

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LUFKIN, TEXAS, HELD ON THE 20TH DAY OF MAY 2025.

On the 20th day of May 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	Mayor
Robert Shankle	Mayor Pro Tem
Angela Hobbs-Spencer	Councilmember, Ward No. 1
Brent Watkins	Councilmember, Ward No. 3
Kim Ogden	Councilmember, Ward No. 4
Jimmy Ford	Councilmember, Ward No. 5
Kevin Gee	City Manager
Brian W. Bray	Assistant City Manager
Kristi Skillern	City Attorney
Kara Andrepont	City Secretary
David Thomas	Police Chief
Buddy Cross	Assistant Police Chief
Jesse Moody	Fire Chief
Belinda Melancon	Finance Director
Christopher Key	Engineering Services Director
Scott Rayburn	City Planner
Calvin Touns	Building Official
Scott Cameron	Street Department Superintendent
Buddy Timme	Parks and Recreation Director
Albert Duffield	Utilities Director
John Smith	Municipal Services Manager
Julie Massey	Library Manager

being present; and

Adam Lowther	Councilmember, Ward No. 6
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being absent when the following business was transacted.

INVOCATION – The meeting was opened with prayer by Mr. Mike Parker.

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.

PRESENTATIONS – Fire Marshal Ozzie Jarman spoke as Fire Chief Jesse Moody presented Jared Sowell with his promotional certification to Battalion Chief, Levi Cole with his promotional certification to Captain and Brock Pollino with his promotional certification to Driver/Operator for the Lufkin Fire Department. Fire Marshal Jarman also recognized other promotions for those that were unable to attend due to training obligations; Brett Due promoted to Captain, Mack Grace promoted to Captain, Colton Crisp promoted to Driver/Operator and Cody Walton promoted to Driver Operator for the Lufkin Fire Department. Fire Marshal Jarman also recognized Jordan Walker as Firefighter of the Year for the Lufkin Fire Department.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF MAY 6TH, 2025 - APPROVED.**
2. **SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2024-2025 OPERATING BUDGET (BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 12) APPROPRIATING THE FUNDING FROM A DONATION TO THE PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT – APPROVED.**
3. **ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDING FOR THE LUFKIN POLICE DEPARTMENT’S 9-1-1 VOICE RECORDER SYSTEM AND FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2024-2025 OPERATING BUDGET (BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 13) APPROPRIATING THE FUNDING – APPROVED.**

4. **RESOLUTION APPROVING SELECTION OF A PLANNING SERVICES FIRM FOR THE HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN GRANT – APPROVED.**
5. **RESOLUTION ADOPTING TAX ABATEMENT GUIDELINES GOVERNING TAX ABATEMENT AGREEMENTS FOR PROPERTIES LOCATED IN THE CITY’S ENTERPRISE, REVITALIZATION AND REINVESTMENT ZONES – APPROVED.**

Councilmember Brent Watkins moved to approve all items as presented. Councilmember Robert Shankle seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

BUSINESS AGENDA

6. **PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING TO “COMMERCIAL” ON PROPERTY ADDRESSED AS 3068 EAST DENMAN AVENUE – APPROVED.**

City Manager Gee stated Staff had received a request for a change in zoning from “Commercial”, “Residential Large”, and “Agriculture” to a single “Commercial” zoning classification for property addressed as 3068 East Denman Avenue. City Manager Gee furthered the purpose of the zone change was to construct a commercial development for the relocation of Ross Motorsports. City Manager Gee highlighted the location of the property and surrounding uses. City Manager Gee stated the Comprehensive Plan designation for the properties was “Commercial” and the Thoroughfare Plan, within the Comprehensive Plan, considered East Denman Avenue a major thoroughfare. City Manager Gee noted Staff recommendation was based on consistency with the zoning and existing uses within the area as well as the existing “Commercial” future land use plan classification. City Manager Gee stated the request had been unanimously recommended for approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended Council conduct a Public Hearing and consider approval on Second Reading of an Ordinance changing the zoning to “Commercial” on property addressed as 3068 East Denman Avenue.

Mayor Hicks opened the Public Hearing at 5:09 p.m. There being no one who wished to speak; Mayor Hicks closed the Public Hearing and requested comments from City Council.

Councilmember Jimmy Ford moved to approve the Ordinance as presented. Councilmember Angela Hobbs-Spencer seconded the Ordinance and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

7. **PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE GRANTING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR A “DRINKING ESTABLISHMENT” FOR PROPERTY ADDRESSED AS 106 EAST LUFKIN AVENUE – DENIED.**

City Manager Gee stated Staff had received a request for a Special Use Permit for a drinking establishment for property addressed as 106 East Lufkin Avenue. City Manager Gee furthered the purpose of the Special Use Permit was for the operation of a private members-only drinking establishment and lounge. City Manager Gee highlighted the location of the property and surrounding uses. City Manager Gee stated the Comprehensive Plan designation for the property was “Mixed Use” and the subject property fell under the Downtown (I) Planning Focus Area. City Manager Gee furthered Staff recommendation was based on consistency with uses Downtown as well as the existing “Mixed Use” future land use classification. City Manager Gee stated the request had been 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 of an Ordinance granting a Special Use Permit for a “Drinking Establishment” for property addressed as 106 East Lufkin Avenue.

