



City of Lawton
Lawton Enhancement
Trust Authority

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

Minutes

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

3:00 PM

Lawton City Hall
3rd Floor Conference Room

Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call

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

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Dwain Baxter, Ted Symuleski, Charles Owens, Barry Ezerski, Lane Hooton, Addie Smith, Dwight Tanner, Joshua Hale, *Onreka Johnson

ABSENT: Johnny Owens (excused), Chris Rabon (excused)

OTHERS PRESENT: Dewayne Burk, Deputy City Manager; Caitlin Gatlin, Communications & Marketing; Neal Kirmer, Communications & Marketing; Tammy Branstetter, City Clerk's Office; Garrett Lam, City Attorney's Office; Kelvin Ingram, Community Enrichment and Parks & Recreation Deputy Director / LETA Executive Director; Larry Parks, Community Enrichment and Parks & Recreation Director; John Saville, Financial Services; Kaitlin Nunley, Financial Services; Tiffiney Dimery, Ward 4 Councilperson; Dr. Rosemary Bellino, Former City Council Member and former President of Lawton Beautiful, Inc; Matina Davis, Citizen of the Community

*Arrived at 3:04 PM

Chairman Ezerski said we want to welcome Joshua Hale, our new member who is representing Ward 1. We will also have a new Ward 4 representative, and that's Onreka Johnson. She's running a little bit late. She'll be here in a little bit, so I'm excited to have her join our group as well.

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

Chairman Ezerski verified with Branstetter that the meeting notice and agenda were posted in accordance with the Oklahoma Open Meetings Act.

Introduction of Guests

Guests of the meeting introduced themselves.

Reports

1. Receive a report from Parks and Recreation regarding departmental projects and monthly updates and take action as deemed necessary.

Kelvin Ingram, Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation, gave a report on departmental projects and monthly updates.

Ingram said I'm sitting in for my director, Mr. Larry Parks, who had to step out. So I'm well-versed in what we need to discuss. Our first thing we'd like to discuss is in reference to the Dunbar Elementary School Memorial. As you can see, I've passed out a few flyers there. What you have before you is version number nine. That's a small update from what you may have in the packet there. Again, this is in line with the background. Just to re-brief you, it's a critical role in our city's educational history. And it brings together community support, our cultural continuity, and also a significant civil resilience achievement for our former students, families, and our broader community.

Ingram said in accordance with our local historians, community organizations, and former Dunbar alumni, again, we're proposing installing a permanent memorial monument here within the Lemuel Harkey Park near the school site. And where that school is geographically located is on the south side of Ward 7, right in the vicinity of the Lawton Municipal Airport. It's on the corner of SW Douglas and 17th Street. As you can see on that lot there, the school lot is already demoed. However, right across from the street on the south side is Lemuel Harkey Park. And where that monument goes is right by the turn-in going into the park. So it can be seen from the school right there in front of the park. It's going to be more or less recognizing three key components of that monument.

Ingram said what you see there is an update on how it's going to look. We have all the materials. About 90% of the material is headstone. We're asking to move forward with this project, subject to any questions and comments.

Chairman Ezerski said we do have an agenda item for that, so we'll vote for it then.

Ingram said we're finishing up with our phase two — as you can see, Mocine Park, Gooch Acres, 35th Division — the finalization of phase two of our Lawton City Parks is being wrapped up as we speak. Also, what you're going to start seeing done in phase three, that's with Harmon Park and the Lee West splash pad. Again, we're getting permitting for that over at the Lee West splash pad — the park has just opened. Also, on the 18th, the Thunder Foundation is going to do another dedication for the basketball court there, so you should start seeing advertising for that as well.

Ingram said Eastside Park, Great Plains, Kathy Newcombe, Stephens, Harkey Park, Patriot and Putney Park will be in the rounds of phase three.

Caitlin Gatlin, Communications and Marketing, said I actually think that's the 28th.

Ingram said I stand corrected — the 28th of February will be the rededication of the basketball court. They were not able to make it during the Lee West ceremony, so they want to take this time to do a special stand-alone for this basketball court. So I ask each one of us if you can gather the time and support, come out there and support us for that.

Gatlin said this will be publicized a little bit more very soon — we're waiting for information to come back from the foundation.

2. Receive a report from the Executive Director regarding ongoing LETA projects and take action as deemed necessary.

Kelvin Ingram, LETA Executive Director, gave a report regarding ongoing LETA projects.

Ingram said the 2025 Holiday in the Park recovery at Elmer Thomas is underway. We're working due diligence with the Holiday in the Park Committee and also their various contract supports, such as Teen Challenge, to get our park back to its state. We gave a deadline of mid-February. We're going to try to do as much as possible throughout this week and next to get our park recovered so we can recover from the 2025 Holiday Park and move over to other activities. Things that we're going to start taking down are the Santa Hat and the big large items. We'll be moving things around so we can start to see an aesthetic look back into our park again.

