



City of Lawton

City Council

Minutes

Lawton City Hall
212 SW 9th Street
Lawton, Oklahoma
73501-3944

Tuesday, April 22, 2025

6:00 PM

Lawton City Hall
Wayne Gilley Auditorium

Meeting Called to Order with Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

"Official action can be taken only on items which appear on the agenda. The Council may adopt, approve, ratify, deny, defer, recommend, or continue any agenda item. The Council may also propose and enact floor amendments to any matter presented before them. When more information is needed to act on an item, the Council may refer the matter to the City Manager or the City Attorney. The Council may also refer items to standing committees of the Council or a board, commission, or authority for additional study. Under certain circumstances, items are deferred to a specific later date or stricken from the agenda entirely."

Meeting called to order by Mayor Pro Tem Randy Warren. The invocation was offered by Reverend Terry Marsh, Carriage Hills Christian Church. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Roll Call

Present:

Councilman- Ward 2 RL Smith
Councilwoman - Ward 3 Linda Chapman
Councilman - Ward 4 George Gill
Councilman - Ward 5 Allan Hampton
Councilman - Ward 6 Bob Weger
Councilwoman - Ward 7 Sherene L Williams
Councilman - Ward 8 Randy Warren

Absent:

Mayor Stanley Booker

Also Present:

John Ratliff, City Manager
Timothy Wilson, Interim City Attorney
COL Derek Baird, Fort Sill Garrison Commander
Donalynn Blazek-Scherler, City Clerk

Presentation

1. Employee Recognition: Taressa Macias, Human Resources

Ratliff recognized Teresa for passing a professional HR certification. He noted the certification's difficulty and commended her dedication and work ethic.

2. True North Award Recipient

Ratliff highlighted Sgt. Dimmit's leadership in community-oriented policing and outreach to unhoused residents, including winter weather welfare checks.

3. Young Achiever Award

Ratliff and COL Baird recognized Tyler (age 12) for completing a half-marathon at Fort Sill; Tyler is a below-knee amputee and will soon receive a running prosthetic.

Proclamation

4. Air Quality Awareness Week, May 5-9, 2025

Mayor Pro Tem Warren proclaimed the week and staff summarized City efforts including signal timing improvements, alert-day operational adjustments, and youth education (coloring campaign with bicycle vouchers).

5. KIDS FIRST: Coloring for a Cleaner Tomorrow Drawing

Kindergarten: Kon Thomas (Cleveland Elementary); First Grade: August McCoy (Whittier Elementary); Second Grade: Isaac Flores (Whittier Elementary); Third Grade: Marty Sheffield (Flower Mound Elementary).

Reports: Mayor/City Council

COL Baird reported on the Bunny Run, Army Emergency Relief campaign (goal \$250,000 through June 14), and a fully-booked Lego Day at the Patriot Club.

Councilmember Hampton promoted Tuesday evening food trucks at the Farmers Market and thanked Open Streets organizers.

Councilmember Gill provided street/bridge updates, including Wolf Creek bridges and 38th Street detour preparation pending a state wastewater permit.

Councilmember Chapman announced the Meadowbrook/Hinds Neighborhood Watch meeting featuring an LPD fraud detective.

Councilmember Smith highlighted the Museum of the Great Plains and Comanche National Museum and noted Aquatic Center progress.

Ratliff reminded residents of the Citywide Trash-Off at McMahon Auditorium on April 26.

Audience Participation

Lawton citizens who have completed a Request to Speak Form and wish to address business not listed on the agenda may step forward at this time.

To ensure compliance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act, the Mayor and Council will receive comments but will NOT engage in direct responses. However, they may refer matters to the appropriate department or individual for further consideration and follow-up action.

To participate, speakers must submit a Request to Speak Form to the City Clerk and reside within the Lawton city limits. Each speaker is allotted 3 minutes, with a maximum of 9 minutes per topic, and Audience Participation is limited to 30 minutes total. All participants are expected to follow the Rules of Decorum as outlined in Council Policy 1-6.

No requests to speak were received.

Consent Agenda

The following items are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted with one motion. Should discussion be desired on an item, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda prior to action and considered separately.

Motion by Linda Chapman, Second by RL Smith, to Approve with the exception of striking items 9, 10, 19. AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

6. Consider awarding a construction contract to Ellsworth Construction OKC, LLC dba A-Tech Paving of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on Project PW2502- Elmer Thomas Park Aquatic Center Parking Lot Paving in the amount of \$501,764.57.

7. Consider approving a request to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Lawton and the Comanche County Board of Commissioners to reimburse the City \$196,900 (\$128,700 for the Lawton Enforcement Mobile Site License and \$68,200 for the Fire/EMS Mobile Site License) by June 1, 2026.

