# City of Lawton

## City Council

## Minutes

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

**Tuesday, September 23, 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 Stanley Booker with invocation led by Pastor Benny Llanos followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Roll Call

**Present:**
Councilman - Ward 1 Lane Hooton
Councilman - Ward 2 Taron Epps
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:**
Councilwoman - Ward 3 Linda Chapman

**Also Present:**
Stanley Booker, Mayor
John Ratliff, City Manager
Timothy Wilson, Interim City Attorney
Donalynn Blazek-Scherler, City Clerk
COL Derek Baird, Fort Sill

## Presentation

1. Employee Spotlight Award: Melissa Gomez

John Ratliff presented the Employee Spotlight Award to Melissa Gomez of Central Fire

Station, recognizing her exemplary service and initiative in assisting a food truck vendor who needed a fire inspection and business license. When the Licensing and Permits Office was busy, Ms. Gomez personally ensured the vendor received all required documents, enabling timely business operations.

2. Receive a presentation from staff on specialized traffic warning signs

Michael Watrous, Public Works Director, presented an informational item regarding specialized traffic warning signs and stated no action was requested. Watrous stated the purpose was to discuss non-regulated signs such as "Children at Play," "Autistic Child," "Blind Child," and "Deaf Child" signs. Watrous stated these signs are not approved in the MUTCD and City code currently requires MUTCD compliance, making such signs non-enforceable and non-regulatory. Watrous stated these signs may create potential legal liabilities, may contribute to sign overuse, and may provide misleading information over time if not removed when no longer applicable. Watrous stated peer cities generally do not allow these signs, with an exception noted regarding past practice in Broken Arrow. Watrous stated staff anticipated adding a paragraph to the neighborhood traffic calming policy so future councils are informed, while noting that council members may still request signs and City Council retains authority to approve installation. Watrous invited questions.

3. Clean Sweep Award

Mayor Booker introduced members of the Buffalo Soldiers, 10th Horse Cavalry, as recipients of the Clean Sweep Award. He praised their consistent volunteer efforts to keep Lawton beautiful through litter cleanup along their adopted roadway from Fort Sill to I-44. President Tony Washington accepted the award on behalf of the organization, expressing pride in their community involvement and commitment to supporting the city through service.

4. Oklahoma Municipal League Award Presentations to Rusty Whisenhunt, Oklahoma Hall of Fame for City and Town Officials Inductee, and Donalynn Blazek-Scherler, Don Rider Transparency in Government Award Winner

John Ratliff presented two state-level recognitions from the Oklahoma Municipal League. Rusty Whisenhunt, Director of Public Utilities, was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame for City and Town Officials for over 35 years of dedicated public service. In his remarks, Mr. Whisenhunt credited his decades of work to a desire to build a better future for Lawton's youth and tied his service philosophy to the City's "Kids First" initiative.

Ratliff then presented the Don Rider Transparency in Government Award to City Clerk Donalynn Blazek-Scherler, honoring her leadership in transforming the City's open records program into a model of transparency. He commended her for developing formal policies and implementing software that greatly improved responsiveness and accountability to citizens.

## Proclamation

5. National Surgical Technology Week

The Mayor called for a representative to receive the proclamation for National Surgical Technology Week, though none were present.

6. Hispanic Heritage Month

Mayor Booker read the proclamation recognizing September 15 through October 15 as Hispanic Heritage Month, highlighting the historical and cultural contributions of Hispanic Americans and encouraging residents to celebrate cultural diversity. The proclamation was presented to members of the Race Relations Commission.

## Reports: Mayor/City Council/ City Manager

COL Baird thanked the City and community for support during the recent Black Start exercise, noting it was successful and provided valuable lessons learned. Upcoming events at Fort Sill were highlighted, including the 32nd Annual Devil Dog Run, Oktoberfest at the Patriot Club, the Oktoberfest Run, and Thursday Night Football events at the Patriot Club.

Warren expressed appreciation for the service and support provided by City staff, specifically recognizing Rusty Whisenhunt and Donalynn Blazek-Scherler for their professionalism, responsiveness, and dedication.

Williams thanked volunteers involved in the Ward 7 home painting project and asked for prayers for a homeowner whose mother recently passed away.She also announced the NAACP Freedom Banquet on October 4 at Cameron University and encouraged neighbors to assist one another when possible.

Weger reported on the success of Open Streets, noting strong community participation and appreciation for staff and volunteers. He expressed pride in City employees being recognized at the state level.

Hampton encouraged attendance at the year-round Farmers Market and praised the Open Streets program, recognizing the extensive behind-the-scenes work by City staff. He congratulated Jason Poudrier on a new downtown business and thanked Donalynn Blazek-Scherler and Rusty Whisenhunt for their continued support.

Gill commended Rusty for his long-standing service and engineering leadership and provided updates on the mill and overlay street program, emphasizing its cost-effectiveness and durability, and noted progress on 38th Street.

Epps noted the closing of the water park season and highlighted the upcoming 46th Annual International Festival, encouraging community participation.

Hooton thanked City staff for their assistance and expressed appreciation for their professionalism.

John Ratliff encouraged attendance at the International Festival and noted opportunities for community engagement. He reported that the City is scheduled to close on its Capital Improvement Program (CIP) loan on September 30, which will fund projects including the Museum, 105 Streets, Animal Welfare Center, and the Library.

## 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 George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve as presented striking 19 and pulling 9 and 22. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

7. Consider the following tort claim recommended for approval: Shawn and Helen Donley in the amount of $540.78, and approve the resolution authorizing the filing of a Friendly Suit and confessing judgment in said amount.

Resolution 25-236

8. Consider the following tort claim recommended for denial: Ruby Polk in the amount of $30,303.80.

9. Consider accepting a deed to Lots 17 through 32, Block 63, of the Lawton Heights Addition, commonly known as Lots 3 and 4, Block 63, Lawton Heights Addition, accepting payment of $5,000.00 and approve dismissing the pending action in the District Court of Comanche County titled City of Lawton, Oklahoma, A Municipal Corporation vs. Transforming Hand, Inc, et al, Case No. CJ-2025-265.

Timothy Wilson explained that this case concerned the City's acquisition of a former nursing home property on Andrews Avenue, related to prior demolition litigation. The property owner agreed to deed the land to the City and pay $5,000 as settlement.

Motion by Bob Weger, Second by None, to approve. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

10. Consider approving a resolution amending the City of Lawton FYE26 budget, as amended, to appropriate $1,269,403.92 in insurance proceeds to the General Fund for the repair of city facilities, $1,525,706.00 to the General Fund for the Elmer Thomas Park Amphitheater and Lake Helen Boardwalk design, and $8,374.35 to the 2019 Capital Improvement Fund for the payment

of final invoices relating to the PW2101 Landfill Cells 6 & 7 project.

