

**REGULAR MEETING
LOCKHART CITY COUNCIL**

SEPTEMBER 2, 2025

6:30 P.M.

CLARK LIBRARY ANNEX-COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 217 SOUTH MAIN STREET, 3RD FLOOR, LOCKHART, TEXAS

Council present:

Councilmember John Castillo
Councilmember Juan Mendoza
Councilmember Jeffry Michelson

Mayor Lew White
Councilmember Brad Westmoreland
Councilmember John Lairsen
Mayor Pro-Tem Angie Gonzales-Sanchez

Staff present:

Joseph Resendez, Assistant City Manager
Julie Bowermon, City Secretary
Travis Hughes, Parks Director
Keeli Michna, Finance Director
Bertha Martinez, Library Director

Steve Lewis, City Manager
Brad Bullock, City Attorney
Sean Kelley, Public Works Director
Gary Williamson, Police Chief
Randy Jenkins, Fire Chief
Will Wachel/TRC, City Engineer

Citizens/Visitors Addressing the Council: Frank Coggins and Ronda Reagan.

6:30 p.m.

The Lockhart City Council attended the retirement reception for retiring City Manager Steve Lewis that was held in the Council Chambers. A quorum of the City Council was present. There was no action of the Lockhart City Council.

ITEM 1. CALL TO ORDER.

Mayor Lew White called the meeting to order at 7:55 p.m.

ITEM 2. INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Mayor White gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and Texas flags.

ITEM 3. PUBLIC COMMENT.

Mayor White requested citizens to address the Council. There were none.

ITEM 4-A. HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE CITY OF LOCKHART AND THE LOCKHART ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 BUDGET.

Mayor White opened the public hearing at 8:05 p.m.

Mr. Resendez stated that in accordance with the provisions of Article IX, Section 9.09 of the City of Lockhart Charter - a vote is required for adoption; the budget shall be adopted by the favorable vote of the majority of the members of the whole City Council. This budget also sets forth the fiduciary policies for the City of Lockhart and the Lockhart Economic Development Corporation for the fiscal year October 1, 2025 and ending September 30, 2026. This ordinance will adopt the City's Investment Policy, Financial Policy, and the Fund Balance - Stabilization and Excess of Reserve Policy. The City of Lockhart's Investment Policy must be adopted annually by ordinance according to the City's Charter, Chapter 2256, Section 2256.005. This agenda item allows for the City Council to suggest any final budget changes before a vote is taken. If no additional allocations or deletions are presented, action can be taken to adopt the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Annual Operating Budget for the City of Lockhart, Caldwell County, Texas and the Lockhart Economic Development Corporation.

Mayor White requested citizens in favor of the proposed budgets to address the Council. There were none.

Mayor White requested the following to address the Council:

Frank Coggins, 602 La Feliciana, requested that the Council increase the cemetery budget to make the cemeteries great again. He suggested that the roads, other areas of the cemetery, and litter and debris be maintained more than once or twice a year. Mr. Resendez stated that staff have considered including maintenance and road repairs at the city cemetery in a citywide maintenance management program.

Ronda Reagan, 412 West San Antonio Street, recommended that the city consider hiring a Main Street Manager instead of hiring an employee for a Visitor's Center. She also stated that Mr. Hilgers informed her that Janet Petrie is the current Chair of the Cemetery committee. She spoke against another organization taking over promoting downtown businesses. There was discussion about tourism.

Mayor White requested additional citizens to address the Council. There were none. He closed the public hearing at 8:30 p.m.

ITEM 4-B. HOLD PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED TAX RATE FOR 2025.

Mayor White opened the public hearing at 8:30 p.m.

