



City of Lawton
Lawton Enhancement
Trust Authority

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

Minutes

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

3:00 PM

Lawton City Hall
3rd Floor Conference Room

Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call

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

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

ROLL CALL:

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

ABSENT: Johnny Owens (excused)

*Arrived at 3:02 P.M.

**Arrived at 3:21 P.M.

OTHERS PRESENT: 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; Jason Poudrier, Arts & Humanities Director; John Saville, Financial Services; Dennis Totte, Bedrock Nursery; Dr. Rosemary Bellino, Former City Council Member and former President of Lawton Beautiful, Inc

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

Chairman Ezerski introduced Dr. Rosemary Bellino.

Reports

1. Receive a report from Dennis Totte with Bedrock Nursery regarding current landscaping and irrigation projects, provide direction to Mr. Totte on current projects and take action as deemed necessary.

Dennis Totte, Bedrock Nursery, said I don't have a lot new to report, just about our normal maintenance routine. Some of our annual color planting has begun. All the Second Street pots were custom-grown. It's a hanging basket. Basically, if you've been to Bedrock, we grow the big petunia baskets, and we transplanted those into the containers. I think we did a hundred and five up and down Second Street just in the last couple of days.

Totte said those get tampered with from time to time—believe it or not. Last year, we had about 20 that were outright stolen out of the containers and had to be replaced. If you're in or around the area and see anything like that going on, or leaks—one time they cut the tubing, which affects all the water to the other plants—I'd be glad to give you my cell number, and you can shoot me a text and let me know what's going on, and I'll be down there to fix it.

Totte said the rest of the colored beds will probably begin to be planned out around the first of May, and it usually goes the whole month of May. Those are ready a little bit early, and temperatures allowed us to get them in the containers.

Totte said if you guys have anything else for me or need estimates on anything else, let me know, and I can write those down.

2. 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 regarding departmental projects and monthly updates.

Ingram said first, the Harkey Park Dunbar School memorial—again, we will continue progress on this project and get it completed in due time for our Juneteenth celebration. We've obtained the three required estimates so we can move forward. Again, our goal is to build momentum quickly to align this with that ceremony. This will be a meaningful opportunity that will be brought forth to our city, more especially in Ward 7, but throughout the entire community.

Regarding the Lawton Aquatic Center, Ingram said again, we're still scheduled to open on May 25th. We're still hiring and continuing to build our staff. Our ARPA funds have been supplemented to help beautify this project. I ask each and every one of you to take a moment to stop by and see what's been done—even more so compared to last year. We've made great improvements with this beautification, including adding an awning in front of the center and installing privacy slats in the chain-link fencing. This not only provides privacy but also helps keep wind and debris out of the pool, which

saves money over time. We also completed a sidewalk from the Lawton Aquatic Center down to the playground splash pad. There are several aesthetic improvements in that area, so if you have time, I encourage you to go take a look. The center is open—feel free to go inside as well. We're more than happy to show you around if you'd like a walkthrough as we prepare for the season.

Ingram said as for lighting improvements, we are continuing efforts across several parks, especially those that have already been upgraded. This is an enhancement of our public safety, park visibility, usability, and helps keep our vagrant population at bay.

Ingram said I'm still in the process of our wildflower beautification project. I am currently applying for a grant through Color Oklahoma. We're gathering numbers now so we can move forward with planting wildflowers across the city.

Ingram said lastly, regarding park improvements, what you're going to start seeing, if you have not already seen them — I know Mr. Rabon has already come by and talked about these parks — is Kathy Newcomb and Walker Family Park. You'll begin seeing those finalized as well. These two parks are very closely connected—one sits behind the other—so they often feel like one space. However, we are making improvements both in the lower portion of Walker Family Park and the upper portion near Kathy Newcomb. Overall, we've received great feedback from the community. We will finish this phase and then begin on Phase Four of our park improvements, which has not yet been formally approved.

