

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
LUFKIN, TEXAS, HELD ON THE 1ST DAY OF APRIL 2025.**

On the 1st day of April 2025, the City Council of the City of Lufkin, Texas convened in a Regular Meeting in the Council Chambers of City Hall with the following members, thereof to wit:

Mark Hicks
Guessippina Bonner
Robert Shankle
Brent Watkins
Kim Ogden
Jimmy Ford
Adam Lowther
Kevin Gee
Brian W. Bray
Kristi Skillern
Kara Andrepont
David Thomas
Buddy Cross
Belinda Melancon
Christopher Key
Scott Rayburn
Scott Cameron
Tara Hendrix
Albert Duffield
John Smith
Ryan Gulker

Mayor
Councilmember, Ward No. 1
Mayor Pro Tem
Councilmember, Ward No. 3
Councilmember, Ward No. 4
Councilmember, Ward No. 5
Councilmember, Ward No. 6
City Manager
Assistant City Manager
City Attorney
City Secretary
Police Chief
Assistant Police Chief
Finance Director
Engineering Services Director
City Planner
Street Department Superintendent
Tourism & Marketing Director
Utilities Director
Municipal Services Manager
Ellen Trout Zoo Director

being present when the following business was transacted.

INVOCATION – The meeting was opened with prayer by City of Lufkin Police Chief, David Thomas.

PUBLIC COMMENT - Mayor Mark Hicks opened the public comment period at 5:01 p.m. There being no one who wished to speak; Mayor Hicks closed the Public Hearing.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF MARCH 18TH, 2025 - APPROVED.**
2. **RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR A REQUEST FOR FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE I-69 CORRIDOR PROJECT – APPROVED.**

Councilmember Robert Shankle moved to approve all items on the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilmember Jimmy Ford seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

BUSINESS AGENDA

3. **PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROHIBITING THE UNLAWFUL DISCHARGE OF WEAPONS WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS – APPROVED.**

City Manager Kevin Gee stated the Lufkin Police Department had received numerous complaints from citizens regarding the discharge of firearms in neighborhoods. City Manager Gee explained that the City was dedicated to protecting the Second Amendment rights of its citizens but also prioritized the health and safety of the residents. City Manager Gee furthered the Ordinance was focused strictly on the discharge of weapons and provided the Lufkin Police Department with a more specific Ordinance for enforcement around private property. City Manager Gee stated the intent of the Ordinance would be to aid in protecting the public while allowing reasonable exceptions, including protection of oneself and others and on tracts of land greater than ten (10) acres.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended City Council approve on Second Reading an Ordinance prohibiting the unlawful discharge of weapons within the City limits.

Mayor Hicks opened the Public Hearing at 5:03 p.m. There being no one who wished to speak; Mayor Hicks closed the Public Hearing and requested comments from the City Council.

Councilmember Guessippina Bonner moved to approve the Second Reading of the Ordinance as presented. Councilmember Kim Ogden seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

4. PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING TO “COMMERCIAL” ON PROPERTY ADDRESSED AS 1809 ATKINSON DRIVE – APPROVED.

City Manager Kevin Gee stated Staff received a request for a change in zoning from “Residential Large” to “Commercial” for property addressed as 1809 Atkinson Drive with the purpose of the zone change being to allow commercial development for small business rental. City Manager Gee highlighted the location of the property and surrounding uses. City Manager Gee furthered the Future Land Use Plan classification for Atkinson Drive, which was considered a major thoroughfare, was “Neighborhood Commercial” and “Institutional”. City Manager Gee stated the request was unanimously recommended for approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended City Council Conduct a Public Hearing and consider approval on First Reading an Ordinance changing the zoning to “Commercial” on property addressed as 1809 Atkinson Drive.

Mayor Hicks opened the Public Hearing at 5:05 p.m. There being no one who wished to speak; Mayor Hicks closed the Public Hearing and requested comments from the City Council.

Councilmember Jimmy Ford asked if there had been any opposition to the request from the Planning and Zoning Commission. Discussion ensued.

Councilmember Brent Watkins moved to approve the Ordinance as presented. Councilmember Jimmy Ford seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

5. PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING TO “APARTMENT” ON 3.752 ACRES AND THE FUTURE LAND USE PLAN CLASSIFICATION TO “HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL” ON 6.5 ACRES OF PROPERTY ADDRESSED AS 2911 OLD UNION ROAD; CHANGING THE ZONING TO “RESIDENTIAL LARGE” AND THE FUTURE LAND USE PLAN CLASSIFICATION TO “MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL” ON 2.184 ACRES OF PROPERTY ADDRESSED AS 2905 OLD UNION ROAD – POSTPONED.