Resolution 25-237

11. Contingent upon state approval through the Roof Assent Management Program, consider awarding a construction contract to Clayco Industries Inc., Doing Business As Ford Roofing & Sheet Metal co. in the amount of $512,392.52 to replace the roof of McMahon Memorial Auditorium which was damaged during the 2023 hail storm, and authorize execution of necessary documents.

12. Consider and take action in approving Change Order no. 1 reducing the contract by $276,662 and accepting the project in the final contract amount of $3,788,119.70 and placing the maintenance bond into effect for the South Wolf Creek Trunk Expansion #5 Project PU1801 as constructed by McKee Utility Contractors, LLC.

13. Consider awarding (CL26-002) Agricultural Leases to the named parties in the attached memorandum from the City Attorney's Office, with each award contingent upon the lessee executing a timely lease with the City and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the required documents.

14. Consider and take action in approving Change Order no. 1 reducing the contract by $395,579.00, accepting the project in the final contract amount of $3,975,441.00, and placing the maintenance bond into effect for the Sub Basin 104, 105, 106 Projects PU1306 PU1410 PU1414 for sewer line replacement as constructed by Horseshoe Construction, INC.

15. Consider approving final change order No. 1 with an overall deduction of $73,344.25 for Project PW2505- Emergency Landfill Repairs, as constructed by 4X Construction Group, LLC, thereby placing the Maintenance Bond into effect.

16. Consider and take action in approving Change Order no. 2 reducing the contract by $24,033.81 and accepting the project in the final contract amount of $14,353,226.19 and placing the maintenance bond into effect for the Map 9 Waterline Replacement Project PU2308 as constructed by TIMCO Blasting &

Coatings, INC.

17. Consider approving and issuing a Revocable Communications Cable Permit to Chickasaw Telecommunications Services Inc. to install approximately 123 feet (7.45) rods of fiber optic cable within the right of way of E Gore Blvd to serve the Arvest Bank located at 2902 E Gore Blvd.

18. Consider approving a Revocable Communications Cable Permit with Indian Nations Fiberoptics, Inc. for five existing routes within the City of Lawton, and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the document.

19. Acceptance of a donation from the Thunder Community Foundation for the refurbishment of a basketball court at Lee West Park in the amount of $21,360.00.

Stricken.

20. Consider designating the area immediately around the Comanche Nation Education Center as a school zone and implement traffic control measures accordingly.

21. Consider approving the claims list from September 6, 2025, through September 19, 2025.

22. Consider approving proposed appointments to boards and commissions.

**DOWNTOWN TRANSFER CENTER SITE COMMITTEE:**
Councilman Taron Epps – Ward 2
212 SW 9th Street
Lawton, OK 73501
Council Term

**LAWTON METROPOLITAN AREA AIRPORT AUTHORITY:**
Nate Slate – Mayoral Appointment
87 Quail Creek Drive
Lawton, OK 73507
UT 12/31/2027

**MUSEUM OF THE GREAT PLAINS AUTHORITY:**
Linda Neal – Trustee Appointment

325 NW Ridgeview Way
Lawton, OK 73505
UT 06/30/2028

Matina Davis-Prudhomme, who had requested to speak, was not present.

Motion by Randy Warren, Second by Taron Epps, to Approve. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

23. Consider approving a second amendment to the School House Slough lease agreement as it pertains to the location of the proposed self-serve ice vending machine.

**Unfinished Business**

24. Receive an updated presentation from Family Promise regarding their request for Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) Project for the acquisition and rehabilitation of building and property located at 1308 SW D Avenue and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign all required documents pertaining to this project.

Charlotte Brown, Community Enrichment Department stated that this item was originally brought to the Council on July 22nd, and it was tabled, so additional information could be collected. She then introduced Michael Tao, President of the Board of Family Promise.

Tao stated that Brown would distribute what Family Promise referred to as “Phase One,” which outlined the $33,000 request and broke it into two sections. Tao asked whether Council wanted a full overview or focus on specific items, and Mayor Booker directed him to give a quick overview. Tao explained that Phase One included “Part A,” described as operating support, covering staff and administrative costs, including HUD compliance and CPA financial oversight. Tao stated that Part A included administrative components, some of which were “not encumbered” yet and related to future work. Tao then described “Part B” as pre-development costs or assistance and stated that this portion covered the “hard” project costs needed to advance the building project, including the conceptual design phase and engineering work, along with a survey tied to construction planning. Tao stated that they had met multiple times with “CDBL” and had received a simplified layout of a floor plan, and he said they were excited about how it was shaping up and expected follow-up meetings to prepare for a final proposal.

Mayor Booker stated he had misunderstood the request and believed Family Promise was seeking operational funding, but now understood it to be funding to begin a building project. Tao responded that the request was “support” for the construction project, specifically for items like the survey, structural engineer, and work with CDBL to move the plans forward. Mayor Booker asked whether there was any estimate for the project's total cost. Tao stated that the original proposal had been $540,000, but that at this stage only a conceptual floor plan had been discussed; the engineering report and the upcoming survey would allow CDBL to produce a full budget, including itemized costs such as HVAC and other components, and they would return to Council with the final request and identify what funding would be sought elsewhere if needed. Gill added that obtaining more information and a budget before requesting the larger amount would be beneficial, since the Council's vote would depend on what the final scope and cost looked like.

Tao explained that this portion of the project would be considered a support pre-development phase by CHDO. He stated it could be thought of as two separate deals. The support phase would be funds to help Family Promise pay for the engineering. Then, once the budget and proposal are finalized, Family Promise would come back to the City with the final numbers and final design and submit their request to build the project. Tao stated that is the way HUD releases CHDO funds.

Brown then clarified that the request that night was for Council to approve the $33,000 agreement. The Mayor stated he was concerned that he had heard unofficially that the project estimate might be over a million dollars and said he was not ready to commit to spending $33,000 if it effectively signaled the City was behind the project. Warren stated that approving the $33,000 felt like money could "evaporate" if the later request became much larger and the City could not afford its share, and he expressed concern that plans might be outdated by the time construction could realistically occur.

Tao replied that the project was split into two phases.and that approval of #33,000.00 tonight did not signify support or approval of Phase II of the project.

Warren asked if funds could be used for operational expenses. Warren said he would rather see funds spent directly on citizen services or immediate housing-related needs, instead of on pre-development work that might not lead to a build.

