

**BURLESON CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING  
FEBRUARY 24, 2026  
DRAFT MINUTES**

**ROLL CALL**

**COUNCIL PRESENT:**

Victoria Johnson  
Phil Anderson  
Alexa Boedeker  
Chris Fletcher  
Larry Scott  
Dan McClendon  
Adam Russell

**COUNCIL ABSENT:**

**Staff present**

Tommy Ludwig, City Manager  
Harlan Jefferson, Deputy City Manager  
Eric Oscarson, Deputy City Manager  
Monica Solko, Deputy City Secretary  
Lisandra Leal, Assistant City Secretary  
Allen Taylor, City Attorney  
Matt Ribitzki, Deputy City Attorney

**1. CALL TO ORDER - Time 8:30 a.m.**

Mayor Fletcher called the meeting to order. **Time: 8:49 a.m.**

**2. CITIZEN APPEARANCES**

- No speakers

*Mayor Fletcher announced that the items would be taken out of order.*

**4. GENERAL**

**A. CSO#6060-02-2026, resolution nominating candidates to fill a vacancy on the Board of Directors for the Central Appraisal District of Johnson County. (Staff Contact: Janalea Hembree, Assistant to the City Manager)**

Janalea Hembree, Assistant to the City Manager, presented a resolution to the city council.

Motion made by Larry Scott and seconded by Adam Russell to nominate Shane McNeil.

Motion passed 7-0.

### **3. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**A. Hold a work session where the City Council may discuss any and all aspects of the City of Burleson. The City Council will not take any action on topics discussed, but may set priorities and direct staff to place items on future City Council agendas. Topics that may be discussed include, without limitation, short term and long term goals and priorities of the City Council, City Management, and City departments; City legal services; information technology; finance; purchasing; economic development; development services, community services and communications; capital improvement projects; city facilities, streets, and infrastructure; transportation; public works; code enforcement; parks and recreation; public safety; municipal court; neighborhood and animal services; permits and inspections; Hidden Creek Golf Course; human resources; utilities, trash and recycling; population growth; planning and zoning; traffic; annexation; intergovernmental relations; city budget; taxes and fees; debt policy, bonds, and debt service; water rates and service, Old Town plaza; boards and commissions; City Council committees; elections; events and festivals; participation in the National League of Cities; Errors and omissions insurance, insurance coverages for professional services, and the City's insurance coverages; stormwater and drainage utility system ordinance and fees; emergency management; and City Council Policy Number 17 and other City Council policies.**

#### **Reflections and refinements:**

Tommy Ludwig, City Manager, summarized the previous day's meeting and asked Council to prioritize the goals that had been identified. Council members expressed interest in obtaining citizen input on priorities so that feedback could be incorporated into Council decisions and in future retreats. Council also discussed the need for a searchable public database that would allow for easier access to previous agenda packets, website content, and meeting minutes. Additionally, Council reflected on the previous day's dot exercise and noted that taking time to reflect on perspectives overnight could potentially influence or change priorities the following day.

#### **Citizen survey and feedback:**

Facilitator DeAnna Philips reviewed previous citizen surveys available on the City's website to compare community feedback with Council's priorities identified during the dot exercise.

Council discussed survey topics including traffic and street conditions particularly noting that conditions appear to have worsened since the recent ice storm and traffic light diagnostics. Council emphasized the importance of considering feedback from both residents and city staff. It was also noted that one-page summaries outlining each department's critical priorities, rather than wish lists, will be prepared and provided to Council prior to future retreats.

#### **Time/Quality/Cost Exercise:**

Facilitator DeAnna Philips reviewed the Council goals established the previous day and introduced the "iron triangle" concept to guide discussion. Council used the framework of time, cost, and quality to evaluate and prioritize projects.

### **Advance Hidden Creek & Conference Center Development (3 dots)**

- Discussion Points:
  - Legislative considerations and partnerships (example Embassy Suites in Denton).
  - Funding options: TIF, HOT/MOT, 4A funds, public/private partnerships.
    - Staff TIF, HOT/MOT are not an option; 4A can help but need additional revenue sources; need to monitor the incentives for 4A funds
  - Focus on high quality, careful planning, selective incentives.

### **Support Old Town Redevelopment (3 dots)**

- Goals: Clean streets, public art (wrapping utility boxes), restaurants, and businesses.
- Density & Housing: Discussion regarding high-density residential; council recommends townhomes, not large apartment complexes.
- Industrial Development: Consideration of industrial development along I-35, land banking, and infrastructure improvements such as water line extensions (expand Old Town to I-35 or Hidden Creek).

Staff noted ongoing efforts to attract industrial projects near the John Jones business area and previous investments in water capacity to support future growth. Council also discussed the possibility of using tools such as a TIF and prioritizing 4A resources for economic development infrastructure. Additional ideas included improving connectivity to Old Town, enhancing the Wilson Street corridor, and potentially attracting amenities such as a grocery store. Staff will continue evaluating development opportunities and infrastructure needs to support both Old Town redevelopment and broader economic growth.

### **RECESS AND BACK TO ORDER**

Mayor Fletcher recessed for a short break at 10:17 a.m. and called the meeting back to order at 10:30 a.m. with all members present as recorded above.

### **Maintain competitive employee physical and financial wellness and benefits (3 dots)**

Council discussed maintaining competitive compensation and benefits to remain an employer of choice. The conversation focused on employee recruitment and retention, including merit pay timing, pay equity, and potential market adjustments for entry-level workers like Public Works. They noted current shortages in police staffing and the need to remain competitive. Council discussed the importance of strong benefits packages, evaluating overall compensation satisfaction, and fostering a positive workplace culture to encourage long-term employee retention.