Mr. Resendez stated that the proposed tax rate is \$0.5541 per \$100 of assessed value. The Ordinance describes the two required components of the tax rate; Maintenance and Operations (M&O) and Interest and Sinking (I&S). State law requires a statement regarding the amount by which taxes for maintenance and operations on a \$100,000 home will be raised. Based on the proposed tax rate, the maintenance and operations portion of the rate will be \$0.4113 per \$100 assessed value compared to last year's maintenance and operations rate of \$0.4067 per \$100 assessed value, resulting in an increase of \$0.0046 or 1.13%. The interest and sinking portion of the tax rate increased from \$0.1026 to \$0.1428 per \$100 assessed value, resulting in an increase of \$0.0402 or 39.2%. This tax rate will raise more taxes for maintenance and operations than last year's rate. The City of Lockhart's portion of a homeowner's property tax bill is 26% of their total bill based on current tax rates. The remaining 74% of the tax bill is for property taxes charged by the other taxing jurisdictions, including the Lockhart Independent School District (46%), Caldwell County (22%), ESD #5 (4.8%), Plum Creek Conservation District and Groundwater tax (1.4%), and Farm-to-Market (0.005%). Property taxes paid to the City of Lockhart make up approximately 40% of the City's General Fund revenues. Sales tax revenue makes up another 19%, while other fees and services cover the remaining 41%. The revenues from the General Fund provide maintenance and operational support for streets, drainage, parks, infrastructure, police and fire protection. The verbiage contained within this ordinance is in compliance with requirements of Section 26.05(b)(1)(B) of the Texas Tax Code.

Mayor White requested citizens to address the Council about the tax rate. There were none. He closed the public hearing at 8:32 p.m.

ITEM 5-A. DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION TO CONSIDER RESOLUTION 2025-27 TO AWARD A CONTRACT TO BRS ARCHITECTURE TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY TO GUIDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW RECREATION CENTER AT THE FORMER HOMETOWN CINEMA SITE AND THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF A PROPOSED RECREATION CENTER ADJACENT TO THE NEW AQUATICS FACILITY, AND AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE A CONTRACT WITH BRS TO OVERSEE THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW RECREATION CENTER.

Mr. Hughes stated that on May 13, 2025, staff published a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for architectural and engineering design services to build a new recreation center by renovating and retrofitting an existing building. Staff received 10 Statements of Qualification in response to the RFQ. Four firms were selected for interviews: Parkhill, Levy Dykema, Barker-Rinker-Seacat (BRS), and Burditt Land Place. Barker-Rinker-Seacat (BRS) was selected as the finalist by the review committee on June 27, 2025. If the professional services contract with BRS is approved by City Council, BRS will begin work on the final design of the facility and oversee construction. Deliverables for the project include design, construction documents, bid documents, a proforma and operational planning. The project will be completed in two steps. The first step will consist of a feasibility study, facility design, construction pricing, and operational planning. This step contemplates the formation of a citizen steering committee consisting of members representing the Parks Advisory Board, Caldwell County Commissioners, Lockhart ISD, and other relevant parties. The second step will consist of the selection of a building contractor, production of construction documents and the oversight of construction. Step 1 is scheduled for completion in approximately 6 months. Step 2 will commence immediately after and is scheduled to be completed 10 months later.

The BRS design and construction administration team will also include Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture, P.C., Halff & Associates, and Ballard King & Associates to provide design expertise and assistance to various aspects of the project including:

- Landscape Architecture / Site Design
- Architecture
- Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing (MEP)
- Recreation Center Design,
- Operational Proforma, and
- Civil Engineering

There was discussion about formation of a steering committee to provide recommendations of the development of the Recreation Center.

Councilmember Michelson made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-27, as presented. Councilmember Lairsen seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

ITEM 5-B. DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION TO CONSIDER ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE 2025-18 REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMIT PROGRAM.