Mayor  Booker asked for clarification about what the $33,000 represented and whether it was operating funds for the conceptual planning process, and Warren asked whether the City could award CHDO funds for day-to-day operations. Brown stated the funds could only be used by a designated CHDO, and Family Promise was the only designated CHDO in town. Ratliff then asked about the deadline and said he understood the funding would expire in three days, with $42,000 returning to HUD at the end of the week. Mayor Booker asked whether the money had to be spent or merely awarded. Brown answered that it had to be spent. Mayor Booker questioned how that could occur within three days. Brown stated that much of the $33,000 was already spent and that the request was structured as a reimbursement, though not all components—such as the HUD compliance consultant—were necessarily already expended. The Mayor raised concerns about purchasing requirements and whether a PO would be required. Kristen Huntley, Interim Finance Director, stated it would depend on whether the City provided a support agreement or paid directly, and noted that a support agreement could be executed quickly, but allocation details would matter.

Weger asked whether Family Promise currently owned the property. Tao answered no and explained that this was a CHDO request to develop a conceptual plan before returning to Council for funding to purchase and complete the project, and that CHDO rules did not require the property to be purchased before the pre-development phase. Tao stated that, once approved, there was a multi-year window—he referenced up to four years—to purchase/build or acquire and rehabilitate a structure before the project would become noncompliant. Tao added that the line items were structured so the funds would not simply be deposited into general operations; the spending would be tied to specific items and would either be reimbursed later or set aside consistent with the agreement.

Warren then stated he felt “icky” about the proposal, said he could not support it, and made a motion to deny. Mayor Booker asked for a second, but none was offered, and Mayor Booker stated the motion died for lack of a second and discussion continued. Epps asked whether there was any other way to estimate total project costs without paying these pre-development fees, expressing concern that approving them amounted to a commitment without knowing the full cost. Tao responded that obtaining an estimate required paying for the work to develop the plan, and stated that approving this phase did not commit Council to funding construction later.

Gill asked for clarification because he heard two different explanations: that money would go back to HUD if not spent, but also that the request implied it would be spent; and he also noted that earlier statements suggested the request was a reimbursement and that at least part of the work—such as a structural engineer review—had already occurred. Gill said that if the project ultimately came back at $1 million, $1.5 million, or $2 million, the City could be placed in a position of either moving forward at that cost or effectively forfeiting the initial $33,000. Brown acknowledged the City would not be able to fund the entire project and stated Family Promise would have to pursue grants and other funding sources beyond what was set aside.

Mayor Booker asked whether the funds could be used for day-to-day CHDO operations and then stated he personally was not sold on the building project, but was impressed with Family Promise’s existing work and believed their services aligned with homelessness prevention. Brown confirmed the funds could be used for day-to-day operations. Mayor Booker explored whether expiring CHDO funds could be awarded for operating support instead, but Brown explained there was a 5% cap on CHDO operating costs. Brown also stated that the City had several years of unawarded CHDO set-asides because Family Promise had only become a CHDO recently. Tim Wilson, Acting City Attorney, then pointed out that the proposed agreement labeled the $33,000 as “operating expense funds budget,” and Brown responded that the $33,000 included administrative items and compliance/financial oversight services as well as planning-related items like architecture, engineering, and survey work.

Mayor Booker asked whether there was a way to use the expiring funds without tying them to the 1308 SW D Avenue project. Brown stated she did not believe there was. Mayor Booker asked what the expected impact would be on future grants if the funds were not used, and Brown said she did not know offhand and would need research. Mayor Booker noted there likely was not time for that research before the deadline. Mayor Booker asked whether the property was under contract, and Sarah Svec, Family Promise, answered that it was, but stated earnest money and related costs were covered by donations, and that the conceptual design could be applied to a different property if the specific purchase did not proceed, though additional work such as parking and a slab could be needed.

Mayor Booker asked whether the City could award up to $42,000 as reimbursement for renovations already completed at Family Promise’s existing facility or for other capital needs. Brown stated she was not sure. Mayor Booker suggested a motion contingent on legal approval, but Wilson indicated that implementing a support agreement and receiving Council approval before the end of the week was not feasible. Brown added that the existing Family Promise building was treated as a PSO and would qualify under CDBG, not HOME, and said that while the CHDO agreement contemplated acquiring and rehabilitating housing units, the timeline and contracting realities made it impractical to spend the expiring funds by week’s end. Mayor Booker concluded that the situation had become too last-minute, leaving the Council in a no-win situation and that the City would need to plan better going forward.

Svec noted that, depending on how the agreement is dated, it would be possible to turn in receipts for operational costs for a reimbursement. Mayor Booker stated he doesn't think that is something that the Council would be interested in. Mayor Booker said he was open to suggestions.

Warren stated he would support an agreement if there was a way not to tie it to the "albatross building". Both Mayor Booker and Warren agreed there was no time to do any of that, though.

Epps asked again how failing to spend the money would affect future grants. Brown stated that if the CHDO funds were returned, the City’s HOME funds would decrease the next year because the CHDO set-aside was returned, but she could not quantify the change and noted the City’s grant numbers were not known until later in the year. Ratliff added that, in other contexts, the City has sometimes operated with uncertainty when support agreements were not executed immediately and has continued operations consistent with prior fiscal-year practices to avoid noncompliance. Wilson expressed broader concerns given the City’s recent history of repaying HUD funds.

Weger stated that, based on conscience, the City should “do nothing in haste” and indicated support for denial.

Motion by Bob Weger, Second by Randy Warren, to deny. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Randy Warren. NAY: Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. ABSTAIN:

Sherene L Williams. Motion Passed.

On the vote, Councilmember Williams stated she was abstaining due to a personal interest because a family member worked for the organization.

## Business Items

25. Hold a public hearing and consider approving the Amendment to the Annual Action Plan for FFY 2025 and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the revised SF 424s and Grant Funding Agreements for CDBG & HOME along with any other documents necessary to implement the plan document.

Charlotte Brown, Community Enrichment Deputy Director, stated this item was an amendment to the Annual Action Plan and was something staff told Council they would bring back after the original amended plan in June. Brown explained the amendment would add funding to the project list for the homeless transportation program. Brown stated the amount was set at $10,000, but she believed there would be a request to increase it to $15,000. Brown also stated the amendment would add the Griffin Planning agreement to assist with PSO metrics, with a contract amount of up to $100,000.

Mayor Booker asked how much had been spent to date since the program started, which he believed was around the prior November. Ratliff responded that it was approximately $20,000. Mayor Booker then asked why the amendment was being made at $10,000 and stated that if his only option was a $5,000 “floor amendment,” he would rather amend it to a higher number, suggesting $25, because he believed the issue was not going away. Mayor Booker said he was hearing from people that they were seeing new faces among the homeless population and believed there was an influx, and he emphasized his support for the transportation project because it helps get people to their families where they can be successful. Mayor Booker asked whether the City could amend for a larger amount now or whether staff would need to amend again later.