8. Consider approving a contract supplement for WSB Consulting Inc, for the continued service to manage the pavement maintenance program through June of 2025.

9. Consider and approve Amendment No. 1 to the WWTP Phase II Design contract with Garver, LLC, PU2103 in the amount of \$403,063 to design Primary Clarifiers rehabilitation as part of Phase II wastewater treatment plant Phase II upgrades.

This item was stricken.

10. Consider approving Amendment No. 4 in the amount of \$40,311.11 for MA+ Architecture, LLC for Engineering Project EN2004A City Hall Renovation, which compensates MA+ Architecture, LLC for additional services not included in the original contract fee.

This item was stricken.

11. Receive a notification regarding approval of Change Orders No. 5 (\$4,121.28), No. 6 (\$2,152.35) and No. 7 (\$7,421.60) with ODOT on Project EN1208- Gore Boulevard Reconstruction from 67th to 82nd St, the

Department of Transportation of the State of Oklahoma Project Number JO19144(04), State Job Number STP-116B(059) MS.

12. Consider authorizing the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to construct a boat ramp and parking area adjacent to Gondola Lake for the purpose of improving recreational access to Gondola Lake in Medicine Park, Oklahoma.

13. Consider approving the Initial Pricing Recommendation for the New Aquatic Facility Inaugural Season and take appropriate action as deemed necessary.

14. Consider determining the actual costs of the dismantling and removal of dilapidated buildings and other expenses that may be necessary in conjunction with same by approving invoices for demolition of properties as required by State Statue 11-22-112.4 for properties located at 1401 NW Lawton Avenue, 6102 SW Park Avenue, 1813 SW McKinley Avenue, 1401 NW Ozmun Avenue, 1401 SW 8th Street, 2706 NW 19th Street, 1209 SW 23rd Place, 813 SW F Avenue, 108 NW 14th Street, 1406 NW Williams Avenue and 622 SW Highland Avenue

15. Consider approving the Claims List for March 14, 2025, through April 17, 2025.

16. Consider approving appointments to boards and commissions.

LAWTON YOUTH SPORTS TRUST AUTHORITY:

Brian Henry – Trustee Appointment
New Term Expiring: 02/22/2028

Hossein Moini – Trustee Appointment
New Term Expiring: 02/22/2028

Albert Johnson Jr - Trustee Appointment
New Term Expiring: 02/22/2028

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT:

Jesse Cross – Mayoral Appointment

6302 SW Oakmont Blvd
Lawton, OK 73505
New Term Expiring: 5/25/2028

Tony Layton – Mayoral Appointment
15 SW B Avenue
Lawton, OK 73501
New Term Expiring: 5/24/2028

LAKES & LAND COMMISSION:

Kade McClure – Mayoral Appointment
136 NW 36th Street
Lawton, OK 73505
New Term Expiring: 5/24/2028

LIBRARY BOARD:

Patty Neuwirth – Mayoral Appointment
715 NW Heinzwood Circle
Lawton, OK 73505
New Term Expiring: 5/31/2027

Fermin Viruet – Mayoral Appointment
3817 NW Arlington Avenue
Lawton, OK 73505
New Term Expiring: 5/31/2027

Susan Kremmer – Mayoral Appointment
201 NW Mockingbird Rd
Lawton, OK 73507
New Term Expiring: 5/31/2027

RACE RELATIONS COUNCIL COMMITTEE:

RL Smith – Council Nomination
212 SW 9th Street
Lawton, OK 73501
Council Term

17. Consider approving the minutes of the April 8, 2025, April 11, 2025, and April 16, 2025 Council meetings.

Business Items

18. Consider approving a resolution of the City of Lawton (the “City”) establishing and declaring its official intent to reimburse the City’s general fund on behalf of one or more of the public trusts of which the City is the beneficiary for expenditures relating to acquisition, construction, equipping, renovating, and improving of certain capital improvement projects for the benefit of the City, said reimbursement being anticipated to be funded from the proceeds of the bonds issued for the same said acquisition, construction, equipping, renovating and improving of certain capital improvement projects for the benefit of the City; and containing other provisions relating thereto.

Wilson explained this companion item to the Lawton Industrial Development Authority action, enabling reimbursement to the General Fund of \$550,000 previously advanced for Lawton Youth Sports Authority pre-development work.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Linda Chapman, to approve Resolution 25-110. AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

19. Discussion and possible action with respect to a resolution approving and authorizing the Lawton Metropolitan Area Airport Authority to incur indebtedness by the issuance of its Revenue Note Series 2022A (AMT)(the “Note”) and approving an amendment to the Lawton Metropolitan Airport Authority Revenue Note, Series 2022 (ATM) in the amount not to exceed \$9,350,000; waiving competitive bidding for the sale of the Note and approving the sale of said Note to Arvest Bank; and containing other provisions relating thereto.