Hooton said what is the ratio that you guys used last year for lifeguards to guests?

Ingram said that's a good question. I don't have that exact number, but I will get it for you. But I'll tell you, the more we have, the better our management with lifeguards and also our season. We want at least 15 throughout the day for a max because of what we're required to have across the pool. So, we do need ample numbers. If not, we'd have to shut parts of the pool down.

3. 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 and departmental updates.

Ingram said I just have two things today, sir. One is the ACEZ WAO mural project. I've sent correspondence out, and I've reached out to Mr. Mahr of Stillwater Central Railroad. He has already submitted the packet that was prepared by Deacon Maldonado in reference to getting this project underway. Right now, it's in the submitted phase for approval, and we expect to hear something back within the next week or so. They do have ongoing projects, like many other municipalities and businesses, but he did confirm that he has the packet and that it is underway. Again, as a reminder, that's the mural project on 2nd Street near F Avenue. This is a project intended to beautify our city, especially that area of town.

Ingram said with our Veterans Memorial Sidewalk project, if you'll look at your agenda packet, there is a staff and executive report that has been compiled on this project. Staff has been working to better define the scope and next steps, with updates brought forth for this project. Bottom line up front, we understand there are some unique aspects to this project, as it began in 2017 and has continued up to now. Tammy has also taken great pride in getting this information together as well. There are some holes in here that we need to identify. In being good stewards and building trust and confidence with our citizens and this board, there are some additional steps that need to be taken so we can move forward.

Chairman Ezerski said do we know how many people have purchased bricks that haven't been done yet?

Tammy Branstetter, City Clerk's Office, said around 20 is probably a good estimate.

Ingram said if you ask me, there needs to be some due diligence in this project. I've made some recommendations in the packet to move forward. I'm also using my staff to help gather additional information. On Monday, we spoke with Polar Engraving. I think they do have a better product than the previous. Luckily, right now, I don't see much of a price difference, but better options. Where there's a will, there's a way—I just think we need to take our time to get through this. My apologies to all the citizens before this since 2017 who have been waiting for this, but we're going to get this right.

Chairman Ezerski said let's see if we can do this before the end of the year.

Ingram said with this report, I do recommend that this becomes a normal reporting to get this underway until we're confident that we can move forward.

Chairman Ezerski said please do.

Ingram reviewed correspondence received from the Department of Safe and Clean Neighborhoods regarding work done for the month of March.

Chairman Ezerski said do you know how many houses are on the D & D list right now?

Ingram said I do not, but I can ask that question.

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

No updates were given.

5. Receive a report on the upcoming Eye Candy Awards Gala and take action as deemed necessary.

Caitlin Gatlin, Marketing and Communications Manager, provided updates regarding the upcoming Eye Candy Awards Gala.

Gatlin said the Gala is coming up on April 10th at the Lawton Farmers Market from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. We have a wonderful ceremony planned, with all of our award recipients in attendance. Even Chief Smith's daughter, who is receiving the Rosemary Bellino Lifetime Achievement Award, will be flying in from Kentucky, so we're excited to welcome her back to Lawton. It will be a great venue with drinks, good fellowship, and an opportunity for people to connect and talk about how beautiful Lawton is.

Gatlin said if you have not yet RSVP'd, please get those to Tammy. At this point, I think we have about 80 people attending, which is great because we usually count for 100 people. So if someone decides at the last minute that they'd like to come, they certainly can. Tickets are still available for \$25 for anyone who would like to attend who is not part of the trust or among the award recipients.

Chairman Ezerski said I appreciate all of your hard work.

Business Items

1. Consider approving the minutes of the March 11, 2026, meeting.

A copy of the minutes of the March 11, 2026, meeting may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

Motion by Baxter, **Second** by Johnson, to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2026, meeting as presented. **AYE:** Baxter, Rabon, Symuleski, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hooton, Tanner, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

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

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

Saville said we have four checks for you to approve today. The first one is Bedrock Nursery for some minor repairs in the amount of \$407.75. The annual membership for the Lawton Chamber of Commerce is \$340.00. Stanton's Apparel — that was for \$4,231.50, and that was for the Trash-Off t-shirts. Great Plains AMBUCS was from the LETA grants. I believe you all approved that last month. That's been paid for - the \$3,000.