Ratliff responded that Council could amend for a larger amount in a single amendment. He also stated that there were currently funds set aside for the program and that earlier in the year he had allocated $10,000 in manager contingency funds that were being used, and he said the proposed amount would supplement that and bring the City closer to the figure Mayor Booker wanted. Mayor Booker stated he thought the goal was to use federal funds rather than local funds. Ratliff agreed that was his goal, but said changing the amount would delay the process. Brown stated another 30-day public notice period would be required.

Mayor Booker said he thought it was worth it to amend to $25,000 and suggested $30,000.

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

Mayor Booker then asked for a motion directing staff to redo the item and raise the amount to $30,000.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Sherene L Williams, to direct staff to amend the plan to include $30,000.00 for the bus ticket program.

Kristy Dement, Housing Division, stated that the City could proceed with using the $10,000 currently available and begin the 30-day notice process for an additional $15, rather than waiting to restart the notice period for the entire amount. Mayor Booker asked whether there was any problem with doing two amendments, and Brown responded that there was not. Mayor Booker asked whether Council was okay with that approach, and the motion was amended to approve the current action and direct staff to bring back an additional amendment so the total would reach $30,000.

The amended motion was accepted by Gill and Williams.

VOTE ON AMENDED MOTION: AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

26. Hold a Pubilc Hearing and consider approving the Amendment to the consolidated Action Plan for FFY 2021-2025 and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the revised SF 424's and Grant Funding Agreements for CDBG along with any other documents necessary to implement the plan amendment.

Charlotte Brown, Community Enrichment Deputy Director, stated that this item was a companion to the prior agenda item and applied to the City’s five-year Consolidated Plan rather than the annual action plan.

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

Motion by Allan Hampton, Second by Sherene L Williams, to approve. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

Brown announced that Gary Brooks, former Housing and Community Development Administrator, left the City in June. She introduced Robert Burns as the new Housing and Community Development Administrator and noted that he was previously employed in the Planning Department.

27. An ordinance amending Personnel Policies and Procedures Section 17-1-3-127, Division 17-1-3, Article 17-1, Chapter 17, Lawton City Code, 2015 by clarifying the amount of time an employee must give before separation from employment to be eligible for rehire; removing language that allowed leave to be taken during the notice of separation time frame; providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

Craig Akard, Human Resources Director, explained that the ordinance amended the notice-of-separation timeframe to require 30 calendar days' notice for executive employees and 14 calendar days' notice for general employees. Craig further stated that the ordinance removed language that previously allowed employees to use leave time to satisfy the notice period and clarified that employees would no longer be permitted to take leave during the notice period.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Ordinance 25-41, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney Read the Title: ORDINANCE 25-41
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PERSONNEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES SECTION 17-1-3-127, DIVISION 17-1-3, ARTICLE 17-1, CHAPTER 17, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015 BY CLARIFYING THE AMOUNT OF TIME AN EMPLOYEE MUST GIVE BEFORE SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR REHIRE; REMOVING LANGUAGE THAT ALLOWED LEAVE TO BE TAKEN DURING THE NOTICE OF SEPARATION TIMEFRAME; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

28. An ordinance amending Personnel Policies and Procedures Section 17-1-4-440, Division 17-1-4, Article 17-1, Chapter 17, Lawton City Code, 2015 by amending the notice time a general employee shall provide prior to separation from service; by adding that if an employee submits a notice of separation for a specific date, management may shorten the time for the good of the service; renumbering this section of code to correspond to the numbering where it belongs; providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

Akard explained that this section of code also referenced a two-week notice and was updated to 14 calendar days for general employees and 30 calendar days for executive employees. Craig stated the ordinance added language providing that if an employee submits a notice of separation for a specific date, management may accept the resignation immediately and end employment for the good of the service, including for employees in sensitive positions.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Ordinance 25-42, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney read the title: ORDINANCE 25-42
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PERSONNEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES SECTION 17-1-4-440, DIVISION 17-1-4, ARTICLE 17-1, CHAPTER 17, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015 BY AMENDING THE NOTICE TIME A GENERAL EMPLOYEE SHALL PROVIDE PRIOR TO SEPARATION FROM SERVICE; BY ADDING THAT IF AN EMPLOYEE SUBMITS A NOTICE OF SEPARATION FOR A SPECIFIC DATE, MANAGEMENT MAY SHORTEN THE TIME FOR THE GOOD OF THE SERVICE; RENUMBERING THIS SECTION OF CODE TO CORRESPOND TO THE NUMBER WHERE IT BELONGS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Lane Hooton, Taron Epps, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, George Gill. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

29. An ordinance amending Personnel Policies and Procedures Section 17-1-6-167, Division 17-1-6, Article 17-1, Chapter 17, Lawton City Code, 2015 by correcting code to reference general employee instead of executive employee as it pertains to the pay plan; providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

Akard stated this item corrected an error in the code that referenced the wrong pay plan.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Ordinance 25-43, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney read the title of the ordinance: ORDINANCE 25-43:
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PERSONNEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES SECTION 17-1-3-167, DIVISION 17-1-3, ARTICLE 17-1, CHAPTER 17, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015 BY CORRECTING CODE TO REFERENCE GENERAL EMPLOYEE INSTEAD OF EXECUTIVE EMPLOYEE AS IT PERTAINS TO THE PAY PLAN; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Lane Hooton, Taron Epps, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, George Gill. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

30. An ordinance amending Personnel Policies and Procedures Section 17-1-6-163, Division 17-1-6, Article 17-1, Chapter 17, Lawton City Code, 2015 by clarifying code and the meaning of "immediately prior to separation of city employment"; adding a paragraph stipulating the forfeiture of unused sick leave if proper notice was not given; renumbering of specific paragraphs due to the addition; providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

Akard explained that the ordinance defined “immediately prior to separation” to mean the notice-of-separation period. Akard further stated that sick leave was not authorized during the notice-of-separation period unless waived by the manager due to a serious medical condition. He stated the ordinance added that if an employee fails to provide proper notice of separation, the employee forfeits accrued sick leave, excluding historical sick leave already on the books.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Ordinance 25-44, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney read the title: ORDINANCE 25-44
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PERSONNEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES SECTION 17-1-6-163, DIVISION 17-1-6, ARTICLE 17-1, CHAPTER 17, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015 BY CLARIFYING CODE AND THE MEANING OF "IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO SEPARATION OF CITY EMPLOYMENT; ADDING A PARAGRAPH STIPULATING THE FORFEITURE OF UNUSED SICK LEAVE IF PROPER NOTICE WAS NOT GIVEN; RENUMBERING OF SPECIFIC PARAGRAPHS DUE TO THE ADDITION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Lane Hooton, Taron Epps, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, George Gill. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

31. An ordinance amending Personnel Policies and Procedures Section 17-1-7-173, Division 17-1-7, Article 17-1, Chapter 17, Lawton City Code, 2015 by amending code to say that a witness will be present if an employee is issued a written warning or written reprimand; specifying the timeframe in which an employee suspension must start; amending the processes that must be followed to discipline an employee with either suspension, demotion or termination; Adding a section pertaining to merit step increases after being suspended or demoted; providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