This item was stricken.

20. Hold a public hearing and consider an ordinance for a change of zoning request from Mark’s Corner, LLC from the C-1, Local Commercial District to C-5, General Commercial District zoning classification for Lot 14, Block 1, Great Plains Addition Part 1, located at 1421 NW Great Plains Blvd, Lawton, OK 73505 and take appropriate action as deemed necessary.

Kameron Good, Planning Department, presented the change of zoning request. Good explained that the rezoning request is being brought forward because there is a liquor store in the strip center that would like to expand. This change requires a rezoning. Good noted that the City Planning Commission recommended approval of the request.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED. No one appeared to speak. PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.

Motion by Linda Chapman, Second by Sherene L Williams, to Approve the ordinance, waive the reading, and read the title only.

City Attorney read the title into the record: ORDINANCE 25-17
AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE EXISTING ZONING CLASSIFICATION FROM THE C-1, LOCAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT TO C-5, GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT ZONING CLASSIFICATION ON THE TRACT OF LAND WHICH IS HEREINAFTER MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN SECTION ONE (1) HEREOF; APPROVING THE SITE PLAN ATTACHED AS EXHIBIT A; AND AUTHORIZING CHANGES TO BE MADE UPON THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS ORDINANCE.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

21. Hold a public hearing and consider a request from the City's Public Works Department to close a portion of the alley located near SW I Avenue between SW 8th Street and SW 9th Street, and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the ordinance and utility easement.

Christine James, Planning Director, explained that the subject alley contained an old, dilapidated bridge that had previously been declared unsafe. The bridge had fallen into significant disrepair and was no longer structurally sound for vehicles or pedestrians. Earlier in the year, the City Council had voted to remove the bridge entirely rather than rebuild it due to cost considerations and limited necessity for traffic access in that area.

James stated that, because the bridge was scheduled for removal, the portion of the right-of-way that connects to it must now be officially closed to prevent future vehicular access and to eliminate potential safety hazards. She clarified that all existing public utilities would remain protected through the establishment of a permanent public utility easement. The closure would have no impact on surrounding property owners' access to their lots.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED.

No one appeared to speak.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.

Motion by Allan Hampton, Second by Sherene L Williams, to Approve the ordinance, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

Interim City Attorney Timothy Wilson read the title into the record: ORDINANCE 25-18
AN ORDINANCE CLOSING A PORTION OF THE 20 FOOT ALLEY BETWEEN BLOCK 40 OF WOODS ADDITION AND BLOCK 8 OF BEAL ADDITION AND RETAINING A PUBLIC UTILITY EASEMENT.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYE: Linda Chapman, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, RL Smith. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

22. Hold a public hearing and consider a request from the City's Public Works Department to close the north approximately 150' of the alley located near NW Denver Avenue and NW 31st Street, just to the east of 3106 NW Denver Avenue for the purpose of constructing a drainage berm, and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the ordinance and utility easement.

Christine James, Planning Director, Christine James, stated that this closure request was part of an effort to mitigate flooding in the area. She explained that over the years, the department had constructed a berm to redirect runoff and protect nearby homes. However, vehicular traffic using the alley had caused deep ruts that compromised the berm's effectiveness. Closing the short northern section of the alley would allow the City to reestablish and maintain the berm without continual damage from through traffic. She noted that utility access would be preserved, and a gate would be installed for maintenance purposes.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED.

Odell Gordon, 3113 Northwest Branch Circle, spoke in opposition to the closure. He stated he had lived in the neighborhood for 35 years and believed the alley could be maintained instead of closed by using leftover gravel or asphalt from other street projects to stabilize the surface.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED.

Chapman and Smith asked for more detail about what exactly was being done with this ordinance.

James explained that the area in question is prone to flooding. The City has installed a berm to protect nearby properties, but the berm is being run over by vehicles driving in the alley. The traffic is causing the berm to break down and create ruts in the alley. The proposed suggestion is to rebuild the berm and then close the alley to traffic to protect the integrity of the berm. She also reiterated that the alley would remain open for utilities.

Gill questioned how staff proposed to close the alley.

Michael Watrous, Public Works Director, explained that a gate with a lock and a sign would be installed. The sign would provide a phone number to call for utility companies to gain access to the alley.

Gill noted that this makes it difficult for citizens to access the alley to mow and suggested reinstalling the berm without closing the alley.

Motion by Gill, Second by Smith, to deny the ordinance.

Warren noted that the intention is not to completely close the alley, but to make it inaccessible to vehicles only. Citizens could still get a mower in the alley.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams. NAY: Randy Warren. Motion Passed.

23. Receive an update from the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Youth and Family Affairs Committee on the Committee's annual written report, which is due to the Council by May 1st of each year, as well as an update on the implementation of the new policies and procedures outlined in City Council Ordinance 24-78.