Mayor Hicks opened the Public Hearing at 5:10 p.m. There being no one who wished to speak; Mayor Hicks closed the Public Hearing and requested comments from City Council.

Councilmember Brent Watkins asked if the location met the TABC distance requirements from other establishments, if it would be a private lounge and if there had been any negative response to the request.

Mayor Mark Hicks asked if there would be food sold at the location and if private memberships would be required. Councilmember Angela Hobbs-Spencer asked what the criteria would be for the private members. Councilmember Kim Ogden asked if access to the location would be similar to existing establishments in the downtown area. City Planner Scott Rayburn addressed the questions and discussion ensued.

Councilmember Brent Watkins moved to approve the Ordinance granting a Special Use Permit as presented. Mayor Mark Hicks seconded the motion. The motion failed with a vote of four (4) opposed and two (2) in favor. The following votes were recorded:

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| • Mayor Mark Hicks | Yes |
| • Councilmember Robert Shankle | No |
| • Councilmember Angela Hobbs-Spencer | No |
| • Councilmember Brent Watkins | Yes |
| • Councilmember Kim Ogden | No |
| • Councilmember Jimmy Ford | No |

8. **PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING TO “COMMERCIAL” ON PROPERTY ADDRESSED AS 4854, 4912 AND 4944 SOUTHWOOD DRIVE AND CHANGING FUTURE LAND USE MAP DESIGNATION TO “CORRIDOR COMMERCIAL” ON PART OF 4854 SOUTHWOOD DRIVE – APPROVED (ONLY 4944 SOUTHWOOD DRIVE).**

City Manager Gee stated the three (3) lots were currently zoned “Agricultural”, and the request was to change the three (3) lots to "Commercial". City Manager Gee furthered the request included a Future Land Use Plan map change from "Rural Residential" to "Corridor Commercial" for part of 4854 Southwood Drive. City Manager Gee highlighted the location of the three (3) properties and surrounding uses. City Manager Gee stated the purpose of the zone change was for future operation of a retail business. City Manager Gee furthered the Comprehensive Plan designation for the property was "Corridor Commercial", and Staff recommendation was based on consistency with the zoning and existing uses within the area as well as the existing "Corridor Commercial" future land use classification. City Manager Gee stated six (6) letters of opposition were received from within the notification area. City Manager Gee furthered the Planning and Zoning Commission only recommended the change in zoning for 4944 Southwood Drive, but City Council could approve either the Planning and Zoning Commission recommendation or any/all of the request as submitted. City Manager Gee stated a motion to approve any portion, or the entire request would require a "super majority" vote of at least three-fourths (six of seven) of all City Council members due to signed opposition of over twenty percent (20%) within the two-hundred-foot (200') notification area.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended City Council conduct a Public Hearing and consider approval of the Ordinance with the requested change.

Mayor Hicks opened the Public Comment Hearing at 5:17 p.m. Mr. Gerald Crump spoke in favor of only allowing the change in zoning for 4944 Southwood Drive. Mr. Rodney Paulette spoke in opposition to the property being zoned Commercial. Ms. Dianne Paulette spoke in favor of allowing the zone change for 4944 Southwood Drive only. Ms. Stephanie Johnson, the applicant, spoke and provided history of the property and the reason for the zone change request. There being no one else who wished to speak; Mayor Hicks closed the Public Hearing and requested comments from City Council.

Councilmember Jimmy Ford moved to approve the Ordinance for the change in zoning to “Commercial” for 4944 Southwood Drive only. Councilmember Robert Shankle seconded the motion, and the following roll call vote was recorded:

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| • Mayor Mark Hicks | Yes |
| • Councilmember Robert Shankle | Yes |
| • Councilmember Angela Hobbs-Spencer | Yes |
| • Councilmember Brent Watkins | Yes |
| • Councilmember Kim Ogden | Yes |
| • Councilmember Jimmy Ford | Yes |

9. PUBLIC HEARING AND RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2026 JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT AND FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2024-2025 OPERATING BUDGET (BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 15) APPROPRIATING THE FUNDING – APPROVED.

City Manager Gee stated the Lufkin Police Department received notification that funding in the amount of \$45,000 had been approved from the Fiscal Year 2026 Justice Assistance Grant. City Manager Gee furthered the funds would be used to replace the computer forensic workstation and training on the new system. City Manager Gee stated the intent was to ensure the Department was equipped with the latest technology to handle digital evidence efficiently and effectively, further enhancing their ability to combat cybercrime and support ongoing investigations. City Manager Gee furthered acceptance of the funding required a Public Comment period and a Resolution with Budget Amendment No. 15 to appropriate the funding.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended City Council conduct a Public Hearing and consider approval of a Resolution authorizing acceptance of the Fiscal Year 2026 Justice Assistance Grant and First Reading of an Ordinance authorizing an amendment to the 2024-2025 Operating Budget (Budget Amendment No. 15) appropriating the funding.