Akard stated the ordinance updated procedures relating to warnings, reprimands, suspensions, demotions, and terminations.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Ordinance 25-45, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney read the title: ORDINANCE 25-45
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PERSONNEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES SECTION 17-1-7-173, DIVISION 17-1-7, ARTICLE 17-1, CHAPTER 17, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015 BY AMENDING CODE TO SAY THAT A WITNESS WILL BE PRESENT IF AN EMPLOYEE IS ISSUED A WRITTEN WARNING OR WRITTEN REPRIMAND; SPECIFYING THE TIMEFRAME IN WHICH AN EMPLOYEE SUSPENSION MUST START; AMENDING THE PROCESSES THAT MUST BE FOLLOWED TO DISCIPLINE AN EMPLOYEE WITH EITHER SUSPENSION, DEMOTION OR

TERMINATION; ADDING A SECTION PERTAINING TO MERIT STEP INCREASES AFTER BEING SUSPENDED OR DEMOTED; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Lane Hooton, Taron Epps, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, George Gill. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

32. An ordinance amending Personnel Policies and Procedures Section 17-1-6-168, Division 17-1-6, Article 17-1, Chapter 17, Lawton City Code, 2015 by amending code to say that an employee that submits to a random drug screen or a for-cause drug screen, whose results are reported as positive, will be placed on administrative leave without pay pending a meeting and will remain on said leave pending any disciplinary action that may be taken; providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

Akard stated the ordinance clarified that if a positive drug test is reported to the City, the employee will be placed on administrative leave without pay until the matter is resolved.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Ordinance 25-46, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney read the title: ORDINANCE 25-46
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PERSONNEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES SECTION 17-1-6-168, DIVISION 17-1-6, ARTICLE 17-1, CHAPTER 17, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015 BY AMENDING CODE TO SAY THAT AN EMPLOYEE THAT SUBMITS TO A RANDOM DRUG SCREEN OR A FOR-CAUSE DRUG SCREEN, WHOSE RESULTS ARE REPORTED AS POSITIVE, WILL BE PLACED ON ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE WITHOUT PAY PENDING A MEETING AND WILL REMAIN ON SAID LEAVE PENDING ANY DISCIPLINARY ACTION THAT MAY BE TAKEN; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Lane Hooton, Taron Epps, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, George Gill. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

33. Consider approving an ordinance pertaining to recreation, amending Section 19-3-302, Article 19-3, Chapter 19 of the Lawton City Code 2015, relating to fishing permits required, by changing the age requiring a permit to fish Lawton lakes Ellsworth and Lawtonka from 16 to 18, providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

Kelvin Ingram, Community Enrichment Deputy Director, stated the ordinance aligned City requirements with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Ordinance 25-47, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney read the title: ORDINANCE 25-47
AN ORDINANCE PERTAINING TO RECREATION, AMENDING SECTION 19-3-302, ARTICLE 19-3, CHAPTER 19, LAWTON CITY CODE 2015, RELATING TO FISHING PERMITS REQUIRED, BY CHANGING THE AGE REQUIRING A PERMIT TO FISH LAWTON LAKES ELLSWORTH AND LAWTONKA FROM 16 TO 18, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Lane Hooton, Taron Epps, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, George Gill. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

34. Consider approving an ordinance pertaining to recreation, amending Section 19-2-207, Article 19-2, Chapter 19 of the Lawton City Code 2015, relating to water sports and boating license expiration to the end of the calendar year, providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

Jim Bonnarens, Lakes Division, explained that the current code made boat license expiration based on date of purchase, which made enforcement difficult because an officer could not determine the month of purchase from the decal. NAME stated the change would make licenses expire on December 31, so a decal year would be valid through the end of that calendar year.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Ordinance 25-48, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney read the title: ORDINANCE 25-48
AN ORDINANCE PERTAINING TO RECREATION, AMENDING SECTION 19-2-207, ARTICLE 19-2, CHAPTER 19, LAWTON CITY CODE 2015, RELATING TO WATER SPORTS AND BOATING, BY CHANGING BOAT LICENSE EXPIRATION TO THE END OF THE CALENDAR YEAR, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DA E.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Lane Hooton, Taron Epps, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, George Gill. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

35. An ordinance pertaining to recreation, amending Section 19-6-606, Article 19-6, Chapter 19, Lawton City Code 2015, relating to golf carts and land recreation vehicles permitting, by changing golf cart/land recreational vehicle permit expiration to the end of the calendar year, restricting golf cart access on the road serving the ponds, providing for severability and establishing an effective date.

Bonnarens explained that the permit expiration change mirrored the boat-license change by converting expiration to the end of the calendar year. He further stated the ordinance restricted golf carts from the pond-area roads serving the tent camping area because there was no identified purpose for golf carts in that location.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Ordinance 25-49, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney read the title: ORDINANCE 25-49
AN ORDINANCE PERTAINING TO RECREATION, AMENDING SECTION 19-6-606, ARTICLE 19-6, CHAPTER 19, LAWTON CITY CODE 2015, RELATING TO GOLF CARTS AND LAND RECREATION VEHICLES PERMITTING, BY CHANGING GOLF CART/LAND RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PERMIT EXPIRATION TO THE END OF THE CALENDAR YEAR, RESTRICTING GOLF CART ACCESS ON THE ROAD SERVING THE PONDS, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Lane Hooton, Taron Epps, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, George Gill. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

36. Consider approving an ordinance modifying the title to Article 20-2, modifying Sections 20-2-202 through 20-2-207, 20-2-209, 20-2-210, and 20-2-212, and creating Section 20-2-212.1, Article 20-2, Chapter 20, Lawton City Code, 2015 pertaining to excavating and/or boring within street rights-of-way or public easements including paving cuts by requiring a paving cut/excavation/boring permit for such work; providing for severability and codification.

Christine James, Planning Director, stated the ordinance was developed in response to issues associated with fiber installation activities. James stated the ordinance would require anyone boring in street rights-of-way or easements to obtain a permit so the City could track these activities.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Ordinance 25-50, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney read the title: ORDINANCE 25-50
AN ORDINANCE MODIFYING THE TITLE TO ARTICLE 20-2, MODIFYING SECTIONS 20-2-202 THROUGH 20-2-207, 20-2-209, 20-2-210, AND 20-2-212, AND CREATING SECTION 20-2-212.1, ARTICLE 20-2, CHAPTER 20, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015 PERTAINING TO EXCAVATING AND/OR BORING WITHIN STREET RIGHTS-OF-WAY OR PUBLIC EASEMENTS INCLUDING PAVING CUTS BY REQUIRING A PAVING CUT/EXCAVATION/BORING PERMIT FOR SUCH WORK, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND CODIFICATION.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Lane Hooton, Taron Epps, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, George Gill. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

37. Consider approving an ordinance creating Division 6-6-3, Article 6-6, Chapter 6, Lawton City Code, 2015 and creating Sections 6-6-3-601, 6-6-3-602, 6-6-3-603, 6-6-3-604, 6-6-3-605, 6-6-3-606 6-6-3-607 and 6-6-3-608 in said Division establishing that an excavation/boring contractor's registration is

required to obtain a paving cut/excavation/boring permit; providing for severability and codification.