Ingram said Safe and Clean Neighborhoods submitted a report as well. This should also be in your packet, and we'll be able to talk about that in some detail. Park improvements, again, we just talked about. Permits are being issued for the Lee West Splash pad.

Ingram said the Veterans Brick Sidewalk Project is underway. I plan to log on to this website to get a grasp of how this process works with the engraving. I've done an on-site recon on how this looks, how those sidewalks look, and it's like certain areas inside this walkway from the Fort Sill Apache convenience store going east to Flower Mound, as you walk along that sidewalk, there are paved sidewalks, but there's an etched-in brick layout. So what you'll start hearing from me as well is getting that started. I understand there have been various points of contact on getting bricks purchased and paid so we can move forward with this project.

Ingram said I've had a series of bounce arounds from points of contact with the ASEZ mural project from the last meeting. I had Deacon David Maldonado come in to talk about the project that goes under the underpass on F Street and 2nd Avenue. What we had to do was contact the railroad company through various contacts. So I'm on contact number four now, being bounced around, getting in touch with the right person. I did get supposedly the right person — I think it's Stillwater Railroad. There's an application process. It's not that they don't want us paying, it's a liability. That's basically what it boils down to — it's just a liability. My request for information to him is on the application there is a fee. My goal is we need to get this waived so we can move forward with this

project. I've not been in touch with Deacon Maldonado in reference to this until I get all that information.

Tanner said the railroad is the one that owns the bridge, it's not the city's property, correct?

Ingram said that is correct.

Ingram said we've conducted this morning our in-progress review number two for the 9-11 project with Ms. Leday-Mauney, our city engineers, our Director of Arts and Humanities, Mr. Parks and myself over at the Public Safety building. What's going to happen is we're leaning towards putting it in front of the front door at the front of the Public Safety building. We were on the ground today to discuss that. What we do owe, just as an update, but also the Planning Commission and then take it to the City Council, but we're not there yet now. CDBL, who was also there, owes us a sketch, groundwork and costs that are associated. So we're not ready for that. So what I foresee, not only with the ASEZ mural project and this one, we're not trying to kick the can, but there's due process we must do before we commit to these projects.

Ingram said we are also underway with the other project at East Side Park. I know that's more driven by the Lawton Youth Sports Trust Authority, but expect to hear more about this very soon.

Chairman Ezerski said do we have a date for the Trash Off yet?

Ingram said I'll get that information for you.

Chairman Ezerski said it's usually at the end of April or the first of May. We usually help sponsor t-shirts for that.

3. Receive Monthly Ward Updates from Trustees and take action as deemed necessary.

No updates were given.

Business Items

1. Consider approving the minutes of the January 14, 2026, meeting.

A copy of the minutes of the January 14, 2026, meeting may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

Motion by Hooton, **Second** by Symuleski, to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2026, meeting. **AYE:** Hooton, Baxter, Smith, Symuleski, Tanner, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

2. Consider approving the list of expenses for the period covering January 7, 2026 – February 6, 2026.

John Saville, Financial Services, presented the list of expenses for the period covering January 7, 2026 – February 6, 2026. A copy of the list of expenses may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

Saville said as you can see, there's nothing there. It's been a quiet month as far as the financials go. I did take a look just before I came to the meeting today. There was no activity so far in February, so we have nothing in the pipeline going on, so we really don't have anything to approve.

No action was taken on this item.

3. Consider approving the Financial Statements for the month of January 2026.

John Saville, Financial Services, presented the Financial Statements for the month of January 2026. A copy of the Financial Statements may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

Saville said I have with me today Kaitlin Nunley. She will be sitting in to report next month.

Saville said the cash is \$342,342.83, and as you can see, that's split out by different categories there. The change in net cash from last month to this month is a decrease of \$7,110.60. That is \$4,479 in court fines that came in. We had \$400 in Dunbar donations over the course of a couple of payments on that. And then \$11,989.60, that was all reported last month, but the check actually cleared, so it came out of the bank in January.

Saville said I will note, I've heard some discussion, and I don't know whether it was with staff or in this meeting, but there's been talk about the Veterans Center sidewalk brick project. And I did notice that that's broken out as one of your itemized items there, showing \$18,707.80. That hasn't changed since I've been reporting on this since I came to the city. So, I'm just bringing that up that that's money that's there.

Chairman Ezerski said we've had people make donations to that. I guess we're just waiting on the bricks.

