COUNCIL MINUTES
July 28, 2026

Stratford City Council met in regular session with Mayor Pro-Tem Joe Zak presiding and the following:

Council: Misti McBryde, Ray Lermon, Brad Reed, Michael Hood
Interim City Manager: Eddie Edwards
City Secretary: Kathy Rendon
Police Chief: Richard Coborn
PW Supv: Tracie Bogart
ACCE Officer: Kristin Elam

Guests: Max Seymour PRPC representative

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and an invocation was given.

Consent Agenda

a. Minutes from June 23, 2026, July 1, 2026 and July 8, 2026

Motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Misti McBryde as presented and seconded by Ray Lermon. The motion carried unanimously.

Council Business

a. Discuss and consider action re: interlocal agreement with PRPC for City Manager search services

Max Seymour, a representative from the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC) appeared before the Council to present the interlocal agreement for City Manager search services and to answer questions. The representative outlined the search process, noting that the timeline can range from three to eight months depending on several factors, the most significant of which is the salary and benefits package established by the Council. He was candid that the compensation offered would directly influence the quality and volume of qualified applicants.

The representative described the applicant screening methodology, which involves developing a job description and posting matrix, with resumes and cover letters sorted into three tiers — unqualified, partially qualified, and fully qualified — represented by red, yellow, and green folders, respectively. The goal is to present the Council with a green folder of ten to twelve qualified candidates, narrowed to four to five for further consideration and two to three for on-site interviews. Postings would be made on the PRPC website, the Texas Municipal League (TML), and optionally through Indeed, though the representative cautioned that Indeed generates a high volume of unqualified applications. A Council member inquired about posting with the Texas City Managers Association, which the representative agreed to explore. The maximum fee for the services is $10,000 over six months, inclusive of travel time and posting costs, with mileage and local newspaper advertising billed separately. Staff noted the cost would likely be split between the General Fund and Utility Fund.

The representative also informed the Council that PRPC is currently conducting a City Manager search for the City of Clarendon and recommended that Stratford's job posting be delayed until approximately September 1st to avoid candidates simultaneously pursuing both positions and to allow the Clarendon process to progress further. He noted that Stratford is in a favorable position relative to Clarendon because it already has an interim City Manager in place.

Motion to approve the interlocal agreement between the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission and the City of Stratford for City Manager search services was made by Brad Reed and seconded by Ray Lermon. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Discuss and consider action re: RESOLUTION R-03-26 Texas Water Development Board Financial Assistance Application Filing and Authorized Representative Resolution

The City Manager informed the Council that the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) has an open funding cycle with the potential for 100% financing of new large water supply projects, for which the City qualifies. The application deadline is August 1st. City staff, with assistance from OJB Engineering, had substantially completed the application, and the only required Council action was authorization for staff and OJB to file on the City's behalf and for designated representatives to complete necessary certifications. The City Manager acknowledged that, because the project is not yet shovel-ready — lacking a finalized well design — it would score lower on certain criteria, but emphasized that applying was the only path to potential funding.

Motion to approve Resolution R-03-26, authorizing the filing of a Texas Water Development Board Financial Assistance application and designating authorized representatives, was made by Ray Lermon and seconded by Misti McBryde. The motion carried unanimously.

c. Discuss and consider action re: operations, procedures and fees of the Stratford Recycle Center

The City Manager introduced the item, noting that questions had been raised regarding the Recycle Center's hours of operation, payment handling, and staff utilization. The current public hours — 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM Monday through Friday, 4:00 to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday, and 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM on Saturday — were described as inconvenient for residents, many of whom cannot access the facility during those limited windows.

Discussion centered on the workload of the Recycle Center employee, with Council members and staff acknowledging that recycling duties do not constitute a full forty-hour workweek, leaving the employee available to assist other city departments during off-hours. The Council discussed restructuring the schedule so the employee would be present at the Recycle Center for full days on two or three designated days per week — such as Tuesdays and Thursdays — while remaining available for other city work on alternate days. This arrangement was seen as more predictable and accessible for the public.

On the matter of payment, concern was raised about the current practice of accepting cash at the facility. The Council discussed alternatives including placing charges on residents' water bills as a one-time charge or potentially using a card reader. The consensus was to move away from cash payments to eliminate any appearance of impropriety, even in the absence of any known issue.

The discussion also touched on broader community waste management concerns, including the possibility of periodic community cleanup events where residents could dispose of certain materials free of charge, limited to city residents. The City Manager was directed to develop a revised fee and schedule proposal for future Council consideration.

No formal action was taken on this item during the meeting.

City Manager Report

a. Financial status

The City Manager presented a financial update through the first of July. He reported that General Fund revenues are tracking above the three-year average and above the current year's budget, while expenditures, though slightly above the three-year average, remain well below budgeted figures — indicating a healthy General Fund position. The Utility Fund is performing adequately, with revenues above the three-year average and expenditures running below revenues, suggesting a positive trend following the prior year's water rate adjustment.

Departmentally, the City is at approximately 79% of annual expenditures through mid-month, consistent with the point in the fiscal year. The Fire Department, which had previously been over budget, returned to compliance following receipt of a grant reimbursement.

The City Manager also introduced two new reporting formats for the Council's consideration: a check register report organized by department and vendor, and a full financial statement listing every revenue and expenditure line item. He highlighted that solid waste/recycling revenues are projected to fall short of the $240,000 budget target, reaching approximately $167,000 — roughly 70% — underscoring the need to revisit the rate structure so that each utility service (water, sewer, and refuse) is self-supporting.

He noted that the water rate adjustment made in the prior year has proven well-calibrated, with the full year's budgeted water revenue already collected well ahead of the end-of-year deadline.

b. TxDOT painting request

The City Manager clarified that the crosswalk striping requirement on Main Street, previously perceived as an optional TxDOT request, is in fact a federal mandate flowing from the U.S. Department of Transportation through the Governor's office to TxDOT. Non-compliance would initially result in the withholding of federal grant funds, and could ultimately result in legal action.

The specific requirement applies to designated crosswalk locations on Main Street — identified as the south side of First Street, south side of Second Street, and north side of North Street — and includes intersections without stop signs. The Council discussed the compatibility of painted crosswalks with the existing brick street surfaces and noted that certain treatments, such as glass-bead enhanced paint, may be acceptable alternatives to full pavement markings. The City Manager agreed to distribute the full federal documentation detailing acceptable crosswalk treatments so the Council could revisit the matter with complete information.

A related concern was raised about sight-line obstructions at the intersection of First Street and Main Street caused by angled parking, which forces drivers to edge into traffic to see oncoming vehicles. The possibility of adjusting parking angles or requiring parallel parking at that location was briefly discussed, though no formal action was taken.

Citizen Comment Period

No citizen comments were made.

Items from the Council

No formal items were raised under this agenda item.

Budget Workshop - no action will be taken

There was discussion regarding FY 2026-2027 budget priorities.

The Council established the following schedule for the budget adoption process:

- **August 11:** Regular Council meeting — discuss proposed tax rate and conduct budget work session.
- **August 18 (Special Meeting):** Formally receive the proposed budget, schedule public hearings, and introduce budget and tax ordinances.
- **August 25:** Regular Council meeting — optional additional budget work session.
- **September 8:** Special or regular meeting — public hearing on the budget.
- **September 22:** Regular Council meeting — public hearing on the tax rate and final adoption.

8. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn at 7:33 pm was made by Brad Reed and seconded by Misti McBryde. The motion carried unanimously.

Joe Zak, Mayor Pro-Tem

Attest:

Kathy Rendon, City Secretary