COMMUNITY SERVICES COUNCIL COMMITTEE
JULY 15, 2026
DRAFT MINUTES

Council present:
Victoria Johnson
Phil Anderson
Alexa Boedeker

Council Absent:

Staff present
Tommy Ludwig, City Manager
Eric Oscarson, Deputy City Manager
Harlan Jefferson, Deputy City Manager
Monica Solko, Deputy City Secretary
Matt Ribitzki, Deputy City Attorney

1. CALL TO ORDER – Time: 1:00 p.m.

Chair Victoria Johnson called the meeting to order. **Time: 1:01 p.m.**

2. CITIZEN APPEARANCES

- None.

3. GENERAL

A.* Minutes from the May 6, 2026 Community Services committee meeting. *(Staff Contact: Monica Solko, Deputy City Secretary)

Motion made by Phil Anderson and seconded by Alexa Boedeker to approve.

Motion passed 3-0.

4. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

A. Receive a report, hold a discussion, and provide recommendations to the city council regarding potential shade and play area enhancement options for Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza and provide feedback. *(Staff Contact: Jen Basham, Director of Parks and Recreation)*

Jen Basham, Director of Parks and Recreation, presented potential shade and play area enhancements for Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza. The proposed nature-inspired playscape would include a concrete embankment slide, climbing and balance features, interactive musical elements, and accessible entry features, with an estimated cost of $93,246.46. Staff also presented two shade options: triangle shade sails along Ellison Street at an estimated cost of $296,499 and umbrella shade structures over benches at an estimated cost of $51,810. Staff

recommended the umbrella structures as a lower-cost option that would provide targeted shade while maintaining the Plaza's open character. The presentation also addressed the need for future furniture replacement and ongoing maintenance of Plaza amenities.

The committee discussed simplifying the play area by focusing on climbing features and natural elements while avoiding flower beds and loose materials that could create additional maintenance concerns. Regarding shade, the committee expressed a preference for the triangle shade sails along Ellison Street, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the parade route and ensuring the structures are tall enough to accommodate its use. City Manager, Tommy Ludwig noted that the Finance Committee did not recommend funding the shade structures but supported the play area and furniture replacement. Committee member Alexa Boedeker emphasized the importance of visitors taking better care of Plaza amenities and indicated that chess pieces should no longer be replaced. Mr. Ludwig suggested submitting the triangle shade sail option as a supplemental budget request.

The committee was in favor of option 1, the triangle shade sails along Ellison Street as a supplement request.

B. Receive a report, hold a discussion, and provide recommendation to the City Council on potential replacements of the Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza Christmas tree. *(Staff Contact: Alex Philips, Economic Development Director)*

Alex Philips, Economic Development Director, presented options for replacing the Mayor Vera Calvin Plaza Christmas tree, which was purchased in 2020 for $39,700 and has experienced significant wear and deterioration. The current tree has reached the end of its useful life, and installation, takedown, and storage cost approximately $16,000 annually. Three replacement options were presented: an animated Christmas tree ranging from $114,172 to $150,628, a 30-foot LED tower tree for $51,820, and a 20-foot pre-lit commercial tree for $14,585. Each option offers an expected service life of 10 years or more with routine maintenance. Additional costs for installation, takedown, and storage would apply, ranging from approximately $14,000 to $22,000 annually, depending on the tree selected. Optional perimeter fencing was also presented at an estimated cost of $4,500 to help protect the tree from damage.

The committee discussed the daytime appearance of the animated tree option, the potential addition of fencing to prevent damage, and the cost of a live tree, which was estimated at approximately $200,000 annually. Members favored the 30-foot LED tower tree but discussed concerns regarding storage and staff's ability to install and remove the tree. City Manager, Tommy Ludwig recommended purchasing the tree and contracting with a third party for installation. The committee also discussed installing fencing, evaluating anchor options when the turf is next replaced, and continuing to use the existing presents to anchor the tree.

Funding has not been allocated for the replacement, and staff will need to consider storage and installation requirements.

The committee recommended purchasing Option 2, the 30-foot LED tower tree, with staff exploring fencing and third-party installation, and recommended presenting the item to the full council for consideration.

C. Receive a report, hold a discussion, and provide recommendations to the city council regarding the updated Burleson Public Library Strategic Plan. *(Staff Contact: Sara Miller, Deputy Director-Library)*

Sara Miller, Deputy Library Director, presented an update on the Burleson Public Library Strategic Plan to the committee. Originally developed in 2021, the updated plan was presented to the Library Board in February 2026 and incorporates multi-year research, community input, and a 2023 needs assessment and facility study. The library recorded a record 217,579 visitors and 321,773 items checked out, reflecting strong community demand. However, population growth has placed increasing demands on the facility, which opened in 1996 and has limited meeting space, study rooms, seating, shelving, parking, and staff work areas. The strategic plan focuses on three areas: maximizing the use of the existing facility, strengthening access to collections and digital resources, and enriching programs and outreach for all ages. Proposed initiatives include improving the library layout, expanding digital resources, enhancing collection organization, increasing programming and community outreach, and exploring additional staffing to support outreach efforts. Success will be measured through goals for household participation, new cardholder retention, and collection turnover.

Committee members expressed support for the presentation and the library's efforts to address space limitations and meet community needs. Committee member Alexa Boedeker praised the Friends of the Library for finding creative funding opportunities to support programs and services, while the Director of Community Services, DeAnna Philips, highlighted the value of partnerships with other organizations. Members acknowledged that using off-site facilities helps accommodate programs but does not necessarily encourage participants to visit the library and check out materials. Committee Chair Victoria Johnson emphasized the importance of identifying solutions, establishing measurable outcomes, and developing timelines to track progress.

D. Receive a report, hold a discussion, and provide recommendations to the city council regarding the Senior Activity Center Strategic Plan*. (Staff Contact: DeAnna Phillips, Director of Community Services)*

DeAnna Phillips, Director of Community Services, presented the first Senior Activity Center Strategic Plan to the Community Services Committee. The plan was developed using a facility assessment, staff input, participant and community surveys, and demographic data. In FY 2025, the center recorded 60,154 visitors,

21,351 program attendees, 2,900 volunteer hours, and 190 events. While the center benefits from dedicated staff, diverse programming, and strong community support, challenges include ADA accessibility barriers, deferred maintenance, limited activity and storage space, outdated technology and amenities, insufficient wayfinding signage, and a lack of security features to protect staff and participants. The plan establishes four focus areas: Facilities and Infrastructure, Programs and Services, Community Awareness and Engagement, and Organizational Capacity. Key objectives include addressing facility and safety concerns, evaluating future expansion or replacement, enhancing programs and services, improving community outreach, promoting an inclusive environment, and strengthening staffing and professional development. The plan outlines short-term priorities for Years 1–2 and long-term goals for Years 3–5.

There were no questions from the committee. City Manager Tommy Ludwig noted that one-time funding was included in the budget for ADA facility improvements and discussed using available funding sources to make incremental improvements, similar to the planned library remodeling. He acknowledged that the city has a significant backlog of maintenance needs across its facilities. Committee members thanked staff for the update and expressed appreciation for the presentation and the positive impact the Senior Activity Center has on the community.

5. REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS OR REPORTS

- None.

6. RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

In accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, the City Council may convene in Executive Session in the City Council Workroom in City Hall to conduct a closed meeting to discuss any item listed on this Agenda.

A. Pending or contemplated litigation or to seek the advice of the City Attorney pursuant to Section 551.071, Texas Government Code

7. ADJOURN

Chair Victoria Johnson adjourned the meeting.

Time: 2:18 p.m.

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Monica Solko
Deputy City Secretary