Weger, Chairman of the Youth and Family Affairs Committee, introduced the item, stating that the annual written report was being presented in accordance with City Code and the committee's bylaws. He noted that the purpose of the report was to keep the Council informed of committee activity, funding decisions, and the implementation of new procedures adopted under Council Policy Ordinance No. 24-78.

Vice Chairman Taron Epps then provided the committee's update. He summarized the improvements made over the past year to strengthen accountability, consistency, and transparency in the funding process. These included revising the committee structure, defining application and review timelines, and implementing a pre-application training requirement to help organizations better align their requests with Council goals.

Mr. Epps reported that seven applications were reviewed during the most recent funding cycle, with two recommended for approval. He stated that although the process is now more rigorous, it ensures better stewardship of public funds and a fair opportunity for all applicants. He encouraged past applicants to participate in training sessions and reapply in the next cycle.

No action was taken on this item.

24. Consider approving an ordinance pertaining to Utilities, amending Section 22-1-4-144, Division 22-1-4, and creating Section 22-1-4-145, both in Article 22-1, Chapter 22, Lawton City Code 2015 by eliminating exemptions and certain price reductions from landfill fees, creating state fee requirements, providing for codification, providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

Michael Watrous, Public Works Director, presented the item and explained that the amendment was recommended by the City's Fee and Rate Committee to address a recurring shortfall between landfill operating revenue and the mandatory state fees remitted to the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ). Watrous stated that under current practice, certain entities and activities were granted reduced or no-cost dumping privileges, which had led to a funding deficit. He noted that the proposed ordinance would eliminate all exemptions and price reductions to ensure that every user, including City departments and contractors, pays the full landfill rate, including the \$1.25 per ton state fee.

Watrous detailed that in the first two quarters of the fiscal year, the landfill had

undercollected approximately \$110,000 in state fees (\$49,916 in the first quarter and \$60,857 in the second) creating an unsustainable gap. He emphasized that the purpose of this ordinance was not to increase rates but to ensure full compliance with state requirements and maintain financial solvency for landfill operations.

Councilmember Gill reiterated the importance of accountability in landfill operations, stating that “our budget’s pretty short and we’re not even paying the state.” He emphasized that the landfill had experienced a \$178,000 deficit last year and that without this corrective measure, the shortfall would continue to grow. Gill noted that many users—including City crews and contracted projects—had been allowed to dump at no cost, which complicated financial oversight. He stated that under this new system, all users will buy permits and pay for their loads up front, allowing the City to track and reconcile landfill expenses more accurately. “This isn’t about making more money,” Gill said, “it’s about keeping accountability and making sure the City pays its obligations to the state.”

Councilmember Hampton asked for clarification on how the new fee structure would affect citizens who bring household debris or refuse to the landfill. He inquired what the actual charge would be for an average resident who hauls in their own load.

Watrous responded that the state fee is \$1.25 per ton, and that cost would be prorated based on the weight of the material deposited. He explained, “If someone brings in half a ton, that would be roughly sixty-three cents. There’s a small incremental cost now that citizens would have to pay, but it’s minimal.” He clarified that this fee is collected at the landfill scale house and applies only to material disposed of directly at the landfill, not through curbside or bulk pickup programs.

Warren expressed support for the ordinance, noting that it promotes fairness, transparency, and financial sustainability within landfill operations.

Motion by Linda Chapman, Second by George Gill, to Approve the ordinance, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

Interim City Attorney Timothy Wilson read the title into the record: ORDINANCE 25-19 AN ORDINANCE PERTAINING TO UTILITIES, AMENDING SECTION 22-1-4-144, DIVISION 22-1-4, AND CREATING SECTION 22-1-4-145, BOTH IN ARTICLE 22-1, CHAPTER 22, LAWTON CITY CODE 2015 BY ELIMINATING EXEMPTIONS AND CERTAIN PRICE REDUCTIONS FROM LANDFILL FEES AND CREATING STATE FEE REQUIREMENTS, PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

.

25. Consider approving a Resolution amending Article A-22-1, Chapter A-22, Appendix A, Schedule of Fees and Charges, Lawton City Code, 2015, pertaining to Utilities, by including state fee requirements into the schedule and eliminating exemptions and certain price reductions from landfill fees.

Michael Watrous, Public Works Director, explained this is a companion item aligning the fee schedule with the ordinance in Item 24.

Motion by Bob Weger, Second by Linda Chapman, to approve Resolution 25-111. AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

26. Consider approving an Ordinance pertaining to Business by creating Section 7-36-1-3601 through 7-36-1-3606, Division 7-36-1, Article 7-36, Chapter 7, Lawton City Code 2015, by creating the requirement for commercial pet establishments to obtain an annual license to operate within the City of Lawton, creating what needs to be submitted as part of the application, creating the standards for this establishment, providing for severability, providing for codification, and establishing an effective date.

