



**City of Lawton**  
**Lawton Economic  
Development Authority**

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

**Minutes**

Thursday, September 18, 2025

2:00 PM

Lawton City Hall  
3rd Floor Conference Room

**Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call**

Chairman Fitch called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM in the 3rd floor conference room of City Hall.

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Fred Fitch, David Madigan, Brandie Page, George Gill, Jason Hensley, Mark Brace

**ABSENT:** Ron Nance (excused), Randy Warren (excused), Larry Neal (excused)

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Richard Rogalski, LEDA Executive Director; John Ratliff, City Manager; Timothy Wilson, Interim City Attorney; Tammy Branstetter, City Clerk's Office; Kelvin Ingram, Deputy Director of Parks & Recreation and Community Enrichment; Matthew Modeste, Hatch, Croke & Associates; Kirby Brown, Ward 3 Councilman Elect; Tiffney Dimery, Ward 4 Candidate; Matina Davis, Citizen of the Community

**Statement of Compliance with Oklahoma Open Meeting Act, 25 O.S. 301-314**

Chairman Fitch confirmed with Branstetter that the meeting notice and agenda were posted by the City Clerk's Office as required by State Law.

**Business Items**

1. Consider approving the minutes of the August 21, 2025, meeting.

A copy of the minutes from the August 21, 2025, meeting may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

**Motion** by Gill, **Second** by Page, to approve the minutes from the August 21, 2025, meeting as presented. **AYE:** Gill, Madigan, Brace, Page, Hensley, Fitch. **NAY:** None.  
**MOTION PASSED.**

2. Consider approving the July 2025 Financial Report from Hatch, Croke and Associates.

Matthew Modeste, Hatch Croke and Associates, presented the July 2025 Financial Report. A copy of the July 2025 Financial Report may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

Modeste said the financials start on page 16 of your agenda packets. On your statement of net position under current assets, you'll see the six bank accounts, which total \$6,729,387.56. The interest receivable from BOK reflects July's interest, which was received in August. The sales and use tax receivable represents May and June's sales and use tax. The property tax receivable for TIF 1 and 2—both of these amounts were received in August. The last item under current assets is the state marching fund — \$1.8 million. Of that amount, in August we received about \$1.2 million, and the reimbursement from the state will be requested within the coming weeks for the rest. Modeste said there was no change in fixed assets and no change in other assets, so total assets are \$13.91 million.

Modeste said on the next page, under liabilities and net position, total current liabilities, made up of accounts payable and accrued interest payable for the tourist note, are \$251,258.18. There was no change in long-term liabilities, so your assets less your liabilities gives you a net position of negative \$14.8 million. On the next page, the combined statement of revenues and expenses, July's property taxes which were received in August were \$776,658. Total operating expenses were \$95,258, with interest income of \$13,803, resulting in a change in net position of \$695,203.02.

Modeste said the next page is the statement of cash flows, and if you look at the bottom of the page, you can see that we had a net increase in cash for the period of \$54,194.74. If we add that to the cash that we began with at the beginning of the period of \$6,675,192.82, that gives us cash at the end of the period of \$6.73 million.

Modeste said pages 20-23 of your agenda packet are the details of the combined expenses, which we looked at on page 18.

**Motion** by Hensley, **Second** by Madigan, to approve the July 2025 Financial Report as presented. AYE: Gill, Madigan, Brace, Page, Hensley, Fitch. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

3. Consider approving an Amended Lawton Community STEM Program Funding Agreement with the Friends of the Lawton Public Library to incorporate changes recommended by the Center for Economic Development Law.

Rogalski provided background information on this item. A copy of the Amended Lawton Community STEM Program Funding Agreement with the Friends of the Lawton Public Library may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

Chairman Fitch inquired about the STEM budget for this fiscal year that was taken off of

the agenda.

