and direct additional follow-up measures, a new motion would be required to formalize those directives. Councilmember Lam agreed and made a follow-up motion that incorporated the contents of his earlier prepared remarks.

Acting City Attorney Creech restated the motion:

(1) To adopt Councilmember Lam's written statement as part of the official Council record for the item;

- (2) To direct the Interim City Manager to coordinate training for the City Council on governance, ethics, and communication practices;
- (3) To request a public apology from Councilmember Chua to staff, the Council, and the public; and
- (4) To bring forward recommendations for improvements to City policy and procedure based on lessons learned from this incident.

Councilmember Lam confirmed that the restated motion accurately captured his intent. Mayor Montano seconded the motion, noting that she supported additional training and a formal apology to help the Council and community move forward.

Motion/Second: Councilmember Lam / Mayor Montano

Motion carried by the following:

AYES: Mayor Montano, Councilmember Lam

NOES: Councilmember Lien

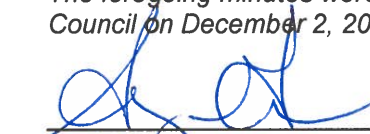
ABSTAIN: Vice Mayor Barbadillo, Councilmember Chua

Following the vote, Mayor Montano thanked staff for their work on the report, acknowledging the difficulty of the discussion, and urged everyone to move forward for the good of the city.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Montano adjourned the meeting at 1:57 PM.

The foregoing minutes were approved by the Milpitas City Council on December 2, 2025.



Suzanne Guzzetta
Milpitas City Clerk