

DOWNTOWN LAWTON ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
FEBRUARY 17, 2026

Minutes of the Downtown Lawton Architectural Review Committee special meeting held February 17, 2026, in the 3rd Floor Conference Room, 212 SW 9th Street, Lawton, Oklahoma.

The agenda for the meeting was posted on the bulletin board in City Hall in compliance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act.

The meeting was called to order at 1:57 P.M. by John Purcell.

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT Darren Medders
 John Purcell
 Allee Passmore

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jesse Cross
 Evan Watson

ALSO PRESENT: Christine James, Planning Director
 Kameron Good, Senior Planner
 Christina Ryans-Huffer, Planner I
 Jennifer Wynne, Recording Secretary
 Richard Rogalski, LEDC/LEDA

The meeting has established a quorum and was posted according to the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act, 25 O.S. 301-314.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Consider approving minutes from the special meeting on January 20, 2026.**

Motion by Medders, Second by Passmore to approve the minutes from the special meeting from January 20, 2026, with floor amendments. **Aye: Medders, Passmore, Purcell. **Nay:** None **Motion Passed 3-0****

2. **Consider approving a Certificate of Architectural Conformance for the proposed Best Buy signage located at 449 NW 2nd Street, Lawton, OK 73507 and take action as necessary.**

John Purcell: Item number 2 consider approving a Certificate of Architectural Conformance for the proposed Best Buy signage located at 449 NW 2nd Street, Lawton, OK 73507 and take action if necessary.

Christina Ryans-Huffer: This is the second part of the proposed Best Buy. This is just for the signage. Back in January you had approved the front elevations, the Human Blue, that is their trademark color. This is just for the signage. As you remember on that from January it was specifying everything, but it did say at the very bottom "did not include the signage." So, Sign Dynamics has come in and has applied for the sign permit and so that's why we're bringing it to you today. It is the installation of Best Buy standard illuminated channel letters. So, it's very common. I think we've all seen that. So, this is what we're asking for you to review and approve.

Allee Passmore: Move to approve the sign for Best Buy the Certificate of Architectural Conformance for the proposed Best Buy.

Darren Medders: Second.

John Purcell: Any further discussion?

Allee Passmore: I do want to just ask because this is just their regular sign, right?

Christine James: Yes.

Allee Passmore: I thought at one point we said if it was their nationwide —

Christine James: That was only a replacement.

Allee Passmore: I see. This is there. OK.

Christina Ryans-Huffer: Yes.

Christine James: So, if Best Buy if was already there, and they were going to upgrade, and they had changed their logo or whatever then we could do it. But this is a brand-new sign. So, that's why it's coming to you today.

Allee Passmore: OK. That's all I wanted to know.

Christine James: Yes ma'am.

Motion by Purcell, Second by Medders to approve a Certificate of Architectural Conformance for the proposed Best Buy signage located at 449 NW 2nd Street, Lawton, OK 73507 and take action as necessary. **Aye:** Purcell, Passmore, Medders **Nay:** None
Motion Passed 3-0

Commissioner's Reports or Comments

None

Secretary's Report

Kameron Good: Secretary's report. I just wanted to note that Southern Maid Donuts is open and operational on a temporary C/O.

Allee Passmore: Oh good.

Kameron Good: They have some conditions that they still got to complete, but they're making donuts.

Christine James: OK. Landscaping is one of the conditions that they're still lacking, but because of the season, stuff like that, will be pushed off just a little bit longer before they get their landscaping in.

John Purcell: OK.

Christine James: So, that's it.

Kameron Good: Other than that, nothing else has changed for DLARC.

Audience Participation

Richard Rogalski: I have audience participation. I just want to say thank you because I can use the sales tax from Best Buy. The sales tax. Yes, it's in the TIF district. Best Buy is in TIF 2.

John Purcell: Oh, yes, it is.

Richard Rogalski: And we didn't have to give anything for it. It's just a freebie yeah.