Regarding that budget, Rogalski said what we were originally looking was a change that Quest was requesting, so that budget you were looking at was a separate agreement with Quest. It turns out there were some issues still, so we took it off this agenda and will have to review it later. Rogalski said the total funding for STEM in each year that we worked out, that 10-year plan, was \$212,000. The Quest agreement was \$177,500, and this one is \$12,000, so you're still under your total annual funding amount with this approval. So, that budget was just the Quest agreement. You will get it in the future probably — they're requesting some change, not in the total amount, but in how they spend the money. For the most part, they're looking at the maker space equipment costs more and some other stuff costs less. That has to go to the STEM Board first. If the STEM Board doesn't approve it, then it won't ever come to LEDA. But if the STEM Board does approve it, then it would come here.

Chairman Fitch said I saw where the Lego project was on the budget for STEM this fiscal year. He asked why it's on the budget for \$12,000, and then we're considering giving \$12,000 to the library direct.

Rogalski said they're completely different groups that are doing completely different programs. The Lego League funding that Quest is doing is a Pre-K-ish kind of thing. The library is funding a little bit higher age. And then a lot of public schools are actually taking care of kids beyond that. But for this particular agreement—their funding request form and their budget has not changed at all from what was considered the last meeting. What it was is that, and you can see the red lines, the language in the agreement itself was basically cleaned up.

Chairman Fitch said while we're talking about their budget, that was pretty thin information she gave us as far as her budget (for the Quest STEM program). She had five summer camps, and I think we need a little bit more information on that, because that is money that is basically city money that comes through us and then it goes out. I realize that how they spend is their discretion. I would like to see it a little more broken down.

Rogalski said that's exactly why we were proposing it to be on the agenda—because we thought the STEM Board was going to meet before then, and then we would have that information. When we found out the STEM Board wasn't going to meet, we took it off the agenda. That's why you saw it early on, and then it was taken off.

Chairman Fitch asked if it will be on the next meeting.

Rogalski said as long as the STEM Board approves it. The STEM Board may say no, in which case it will never come here. But if the STEM Board approves something, then it will come before you to approve that same thing. Because that's how the policy is written up—that the STEM Board makes a recommendation, and then LEDA would actually approve the final agreement. But on that agreement, like I said, we didn't get

the information you were asking for, so that's why we took it off.

Chairman Fitch said if they don't approve that, then who does approve their budget?

Rogalski said if they don't approve the amendment, it stays as it is now. It doesn't change. When the agreement originally came to LEDA, the STEM Board had already approved their program. We had a whole write-up of what everything was for, and then you all approved it. We don't have a good write-up of why the changes were made, which is why we didn't bring it forward.

Rogalski said this agreement is a different funding agreement with the Friends of the Library, and the language was reviewed by the Center for Economic Development Law, and they made some changes. You can see the red lines, and Tim was happy with the red lines, but we didn't have them in time for the last meeting. And so, that's why it's coming back. The budget is not changing, the purpose isn't changing, but the language in the agreement is changing.

Ratliff asked Wilson if he is good with the changes.

Wilson said Garrett actually reviewed it, but it made it through review.

Madigan said as a reminder for this business item, we'd approved the \$12,000 last month, and we just wanted legal to review it and come back with comments, and that's what we have in front of us.

Chairman Fitch said what I was curious of was the \$12,000 and \$12,000. I was confused by this, thinking the money was wanting to go to the STEM program to Ms. Taylor, and I couldn't figure out then why we were also sending \$12,000 to the Friends of the Library.

Rogalski said that's a good point in that they are looking at different age groups. This is Lego Robotics as opposed to Pre-K Legos, which will be a little less robotic. So there are different purposes behind this funding, and again, it's completely different agencies — this is a completely separate agreement with a separate group to do a separate task.

Regarding the budget amendment for Quest, Chairman Fitch noted that he'd like to see a lot more description on all the items she's requesting money for when the item is brought back to the Authority.

Rogalski said when we bring it back, we'll bring back all the original documentation that goes with it that was approved back when it was originally approved.

When it is approved by the STEM Board, Chairman Fitch asked if we get anything in writing stating what they've approved and what they're asking us to approve.

Ratliff said we can put that information in the background.