Motion by Hooton, **Second** by Charles Owens, to approve the list of expenses for the period covering March 7, 2026 – April 6, 2026, as presented. **AYE:** Baxter, Rabon, Symuleski, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hooton, Tanner, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

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

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

Saville said we'll start with the balance sheet for March. You'll see there the City National Bank total of \$344,006.86. That is a decrease from last month of \$1,160.19, and that all washes out through some activity. We had \$6,764 in court fines for January come in, along with earned interest of \$5,506. Then, what went out included \$4,231.50 for the Trash-Off shirts, \$3,000 for the AMBUCS flags, \$407.75 for Bedrock repairs, and \$340 for Chamber membership. So that all washes out to a decrease in cash from last month totaling \$1,160.19, leaving us at \$344,006.86. There are no receivables and no payables, so that is our balance sheet total. Our net income for the year is currently at a loss of \$33,418.16.

Saville said we'll move on to the income statement, which reflects the court fines I just mentioned that came in at \$6,764, along with interest income of \$5,506. The expenses are the four checks you just approved. So again, our net loss reflects the change in our cash position of \$1,160.19.

Chairman Ezerski said have we filed a claim on hotel motel tax?

Saville said we have not yet. There's just not been much activity with which to make claims. I have to have invoices to support the claim through that. And I'll get into some hotel motel tax in just a minute when we're finished with the other financials. I've got some good news for you all. In fact, I don't want to talk too much about it now because there's been a major change in it.

Saville said your next sheet should be the income and expense tracker, which is basically the year-to-date income statement P&L. So, it reflects the activity there under income to date. And our total revenue is \$98,244.11. Then the expenses year-to-date total \$131,662.27, and then that shows the net loss of \$33,418.16, which ties back to the amount shown on your balance sheet. The expense projects pending tie out to the next spreadsheet that we have that lists the ongoing projects.

Saville said the next page has the tracker that has the three categories there. The top category for LETA beautification projects, and then the middle category, repairs and replanting — there's been no change from last month's report on that. And down at the bottom, the grant awards and miscellaneous donations, the only changes in that were the Trash-Off event. The budget amount was \$4,600. They've spent \$4,231.50, so they have a remaining budget left of \$368.50 if they need that for anything else. And then I would just give an update on the Eye Candy Gala. The budget on that is \$10,000. So far to date, we've encumbered \$7,285 on that. Those are POs that are in place, so once the bills roll in, we can just pay them. I'm sure there will be more coming too. The last item down there, again, is the \$3,000 for the AMBUCS flags.

Chairman Ezerski said regarding the grant awards, I was going to let everybody know,

we've got probably another \$30,000 in that account. We only have about three months left in the year, so if you know of somebody who has project to bring before us, let us know.

Saville said I really don't want to talk about the hotel motel tax report you guys have. Literally, as I was walking away from the department to come over here to the meeting, the lady in Finance who works with the global allocations of the hotel motel tax informed me that they reallocated some items. There was an entity—I don't know any details—that received some funds that shouldn't have, so they went back and reallocated. That's why I don't want to go into detail on this report right now, because it is inaccurate. But the bump is going to be a positive bump. Between the three items of hotel motel that we receive—LETA beautification, Freedom Festival, and Holiday in the Park—we're going to see, through March, a bump of \$58,121. So that's really good news. On this report, where I'm showing we have \$41,639 available to draw, that amount is going to increase. As Dennis starts working on his projects, and as I start receiving invoices, we will make a claim for the hotel motel funds. I'll go back and check to see if we have anything to submit now, but there's not going to be much because we just haven't had a lot of activity over the past two or three months. I do have to have the activity and paid invoices to support that to draw from hotel motel, and we haven't gotten anything from Freedom Festival or Holiday in the Park.