Chief Williamson stated that the ordinance creates the framework for a Residential Parking Permit Program, specifically regulating on-street parking in residential areas. The program does not automatically designate any parking restrictions. Instead, property owners would be required to petition the City Council for the creation of a residential permit parking area. Only upon council approval would a designated permit area be established. This ordinance was tabled at the previous meeting for further review and is now being reconsidered by the Council. Questions were raised about whether both sides of a street must be designated as a permit area, whether residents can request only one side of the street be designated as a permit area, if there is a fee for permits, and whether a public hearing is needed. Staff and Council adequately addressed these questions, and the ordinance was clarified to specify that the permit fee applies only to lost permits. The program is proposed in response to ongoing complaints from residents near the high school, where student parking in surrounding neighborhoods has limited on-street parking for residents during school hours. He stated that staff have worked with James Bertram to address his concerns that were expressed at the last Council meeting. There was discussion.

Councilmember Lairsen made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-18, as presented. Councilmember Castillo seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

ITEM 5-C. DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION REGARDING ORDINANCE 2025-19 ADOPTING THE CITY OF LOCKHART'S ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 2026 AND APPROPRIATING RESOURCES, BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2025, ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2026, FOR THE CITY OF LOCKHART, CALDWELL COUNTY, TEXAS AND THE LOCKHART ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AND ADOPTING THE CITY'S INVESTMENT POLICY, FINANCIAL POLICY, AND FUND BALANCE - STABILIZATION AND EXCESS OF RESERVES POLICIES.

Councilmember Lairsen made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-19 adopting the City of Lockhart's and Economic Development Corporation's annual budget for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 beginning October 1, 2025 and ending September 30, 2026. Councilmember Westmoreland seconded.

The roll call vote is as follows:

Councilmember Brad Westmoreland – Aye
Councilmember Juan Mendoza – Aye
Mayor Pro-Tem Angie Gonzales-Sanchez – Aye
Councilmember John Lairsen – Aye
Councilmember John Castillo – Aye
Councilmember Jeffry Michelson – Aye
Mayor Lew White – Aye

The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Councilmember Westmoreland made a motion to ratify the property tax reflected in the budget for Fiscal Year 2025 – 2026 of the City of Lockhart, Texas. Councilmember Lairsen seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

ITEM 5-D. DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION REGARDING ORDINANCE 2025-20 ADOPTING THE TAX RATE ON TAXABLE PROPERTY WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS OF THE CITY OF LOCKHART, TEXAS AND LEVYING MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS PROPERTY TAXES FOR THE USE AND SUPPORT OF THE CITY OF LOCKHART, TEXAS AND INTEREST AND SINKING PROPERTY TAXES FOR THE DEBT SERVICE OBLIGATIONS OF THE CITY OF LOCKHART, CALDWELL COUNTY, TEXAS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026, BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2025 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2026.

Councilmember Michelson made a motion to approve the maintenance and operations rate adopted at .4113 cents per 100 of assessed value as listed in Ordinance 2025-20 thereby adopting said ordinance. Councilmember Castillo seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Councilmember Castillo made a motion to approve the interest and sinking rate adopted at .1428 cents per 100 of assessed value as listed in Ordinance 2025-20 thereby adopting said ordinance. Councilmember Westmoreland seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Councilmember Lairsen made a motion that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of .5541 which is effectively 11.85 percent increase in the tax rate. Councilmember Mendoza seconded.

The roll call vote is as follows:

Councilmember Brad Westmoreland – Aye
Councilmember Juan Mendoza – Aye
Mayor Pro-Tem Angie Gonzales-Sanchez – Aye
Councilmember John Lairsen – Aye
Councilmember John Castillo – Aye
Councilmember Jeffry Michelson – Aye
Mayor Lew White – Aye

The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

ITEM 5-E. DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION REGARDING ORDINANCE 2025-21 REPEALING UNCODIFIED ORDINANCE 2024-25 IN ITS ENTIRETY AND ADOPTING THIS ORDINANCE REGARDING THE CITY PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL; REMOVING PERFORMANCE OR MERIT PAY FOR POLICE AND FIRE PERSONNEL AND ADOPTING A STEP PAY PLAN FOR POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS UNDER CIVIL SERVICE.