Rogalski said we can give you the minutes from the STEM Board meeting.

**Motion** by Madigan, **Second** by Hensley, to approve the Amended Lawton Community STEM Program Funding Agreement with the Friends of the Lawton Public Library as presented. **AYE:** Gill, Madigan, Brace, Page, Hensley, Fitch. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

## Reports

### 1. Receive a report from the LEDA Executive Director

Rogalski said as Matthew mentioned, there was a disbursement in July that we received in August in the amount of \$750,000. We made that distribution to all the taxing entities like we're supposed to.

Regarding the disbursements we've made, Chairman Fitch said I think we should have those on a list with the dollar amounts that we've paid, showing that we've done what we're supposed to do.

Rogalski said we can start putting our deposit register and check register into your books. It shows the amounts that we pay to the different taxing entities. For the last disbursement, Cache Public Schools was \$23,455.21, Comanche County Commissioners Office was \$16,309.35, Comanche County Health Department was \$4,081.32 and Great Plains Technology Center was \$24,312.57. The exact amount of the deposit was \$757,978.21. Rogalski said we keep every check, we keep every disbursement, and we even have the categories in which the disbursements go into—the budget category they apply to.

Rogalski said we did have a September note payment since we last met. It was just over \$2 million. We had to transfer about \$1.5 million. As you know, certain amounts of revenue that come in—basically the sales and use tax that comes from TIF 2—the City deposits that directly into the BOK note payment account. Then, as we get other revenue coming in, we deposit it into the account. Well, as you're aware, the state was slow, and we got that \$1.2 million in August. So we made that deposit, and then we just kind of swept it all at once into the BOK account. There was some difficulty with IBC getting that done, and so we actually had to go over to our STEDI account and get the note payment made. Then we later transferred the money back into the STEDI account, because we needed to get the payment made on the day it was due, and so we did that. IBC is our TIF 1 and 2 money, and City National Bank is the STEDI money. There was some discussion, and the thought was that having the TIF 1 and 2 money in a local bank might be better off, so that we actually could get the kind of service that we got at City National Bank. In the past, you all have discussed moving those accounts to Arvest, and so I'm getting some of that information together, and we can have an action item on next agenda if you all think that's a good idea. We don't have to do it quickly—

there's no real issue there, but we have to get it done.

Rogalski said the next note payment will be March 1st. That's interest only, and the amount is going to be \$256,200.75. Obviously, it's not going to be difficult for us to make that one at this point. As you all who have been here for a while know, that's not always been the case. We typically struggle—Mark knows this really well— getting those payments together, and now it seems like the revenue has kind of caught up to us, coupled with the lower interest rate on the note, and we're getting ahead now. So we actually can start looking at doing positive things with our Downtown Project Plan money, as opposed to just paying the note. We can start looking at doing other things.

Regarding the Downtown Project Plan, Rogalski said you all approved a purchase and sale agreement for a grocery store on Lot 8 of the Lawton Town Center. That's still moving forward. We have sent them the draft redevelopment agreement per our PSA, so that is under review on their part. The Downtown Project Plan was originally approved in 2010. TIF 2 was set up in 2012. Rogalski provided Authority members with a copy of Exhibit A - Project Area and Increment District Boundary Map. Rogalski said you'll see TIF A and TIF B on that map. That represents the 10 acres. TIF A is Lot 8 — that's where the grocery store is planned to go. Then, TIF B is just the other property that LEDA owns that's still vacant in the Downtown Project Plan as well. So, it would benefit us to do a modification, a major modification, of our Downtown Project Plan to basically restart those two areas. Because, again, their base value is still zero, so we don't lose anything. And we would basically get another 25 years of revenue from those. Notice they're called A and B just like the STEDI Plan, so they're not actually activated until we activate them. So, even though we have that planned project on TIF A, we wouldn't activate it until it happens. Once that redevelopment agreement got approved, we would activate TIF A at the same time, and it would become TIF 7, actually. We're trying to do as little as possible, because this does have to be done before we close, because otherwise the base value changes — someone else owns it, it has a taxable value. So that's why we're moving this forward, and we're doing as little as possible, but we do have to update the budget. Rogalski said on that map you'll notice the project area. In the current plan, the project area does not include Elmer Thomas Park, and so I felt that it would be beneficial just to include Elmer Thomas Park in the project area as we start getting positive revenue. Then we could make some park improvements with some of the funding.