Charlotte Brown, Community Services, presented the item and explained that the proposed ordinance would establish an annual licensing requirement for all commercial pet establishments operating within the City of Lawton. She stated that the purpose was to ensure the humane treatment of animals and create consistent health and safety standards across facilities such as pet stores, kennels, grooming businesses, and mobile groomers.

Brown explained that applicants would be required to submit a business license, proof of zoning compliance, and a valid State Sales Tax Permit. Each establishment would undergo an annual inspection by City staff to verify compliance with sanitation, ventilation, and animal care standards. She noted that the ordinance had been developed collaboratively with Animal Welfare and the City Attorney's Office to ensure consistency with existing municipal codes.

Smith asked if the fee would increase for previously established businesses.

Brown stated this is a brand-new license, so it would be a new fee for everyone. The fee is included in the resolution in the next item.

Gill asked if the fee had gone to the Council Fee Committee.

Brown stated she will get it on the next Fee Committee Agenda.

Motion by Sherene L Williams, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve the ordinance, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

Interim City Attorney Timothy Wilson read the title into the record: ORDINANCE 25-20 AN ORDINANCE PERTAINING TO BUSINESS BY CREATING SECTIONS 7-36-1-3601, 7-36-1-3602, 7-36-1-3603, 7-36-1-3604, 7-36-1-3605 AND 7-36-1-3606; DIVISION 7-36-1, ARTICLE 7-36; CHAPTER 7, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015; BY CREATING THE REQUIREMENT FOR COMMERCIAL ANIMAL ESTABLISHMENTS TO OBTAIN AN ANNUAL LICENSE TO OPERATE WITHIN THE CITY OF LAWTON, CREATING WHAT NEEDS TO BE SUBMITTED AS PART OF THE APPLICATION, CREATING THE STANDARDS FOR THIS ESTABLISHMENT, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION, AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

27. Consider approving a Resolution amending appendix A, Schedule of Fees and Charges, Lawton City Code, 2015, pertaining to Chapter 7, Business by creating Article A-36 and establishing an effective date.

Charlotte Brown, Community Enrichment, presented the companion resolution to the commercial pet establishment ordinance approved under Item 26. She explained that while the ordinance establishes the requirement for annual licensing, this resolution formally sets the corresponding fees in the City's Schedule of Fees and Charges (Appendix A). The proposed fees include a \$100 initial license, a \$75 annual renewal, and a \$50 annual Fire Marshal inspection fee.

Ms. Brown stated that these amounts were developed through consultation with the Lawton Animal Welfare Division and the Fire Marshal's Office to ensure that the fees reflect the actual cost of inspection and administrative processing. She emphasized that the fees are intended to cover only the City's cost of providing oversight—not to generate additional revenue. She added that the effective date of the resolution would coincide with the implementation of the ordinance, allowing existing businesses 30 days to obtain their license before enforcement begins.

Smith asked whether the inspection fee would apply to both brick-and-mortar and mobile pet grooming businesses. Ms. Brown confirmed that it would, explaining that each operation type presents unique safety considerations, such as ventilation and fire suppression requirements, which warrant a standardized inspection fee.

Motion by Sherene L Williams, Second by Bob Weger, to approve Resolution 25-112. AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

City Manager John Ratliff expressed his appreciation for the interdepartmental collaboration between Community Services, Animal Welfare, and the Fire Marshal's Office, noting that "this is a good example of departments working together to solve a problem before it becomes one."

28. Consider approving a resolution amending Appendix A, Schedule of Fees and Charges, Lawton City Code, 2015, as amended, by implementing a six-month moratorium on the requirement that revenues generated from a capital outlay fee on the utility bill be restricted to the purchase or lease purchase of wheeled or track vehicles only, and establishing an effective date.

City Manager John Ratliff introduced the item and explained that the resolution proposes a temporary six-month moratorium on the restriction limiting Capital Outlay Fee revenues—collected through monthly utility bills—to vehicle purchases only. He stated that this temporary action is needed to provide short-term budget flexibility while the City awaits proceeds from the Westwin Capital Improvement Project loan, which have been delayed. Ratliff said, “We’re not changing the purpose of the fee or adding to it; we’re simply allowing ourselves to use it more broadly for a short period of time to keep departments running without disruption.”

Ratliff explained that inflationary pressures, rising operational costs, and deferred reimbursements have created a projected \$1.8 million shortfall in the upcoming fiscal year. The moratorium, he said, would allow the City to redirect the approximately \$8 per month collected per utility customer toward critical operational needs, including vehicle maintenance, fuel, sanitation, and public safety support. He stressed that the measure was not an expansion of spending authority, but a strategic adjustment. “This keeps us operational while we wait for those internal loan proceeds to come through,” Ratliff said. “Every dollar used from the Capital Outlay Fee will be accounted for and reimbursed once the funds are received.”