John Purcell: Yes.

Darren Medders: Good, even better so.

John Purcell: Have we heard any more about the grocery store or is that a dead issue?

Richard Rogalski: I mean they renewed their purchase agreement. So, it's still in the works. They deposited another \$5000 this week, but you know I'm trying to get us a call up. This month there was, and I'm not sure if it was when exactly it was this month, but that was when the ICSC in San Antonio. We're supposed to touch base after that and then see where they're at. But they had the brand. They had an agreement with the brand, that's why they got the purchase agreement, and then the brand kind of backed off. They have their own internal issues. So, then they're looking for another brand and there is some other stuff going on. There is stuff going on all over the place.

Kameron Good: You don't want to say the brand?

Richard Rogalski: Huh? Yes.

Kameron Good: You don't want to say the brands?

Richard Rogalski: It's called "grocery." Big yellow sign that says grocery. No, it's just I can't say. It's in public meetings. But they're working it. There is no sure deal there. But they're working it pretty hard. It's better than no one working it, right?

Kameron Good: We would be very happy if they did.

Richard Rogalski: Oh yes. Everybody in the whole world. All of Lawton would be cheering. I mean we really have a food desert in this whole downtown area. It would just be great to have a really nice grocery store. We would be full of people from Elgin, right and left. Everything from Fort Sill and it just be awesome.

Kameron Good: Well, everybody that commutes through Lawton and through Elgin. That's their avenue right on 2nd Street.

Richard Rogalski: And this is a grocery store with gas. Because we need gas sales downtown too.

Darren Medders: So, is that part of the negotiations that you know on like Bricktown Brewery. You know, we kind of went above and beyond on that negotiation to get that restaurant here. Are we willing to go above and beyond to get that grocery store and gas station here?

Richard Rogalski: Yeah, well I don't want to say how far, but yeah. I mean, that's kind of my job to work those deals. But like if you come to me with something and you ask for something. I'm not going to offer something more than that. Right? Now all we have right now is we are reinvesting the purchase price. Which they paid us. They actually bought the property. We're reinvesting it in public improvements, and improvements in the area. So, basically, Ferris Road has to be extended in Railroad. Railroad has to be done. There may be some sewer improvements or something like that. We're going to reinvest that property, that money, into there. I think we're going to go and demo the old concrete from the old Coca-Cola factory. So, there are certain things we will do. But what developers typically are going to come down and say, OK we're ready to sign a deal if you can give me that number right there. And in fact, I have another developer in town that has a number that they're trying to get. And it's just crazy. Crazy talk. So, we're just going to keep working

on them until you go. But in this one, remember the difference is this is our TIF district. So, I can actually do the math and see what kind of revenue we're going to get, right? And it's guaranteed we're going to get that revenue kind of. I mean, it's a projection, but you know we're going to get that revenue. So, it's not just that the City gets more revenue somewhere and we don't know where to catch it all. You will catch that specifically because it's in a TIF district. So, it's more of a mathematical thing instead of just a wish thing. But yeah, there is some stuff going on. I think that Lawton is doing a very good job getting a lot of national press because of what they're doing in the FISTA and all their building around the community. And you know things like Firehawk coming to town and that kind of stuff. It's a lot of national, positive press and so people are looking at us really closer now. I feel like we're on the edge of a boom. Where we're going to get over this top and we'll get the grocery store. I mean the fact that we got Best Buy. There were two people competing for that space. Two companies competing for that space. So, there was another person that was trying to get it. He got outbid by Best Buy. So, when's that happening in Lawton?

Kameron Good: So, when's the other group going to build a building? Or did they not get the space?

Richard Rogalski: I don't know.

Kameron Good: I know this is kind of part of more LURA and not DLARC, are you able to give any update on what FISTA has going on, or what kind of numbers they have as far as who's in their building?

