

# River City Briefs

February 13, 2026

The city of Independence, Oregon | 555 S Main St, Independence, OR 97351 | 503 838-1212

Para La Versión En Español

## February: Love Where You Live

February is a month centered around love — and here in Independence, we have plenty of reasons to celebrate.

February 14 is not just Valentine's Day; we also get to celebrate Oregon's birthday. It's a good reminder of the history and pioneering spirit that shaped not only our state, but our own community.

That spirit is especially visible right now in our downtown with the Independence Downtown Association's **Walk of Hearts**. I love reading the messages on my walks through town - some are sweet, some are funny, and some clearly have a story behind them! If you haven't taken a stroll to read them yet, I encourage you to do so.

February is also a great time to show love to our local businesses. Through the **Love Local** program, shoppers can receive a scratch-it card from participating businesses, where every card is a winner and prizes can be used toward your next purchase. The program runs through the end of the month and it's a fun way to support our small businesses and maybe discovering something new along the way.



I hope you'll take time this month to celebrate how special our community is and to share what you love about it. There is a lot to celebrate in our community and I'm grateful I have so many people to share it with!

In service to our community,  
Mayor Kate

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## 60-Second Council - February 10, 2026 Meeting



### City council meeting recap

On Tuesday evening, the council worked through a full agenda covering several business and development items:

- The meeting began with a presentation from The Gate regarding plans to expand.
- Under unfinished business, the council considered an ordinance that would have capped the number of food carts in downtown Independence. The council amended the ordinance to remove the cap while retaining health and safety requirements. A second reading of the amended ordinance is scheduled for March 10.
- The council approved the annual renewal of several business liquor licenses, along with a change of ownership for another business.
- The council adopted a resolution updating the city's fee schedule, including copy costs, notary fees, and planning fees. This item will return for an ordinance to formally enact the updated fees.

- The council awarded the Corvallis Water Line project to Wickwire Contracting LLC, the lowest bidder.
- The council accepted jurisdiction of portions of Hoffman Road from Polk County.
- The council held a public hearing on the annexation and rezone of 46.7 acres east of 13th Street. After closing the hearing, the council approved the first reading, with a second reading scheduled for March 10.
- The council also held a public hearing on proposed changes to fence requirements associated with governmental use. After closing the hearing, the council approved the first reading, with a second reading also scheduled for March 10.

The next planned meeting is a work session on Tuesday, February 24, 2026. For more details, visit the city of Independence website.

[Watch Video Here](#)

## Mayor Kate Invites you to Pub Talks


**Pub Talks**  
Everyone is Welcome

**with Mayor Kate Schwarzler**

<p><b>Event #1</b> Understanding City Revenue: How Independence Is Funded</p> <p><b>THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2026</b> PARALLEL 45 BREWING 6:00-7:00 PM</p>	<p><b>Event #2</b> Understanding City Expenses: Where the Money Goes</p> <p><b>THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026</b> PARALLEL 45 BREWING 6:00-7:00 PM</p>
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**EVENT ADDRESS:** 240 MONMOUTH ST. INDEPENDENCE, OR 97351

*\*Un resumen del evento estará disponible más adelante en inglés y español.*



### Understanding City Revenue: How Independence Is Funded

Before we begin the next city budget cycle, Mayor Kate is inviting residents to better understand how the city of Independence receives funding — and to share thoughtful ideas about future revenue opportunities.

This public meeting will:

- Break down where city dollars come from

- Explain restricted vs. flexible funds
- Clarify common misconceptions
- Invite community ideas for responsible revenue generation

This is not a debate about past decisions — it's an opportunity to build shared understanding and explore creative, community-aligned solutions. Everyone is welcome.

**Event Details:**

Thursday, February 26  
6:00 – 7:00 PM  
Parallel 45 Brewing

**Understanding City Expenses: Where the Money Goes**

In advance of this year's budget process, join Mayor Kate for a public conversation about how the city of Independence allocates its resources.

This session will:

- Explain major spending categories
- Clarify fixed vs. discretionary costs
- Break down what's mandated by law
- Explore thoughtful ideas for efficiency and cost savings

This is a constructive conversation focused on innovation and stewardship — not personnel decisions or criticism of individuals. All are welcome.

**Event Details:**

Thursday, March 26  
6:00 – 7:00 PM  
Parallel 45 Brewing

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**Historic Homes Roadshow: Episode 4 -  
590 Monmouth St**



In this episode of Historic Homes Roadshow, we explore the history behind 590 Monmouth Street, a home shaped by some of the most pivotal moments in Independence's past.

The episode traces the property from early Donation Land Claims and a tight-knit family settlement in the late 1800s to its transformation during World War II, when a severe housing shortage led to the rapid construction of compact, efficient homes to support Camp Adair and the influx of workers and families to the Willamette Valley.

[Watch Video Here](#)

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**Mayor Kate Hosts First Quarterly Town Hall of 2026**



Last month, residents gathered for Mayor Kate's first quarterly Town Hall of the year. The community came together to engage in open conversation, ask questions, and learn more about the work the City Council and city staff have been doing over the past year, along with the exciting initiatives ahead.

The discussion included an in-depth conversation about the city's budget, the city's budget, how Independence arrived at its current financial challenges, and potential solutions being explored by a resident-led task force. The open dialogue reflected the city's commitment to transparency, collaboration, and long-term sustainability.

"I'm very thankful you took the time to answer my questions," one resident shared with Mayor Kate. "It meant a lot to feel heard."

A sincere thank you to Parallel 45 Brewing for generously hosting the Town Hall and providing a welcoming space for meaningful conversation. We appreciate everyone who joined us and look forward to continuing the dialogue at future Town Halls.