Christine James, Planning Director, stated contractors would be required to register with the City so staff could track insurance and identify who is working in the rights-of-way.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Ordinance 25-51, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney read the title: ORDINANCE 25-51
AN ORDINANCE CREATING DIVISION 6-6-3, ARTICLE 6-6, CHAPTER 6, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015 AND CREATING SECTIONS 6-6-3-601, 6-6-3-602, 6-6-3-603, 6-6-3-604, 6-6-3-605, 6-6-3-606, 6-6-3-607 AND 6-6-3-608 IN SAID DIVISION ESTABLISHING THAT AN EXCAVATION/BORING CONTRACTOR'S REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED TO OBTAIN A PAVING CUT/EXCAVATION/BORING PERMIT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND CODIFICATION.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Lane Hooton, Taron Epps, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, George Gill. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

38. Consider approving a resolution amending Appendix A, Schedule of Fees and Charges, and Appendix B, Bond Schedule, Lawton City Code, 2015, pertaining to Article A-20-2, Chapter 20, Paving Cuts and Excavations, by adding a fee for boring permits under or within street rights-of-way or public easements; establishing a fee in Article A-6-6 pertaining to contractor’s registration by creating an annual and renewal fee for such registration; and establishing a surety bond amount for excavation/boring contractors by creating Article B-6-6-3-605.

James stated the title reflected the substance of the resolution.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Resolution 25-238. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

39. Consider approving an ordinance modifying Sections 20-4-402, 20-4-403, and 20-4-405, Article 20-4, and rescinding Figure 1, Chapter 20, Lawton City Code, 2015 pertaining to Revocable Communications Cable and Pipeline Permit by updating where such permits are applied for and modifying that the revocable permit is for an indefinite term until said permit is terminated or revoked; providing for severability.

James stated the ordinance aligned the revocable permit language with other City revocable permit frameworks and made the permits easier to track.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Ordinance 25-52, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney read the title: ORDINANCE 25-52
AN ORDINANCE MODIFYING SECTIONS 20-4-402, 20-4-403, AND 20-4-405, ARTICLE 20-4, AND RESCINDING FIGURE 1, CHAPTER 20, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015 PERTAINING TO REVOCABLE COMMUNICATIONS CABLE AND PIPELINE PERMIT BY UPDATING WHERE SUCH PERMITS ARE APPLIED FOR AND MODIFYING THAT THE REVOCABLE PERMIT IS FOR AN INDEFINITE TERM UNTIL SAID PERMIT IS TERMINATED OR REVOKED; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Lane Hooton, Taron Epps, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, George Gill. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

40. Consider approving a resolution amending Appendix A, Schedule of Fees and Charges, Lawton City Code, 2015, pertaining to Article 20-4, Chapter 20, Revocable Communications Cable and Pipeline Permit, by modifying that the annual fee is a use fee and not a review fee and by establishing an inspection fee for any requested or required inspection outside of the initial construction.

James stated the title reflected the substance of the resolution and remained available for questions.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve Resolution 25-239. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

41. Consider suspending approvals of new fiber installation from any company that has not submitted surveyed record as-built drawings for review and approval in accordance with their agreement/permit, and also consider rescinding any approvals for fiber installation that has yet to be installed until such time the required surveyed record as-built drawings have been submitted and approved.

Jamesstated the action would provide staff enforcement authority to stop approvals or new installations until companies submit required record drawings and are current with their agreements.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to approve suspending approval of new fiber installations as recommended. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

42. Discuss Artifical Intelligence’s CDBG Homelessness Reduction Plan for Lawton Residents and take action as deemed necessary.

Mayor Booker explained that the item originated from discussion at the Homeless

Action Committee, where council members serving on the committee expressed general support for the concept. He stated that staff had used artificial intelligence, including ChatGPT, to explore how a homelessness action plan could be structured using CDBG and HOME funds without unintentionally attracting additional homelessness to the community. Mayor Booker noted that many communities experience increased homelessness after expanding services or shelter capacity and referenced discussions with Salvation Army leadership indicating that expanding shelter space tends to draw more individuals than available resources can support.

Mayor Booker outlined two key policy concepts for Council consideration. First, he proposed limiting the use of CDBG and HOME funds to individuals with a demonstrable connection to Lawton, such as prior residency, schooling, or family ties, while allowing service organizations to continue assisting others without using City-administered federal funds. Second, he proposed that while funds could be used to improve existing shelter facilities, they should not be used to expand shelter capacity, as doing so could attract additional homelessness beyond the City's ability to respond. He emphasized that housing individuals is not a core municipal function and reiterated that the City's primary responsibility is public safety and the protection of neighborhoods.

Williams described constituent concerns about public safety, including incidents of public indecency, squatting in vacant homes, property damage, and neighborhood deterioration. She stated that residents felt unsafe and that the situation had escalated beyond acceptable limits. Mayor Booker acknowledged her comments and read into the record a written statement from Salvation Army Captain Brian Brinley emphasizing the tension between providing assistance and creating long-term dependency. The statement cautioned against becoming a "sustaining community" rather than a "community of opportunity."

Public Comments
David Reeves cautioned about the limitations and risks of relying on generative artificial intelligence, particularly noting documented instances of inaccurate or fictitious legal citations, and urged transparency regarding the AI prompts used.

Jerry Hrnciar described the broader community impacts of homelessness, including strain on charities, hospitals, businesses, and public safety, and expressed concern over theft, abandoned properties, and increased costs to residents and retailers.

Following public comment, Mayor Booker restated the two policy questions before the City Council: whether the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) funds should be limited to individuals with a demonstrated connection to the City of Lawton, and whether those funds should be prohibited from being used to expand shelter capacity. Mayor Booker emphasized that the City's primary municipal responsibility is public safety and stated that expanding shelter capacity without limitations risks attracting additional homelessness beyond the City's available resources.

Ratliff asked how we determine whether someone has a connection to Lawton. He noted that many homeless individuals do not have identification. Mayor Booker responded that there are organizations that will help them get their ID, but until then, no CDBG or HOME funds can be spent on them.