Williams and Gill emphasized that the resolution would not increase residents’ utility bills but would temporarily allow the City to repurpose existing funds already being collected.

Ratliff confirmed.

Warren stated that at the beginning of the budget process, he had referred to it as “the ugliest budget” he had ever seen, noting that his comment had been misunderstood by some as a sign of financial distress. He clarified that his remark was intended to describe the challenge of balancing departmental requests with limited revenue—something that occurs in every budget cycle. Warren commended the City Manager and staff for their hard work in prioritizing needs, trimming requests, and presenting a responsible financial plan. He emphasized that each department had made sacrifices to keep the City operating efficiently and expressed his appreciation, stating that “everyone understands we’re in this together.”

Motion by RL Smith, Second by Sherene L Williams, to approve Resolution 25-113. AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

29. Per the recommendation of the Council Fee Committee, consider approving a

Resolution amending Appendix A, Schedule of Fees and Charges, Lawton City Code, 2015, to include a 12% Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustment to eligible fees in Appendix A of the Lawton City Code, 2015, for inclusion in the FY26 budget, with no increase to utility bill line items, stormwater fees, aquatic center pricing, or state-mandated fees, all of which are exempt from this adjustment and establishing an effective date.

Charlotte Brown, Community Enrichment, presented the item on behalf of the Council Fees Committee. She explained that the resolution proposed a 12% Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustment to eligible City fees in Appendix A for incorporation into the FY 2026 budget. Ms. Brown noted that the Fees Committee had met to review the City's current fee structure in comparison with peer cities and found that many of Lawton's administrative and service fees had not been updated for several years, resulting in cost recovery falling below inflationary levels.

Brown stated that the proposed CPI adjustment would apply only to eligible fees that are not tied to state statutes or specialized enterprise funds. Exempted categories include utility bill line items, stormwater fees, Aquatic Center pricing, and state-mandated fees, each of which would remain unchanged. She emphasized that the recommendation was not a rate hike or a new fee but rather a routine inflationary adjustment consistent with standard municipal budgeting practices across Oklahoma. The goal, she said, was to ensure that departmental cost recovery remains in line with the actual cost of providing services.

Hampton explained that his ward is already financially challenged, and this is a larger burden for many of his constituents. He also stated that the City could use a different consumer price index, since the CPI coming from Dallas may not be comparable for a city like Lawton. He commented that he appreciated staff's thorough explanation and transparency but expressed reservations about implementing the full 12% adjustment in a single year. He suggested that a smaller phased approach could accomplish the same goal while easing the impact on citizens.

Williams questioned how staff arrived at 12%.

Ratliff explained that the Finance Department used the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), averaging the year-over-year change for calendar years 2021 through 2024, which collectively reflected the cumulative inflation rate since the City's last broad fee adjustment. Mr. Ratliff stated, "When we looked at our baseline—some fees haven't been adjusted in more than five years—the cumulative inflation over that period is roughly twelve percent. This number isn't arbitrary; it simply represents the total increase in the cost of goods and services since our last citywide update."

He added that the 12% recommendation was reviewed and endorsed by the Council Fees Committee, which includes representation from multiple departments. Ratliff emphasized that the proposal was structured to exclude essential services tied to

residents' monthly bills, such as water, sewer, and refuse, to ensure there would be no impact to utility rates. He further explained that without routine CPI-based adjustments, the City increasingly relies on the General Fund to subsidize cost-recovery fees, which strains operational budgets and limits flexibility for other priorities.

Williams echoed the sentiments of Hampton regarding the financial diversity in her ward.

Smith noted he received several phone calls from constituents who were concerned with this item.

Chapman praised staff for efforts to not "touch" the water bill. She noted that these fees do not affect every constituent, but only the citizens that are getting permits.

Warren agreed. He also described the implications of not raising fees a little bit at a time and reflected on a 23% increase that was done several years ago.

Gill noted that while the adjustment was reasonable in principle, it was important to consider the timing and potential public perception during a year when residents were already facing higher living costs. Councilmember Williams agreed, stating that "people are feeling the effects of inflation everywhere, so even though this is just catching up to our own costs, it may not feel that way to the public."

Brown acknowledged the concern, noting that several peer cities, including Enid and Midwest City, use CPI adjustments annually to prevent large jumps after years of inaction. She added that deferring the increase again could cause greater financial strain on City operations later.

Motion by Randy Warren, Second by Bob Weger, to approve the resolution. AYE: Linda Chapman, Bob Weger, Randy Warren. NAY: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Sherene L Williams, RL Smith. Motion Failed.