Saville said next month, I'll have a much more positive report on this because the bump will be up. If I would've had more time earlier, I could have freshened up a report and brought it to you, but I literally just walked over from the department. But I thought I'd pass that along to you because that's going to be good news for us.

Chairman Ezerski said that is good news.

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

4. Review and discuss the FY 2026–2027 preliminary budget for LETA, and provide feedback to staff as deemed necessary.

John Saville, Financial Services, reviewed and discussed the FY 2026-2027 preliminary budget for LETA. A copy of the preliminary budget may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

Saville said this is very preliminary. This is the budget that I kind of scratched together that the Chairman, Tammy, and I took to the City Manager's budget meeting. Mostly, what they wanted to know was what our desire was for the hotel motel tax. This budget basically represents the last three years using this type of budget format, based on that three-year history. The problem with that is it's not a forward-looking budget, so this isn't being presented to you to vote on. What I'm asking for is some feedback from the Board and the Chairman, who might know more about what's going to be going on.

Chairman Ezerski said I have been told from the City Manager that we may be seeing about a 10% decrease in our hotel motel budget. That is, once again, preliminary.

Saville said Jason Poudrier has pretty much got the application for hotel motel funding turned in.

Chairman Ezerski asked Poudrier if he's heard any more about that.

Poudrier said sales tax revenues are down, so they're kind of projecting lower income next year across the board. They're kind of telling every department and all the trust authorities to just kind of expect to not have as much next year. We can always ask for what we normally get, but the expectation is across the board not to have as much.

Chairman Ezerski said right now, hotel motel funding is trailing last year. Usually the best months for hotel motel tax are April, May and June. We will see more then, but they're saying just year over year, it's trending down.

Chairman Ezerski asked if we're allowed to roll over unused funds from the prior year.

Saville said I don't know — I need to check with Chandra or Kristin on that. I'll see if I can learn something on that.

Saville said but again, with this preliminary budget—and there's a little note down at the bottom—if you've got an entity that runs pretty much the same year after year, the way I approach this works pretty well. But the problem is LETA has so many things going on, and there are new things coming in. I don't have the knowledge, only being here a few months, to be able to accurately present what might be a reasonable budget. That's why I'm looking for feedback from this Board, if you all could review these numbers and provide some suggestions on where I could make changes. Of course, it's all in an Excel spreadsheet, so it's very easy to do. We wanted to bring it this month just to give you some time to think about it before we actually try to put one together. I did see some work papers from last year from my predecessor, but to be completely honest with you, I can't follow what she did. I have no idea where her numbers came from, and I have no idea how she was building that.

Chairman Ezerski said our services agreement with the city does allow to roll over our funds to next year. We probably won't be voting on the actual budget until June.

No action was taken on this item.

5. Consider approving an engagement letter with Hatch, Croke & Associates, P.C., for preparation of the Authority's Form 990 for fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, for a fee of \$1,500 plus out-of-pocket expenses.

Saville provided background information on this item. A copy of the engagement letter from Hatch, Croke & Associates may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

Saville said this morning I actually had a really nice conversation with Matthew Modeste. He's a CPA over at Hatch and Croke, and I just wanted to get acquainted with him and see how he approached things. A lot of the information he may need could be part of the 2025 final City of Lawton audit, and I do have access to that final report. So I'll be working with him on that.

Saville said the fee is the same as last year—\$1,500. The out-of-pocket cost last year, probably for the folder and paper and whatnot, was \$53. So what we would ask is approval of this, and then we'll probably include a memo to increase it by about \$75 or so to cover any out-of-pocket incidentals. I believe he said the tax return is due by November. It may not take that long; it could be completed before then, but we won't have to worry about being out of compliance. November is what he mentioned.