City Manager Kevin Gee highlighted the location of the property on corresponding maps and stated the zone change request affected both 2905 and 2911 Old Union Road. City Manager Gee furthered 2911 Old Union Road was proposed to change from “Residential Large” to “Apartment” on a portion of the tract and a change to the Future Land Use Plan classification from “Agriculture/Rural” to “High Density Residential” for the entire property. City Manager Gee stated the request also included a zone change from “Apartment” to “Residential Large” and a Future Land Use Plan classification change from “Agricultural” to “Medium Density Residential” for a portion of 2905 Old Union Road. City Manager Gee furthered the purpose of the zone change was to construct a sixty (60) unit multi-family development. City Manager Gee highlighted the location of the property and surrounding uses. City Manager Gee stated the request was unanimously recommended for approval by a five (5) to two (2) vote by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

City Manager Gee noted Staff had received nine (9) letters opposing the request from residents within the 200’ notification area and an additional nineteen (19) letters from residents outside the notification area with thirteen (13) opposed and six (6) in favor of the request.

City Manager Gee explained due to signed opposition of twenty percent (20%) of the required area notification, a “super majority” vote of at least three-fourths of all City Council members was required per Chapter 211.006 of the Texas Local Government Code.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended City Council conduct a Public Hearing and consider approval on First Reading of an Ordinance changing the zoning to “Apartment” on 3.752 acres and the Future Land Use Plan classification to “High Density Residential” on 6.5 acres of property addressed as

2911 Old Union Road; changing the zoning to “Residential Large” and the Future Land Use Plan classification to “Medium Density Residential” on 2.184 acres of property addressed as 2905 Old Union Road.

Mayor Hicks opened the Public Hearing at 5:10 p.m. Speaking in opposition to the item were Ms. Jane Ainsworth, Mr. Jarred White, Ms. Meagan White and Mr. Forrest Griffin. There being no one else who wished to speak; Mayor Hicks closed the Public Hearing and requested comments from the City Council.

Councilmember Kim Ogden recused herself from the discussion and vote. Councilmember Brent Watkins asked if there were any conditions placed on the zone change per the Planning and Zoning Commission such as fencing or green buffers. City Planner Scott Rayburn addressed the question and discussion ensued.

Councilmember Guessippina Bonner moved to postpone the item until May 6th, 2025. Councilmember Robert Shankle seconded the motion, and the motion passed with four (4) affirmative and two (2) negative votes as follows:

Mayor Mark Hicks	Aye
Mayor Pro-Tem Robert Shankle	Aye
Councilmember Guessippina Bonner	Aye
Councilmember Brent Watkins	Nay
Councilmember Jimmy Ford	Nay
Councilmember Adam Lowther	Aye

6. FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ABANDONMENT, VACATION, CLOSURE AND SALE OF AN ALLEY NEAR BLEDSOE STREET – APPROVED.

City Manager Kevin Gee stated Isaac Lowe of KTTK Properties, LLC had requested the acquisition of a City alley near Bledsoe Street with no City utilities in the paved alley. City Manager Gee furthered if approved for sale, the alley would be required to be replatted with the adjoining properties. City Manager Gee stated the alley had been determined appropriate for sale and all steps required by Chapter 272 of the Local Government Code were followed. City Manager Gee furthered the alley would be sold for a total price of \$4,350, which included the appraised value (\$3,700), appraisal cost (\$600) and filing fee (\$50). City Manager Gee stated upon payment; the City would issue a deed without warranty to the buyer.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended City Council consider approval on First Reading of an Ordinance providing for the abandonment, vacation closure and sale of an alley near Bledsoe Street.

Councilmember Guessippina Bonner expressed her concern and asked if the other landowners near the alley had been notified of the proposed sell of a portion of the alley. Discussion ensued.

Councilmember Brent Watkins moved to approve the Ordinance as presented. Councilmember Kim Ogden seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

7. AWARD CONTRACT FOR A POINT-OF-SALE SYSTEM FOR THE ELLEN TROUT ZOO– APPROVED.

City Manager Kevin Gee stated Staff had been looking at changes that would improve customer experience at the Ellen Trout Zoo. City Manger Gee furthered the current Point-of-Sale system for Zoo admissions was outdated, slow and technically no longer supported by the vendor. City Manager Gee stated acquiring new software would enhance the guest experience, decrease wait times, provide analytical data, and offer online sales that patrons expect. City Manager Gee furthered the Friends of Ellen Trout Zoo also operated a Point-of-Sale system separate from the City, which was also experiencing difficulties and if approved, the purchase would allow utilization of the same system, thereby sharing data, while maintaining separate financial accounting. City Manager Gee stated the Friends had proposed paying 50% of the cost for the three (3) year agreement, with the City being responsible for the contract and license agreement. City Manager Gee noted Centaman (the software supplier) would bill each entity separately. City Manager Gee explained that the City would be responsible for \$30,790 the first year which would include equipment, installation, training, licensing and all elements required for startup, \$12,688.20 the second year and \$13,449.49 the third year.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended City Council approve the award of contract as presented.

Jimmy Ford asked to clarify the City would be responsible for the initial service and hardware and the subscriptions would be split between the City and the Friends of Ellen Trout Zoo. Discussion ensued.

Councilmember Jimmy Ford moved to approve the award of contract as presented. Councilmember Kim Ogden seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Mark Hicks recessed the Regular Session at 5:34 p.m.

Mayor Mark Hicks reconvened the Regular Session at 6:03 p.m.

There being no further business, Mayor Mark Hicks adjourned the meeting at 6:05 p.m.




Mark Hicks, Mayor


Kara Andrepoint, City Secretary