30. Consider approving an Ordinance pertaining to Business by amending Sections 7-28-1-2802, through 7-28-1-2803, 7-28-1-2806, and 7-28-1-2807; Division 7-28-1, Article 7-28, Lawton City Code 2015; by adding the requirement that a copy of the Oklahoma Sales Tax Permit be provided as part of the application, changing the Director of the Building Development Department to the Supervisor of the Building Division or their designee, removing the existing home occupations language that states that those operating prior to March 31, 1994, shall be registered by that date, providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

Charlotte Brown, Community Enrichment, presented the item and stated that this update was part of the City's ongoing effort to make Chapter 7, Business Licenses, consistent across all licensing categories. She explained that home occupations have long required a one-time license, but the City had never required those applicants to

provide a copy of their Oklahoma State Sales Tax Permit, unlike other business types such as food establishments, bars, and alcohol retailers. The proposed change adds that requirement to ensure all business licenses follow the same documentation standards.

Brown further stated that the ordinance also removes outdated language referring to businesses that were to be registered before March 31, 1994, and corrects the title of the department listed in the code from "Building Development Department" to "Building Division." She noted that the department has not been called "Building Development" during her sixteen years with the City, and this update ensures accuracy within the code.

No questions were raised by Council.

Motion by Sherene L Williams, Second by Bob Weger, to approve the ordinance, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

Interim City Attorney Timothy Wilson read the title into the record: ORDINANCE 25-21 AN ORDINANCE PERTAINING TO BUSINESS BY AMENDING SECTIONS 7-28-1-2802, 7-28-1-2803, 7-28-1-2806 AND 7-28-1-2807; DIVISION 7-28-1, ARTICLE 7-28; CHAPTER 7, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015; BY ADDING THE REQUIREMENT THAT A COPY OF THE OKLAHOMA SALES TAX PERMIT BE PROVIDED AS PART OF THE APPLICATION, CHANGING THE DIRECTOR OF THE BUILDING DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TO THE SUPERVISOR OF THE BUILDING DIVISION OR THEIR DESIGNEE, REMOVING THE EXISTING HOME OCCUPATIONS LANGUAGE THAT STATES THAT THOSE OPERATING PRIOR TO MARCH 31, 1994, SHALL BE REGISTERED BY THAT DATE, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYE: Linda Chapman, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: RL Smith. Motion Passed.

31. Consider approving an Ordinance pertaining to Offenses and Crimes by amending Section 16-4-2-424, Division 16-4-2, Article 16-4, Chapter 16, Lawton City Code, 2015, by creating the requirement for when a special permit is issued outside of normal working areas the City Manager shall be notified within 24 hours and City Council shall be notified at the next City Council meeting, providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

City Manager John Ratliff presented the item and explained that the proposed ordinance is a notification procedure to improve communication and accountability regarding after-hours construction activity. He stated that under the current code, construction contractors are permitted to work between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Recently, however, the City received multiple citizen complaints about a contractor on the west side of town working outside those hours.

Mr. Ratliff explained that it had taken significant effort to determine whether a special permit had been issued in that case, and as a result, this ordinance was being proposed to require notification whenever such a permit is granted.

He stated that the ordinance does not change the existing code or construction hours but simply requires that when a special permit is approved for after-hours or weekend work, the City Manager be notified within 24 hours and the City Council be notified at the next regular meeting. Mr. Ratliff said, "If we're going to give a contractor, particularly a construction contractor, the authority to work after hours and on weekends, I should be aware, and the Council should be aware, and that's what this provision does."

Warren asked whether the City Code defines the term "emergency." Ratliff replied that he does not specifically recall if that is defined, but stated that the code allows for special permits that could include emergency situations. Brown added that while the code does not define "emergency," the City considers it to mean a situation involving imminent threats to public safety or property—such as a sinkhole, a danger of structural collapse, or a major sewer or water line break requiring immediate attention.

Warren commented that some contractors interpret "emergency" loosely, viewing schedule pressures as emergencies, and expressed concern about after-hours noise near residential areas. Ratliff agreed, noting that in the recent case, there had been complaints about construction activity occurring late at night and early on weekends, which underscored the need for better oversight and communication.

Councilmember Gill asked for clarification on what a "special permit" means in this context, stating that he wanted to better understand what distinguishes it from a standard building permit. Brown responded that there is no separate provision within the building permit process regulating work hours—it falls instead under the noise ordinance, which restricts construction activity to weekdays between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. She explained that a special permit would only be issued for unusual circumstances requiring work outside those limits.

Ratliff clarified that the ordinance does not change the current rules; it simply requires notification to city leadership when a special permit is issued.