Hooton asked whether the primary objective of the proposed approach was to reduce the overall number of individuals experiencing homelessness. Hooton further asked what steps the City could take to discourage individuals from relocating to Lawton for services, while still supporting effective strategies. Hooton expressed support for the transportation program that provides bus tickets to reconnect individuals with family or support systems and noted concern that increasing resources could unintentionally attract additional homelessness.

Mayor Booker responded that limiting the use of CDBG and HOME funds to individuals with a demonstrated connection to Lawton and prohibiting the use of those funds to expand shelter capacity were intended as tools to address that concern. Mayor Booker stated that while private entities could still construct shelter facilities, City-directed federal funds would not be used to increase capacity. Mayor Booker further explained that upcoming ordinances addressing camping on private property would allow law enforcement to act more quickly to address trespassing, thereby improving public safety and protecting property rights, particularly in areas near children and residential neighborhoods. Mayor Booker stated that these measures were not intended as a complete solution, but as part of a broader strategy.

Epps stated appreciation for the explanation provided and expressed support for the overall approach. Epps emphasized that the intent was not to punish individuals experiencing homelessness, but to acknowledge that homelessness is a complex issue requiring clearly defined roles. Epps stated that the City’s primary responsibility is public safety, while nonprofit organizations and the broader community play a critical role in service delivery and rehabilitation. Epps encouraged citizens to recognize that the issue is being actively addressed, even though it is not a simple or immediate solution.

Mayor Booker referenced a presentation from a homelessness-related training session attended by the City Manager in Oklahoma City, noting materials prepared by Dr. A.J. Griffin, the consultant hired to develop the City’s next five-year CDBG and HOME plan. Mayor Booker stated that the presentation illustrated that public policy alone is often the most distant factor in achieving long-term personal rehabilitation. Mayor Booker explained that the City’s transportation strategy seeks to reconnect individuals with family or close support networks, which are more likely to result in meaningful intervention than street-based social networks. Mayor Booker reiterated that Lawton cannot solve statewide or national homelessness issues by attracting additional individuals through expanded services.

Gill asked for clarification on what the proposed changes were. Mayor Booker then clarified that the two proposed policy directions were to restrict CDBG and HOME funds to individuals with a Lawton connection and to prohibit the use of those funds to expand shelter capacity, while allowing their use for improvements to existing facilities.

Hampton spoke at length regarding conditions in Ward 5, describing repeated incidents involving fires, property damage, theft, and public safety risks associated with chronically homeless encampments. Hampton distinguished between individuals experiencing poverty and those who are chronically homeless, stating that the latter group was responsible for most criminal activity and neighborhood disruption. Hampton described efforts to work with the Salvation Army to reconnect individuals with families, provide access to mental health and substance abuse resources, and reduce dependency on street-based environments. He emphasized that expanding shelter capacity without adequate resources would worsen the problem and stated agreement with Mayor Booker's position that City funds should not be used to increase shelter capacity until sustainable solutions are in place.

Motion by Sherene L Williams, Second by George Gill, to amend the Kids First Homeless Action Plan to only use funds for citizens that have Lawton connection and to have a policy to not add to shelter capacity using CDBG/Home Funds. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

43. Consider approving an ordinance creating Division 16-3-2 in Article 16-3, Chapter 16, Lawton City Code, 2015, and creating Sections16-3-2-201, 16-3-2-202, 16-3-2-203, 16-3-2-204, 16-3-2-205, 16-3-2-206 and 16-3-2-207 in said Division for the purpose of protecting public health, safety and welfare by prohibiting unauthorized camping, providing for the removal of unattended personal property, defining certain terms, providing for enforcement and penalties, regulating the storage of certain personal property recovered from public property within city limits, providing for an administrative appeal process for property removal, providing for exceptions, providing for coordination with social services; repealing and reserving Section 16-3-1-326 of Division 16-3-1, Article 16-3, Chapter 16, Lawton City Code, 2015; providing for severability, codification and declaring an emergency.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Taron Epps, to approve Ordinance 25-53, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only.

The Acting City Attorney read the title: ORDINANCE 25-53
AN ORDINANCE PERTAINING TO OFFENSES AND CRIMES CREATING DIVISION 16- 3-2 IN ARTICLE 16-3, CHAPTER 16, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015, CREATING SECTIONS 16-3-2-201, 16-3-2-202, 16-3-2-203, 16-3-2-204, 16-3-2-205, 16-3-2-206 AND 16-3-2-207 IN SAID DIVISION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROTECTING PUBLIC HEAL TH, SAFETY AND WELFARE BY PROHIBITING UNAUTHORIZED CAMPING, PROVIDING FOR THE REMOVAL OF UNATTENDED PERSONAL PROPERTY, DEFINING CERTAIN TERMS, PROVIDING FOR ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES, REGULATING THE STORAGE OF CERTAIN PERSONAL PROPERTY RECOVERED

FROM PUBLIC PROPERTY WITHIN CITY LIMITS, PROVIDING ·FOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL PROCESS FOR PROPERTY REMOVAL, PROVIDING FOR EXCEPTIONS; PROVIDING FOR COORDINATION WITH SOCIAL SERVICES; REPEALING AND RESERVING SECTION 16-3-1-326 OF DIVISION 16-3-1, ARTICLE 16-3, CHAPTER 16, LAWTON CITY CODE, 2015; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, CODIFICATION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Sherene L Williams, to declare an emergency. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

44. Discuss Section 7 of Council Policy 01-06 as it relates to committees and take action as deemed necessary.

Warren stated he would read prepared remarks regarding committee and appointment procedures. Warren stated that a core issue was that a newly elected council member could serve a full first term without being able to make certain appointments, leaving them subject to predecessor appointments. He stated this mattered because citizens elected the current council member, not the predecessor, and because substantial City work occurs through boards, committees, commissions, and authorities. Warren stated the proposal would also protect newly elected officials from pressure to retain appointments they did not make.

Warren stated he intended to direct staff to bring back both an ordinance and a policy addressing appointments.He stated the ordinance would create a stronger legal foundation, provide for public input, and ensure reforms would persist beyond a single tenure. Warren described a proposed policy concept that the City Council would not receive nominations or make appointments of any appointee who had served more than nine consecutive years on the same board, commission, committee, authority, or similar position, without a three-year break in service.

Mayor Booker raised concern about the phrase “any other appointed position,” questioning whether it could be interpreted to include elected officials. Mayor Booker requested that language be clarified or stricken.

Warren stated that the provision was intended to apply to boards, commissions, committees, and similar appointed bodies rather than elected officials.

Blazek-Scherler suggested using the term “nominees” or “board nominees” to clarify the provision applies to individuals nominated to boards and similar bodies.

Warren described an ordinance concept that appointee terms would follow the nominating elected official, such that when the elected official’s term ends, the successor would have the ability to make appointments, subject to the nine-year limitation.