Saville said I just heard that in conversation somewhere, but I just want to have that in front of you, that there's \$18,000 there, earmarked for that, and it's not on the project list or anything, but it's there. So, again, that gets us to the \$342,342.83. That is your cash. We actually have no payables, no receivables, no activity at all. So we just have the fund balance restricted at \$423,102, and then the under restricted at \$45,677.39. Net loss for the year is \$35,082.19. Those reserved and unreserved haven't changed since I've been reporting. I haven't really taken a deep dive into that. I can. It's just never changed. It's been static. So I'd like to go find out maybe what comprises that.

Saville said on the income statement, the only items of income are \$4,479 in court fines and then the miscellaneous revenue I mentioned on the cash change. So those two items together do represent our monthly net income of \$4,879.

Chairman Ezerski said have we submitted for reimbursement for the hotel motel tax?

Saville said not since we did our initial reimbursement request.

Chairman Ezerski said we've had several expenses that should be reimbursable.

Saville said well, they might be. We'll look at that once we're finished with the tracker. The amount that we have available for beautification that we can pull as of right now, and that will be in your packet as well, the amount we could pull is \$22,158.63. We've pulled \$53,000. We pulled that back in November. The overall for the year to date has been \$147,460, but that's not what's come in. Based on the trend, we're underwater about \$17,565 based on the current trend through seven months. It's kind of ugly.

Chairman Ezerski said as far as what's coming in to the hotel motel tax?

Saville said correct. What's come in actually is \$75,771 through seven months of the fiscal year. If you take that \$147,460 and make that a monthly number, if we're tracking on track, we would've received \$86,018. So we're tracking underwater as we go. But what I've been told by other people that are knowledgeable about this is that it tends to kind of sink lower, but then it can bounce back. So that doesn't mean we're going to be looking at that necessarily at a dire amount; it's just where we're at seven months in.

Chairman Ezerski said have we applied for the \$22,000?

Saville said we have not yet, because there haven't been many expenses here lately. So I'll go back and take another look, but we pulled quite a few in November. I know that one \$11,000 one that I just reported on, that's probably one that we could submit. So that would be about half the amount that we have available to pull. That's something we certainly can do.

Saville said while I'm looking at that page, since we're on this, I did go ahead and look at the other two. We have allocations for Holiday in the Park as well as Freedom Festival fireworks. So I did pull and look at the actual numbers through January. For Holiday in the Park, we have been allocated a total amount of \$19,803.64. Again, that's at the bottom of this hotel-motel tax page that's in your packet. The total allocation was \$38,540. Then for fireworks, the total amount allocated through January is \$71,938.50 against a total allocated amount of \$140,000. We've had no expenses whatsoever come across related to those two topics.

Chairman Ezerski said last month, we approved giving \$90,000 to MWR on post since they're going to be the ones hosting the Freedom Festival this year. Just to refresh

everyone's memory, because Elmer Thomas Park is going to be under construction with the amphitheater and so forth, everything that's going to happen the last weekend in June will happen on post. So that \$90,000—do you know when that check is going to be cut?

Saville said was that actually a vote to do that in that meeting?

Tammy Branstetter, City Clerk's Office, said I believe it ended up getting taken off because of the way the agenda item was worded. Garrett had spoken up about that.

Chairman Ezerski said we're going to need to approve that probably at the next meeting.

Branstetter said I can reach out to Jason Poudrier.

Saville said if we have some expenses against that, we can certainly draw because there is money there.

Chairman Ezerski said that's going to pay for the drone show and fireworks that Post is going to actually be putting on. So we're partnering with them this year, and they're supposed to have a concert and some other things to go along with it. We'll have to get with Jason on that and see how he's negotiated with Fort Sill.

Saville said looking at the expense tracker and the project tracker, really there's no activity there again. The only activity on the income and expense tracker that shows the revenue to date is just that court fine and then the donation that came in. There are no expenses. So that net income loss at the bottom, \$35,082.19, does tie back to the balance sheet net income. Available projects are \$34,404.94. Again, I really didn't change anything on here because there's not been any activity. And then the stuff having to do with the light post for the engineer and then the hanging of the lights. There was a mention in the minutes about that. I reviewed that, and it said that would be dealt with at a later date. I was questioning last month whether we need to release that encumbrance, and I think it was just the direction was.

Chairman Ezerski said probably the idea is that eventually we're going to buy another block of lights, and then when they can get to it they will. And then we're pretty much going to have to work that way if we want to have the city staff do the project, and it's just going to be as they have time. I mean it's a small crew, unfortunately. It took them a lot longer, I think, than they thought it was going to take to do it, so we'll just have to work with them. If they can't do it then we may have to go back and look and see if it's worth it to hire somebody to do it.

Motion by Hooton, **Second** by Baxter, to approve the Financial Statements for the month of January 2026 as presented. **AYE:** Hooton, Baxter, Smith, Symuleski, Tanner, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

4. Consider approving funding in the amount of \$5,000.00 for the Dunbar Elementary School Memorial Project.

Kelvin Ingram, LETA Executive Director, provided background information on this item.