Rogalski provided Authority members with a copy of Exhibit B — Lawton Downtown Project Plan Amended TIF Districts. Rogalski said on Exhibit B, you'll see that you have a number of cost categories. Those are all exactly the same in the current project plan, except for Item F: STEM Strategic Plan. The question is—or the thought was—we would want to include that same 10% STEM Strategic Plan funding in this project plan, as we do with the STEDI Plan. Then you'll see the estimated budgets—this is still very much a draft—using the factors that are kind of similar to what we did in the STEDI Plan, you can see that you have those cost categories reflected in the budgets for TIF 1, TIF 2, TIF A, and TIF B. TIF 1 and TIF 2 are partially done, so the changes probably don't have a lot to affect those. They are going to be what they're going to be. But

obviously, the TIF A and TIF B, if we activate those, those are the budgets, and that would be what we would have for the next 25 years. So again, I have a whole draft project plan already worked out. I didn't bring that with me—too many pages—but we're getting that rolled forward. The steps on this: the first step in this process is that City Council would pass a resolution to make an amendment to the plan and to reset the review committee. Then the review committee would meet at least two times. For the first meeting, they have to add three additional members by vote of the early members. All the taxing entities are a part of the review committee. So everybody that we talked about in our disbursement is going to be at the table. Then you actually have a second meeting where you review the actual project plan. They could take action after that one, or they could ask for a third meeting or whatever else. But there are at least two meetings there. The Planning Commission has to approve the project plan. Again, in this case, we're not expanding it at all, so we're not making really much change at all. Then it has to go to City Council. There would be two public hearings before the City Council that would happen. Right now, those would be in the October–November timeframe, meaning one in October and one in November. That's what the plan is. The due diligence period is up sometime in November, and then there's 30 days after that where we would tend to close. So it gives us at least a little bit of cushion to get this thing done, but it's very tight.

Chairman Fitch said I'm going to ask if we can direct Tammy to get the STEM Board member's name and phone number and then the other committee that this goes through.

Rogalski said the only committee it goes to is the STEM Board. There's also a STEM Consortium, but they're just a consortium. They don't have any influence over the policy.

Chairman Fitch asked what the STEM Consortium does.

Rogalski said they get together and talk about what is happening in STEM in the community. There are lots of people involved, and it's all voluntary. They just show up and talk about what they're doing, what events they have, and they work together to try to move those things forward. But that's its own thing. The STEM board is specifically set up by the City Council to enact the STEM policy, which is a City Council policy, and of course, every agreement that you all approve for STEM has to follow that policy.

Rogalski said I felt like the community's commitment to STEM wasn't reflected in this particular project plan. And so, therefore, I tossed it in there. You all can take it back out if you want, but I thought it would be a good idea. Notice that in this project plan, we do not make the same distributions to the taxing entities as the STEDI does. Because remember, I'm changing this as little as possible. However, there is a category for School Improvements. I'll just read through the categories: Public Improvements—we know what those are. Project Support—we know what that is. School Improvements are just that. Instead of providing a little bit of funding towards schools, we could actually fund an actual physical improvement at a school—a capital improvement. Then there's

another thing called "Other Public Facilities," which we would be allowed to fund within the community. Then Administration, STEM Strategic Plan, and Miscellaneous and Contingencies. And again, the reason that we really haven't discussed these categories before is because we never had net positive revenue that we could use on anything. We always had the minimum amount that we would pay the note on, and now we actually have revenue.

Brace asked Rogalski if he's saying that this whole area, TIF A and B and TIF 2, would be proposed to amend the structure of the revenue allocation.