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**Senator Ron Wyden Hosts Polk County Town Hall**



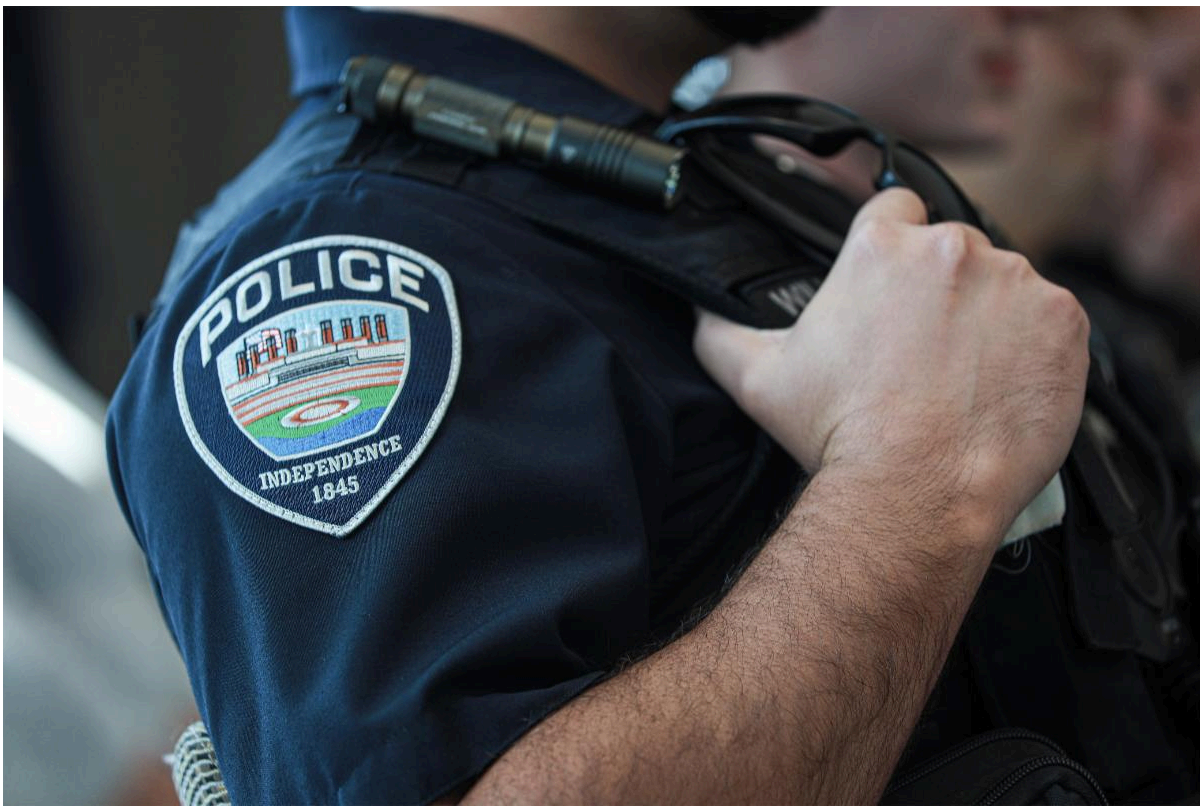
Mayor Kate Schwarzler joined U.S. Senator Ron Wyden at his Polk County Town Hall at Western Oregon University, where she offered opening remarks and had the honor of leading the Pledge of Allegiance to begin the event.

The town hall brought community members together to hear directly from Senator Wyden about federal issues impacting Polk County and communities like Independence. It provided an opportunity for residents to ask questions, share concerns, and better understand how federal decisions affect life at the local level.

We are grateful to our federal partners for inviting us to be part of the conversation and ensuring our community has a seat at the table as these important discussions take place.

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## Independence Police Release Monthly Report



Have you been curious about what our officers have been up to all month? The Independence Police Department is sharing a sample of the calls for service each month to inform and educate community members on the work we do.

In January 2026, officers engaged in 865 activities, including 27 Arrests (Adults and Juveniles), 13 check welfares, 14 domestic disturbances, 5 hit-and-run crashes, 6 emotional health calls, and 74 Suspicious Activity / Person / Vehicle calls.

[Read Full Report Here](#)

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**Love Local Businesses All Month Long**



## THROUGH THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

Visit businesses displaying a Love Local poster, make a purchase of \$5 or more and receive a SCRATCH-IT worth up to \$20 off your next purchase at ANY participating location.



Sponsored by the Independence Downtown Association and The City of Independence



## Celebrate Independence's Community Services



Sign up to become an FOTL member at the event.

Join the Friends of the Library as we celebrate Community Services and Independence's birthday!

**SAT, 28 FEB**



**12:00 PM - 2:00 PM**  
**at the Heritage Museum**  
**281 S 2<sup>nd</sup> Street**

Our city's ability to provide community services - library and museum - past June 2026 is uncertain. Come find out what is going on and how you can help!

**DESSERTS & BEVERAGES PROVIDED**



# STORM WATER

## Master Plan Open House #1

The city of Independence invites community members to attend an open house to learn about the Stormwater Master Plan and share feedback.

This plan will guide how the city manages stormwater, reduces flooding risks, protects local waterways, and plans for future infrastructure improvements.

**Thursday, March 12, 2026 6:00 - 8:00 PM**

at the Independence Civic Center

EVERYONE IS WELCOME



This Newsletter Brought to you by

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# INDEPENDENCE

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*Oregon's Story Begins Here*



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