Ms. Bowermon stated that the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget includes a four and half percent (4 1/2 %) pay increase for all full-time and part-time regular City of Lockhart employees. In compliance with Civil Service, classified police and fire positions are paid per a step pay plan, which is set by ordinance. The proposed ordinance reflects increasing the step plans as included in the budget. Agencies in central Texas continue to experience unremitting vacancies in public safety positions. Consequently, this 4 1/2% adjustment is being proposed to enhance Lockhart's ability to recruit and retain qualified police officers and fire fighters. The City will continue to offer the \$10,000 hiring incentive to police officers as well as the lateral entry pay program.

Mayor Pro-Tem Sanchez made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-21, as presented. Councilmember Castillo seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

ITEM 7. COUNCIL AND STAFF COMMENTS - ITEMS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST

Mayor Pro-Tem Sanchez expressed condolences to the Zapata family for their loss.

Councilmember Castillo expressed a Happy Retirement to Steve Lewis, City Manager. He thanked Mr. Lewis for his dedication to the Council, community and staff.

Councilmember Michelson thanked staff for their work on the budget. He thanked Steve Lewis for his dedication to the Council, community and staff during his tenure as City Manager.

Mayor White also thanked Steve Lewis for his dedication during his tenure as City Manager. He requested an agenda item on the next Council agenda about the 4th of July committee.

ITEM 6. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT, PRESENTATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

- Lockhart Planning Department recognized by the Texas Chapter American Planning Association for the new Comprehensive Plan.
- National Night out is scheduled for October 7th.
- Reminder: There will not be a City Council meeting on the first Tuesday of October due to the National Night Out event. The meeting has been moved to Thursday, October 9, 2025.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

Mayor White announced that the Council would enter Executive Session at 9:10 p.m. to discuss items 8 and 9 below.

Mr. Lewis stated that the Economic Development Department did not receive the necessary documentation for agenda item 8A, therefore, that item will not be discussed in closed session.

ITEM 8. EXECUTIVE SESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT CODE, TITLE 5, SUBCHAPTER D, SECTION 551.087 TO DELIBERATE OR FOR DISCUSSION REGARDING COMMERCIAL OR FINANCIAL INFORMATION THAT THE GOVERNMENTAL BODY HAS RECEIVED FROM A BUSINESS PROSPECT THAT THE GOVERNMENTAL BODY SEEKS TO HAVE LOCATE, STAY, OR EXPAND IN OR NEAR THE TERRITORY OF THE GOVERNMENTAL BODY AND WITH WHICH THE GOVERNMENTAL BODY IS CONDUCTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEGOTIATIONS; OR TO DELIBERATE THE OFFER OF A FINANCIAL OR OTHER INCENTIVE TO A BUSINESS PROSPECT.

- A. Discussion and/or action regarding economic development negotiations with Projects CA-237 and CA-246.

ITEM 9. EXECUTIVE SESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT CODE, TITLE 5, SUBCHAPTER D, SECTION 551.071, PRIVATE CONSULTATION WITH ITS ATTORNEY TO SEEK ADVICE ABOUT LEGAL MATTERS SUBJECT TO ATTORNEY/CLIENT PRIVILEGE.

- A. Discussion regarding water supply contracts.

ITEM 10. OPEN SESSION.

Mayor White announced that the Council would enter Open Session at 9:35 p.m.

- A. Discussion and/or action regarding economic development negotiations with Projects CA-237 and CA-246.

There was no action taken.

- B. Discussion and/or action regarding water supply contracts.

There was no action taken.

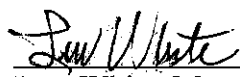
ITEM 11. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro-Tem Sanchez made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Mendoza seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

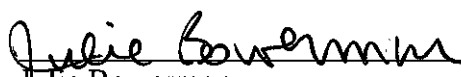
PASSED and APPROVED this the 21st day of April, 2026.



CITY OF LOCKHART


Lew White, Mayor

ATTEST:


Julie Bowermon
City Secretary