Saville said I will be the one primarily working with him. I'll probably have Kelvin listed as a point of contact, but he'll be getting most of what he needs from me. The time period we're covering is before my time. I wasn't here in June of 2025 — I came in September, and Kelvin came in about the same time. But that's okay—the numbers are the numbers, and I can find them and get them to him. So that was one of the main reasons I wanted to call him—just to get acquainted. I think he's going to be really good to work with.

Motion by Hooton, **Second** by Baxter, to approve the engagement letter with Hatch, Croke & Associates in the amount of \$1,500 plus out-of-pocket expenses. **AYE:** Baxter, Smith, Rabon, Symuleski, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hooton, Tanner, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

6. Consider approving the use of social media and Google Forms for citizen participation in nominations and voting for LETA's Yard of the Month contest.

Gatlin provided background information on this item. A copy of the proposed Google Form may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

Gatlin said for anybody that's unfamiliar with the Yard of the Month program that LETA runs, it goes from April all the way through September. Basically, what we've been doing for the last couple of years is posting on LETA's Facebook page and saying, "Hey, if you see any yards in your neighborhood or across Lawton that you think deserve to win Yard of the Month, take a picture and go to our website, beautifullawton.com, upload them, and then people can vote on them."

Gatlin said that's been the process in place for about three years, but it's been contracted out through someone named Clayton with CW Strategies. He's been running the Beautiful Lawton page and helping us maintain that domain, which I think was about \$300 a year. However, Clayton no longer wants to continue that, which is fine. So instead, what we're proposing is to use a Google Form, which is included in your packet. We would really be gauging how well people use this. They can enter their

name, provide their email address, tell us where the yard is that they want to recognize, and they can upload photos—just like they did on the Beautiful Lawton website.

Gatlin said what I really like about this is that it's free and doesn't cost anything. Frankly, it's also easier for us on the back end instead of having to code and manage a website, which isn't really our forte, even though we learned. So this would be the nomination process of how you submit those yards. Of course, we would roll everything out again to the public. We could put out a press release and say, "Hey, this is how we're now taking Yard of the Month nominations—go to this link," and they can just complete the Google Form.

Gatlin said the other piece of this is the voting process. I think citizens have responded very well to having the opportunity to vote on which yard they think is the best. Beautiful Lawton allowed us to do that anonymously. The difference now would be that we would create albums on the Lawton Enhancement Trust Authority's Facebook page, and in order to vote, users would react to the photos. So, we would be limiting voting to users who are on social media, which is something to consider. But if someone likes, hearts, or otherwise reacts to a photo, it would count as a vote. That also adds transparency, since everyone can see how many votes each yard is receiving. Not to mention, it could increase exposure for the LETA page, because if someone sees their yard featured, they're likely going to share it and encourage others to vote. So that's how the voting would take place.

Chairman Ezerski said you know, the nice thing about that, too, is if you're doing it through Facebook, once you react to it, you only get to do it once. In the past, we've had people vote 500 times for three yards.

Gatlin said and you only get to nominate one time. I mean, a ton of nominations can come in for the same yard, but they all have to be from different people.

Gatlin said so that's kind of what we were thinking about the new direction of doing Yard of the Month. Once again, this is April through September. Then in October it switches to the Halloween Yard of the Month, and then November and December is the holiday Yard of the Month.

Chairman Ezerski said I think this is a great form.

Johnson said is it possible to create a QR code and then maybe have flyers up and people can scan that code, and that will kind of open it up to those that are not on social media.

Gatlin said to nominate?

Johnson said yes. Then we'd have the QR code if the person is not on Facebook or not on Facebook a lot.

Gatlin said yes, and it would take you to the google form. We couldn't do a QR code to our Facebook account because somebody would still have to have a Facebook.

Motion by Johnson, **Second** by Rabon, to approve the use of social media and Google Forms for citizen participation in nominations and voting for the Yard of the Month contest. **AYE:** Baxter, Smith, Rabon, Symuleski, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hooton, Tanner, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

7. Consider voting on the type and amount of prizes for future Yard of the Month contest award recipients.

Chairman Ezerski provided background information on this item.