Rogalski said yes — it would apply to all of it, but there's very little revenue in TIF 1. But yes, it would apply to the whole thing. That's how it's planned, at least.

Brace said and then include, at the same time, Elmer Thomas Park?

Rogalski said the TIF District is where the revenue is generated — the plan is where it's spent. We have also discussed several times a more intense look at the downtown project plan. That includes carving out parcels in different areas, looking at the area around the mall, carving up the mall, and creating a specific TIF District for that so we can isolate the revenue in those areas. That's still a plan. But this one, because of this prospective grocery store project, needs to be done very fast, and we can't do a good job on the rest of that very fast.

Gill said Elmer Thomas Park is not going to be income-producing probably in our lifetime.

Brace asked if TIF A and TIF B are included in the security on trust.

Rogalski said no. That's a good question. When we refinanced the note at that time, it was refinanced against city sales tax, which was extremely generous of the city. And so, there is no lien or anything on the TIF revenue or the land itself. However, it's obvious we have an obligation. So, I haven't spent any money of TIF 2 on anything else except the note. It just so happens that there's starting to be a little bit of excess now, as opposed to just being flat. Not a lot of money, but there's a little bit. But, if we decided to just fold up our hands and buy something else, the city would have to pay the note, but I'm sure they would have issues with that. It's not something that causes us a contractual issue, and that's why we're able to amend the plan. That's why we're able to sell the lot. We couldn't have sold the lot without a lien release, otherwise. Now, it just so happens that the old liens may not have been completely released when we were working on that, but they should be, because those notes were satisfied. But we're getting all that worked out. All of this can move forward, as per your direction. This is the direction we're going, and we can have another discussion item next time we meet. But I just wanted to give you at least something to think about.

Chairman Fitch said there is something I'd like to talk about next time, and that is we've had sewer and water, and roads, and that money has come out of the CIP, and that

money will be replaced into the CIP back from the TIF. We are just now beginning to have extra where we can start paying the city back some of the money that they make available to us through the CIP. I would like Richard to get with the City Manager, and I want to see a list of what we owe the city.

Rogalski said any project that the city had built-in the project area of the STEDI Project Plan would be eligible for funding, provided it was a refundable funding source. For instance, if the city used ARPA funding on a project, we wouldn't refund it, because we can't refund ARPA funding to the city. However, if the city used CIP funding or some sort of other cash source, then that's a refundable project. Now, the list could be this long and our funding may never get even with the current existing list, but it's at least possible. I sat down with prior Finance Director a while back and discussed this list, because it's important that before we forget about these projects, that we know that we have a list of them and a funding source that we know where the money would go when we decide to start wheeling them down. We just haven't been able to get anything yet, but we do need that.

Rogalski provided Authority members with an exhibit regarding the Firehawk Aerospace rezoning. Rogalski said LEDA applied for and was awarded \$18 million in P3 funds, and we're moving forward on that. We're kind of getting closer to getting everything done on that project. One of the first steps we had to take was the rezoning. It is a binding site plan, so it took us a little longer to make sure the binding site plan was right. The public hearing at the Planning Commission is scheduled for September 25th, and the notices have already gone out. Then, the public hearing before City Council would be October 28th, and that rezoning would be perfected if approved. You can see that they provide a significant buffer to the adjacent properties. The area adjacent to any kind of non-industrial is down-zoned to either I-3 or I-1. The western 1,000 feet is zoned I-1, and in fact, it's in a buffer area. They have a 1,200-foot buffer that goes around their energetics manufacturing. So, there's nothing like that going within 1,250 feet of anything.

Gill asked if we are making good progress with the meetings that we're having with the public on this.

Rogalski said I can tell you this — one of the primary detractors who actually spoke at that original meeting at City Council has said he appreciates what we did, and he supports the project.

Ratliff asked if Firehawk has agreed to expand the buffer zone.

