

COUNCIL MINUTES

September 23, 2025

Stratford City Council met in regular session with Mayor Wright presiding and the following:

Council: Ray Lermom, Michael Hood, Brad Reed, Joe Zak, Misti McBryde

City Manager: Tommy Bogart

City Secretary: Kathy Rendon

Police Chief: Richard Coborn

PW Supv: Tracie Bogart

ACCE Officer: Kristin Elam

Guests: Kathy Allen, Justin Lanning SFD, Lori Christian MC Judge, Suzanne Bellsnyder

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Prayer

The meeting was called to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present. Greg Wright led the prayer.

Consent Agenda Items

Council member Misti McBryde asked about budget adjustments, specifically regarding transfers in the budget adjustment register. The City Manager explained that at the end of the year, money is moved between departments to address overages, as the budget is approved by departments. The council member asked why the city barn and recycled budget line received transfers of around \$21,000. The City Manager explained that it depends on the bottom line and unexpected expenditures during the year, noting that budget amendments are typically made throughout the year when anticipated, but some are caught at year-end.

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items was made by Joe Zak and seconded by Ray Lermom. Motion carried unanimously.

Council Business

PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing regarding the proposed budget for FY 2025-2026 was opened at 6:03 PM. The City Manager explained that this was a required public hearing, providing an opportunity for the public to ask questions or make comments. He also emphasized that unlike some other entities in the county, the city's budget is transparent with every line item listed.

Misti McBryde asked about salary allocations across departments, and the City Manager explained that salaries are split across general funds and utility funds based on oversight responsibilities, as recommended by the auditor. This is why some positions appear in multiple budget lines.

Michael Hood inquired about the large amount for health insurance in the police department budget. The City Manager explained that the city pays 100% of health insurance for all employees and their dependents, with employees only responsible for vision or dental coverage they choose to add for their dependents. The police department's insurance line item appears larger because it shows the coverage for all police department employees in one line, while other departments might show coverage for fewer individuals.

Questions were also raised about the recycling center revenue. It was clarified that revenue appears under "Recycled Material" and "Recycle Center Fees," though it was noted that the recycling center never fully pays for itself but provides an important community benefit and indirectly saves money by reducing disposal costs.

The public hearing was closed at 6:21 PM.

Discuss and consider action re: ORDINANCE #2025-0923(a) approving and adopting the budget by departments for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026 for the City of Stratford

Motion to approve Ordinance #2025-0923(a) approving and adopting the budget by departments for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026 for the City of Stratford was made by Joe Zak and seconded by Ray Leron. Motion carried unanimously.

Discuss and consider action re: RESOLUTION ratifying the adopted budget and property tax rate that raises more total property taxes than the previous year

Motion to approve the Resolution ratifying the adopted budget and property tax rate that raises more total property taxes than the previous year was made by Michael Hood and seconded by Misti McBryde. Motion carried unanimously.

Discuss and consider action re: ORDINANCE #2025-0923(b) levying ad valorem taxes on all taxable property in the City of Stratford, Texas for the fiscal year 2025-2026

Motion that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of the tax rate of 0.820486, which is effectively a 0.0396584 percent decrease in the tax rate, was made by Brad Reed and seconded by Joe Zak. Motion carried unanimously.

Discuss and consider action re: request to close one block of Main Street for Trunk or Treat

Motion to approve the request to close one block of Main Street for Trunk or Treat was made by Brad Reed and seconded by Michael Hood. Motion carried unanimously.

Discuss and consider action re: Fire Chief Justin Lanning to discuss ladder truck

Fire Chief Justin Lanning and the Council discussed issues with the recently purchased ladder truck from Dalhart. The Mayor explained that when they inspected the truck initially, everything appeared to work, but Dalhart failed to provide proper documentation, including their last inspection from 2020. The truck did not pass the recent inspection and would need significant repairs estimated at \$40,000-\$50,000. The main junction box that controls ladder functions is rusting out, falling apart, and replacement parts are no longer manufactured.

The fire chief noted that according to NFPA guidelines, fire apparatus over 25 years old should be put out of service, which would affect several of their vehicles. He mentioned that while they can refurbish older trucks, this ladder truck is in such poor condition with rusted cross members that companies will not touch it.

The Council discussed options for the future, including obtaining a new pumper truck with a ladder attachment. The fire chief mentioned a 75-foot ladder pumper combo is being built in Lubbock that might be suitable, though pricing was not yet available. Council members asked about potential funding sources, including grants that might become available in the coming months. The Council directed the fire chief to get quotes on both a standard pumper and a pumper-ladder combo truck. They also requested to look into whether insurance would cover any of the repairs needed to the roof of the police department building which was experiencing leaks.

No formal action was taken on this item, but the Council agreed to explore selling or scrapping the current ladder truck after consulting with legal counsel about the situation with Dalhart.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council convened into closed session at 7:20 PM in accordance with Government Code 551.074 to deliberate regarding the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, dismissal or hiring for position of Municipal Court Judge.

Council re-convened into executive session at 7:18 pm and a motion was made by Misti McBryde to increase the Judge's pay by \$5 and seconded by Brad Reed. Motion carried unanimously.

City Manager Report

The City Manager reported that Alex Spurlock has taken over management of the city's website, addressing the council's previous request. All public announcements, budgets, minutes, and agendas will be posted online.

Tracy has completed the 1, 3, and 5-year street repair plan, equipment maintenance schedule, and vehicle maintenance schedule, which were sent to the Mayor for distribution to council members. Currently, staff are in the phase of identifying potholes of various sizes to better plan for future larger projects that might require contracting out.

Ray Leron mentioned his appointment to the PRCP (Safety Roads) committee for the county, with the first meeting scheduled for October. They emphasized the need to have prepared street repair plans with measurements and material estimates ready to present when funding becomes available.

The City Manager also informed the Council that the Stratford Gazette/Sherman County Gazette had submitted a public information request regarding the Aspen Woods project. All requested documents had been sent to the city attorney for review before release.

Citizen Comment Period

No items were discussed.

Items from the Council

Misti McBryde mentioned the need for Open Meetings Act training and thanked the City Manager for providing information on this topic. She expressed interest in receiving training to better understand the requirements, particularly regarding posting of agenda items.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Joe Zak to adjourn at 7:20 pm and seconded by Brad Reed. Motion carried unanimously.