Chairman Ezerski said we found out from Finance that we cannot give out gift cards anymore to our winners. It is actually a state law for municipalities. We talked with Dennis about it this morning, and he suggested maybe doing something like store credit instead. However, after running that up the chain, that is essentially considered the same thing. So, he offered a couple of alternative ideas, like allowing winners to come into Bedrock and choose from a selection of items. He was just brainstorming off the top of his head, since we just found out about this.

Neal Kirmer, Communications and Marketing, noted that we still have enough signs to get through this year, so we don't need to purchase any signs.

Gatlin said I'm trying to think of a demographic of who we're giving these to. They usually have trees. They have flowers. Is there something that Dennis can offer that's comparable in price?

Chairman Ezerski said that's what I was talking to him about before the meeting, and he said what he can do is get something in that \$100 ballpark range where they can pick out from a couple of different selections based on that money amount.

Gatlin said what if we gave the awardees, and whenever we call them to let them know they've been selected, we also offer them a choice—whether it be flowers or a tree—something tangible that we can provide to them? That way, especially for optics, when we go out to present the sign, we can also bring something like flowers for them to plant.

Chairman Ezerski said what we can do is we can purchase those ahead of time for LETA and then just have them kind of in stock for us to take to people.

Ingram said so are you saying have a predetermined prize?

Chairman Ezerski said, well, you'd have a choice of maybe three things, but pre-purchased.

Gatlin said the other thing to consider is can we give out trees for the August yard of the

month? Like, when is the best time to plant things like that?

Chairman Ezerski said I guess the first thing we need to do is find out if we can do that. If we can, then we can start traveling down that path. We get with Dennis to get some pricing and bring it back to the next meeting.

Chairman Ezerski asked Saville to check to see if LETA has any donations for the last two years that might apply towards this.

Saville said I can look. The only challenge we have to make sure we're aware of is that LETA, in its agreement with the City of Lawton, does have to abide by the purchasing policies.

No action was taken on this item.

8. Approve and recommend to Lawton City Council approval of Title Sponsorship Agreement with Fort Sill Moral Welfare and Recreation (MWR) in the amount of \$90,000 in support of Lawton Fort Sill Freedom Festival 2026.

Jason Poudrier, Arts & Humanities Director, provided background information on this item. A copy of the Title Sponsorship Agreement with the MWR may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

Poudrier said over the past few years, I've served as kind of the director or co-chair, along with members from the city, to support the Lawton-Fort Sill Freedom Festival. Going into this year, as we're projected to have some major renovations over at Elmer Thomas Park—which we're all excited about—we began looking for a suitable place to have the Lawton Fort Sill Freedom Festival. Fort Sill MWR reached out and said, "Hey, use our polo field." I said, okay, this sounds like a great idea, and we'll start getting the marketing out there early. We're working with their marketing team to make sure people know how to access the installation and all of that. However, in order for us to host the Lawton-Fort Sill Freedom Festival there, we do need to have an agreement with MWR.

Poudrier said essentially, what we're doing is coming in as a title sponsor of the event. LETA holds the funds for Freedom Festival and approves all expenditures. What we would do is take \$90,000 of this year's hotel motel tax allocation for the Lawton-Fort Sill Freedom Festival and provide that back to the city so they can sign a title sponsor agreement with MWR. That is the recommendation. That amount would go directly toward paying for the fireworks and drone show that will be visible all across Lawton-Fort Sill.

Poudrier said the partnership agreement for LETA reflects \$140,000, but of course, that will be subject to reductions with hotel motel revenues. Poudrier said this will still hold back roughly \$30,000 or more carrying forward into next year. Essentially, we would be covering the cost of the drone show and fireworks.

Chairman Ezerski said basically, what we need to do as an entity here today is just to send our endorsement of the agreement to the City Council.