Richard Rogalski: Well, I mean, I was at the council meeting the other night and Christy gave a very long presentation because my item was after it. That's why I thought it was very long. Might've only been ten minutes but seemed long. But, no, she has 163 employees at the FISTA, according to her presentation, and it's 90 million dollars in revenue. That nebulous kind of revenue, that cluster right, for in terms of payroll and other jobs that are created by those jobs. In every primary job creates three to four to five other jobs. And so, their record review model she said came up with 90 million dollars. A lot of money going into it.

Darren Medders: Sorry to cut you off there, but as a business owner, we're not seeing the people come in though. You know, I talked to real estate people all the time. How many people you've sold houses for FISTA? So that 163, I think it's just people moving, just shuffling. New people come in the store all the time, and we ask them what brings you down? Most of the time it's just relocating because Oklahoma is cheaper, or moving to be closer to family, grandkids and stuff. We're not seeing the people you know. Like you said, 90 million dollars. Can we count how many people have moved here? We got to start saying how much we're going to spend before we start seeing the influx of people.

Richard Rogalski: Awesome. I'm not on the FISTA but I can tell you that, OK. Let's talk about traditional industry. Just this year I've been to three site visits with traditional industry with traditional numbers of jobs, right. Where they came to town to look at the property, and we had two more before the end of March, this is unprecedented kind of activity. At least two of them are an offshoot. Or at least two of them are looking at us more closely because of our capturing of Firehawk. Well, what we did for Firehawk. Meaning that we

successfully got them zoned and approved, and we did it without a lot of fuss and muss. And the fact that they're here. So, other parts of those assemblies want to come to town. And let's also go back to Firehawk. First step in Lawton was at the FISTA. So, very first company that from the FISTA that if you built, well haven't built yet, they're planning on a manufacturing facility in Lawton. Then we already have two people that have visited this month that are related to that. Either because we got it done and they're impressed by that, or because it's energetics, you know.

Darren Medders: Sure.

Richard Rogalski: Or they're another part of the whole puzzle. When we have a third one that we did a site visit, or another company did a site visit. I don't know maybe three or four months ago, they came to town. Today they picked Lawton. 66-million-dollar CapEx. I think in the 40-to-50-point range. Not a huge company, but that's a big deal, right? That's another announcement, another positive thing for Lawton. And of course we're still a long way from getting there. I still got to work out the agreement with them. We've got to, you know, they got to get their financing side done. You know, the big thing. And a lot of people will come up and say, yeah, we love Lawton and send me a letter. I'm ready to go and they don't have the money. So, it's just they're just trying to use us to get more money. But this is the case that this is the firm that's probably has their money lined up. So, I feel pretty good about them. There's a lot of cool stuff going on. Those are the kinds you will see. You will see numbers from that, but it does take time, you know. It's got the first part of Firehawk will get built, will get finished, sometime in 2026 this year. But so, they don't have any employees until after that, right?

Kameron Good: Right.

Richard Rogalski: And then they'll do more construction and they'll get more employees, but it just takes time to get all that stuff going in. And each group, this group, that I just mentioned that said they picked Lawton probably still two years away from having employees, right? Take some time. But, if you never plant a tree, it's never going to grow. And I think we have some trees that are growing right now that we'll see some come up.

Kameron Good: The Anechoic Chamber downtown is underway and it's, I don't know if you've been on the south side of the mall and drive down F.

Richard Rogalski: It's much bigger than I expected.

Kameron Good: It's bigger than I expected. Just from the plans, and looking through the plans, and approving the plans. And you then you go see it on site and you're like oh, wow. That's way taller than I would have envisioned. But it's on the way.

Richard Rogalski: So the FISTA is a different kind of employment model, right, or different kind of industrial model. When you're talking about innovation, you know, you end up with a few people there with a footprint and you're just trying to just attract them to build something in Lawton. A little like the center out Great Plains, what's it called? You'll start your jobs.

Christine James: Incubator.