Mayor Hicks opened the Public Comment Hearing at 5:26 p.m. There being no one who wished to speak; Mayor Hicks closed the Public Hearing and requested comments from City Council.

Councilmember Robert Shankle moved to approve the Resolution and Ordinance as presented. Councilmember Brent Watkins seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

10. SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ABANDONMENT, VACATION, CLOSURE AND SALE OF A 0.087 ACRE PORTION OF ALLEY NEAR WILLIAMS STREET – APPROVED.

Mayor Mark Hicks stated that as the applicant for Items ten (10), eleven (11) and twelve (12) he would be recusing himself from any discussion or vote on the items.

City Manager Gee noted, although the items were similar, they must be heard and voted on separately. City Manager Gee highlighted the location of all three items on corresponding maps. City Manager Gee stated the owner had requested approval to purchase two (2) unused alleys near Williams Street and a portion of right-of-way near Oak Street. City Manager Gee furthered after review Staff had determined there were no City utilities located in the alleys or right-of-way, and no perceived need for the City to retain the properties for future use. City Manager Gee stated all steps required by Chapter 272 of the Texas Local Government Code for notification had been followed and if approved, all three (3) properties would be required to be replatted together. City Manager Gee furthered upon payment for the properties, a deed without warranty would be issued to the purchaser.

City Manager Gee stated Item No. 10 was a request to purchase a 0.087-acre portion of an alley on the west side of Williams Street between Oak Avenue and Persimmon Avenue. City Manager Gee furthered the alley had been appraised at \$4,800 and would be sold for a total price of \$5,300, which included the appraisal fee of \$450 and filing fee of \$50.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended Council approve on Second Reading an Ordinance providing for the abandonment, vacation, closure and sale of a 0.087-acre portion of alley near Williams Street.

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

11. SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ABANDONMENT, VACATION, CLOSURE AND SALE OF A 0.138 ACRE PORTION OF ALLEY NEAR WILLIAMS STREET – APPROVED.

City Manager Gee stated the request was for the purchase of a 0.138-acre portion of alley on the west side of Williams Street between Abney Avenue and Oak Avenue. City Manager Gee furthered the alley had been appraised at \$7,500 and would be sold for the total price of \$8,000, which included the appraisal fee of \$450 and filing fee of \$50.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended Council approve on Second Reading an Ordinance providing for the abandonment, vacation, closure and sale of a 0.138-acre portion of alley near Williams Street.

Councilmember Angela Hobbs-Spencer moved to approve the Ordinance as presented. Councilmember Kim Ogden seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

12. SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ABANDONMENT, VACATION, CLOSURE AND SALE OF A 0.362 ACRE PORTION OF UNIMPROVED RIGHT-OF-WAY ASSOCIATED WITH OAK AVENUE – APPROVED.

City Manager Gee stated the request was for the purchase of a 0.362-acre portion of unimproved right-of-way associated with Oak Avenue. City Manager Gee furthered the right-of-way had been appraised at \$12,000 and would be sold for a total price of \$12,500, which included the appraisal fee of \$450 and filing fee of \$50.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended Council approve the Second Reading of an Ordinance providing for the abandonment, vacation, closure and sale of a 0.362-acre portion of unimproved right-of-way associated with Oak Avenue.

Councilmember Angela Hobbs-Spencer moved to approve the Ordinance as presented. Councilmember Jimmy Ford seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

13. FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2024-2025 OPERATING BUDGET (BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 14) APPROPRIATING THE FUNDING IN VARIOUS FUNDS (MID-YEAR BUDGET AMENDMENT) – APPROVED.

City Manager Gee stated each year Staff analyzed the current budget to determine any additional needs and predicted operation of the funds. City Manager Gee furthered a summary of significant changes was included in City Council's packet.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended Council approve on First Reading an Ordinance authorizing an amendment to the 2024-2025 Operating Budget (Budget Amendment No. 14) appropriating the funding in various funds (Mid-Year Budget Amendment).

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

14. APPOINTMENTS TO CITY OF LUFKIN BOARDS – APPROVED.

City Manager Gee stated there were two (2) City of Lufkin Boards that required appointments of a City Council member.

Councilmember Jimmy Ford moved to appoint Councilmember Angela Hobbs-Spencer to the DETCOG Board. Councilmember Robert Shankle seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

Councilmember Brent Watkins moved to appoint Councilmember Kim Ogden to the Hotel Tax Fund Board. Councilmember Jimmy Ford seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

15. FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT

City Manager Kevin Gee updated City Council on the financial status of the City. City Manager Gee offered to answer any questions. There were none.

There being no further business, Mayor Mark Hicks adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.



Mark Hicks, Mayor

Kara Andreport, City Secretary