Motion by Rabon, **Second** by Baxter, to recommend to the City Council approval of the Title Sponsorship Agreement with the MWR in the amount of \$90,000 for the 2026 Lawton Fort Sill Freedom Festival. **AYE:** Baxter, Smith, Rabon, Symuleski, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hooton, Tanner, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

9. Approve purchase of 22 Derby Car Kits for an amount not to exceed \$2,600 to include shipping out of budgeted Freedom Festival Hotel Motel Funds to support 4th Annual Derby Car Races as a hallmark element of Lawton Fort Sill Freedom Festival.

Poudrier provided background information on this item.

Poudrier said in previous years, we have hosted these derby car races, and we're going into our fourth year now. We're bringing a lot of people out. This past year, it was almost like a parade along Ferris, with all the families out there watching the derby cars. What we do to make this a clean, low-cost, fun activity for kids is to actually provide the derby cars. On the sheet, you'll see the amount of \$2,600. In addition to that \$2,600, we have partners like Comanche Lumber and Classic Lawton Chevrolet. Comanche Lumber provides all of the lumber, which actually exceeds that amount. Then the Life Ready Center assembles the cars with the students, so it also becomes a learning opportunity for them. In previous years, Classic Lawton Chevrolet has contributed another \$2,000, either toward purchasing items for the kids or providing prize money. So that \$2,600 essentially turns into about \$7,500 in free activities for kids.

Poudrier said kids sign up for an opportunity to win, either through raffle tickets or through information shared on Facebook. It's been a hit, and it continues to grow each year. This year, we're actually looking at hosting it on Fort Sill—possibly at the golf course—so we're planning to have some fun with it. Right now, we just need to fund the kits, because the cars are already built.

Motion by Hooton, **Second** by Charles Owens, to approve the purchase of 22 Derby Car Kits for an amount not to exceed \$2,600, to include shipping. **AYE:** Baxter, Smith, Rabon, Symuleski, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hooton, Tanner, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

10. Update use of funds for cultural preservation of City of Lawton Historical Artifacts to include authorization to purchase shelving for proper care and storage of Historical City of Lawton artifacts and artwork and increase amount allocated to an amount not to exceed \$1,800.

Poudrier provided background information on this item.

Poudrier said about a year and a half ago - Tammy looked it up for us, and it was in the minutes — there was about \$5,000 allocated for the storage, moving, and shelving of

some artifacts. We moved some plasters and artifacts that were here at City Hall. We had them crated and moved over to Carnegie Library. Now that they're over at Carnegie Library, I've been working on getting them placed onto shelves.

Poudrier said when I went to purchase shelving, I found that in the line item in the budget, it was listed as being for packaging of artifacts only. But when we pulled up the minutes and the agenda, shelving was actually included. So what we're wanting to do is clarify that within that line item, I would recommend that \$1,731.95 be used for shelving for the City of Lawton Art Collection at Carnegie Library. This was already essentially approved through a past agenda, but the amounts were segmented out—some for moving, some for storage, and some for shelving. This would take the remaining amount, \$1,731.95, and apply it to shelving so we can complete that portion of the project. That way, we can get those funds spent as intended and finally have the City of Lawton Art Collection properly placed on shelving.

Motion by Johnson, **Second** by Smith, to approve the use of funds in the amount of \$1,731.95 for cultural preservation of City of Lawton Historical Artifacts to include authorization to purchase shelving for proper care and storage of Historical City of Lawton artifacts and artwork. **AYE:** Baxter, Smith, Rabon, Symuleski, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hooton, Tanner, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

Adjournment

Motion by Baxter, **Second** by Hooton, to adjourn the April 8, 2026, meeting. **AYE:** Baxter, Rabon, Smith, Symuleski, Ezerski, Charles Owens, Johnson, Hooton, Tanner, Hale. **NAY:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:59 PM.

Minutes of the April 8, 2026, meeting were approved at the May 13, 2026, Authority meeting.