Richard Rogalski: Incubator, yeah, like a business incubator there. I mean, you don't intend them to produce a whole lot, but you want them to do is get going and get a footprint in town. That's actually the same thing with what we do, in a very tiny way, in the farmers market, right? People start doing something, and then they get a footprint, and they say yeah, no, I have a real business. But yes, I understand where you're coming from. I really do. It's hard to equate, you know.

Darren Medders: It's hard to look at FISTA and see all the staff and not see any benefits coming from, so as of yet. You know, with nobody here moving into town and doing the things that we wanted FISTA to increase.

Richard Rogalski: So, I actually ran into Larry Mitchell, not last week —

Christine James: A couple of weeks ago.

Richard Rogalski: At Chief Smith's funeral. You know, Larry Mitchell was the City Manager. You were Mayor at the time weren't you?

John Purcell: Mm-hmm.

Richard Rogalski: Yes, City Manager that started this whole downtown project right. So, and that was what, 2004-5-6? Something of that range.

John Purcell: Somewhere in there, yes.

Richard Rogalski: When he started it, right? And if we didn't get open until '13, and here we are. I mean, I am positive revenue. Remember I was able to pay you back last year. I mean, I couldn't have paid you back for that, right? There was no money to pay you back. And now I can pay you back. Now we have the Best Buy just approved without us having to do a thing, right? So, it takes time and what Larry said. You know Bricktown? People don't realize Bricktown just sat there and did nothing for years until it took off, right? They invested the money and then like OK, you know, what's going to happen? What's going to happen?

Kameron Good: Bricktown as in Bricktown, Oklahoma City?

Richard Rogalski: Yes.

Kameron Good: Not Bricktown the brewery.

Richard Rogalski: Not Bricktown Brewery. The real Bricktown in Oklahoma City. And then suddenly it took off, and then it becomes a genius idea, right? I mean it was very close to being a terrible idea. People were like, oh this is the worst thing I've ever heard. We wasted all our money and then boom! Oh, this is the greatest thing that ever happened.

Kameron Good: Same thing with this Scissortail Development. Scissortail Development in Oklahoma City is the same way.

Richard Rogalski: Same thing. But, that one you kind of knew what they were doing by then. Bricktown was bold because, I mean, Oklahoma City was not a great place. But in that area was not a great place before that. And now you kind of forget when it once been reshaped you forget what it looked like. I have a presentation about 2nd Street Project. I

have a presentation of what it looked like before we acquired the property and built that. And you forget how bad it was. Of course, you only have to look on one side, another side of the street now. You get a good taste of it. But so now that we have positive revenue, God forbid we get that grocery store; we can start looking at doing the next step. Which was always the next step. Whatever fifteen years ago when we started. It was always there but we just couldn't take it until it gets rolling. And I think that the FISTA is a little bit of the sore thing. The same way is that it's been an investment. We've gotten one manufacturer from it but, it could be that maybe it's all that's ever going to get. Maybe that's it. Or it gets us rolling and we just become crazy and also, don't forget, that one of the reasons. Another thing about the FISTA when in the original concept, remember when I was kind of here when and I was kind of helping him out when they did it, is it provides an incredible anchor for Fort Sill. It provides a lot of graph proofing. Because of the investment we've made, and the government's made as well. We have. And all the generals that are coming into Lawton. All the people from other countries have come to Lawton for these FIRES conferences and it just really anchors us and makes us a big deal. And so, I don't know if it's ever going to be a true job producer like that. But it has benefits that are a little harder to pin down. But they're big. I really do.

Darren Medders: Good.

Richard Rogalski: Spent a lot of money there.

John Purcell: Yes.

Kameron Good: Thanks Richard.

Adjournment

Motion by Medders, Second by Passmore to adjourn the meeting. **Aye:** Passmore, Medders, Purcell. **Nay:** None **Motion Passed 3-0**

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:17 P.M.

These meeting minutes were approved by the DLARC members at their meeting on


2024-03-17

Evan Watson

Chairman

Downtown Lawton Architectural Review Committee