Motion by Randy Warren, Second by Sherene L Williams, to direct staff to prepare both a policy and an ordinance, and bring them back for council consideration at the next meeting, with the following provisions: Policy Provision: The city council will not receive nominations of any individual to a board, commission, committee, or authority if that individual has served more than nine (9) consecutive years on the same body, unless they have laid off for at least one full term of three (3) years; Ordinance Provision: The terms of appointees will follow the term of the nominating elected official.
When an elected official's term ends, all of their appointees' terms will also end. The incoming elected official will then have the opportunity to nominate and fill those seats, including reappointing prior members if they are eligible under the nine-year service limitation.

Mayor Booker requested a friendly amendment, stating that board nominations should not be pulled for discussion based on citizen objections to a council member's nominees and that elected officials should be the focus of political accountability rather than nominees. Mayor Booker requested the policy include that board nominations would not be pulled for discussion, except potentially by council members.

Warren and Williams accepted the amendment.

VOTE ON AMENDED MOTION: AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

## Staff Reports

45. Acceptance of Healthy Kids Initiative Grant from Play & Park Structure and Approval to Proceed with Park Improvement Phase III.

Stricken.

46. Discuss component unit audits and take action as deemed necessary.

Kristen Huntley, Acting Finance Director, introduced the component unit audit discussion and stated the item was included to allow Council to discuss and direct staff as needed. Mayor Booker stated that at the prior meeting, Council directed the City Manager to be directly involved.

Mayor Booker asked the City Manager whether he had become directly involved and whether positive movement had occurred regarding delinquent component unit audits.

Ratliff stated he had become directly involved and that positive movement was occurring.

## Executive Session

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to enter into executive session. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.
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The City Council entered Executive Session at 9:01PM and reconvened in Open Session at 9:47PM. No action was taken in Executive Session, in compliance with the Oklahoma Open Meetings Act.

Motion by George Gill, Second by Allan Hampton, to return to open session. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

47. Consideration, discussion and possible action to enter into executive session to hold confidential communications between the City Council of the City of Lawton and its attorney concerning the settling of certain claims in pending litigation (*City of Lawton v. Purdue Pharma L.P., et al,* Case No. 1:19-op-45500-DAP, pending in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, and related litigation), including potential resolution of certain claims against Purdue Pharma LP and its affiliated entities in Purdue Pharma LP's bankruptcy case (Case No. 7:19-bk-23649 pending in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York), members of the Sackler family (the "Sackler's"), Alvogen, Inc., Amneal Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Apotex, Inc., Hikma Pharmaceuticals USA, Inc., Indivior Inc., Mylan Pharmacetucials Inc., Sandoz, Inc., Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, Inc., and Zydus Pharmaceuticals, related to lawsuits against pharmaceutical supply chain participants of opioid prescription drugs, and taking appropriate action in open session, including possible authorization to settle claims, the disclosure of which may seriously impair the litigation if known by public disclosure as allowed by 25 O.S. § 307(B)(4).

Motion by Lane Hooton, Second by Randy Waren, to consider approval of Resolution 25-240 to include: (a) approving voting to accept the Thirteenth Amended Joint Chapter 11 Plan of Reorganization of Purdue and Its Affiliated Debtors in Participation in Case No. 19-23649 pending in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York, and authorizing and directing its legal counsel vote to accept the Plan via master ballot or otherwise, (b) approving voting to accept and participate in the Governmental Entities Settlement Agreement (the "GESA") dated June 17, 2025, and authorizing the Mayor of the City of Lawton, or the Mayor's designee, to execute the Subdivision Participation Form for the City of Lawton's participation in the GESA, and approval of the Purdue State-Subdivision Agreement as it pertains to the Plan and the GESA, and (c) approving voting to accept and participate in the settlement agreements with Alvogen, Inc., Amneal Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Apotex, Inc., Hikma Pharmaceuticals USA, Inc., Indivior Inc., Mylan Pharmacetucials Inc., Sandoz, Inc., Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, Inc., and Zydus Pharmaceuticals, and authorizing the Mayor of the City of Lawton, or the Mayor's designee, to execute the Subdivision Participation Form for the City of Lawton's participation in the the settlements with Alvogen, Inc., Amneal Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Apotex, Inc., Hikma Pharmaceuticals USA, Inc., Indivior Inc., Mylan Pharmacetucials Inc., Sandoz, Inc., Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, Inc., and Zydus Pharmaceuticals, and approval of the State-Subdivision Agreement as it pertains to the general manufacturer settlements. AYE: George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren, Taron Epps, Lane Hooton. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

48. Pursuant to Section 307B.1, Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, consider convening in executive session to review the employment of John Ratliff as City Manager, and in open session take other action as necessary.

No Action Taken.

## 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.

David Tyler stated that he has maintained Lawton Public Schools ball fields for 24 years, including 21 years as a volunteer, and that for the last three years he has worked on the Lawton High/Central ball fields after being hired by Jack Hanna. Tyler stated that he also serves on the parks committee and that, prior to construction of the water park, he warned that there would be prairie dog migration across McMahon Drive and that the City needed to stay on top of it to prevent prairie dogs from reaching the ball fields.

Tyler stated his purpose was to stop prairie dogs from crossing McMahon Drive. He stated he researched barriers online and spoke with Dan McDonald, a wildlife biologist, who confirmed that barriers are effective at preventing migration. Tyler emphasized he was not trying to contain prairie dogs generally, but to keep them from moving across the roadway.

Tyler stated that Central Middle School had abandoned its ball fields since July 25 due to prairie dog damage. He stated that photographs of the damage did not show “ankle breakers,” describing deep holes that are difficult to see and could cause injuries. Tyler stated that if a child enters the field, there is a risk of injury and potential exposure to diseases associated with prairie dog feces, and he noted that one photograph showed feces around the dugout area. Tyler stated he had notified the Parks Department in May, June, and July. He stated that after his knee replacement on July 23, he learned from Jay Dilva, the athletic director at Central, that the ball fields had been abandoned because of the prairie dog problem.

Tyler requested assistance from the Parks Department and stated he was willing to work with the City to develop a barrier. He stated that the barrier only needs to be approximately three feet high and explained that prairie dogs rely on line of sight to watch for predators; he stated that blocking their line of sight would deter them from entering the area. Tyler stated that, at a September 16 meeting, he was told the Parks Department had priorities other than Lawton Public Schools, and he reiterated that the children are at risk and he needs help.

Mayor Booker thanked Tyler for his comments and directed him to coordinate with the City Manager regarding the barrier options he had researched.

## 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 Allan Hampton, to adjourn. AYE: Lane Hooton, Taron Epps, George Gill, Allan Hampton, Bob Weger, Sherene L Williams, Randy Warren. NAY: None. Motion Passed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:57PM.