Ingram said the estimated cost range can be found on page 37. Again, we have most of these items. Over 90% of these items are secured. We have an abundance of actual bricks from the school so they can be part of the memorial as well.

Ingram said this is a historical mark that also unifies our community, especially in this area and that part of Lawton, Oklahoma. What we're asking for is \$5,000 to go ahead and get this approved so it can bring traction to this much needed project.

Tanner said Charles had mentioned that the first picture did not look, to him, like Mr. Harkey. Just make sure whatever pictures you get are accurate.

Ingram said I'll go back with Councilwoman Sherene Williams to ensure accuracy. I know some of the verbiage in some of this is going to change as well. This item will also go to the Planning Commission and to Council.

Motion by Tanner, **Second** by Charles Owens, to approve \$5,000 for the Dunbar Elementary School Memorial Project. **AYE:** Hooton, Baxter, Smith, Symuleski, Tanner, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

5. Discuss the upcoming 2026 Eye Candy Awards Gala and take action as deemed necessary.

Caitlin Gatlin, Communications and Marketing, provided background information on this item.

Gatlin said it's almost that time of year. We usually have the Eye Candy Gala on the second Friday of April. Of course, you all can choose to change that date if necessary. But what you have in front of you is a place where citizens can go to actually make the nominations for our awardees, those being the Rosemary Bellino Lifetime Achievement Award, the Visionary Leader Award, the Champion Volunteer Award, and our Kids First Champion that we introduced as an award last year. So in the past, what we've done is, as a committee, we bring those potential names to you and ask, hey, is there anybody else that you'd like to be considered? We've tried this method before to reach out to our citizens to ask them to submit nominations. I think, and maybe just me being optimistic, I think that we're going to have better luck this year having citizens kind of engage in this process. The dates that are on this flyer are not set in stone. That's kind of what I'm going to check with you guys about. So, if we're going to stick with the same schedule that we have in the past, then it would fall on April 10th. If you wanted to move it a week later, a week before, then of course I could update that on that flyer. And that's the deadline to nominate. I just put a month before. That way, I could go out and interview these people.

Gatlin said if you've been to our Eye Candy Gala, you know that we feature these individuals. I go out, I shoot a nice video with them, kind of just learn a little bit more about their background. The video will play during the event. There's a nice dinner that's catered, and it's really just fellowship with people in our community and, of course, the LETA board that has the same interest in keeping Lawton beautiful. So that's what the flyers are about. That's kind of what the nomination process is about. One thing that I did kind of just want to bring up — we've been doing this format at the Lawton Farmers Market for, well, since 2023, I think it was the first year that we did it there. So we've kept the same format. We've kept the same location and timeframe. Really, not much has changed except for the awards that we give. Last year, we gave some original artwork by Kathy Warren that I thought was just so beautiful. So any feedback on how you feel, those of you that have been there, the past events have gone. If there's anything that you'd like to see changed in terms of date, location, time, just anything within the program. We'd love that feedback so we can start getting to planning.

Chairman Ezerski said I thought last year's events was great. I didn't see anything that really needed to be changed much. I thought the format worked well, and I got good feedback from everybody who attended.

Ingram said is this an invite? How do you get to this event?

Gatlin said the individuals that are selected to receive the awards get their own table, but also we sell tickets to the public for \$25 a piece. We also ask for that kind of in advance. There will be a cut-off date to get your tickets so we can let the caterer know what to expect.

Chairman Ezerski said I don't think we need to move it up any because the weekend before is Easter. So, I think the 10th is probably good as any unless somebody wants to move back another week.

Tanner said what time do we start?

Gatlin said 6:00 PM.

Chairman Ezerski said we'll have to approve the nominations at our next meeting.

Gatlin said this is one of my favorite things that we do, because it's beautiful. The flowers are beautiful. We're going into spring. It's just, it's a nice and refreshing event. So I'm looking forward to those who haven't gone before to be there this year. It'll be great.

No action was taken on this item.

6. Consider appointing a Chairperson for the upcoming 2026 Eye Candy Awards Gala.

Tanner said I think Addie did an excellent job last year.

Motion by Tanner, **Second** by Hooton, to appoint Addie Smith as Chairperson. **AYE:** Hooton, Baxter, Smith, Symuleski, Tanner, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

Adjournment

Motion by Johnson, **Second** by Baxter, to adjourn the February 11, 2026, meeting. **AYE:** Hooton, Baxter, Smith, Symuleski, Tanner, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:36 PM.

Minutes from the February 11, 2026, meeting were approved at the March 11, 2026, Authority meeting.