Public Comment:

Ellen Robinson, 6931 SW Beta Avenue, addressed the Council. She stated that apartments were being constructed directly behind her home and that residents had endured heavy equipment noise early in the morning and on weekends, sometimes as early as 6:30 a.m. on Sundays. She said she understood that development was expected in the area but hoped the ordinance would ensure that after-hours permits are used only for legitimate emergencies, not to accelerate project deadlines. Ms. Robinson thanked the Council for listening to residents' concerns.

Gill asked how enforcement would occur once notifications are in place. Ratliff explained that the City would not assign extra staff but would respond to any violations

as reported. He noted that if a violation occurs, law enforcement could issue citations under the noise ordinance.

Brown also clarified that a special permit is only valid for three days at a time and would be limited to genuine emergency circumstances.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Sherene L Williams, to approve the ordinance, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

Interim City Attorney Timothy Wilson read the title into the record: ORDINANCE 25-22 AN ORDINANCE PERTAINING OFFENSES AND CRIMES BY AMENDING SECTION 16-4-2-424; DIVISION 16-4-2, ARTICLE 16-4; CHAPTER 16, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015; BY CREATING THE REQUIREMENT FOR WHEN A SPECIAL PERMIT ISSUED OUTSIDE OF NORMAL WORKING AREAS THE CITY MANAGER SHALL BE NOTIFIED WITHIN 24 HOURS AND CITY COUNCIL SHALL BE NOTIFIED AT THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL MEETING, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

32. Consider an ordinance pertaining to Finance and Taxation, amending Section 10-2-205, Article 10-2, Chapter 10 of the Lawton City Code, 2015, to temporarily suspend the restricted usage of general sales tax collected from the sale of medical marijuana and medical marijuana products for a set period of July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

Gill stated that the annual revenue collected from the sales tax on medical marijuana products averages approximately \$400,000 to \$500,000 per year. He stated that in prior years, those funds were restricted for use on sidewalk construction and repair, which he acknowledged are important community projects. However, given the City's current budget constraints, he proposed that the funds be temporarily redirected for broader operational use.

Gill emphasized that the ordinance does not eliminate sidewalk projects but allows the City Manager flexibility to allocate these funds where they are most needed across departments during the next fiscal year. He said, "We're simply diverting it from being limited to sidewalks and allowing the City Manager to use it wisely to help departments that need it most." He added that the change is temporary—limited to one year—and will automatically expire on June 30, 2026, unless the Council takes future action to extend it. Gill stated that this measure would "go a long way toward helping us get our budget back in shape" and provide the City Manager the ability to support departments facing shortfalls.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Sherene L Williams, to approve the ordinance, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

Interim City Attorney Timothy Wilson read the title into the record: ORDINANCE 25-23 AN ORDINANCE PERTAINING TO FINANCE AND TAXATION, AMENDING SECTION 10-2-205, ARTICLE 10-2, CHAPTER 10, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015, TO TEMPORARILY SUSPEND THE RESTRICTED USAGE OF GENERAL SALES TAX COLLECTED FROM THE SALE OF MEDICAL MARIJUANA AND MEDICAL MARIJUANA PRODUCTS FOR A SET PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2025, TO JUNE 30, 2026, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION:

AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

Staff Reports

33. Provide City Council with an update on the Monthly Sales Tax Revenue for the 3rd quarter FY2025.

Rebecca Johnson, Finance Director, presented the third-quarter sales tax report and stated that revenues remain approximately 1% below the same period in FY2024. She noted that conservative budgeting has prevented the City from falling below projections, but rising costs and reduced revenue continue to impact the budget.

34. Provide City Council with an update on the ease of taking payments.

Rebecca Johnson, Finance Director, provided an update on improvements made to enhance the ease of making payments to the City. It was reported that coordination between several departments has led to increased convenience for both utility billing and short-term rental payments. Citizens can now submit short-term rental payments at the drive-through window, and staff are working with the Permits Division to ensure seamless processing.

Dewayne Burk, Deputy City Manager, reported that a new payment drop box is being installed in the drive-through lane off 10th Street, replacing one that had been previously destroyed. The new drop box will be positioned near the beginning of the lane split to allow a bypass lane for drivers to drop off payments without blocking others in line. Signage is being finalized, and the new system is expected to be operational by the end of the week. It was also noted that a second drop box exists at the payment kiosk, providing citizens with multiple options for submitting payments.

Executive Session

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to go into Executive Session. AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

The City Council remained in executive session from 8:35PM to 9:03PM.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to return to Open Session. AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

35. Pursuant to Section 307B.4, Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, consider convening in executive session to discuss the pending action in the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma titled Kent Jackson, as the Personal Representative of the Estate of Isreal Williams v. City of Lawton, et al, Case No. CIV-23-284-G, and if necessary, take appropriate action in open session.

No action taken.

Adjournment

The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48 hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."

Motion by George Gill, Second by RL Smith, to adjourn. AYE: Linda Chapman, RL Smith, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:04PM.