Rogalski said they agreed to it, but it really doesn't hurt them at all. I mean, this is exactly what their site plan was. And so, why do I need to zone that 1,000 feet I-4 when it's actually not going to be developed into anything? And so, we said, we're just going to give you this I-1 buffer, because you could have done the same thing by saying, "Look, here's a 1,000-foot setback, we're not going to build anything." But it just feels better for people to have the I-1 buffer. So that's why there's I-1 on the west side, and I-

3 on the north side.

Gill said this is kind of something that the residents out there were wanting—something like this. They knew when they built there what it was, but I think the city has taken an extra step or two to make it more comfortable for those people. And for the most part, they're happy. There's always someone that isn't happy, but for the most part, they are. And the city has to continue to grow.

Brace said so, you're not saying that nothing can be developed in there — you're saying whatever's developed in there has to be within those zoning requirements.

Rogalski said yes. I-1 and I-3 do not have a binding site plan. So, if you rezone that section I-1, anybody could develop anything they wanted in I-1 in that area—as long as it met the requirement. However, the nature of their project is that, if you look at the little orange fence line, they have to have a buffer where there's nothing in their 1,200-foot buffer. So, the nature of their development is that nothing will go in that area, but that doesn't mean it couldn't. Now, let's just say they decided, "We're not doing energetics anymore, we're going to build Legos." All of a sudden, you could develop that as I-1, because there no longer is energetics there. So, in a rezoning project, everything that's available in those districts is available to be used. All the uses that are allowed in those districts are allowed. This particular project with energetics has a use permitted on review—just for the energetics. So, you still get all the other I-4 uses in the I-4, but the energetics has to be just like that.

Chairman Fitch asked if we have to have the transmission line that is buried along that southern border taken up prior to the sale of that land.

Rogalski said no — because it's along the property line, it's currently outside their buffer. So that transmission line can stay where it's at. We've discussed the possibility of acquiring that school land to the south. If you acquired the school land, and if they wanted to expand to the south, then the transmission line would have to move because it can't be in the buffer. So, it's a possibility that some day that might happen.

Gill said it wouldn't necessarily be at our cost, it would be at whoever wanted to further develop that — it would be at their cost.

## **Executive Session**

**Motion** by Gill, **Second** by Brace, to convene in executive session. **AYE:** Page, Fitch, Gill, Madigan, Brace, Hensley. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

The Authority convened in executive session at 2:51 PM and remained in executive session until 3:39 PM.

**Motion** by Gill, **Second** by Hensley, to return to open session. **AYE:** Page, Fitch, Gill, Madigan, Brace, Hensley. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

1. Pursuant to Section 307B.4, Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, consider convening in executive session to discuss the status of a pending investigation / claim concerning a fraudulent wire transfer and other related matters, and if necessary, take appropriate action in open session.

Wilson read the agenda item title as follows: "Pursuant to Section 307B.4, Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, consider convening in executive session to discuss the status of a pending investigation / claim concerning a fraudulent wire transfer and other related matters, and if necessary, take appropriate action in open session."

**Motion** by Hensley, **Second** by Madigan, to have the City Attorney send a letter to Fisher59 stating among other things that there will be no repayment of the \$224,840.34 amount while the investigation is ongoing, and no determination will be made at this time concerning what will happen after the investigation is complete. **AYE:** Page, Fitch, Gill, Madigan, Brace, Hensley. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

2. Pursuant to Section 307C.11, Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, consider convening in executive session for the purpose of conferring on matters pertaining to economic development, including the transfer of property, financing, and the creation of a proposal to entice a business to locate within their jurisdiction if the public disclosure of which would violate the confidentiality of prospective business entities.

Wilson read the agenda item title as follows: "Pursuant to Section 307C.11, Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, consider convening in executive session for the purpose of conferring on matters pertaining to economic development, including the transfer of property, financing, and the creation of a proposal to entice a business to locate within their jurisdiction if the public disclosure of which would violate the confidentiality of prospective business entities."

No action was taken on this item.

## **Adjournment**

**Motion** by Gill, **Second** by Madigan, to adjourn the September 18, 2025, meeting. **AYE:** Page, Fitch, Gill, Madigan, Brace, Hensley. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 3:41 PM.