

**MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
CITY HALL, 701 WASHINGTON ST.**

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

5:30 p.m.

The governing body met in regular session September 2, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the City Commission Room at City Hall, with the following members being present: Commissioners Jackson, Hutchinson, Lambertz, Hasch, and Wentz.

Absent: None.

Other Officers: Interim City Manager, Glenn Rodden; City Clerk, LaTasha Dawson; Finance Director, Amber Farha; City Attorney, Justin Ferrell.

Visitors: Russell Gagnon, Caleb Lausen, Cheryl Lanoue, Brian Strait, Amanda Strait, Joe Strecker, Caesar Wood, Retta Waite, Tom Cypher. Zoom Attendees: Gina Rasure, Michael Miller. Staff Present: Chris Atkins, Parks & Recreation Director; Jeremy Arnold, Utilities Director; Shane Kisby, Public Works Director; John Christensen, Fire Chief; Adam Sorell, Police Lieutenant.

There being a quorum present, Mayor Hutchinson called the meeting to order.

The invocation was followed by the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Lambertz moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Wentz seconded. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC Hearing:

Public Hearing for 2027 Budget and Exceeding Revenue Neutral Rate

Amber Farha: the City budgeted to maintain the existing mill levy at 48.780 mills, which is above the state revenue-neutral rate but does not represent an increase in the City's mill levy. It was noted that one mill is approximately \$41,301.

During public comment, Joe Strecker, 1312 County West Drive, expressed concern about the impact of increased property valuations on taxpayers, citing a 9.36% increase for the City compared with a 0.3% decrease in the County's mill levy. He discussed his long-term property tax payments and referenced inflation, Social Security increases, the Federal Reserve's inflation target, and the proportion of the county population over age 65.

Ashley Hutchinson: clarified that while the mill levy remains unchanged, increases in assessed property values result in higher property tax amounts owed.

Public Hearing for 234 & 236 W. 6th

Property Owner Remarks – Brian Strait: Mr. Strait discussed Code Enforcement's May 17 warning and subsequent 24-hour tenant notices. He reported communication difficulties with City staff and said he obtained engineering evaluations from Architect One and Kaw Valley Engineering. Kaw Valley's report, received the evening before the meeting, stated that repair was viable with timely remediation of the south-end wall. He offered the report to the City.

City Response and Process: Staff explained that communications had been routed through an attorney representing the property owner. Staff emphasized that the hearing concerned a building determined to be unsafe for occupancy based on an engineer's report and Code Enforcement observations, including reports of bricks and other building components falling. Staff clarified that approval of the proposed resolution would initiate a process and would not result in immediate demolition.

The resolution would require the property owner to obtain either a repair building permit or demolition permit within a 60 day timeframe, with extensions available at the Commission's discretion, and to demonstrate continued progress toward addressing the unsafe conditions.

ACTION AGENDA (*Action Expected*)

Minutes of August 19 Meeting

Commissioner Wentz moved to approve the minutes of August 19, 2026. Commissioner Hasch seconded. Motion carried.

Appropriation Ordinance #16

Commissioner Jackson moved to approve appropriation ordinance #16. Commissioner Wentz seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2026-2239 - Levy Property Tax Rate for Exceeding RNR

There was presented to the City Commission a Resolution to levy a property tax rate exceeding the revenue neutral rate.

Thereupon, on motion of Commissioner Lambertz, seconded by Commissioner Hasch, the Resolution was adopted by the following roll call vote:

Yea: Commissioners Jackson, Hutchinson, Lambertz, Hasch, and Wentz.

Nay: None.

Thereupon, the Mayor declared said Resolution passed and the Resolution was then duly numbered Resolution No. 2026-2239, was signed and approved by the Mayor and attested by the Clerk.

Approval of 2027 Budget

Commissioner Lambertz moved to approve the 2027 budget as presented. Commissioner Wentz seconded. Motion carried.

Resolution 2026-2240 – Condemnation of 234 & 236 W. 6th St.

Approved with an amendment extending the permit deadline from 30 to 60 days to commence repair or removal. Clarifications included that either a repair building permit or demolition permit must be obtained, forward progress must continue, and extensions may be considered.

Thereupon, on motion of Commissioner Lambertz, seconded by Commissioner Wentz, the Resolution was adopted by the following roll call vote:

Yea: Commissioners Jackson, Hutchinson, Lambertz, Hasch, and Wentz.

Nay: None.

Thereupon, the Mayor declared said Resolution passed and the Resolution was then duly numbered Resolution No. 2026-2240, was signed and approved by the Mayor and attested by the Clerk.

Lehan Construction LLC Bid and Professional Services Agreement

A motion to approve the bid from Lehan Construction LLC in the amount of \$41,030.00 and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract and any necessary documents for the 19th Street Valley Gutter and North City Hall Sidewalk Improvements, with payment to be made from available Capital Improvement Fund (CIP) Funds.

Commissioner Jackson moved to approve the professional services agreement with Lehan Construction LLC. Commissioner Hasch seconded. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Manager's Report

None.

Staff Reports

Shane Kisby:

Downtown Trees: Staff reported that 24 trees were planted downtown, with two remaining from the 48-tree grant. Weekly watering is scheduled, and smaller, compact varieties were used; no cherry trees were planted.

Street Work: Curb work is complete to Cloud Street. The Cloud/7th Street intersection will remain closed through next week for valley gutter work. Doster Street between 7th and 8th is being prepared for fabric and base installation. Nearby residents are parking on 7th and 8th during construction.

John Christensen: Staff reported that department personnel completed online and two-day inspector training to improve annual inspection quality during the department's busiest two-month period on record. Remaining items from a prior grant were distributed at Farm Bureau Safety Day. The department is pursuing participation in the University of Kansas Fire and Rescue Institute's "Pathways" program and is seeking to become a regional hands-on training site.

Adam Sorell: Staff reported that the 911 Center received 2,199 calls in August, an increase of 347 from the prior year. Police responded to 698 calls for service, nearly 50 more than the previous year. Approximately 30% of 911 calls are hang-ups requiring callbacks and, when unanswered, officer response. Staff also noted a significant increase in welfare checks. Sergeant Robinson will begin intensive firearms training at the end of September to become a range master and department firearms instructor.

Mayor/Commissioner Comments & Reports

Christy Hasch: Positive feedback on East 7th Street construction quality, especially around the school area.

Lambertz: Appreciation expressed for public patience and for continuous improvement in meeting procedures.

Executive Session:

Non-Elected Personnel

Commissioner Lambertz moved that the City Commission recess into executive session to discuss employment/personnel issues pursuant to the non-elected personnel matter exception, K.S.A. 75-4319 (b)(1) with Interim City Manager, Glenn Rodden and John Deardoff in attendance, and to reconvene in the city commission chamber at 6:30 p.m. Commissioner a Jackson seconded. Motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Commissioners Hutchinson, Jackson, Lambertz, Hasch, and Wentz.

Nay: None.

Time 6:08 p.m.

The commission reconvened at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Hutchinson announced there was no binding action taken.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, at 6:32 p.m. it was moved and seconded to adjourn motion passed unanimously.

(Seal)



/s/ *Aisha Dawson*
City Clerk