Staff discussed maintaining consistency with annual salary increases and ensuring employee compensation remains competitive when retaining current staff and recruiting new employees. Staff also noted the potential restoration of merit pay to October 1 instead of January 1 and ongoing evaluation of Public Works pay. Discussion also included the possibility of increasing the TMRS contribution from 7% to 8%, though staff noted this would have a significant financial impact. Staff will continue exploring potential options and ideas related to employee compensation and benefits.

### **Expand infrastructure and facilities to support growth (3 dots)**

Council discussed infrastructure expansion as a long-term priority, acknowledging that infrastructure needs will continue to grow alongside development. While recognizing current

financial limitations. Council noted that near-term efforts can focus on lower-cost planning and coordination with regional partners such as NCTCOG and TxDOT.

Staff emphasized a strategy of growing from the inside out and conducting research and planning now, with the understanding that construction and funding needs will be significantly higher in the future.

**Implement development standards to foster quality growth (2 dots)**

Council prioritized implementing development standards to foster quality growth, emphasizing a high-quality and fast approach. Discussion included the impact on Development Services, noting that a concierge service would not be pursued since it was not prioritized. Council acknowledged that achieving this priority would require significant staff effort. Staff noted that work on the Comprehensive Plan will support these development standards.

**Renovate library restrooms (2 dots)**

Council prioritized the project as low cost and fast.

**Improve ADA access at the Senior Activity Center (2 dots)**

Council prioritized the project as low cost and fast.

**Balance budget and reduce supplement package (2 dots)**

Council prioritized the project as high quality and low cost.

**Implement air fiber to increase connectivity and data system to reduce costs (2 dots)**

Council prioritized the project as high quality and fast.

**Create city-owned public safety radio network (2 dots)**

Council prioritized the project as high quality and fast, noting the potential to improve response times. Council also discussed monitoring the financial impact and whether the change would be cost-neutral. Staff explained the fund was originally intended to support services while building reserves for future replacement. Staff also noted that bringing the system in-house may not result in significant savings but could provide greater security and operational control.

**Phase staffing for fire station 4/phase staffing for police beats**

Council discussed future public safety staffing needs, including Fire Station 4 and additional police beats. It was noted that current financial models do not include funding for Fire Station 4, which would require approximately 17 FTEs for Fire and 20 FTEs for Police. Council discussed potential funding sources, including SAFER grants, the drainage utility fee, and revenue from last year's tax rate increase. Council also noted the need to fund a fourth ambulance with four FTEs due to increasing call volumes. Staff noted that without prioritizing these additions, response times may increase. Staff also emphasized that police call volume is significantly higher than fire calls. Council indicated that fire staffing may be considered on a case-by-case basis, while police-related items, including the take-home vehicle policy, will be referred to the Public Safety Committee for further discussion.

## FY 2027 Goals:

Project/Goal	High Quality	Low Cost	Fast
Advance Hidden Creek and conference center development	X	X	
Support Old Town redevelopment	X	X	
Maintain competitive employee physical and financial wellness and benefits	X		X
Expand infrastructure and facilities to support growth	X	X	
Implement development standards to foster quality growth	X		X
Renovate library restrooms		X	X
Improve ADA access at the Senior Activity Center		X	X
Balance budget and reduce supplemental packages	X	X	
Implement air fiber to increase connectivity and data systems to reduce costs	X		X
Create city-owned public safety radio network	X		X
Phase staffing for Fire Station 4/Phase staffing for police beats	X	X	

## RECESS AND BACK TO ORDER

Mayor Fletcher recessed for a short break at 11:45 a.m. and called the meeting back to order at 11:57 a.m. with all members present as recorded above.

### Five Year Goals

Facilitator DeAnna Philips continued the discussion by reviewing Council's priorities identified during the dot exercise related to five-year goals.

### Secure Federal funding to remove Hulen low water crossing

Council discussed securing federal funding to remove the Hulen low water crossing, noting that design work is important while construction funding may occur later. The project was identified as a lower priority compared to others but categorized as high quality and low cost, with the understanding that work can be spaced out over time.

### Pursue grants for infrastructure and public safety

Council identified pursuing grants for infrastructure and public safety projects as a high-quality and fast priority. Staff noted that pursuing grants will require prioritizing staff time and coordination on appropriations. It was also noted that Kiley & Associates expressed concerns about submitting grant requests for projects without identified funding, including the Hulen bridge, a generator at the Brick, and bullet film for police vehicles.

### Reassess 4A/4B funding to support general fund initiatives

Council discussed the potential reassessment of 4A and 4B funding to support general fund initiatives, including reallocating 4A funds for streets and roads. Concerns were raised about the limited capacity of Type B funds and the potential long-term impact of reducing 4A resources that support economic development and sales tax growth. Council also discussed options such as implementing a street maintenance fee or pursuing voter-approved bonds. Staff noted that reallocating portions of 4A or 4B funding could require voter approval and that continued bond issuances could reduce financial capacity over the next 20 years.

Following discussion, Council directed staff to shelve further evaluation of this item for the next five years.

### **Use stormwater fee to improve drainage**

Council identified the use of a stormwater fee to improve drainage infrastructure as a priority and categorized the initiative as fast to implement.

### **Fund FM 1020 widening**

Council discussed funding the widening of FM 1020 and categorized the project as high quality and low cost, identifying it as the second priority for pursuing federal funding.

### **Add dedicated grant staff**

Council discussed adding dedicated grant staff and categorized the initiative as high quality and low cost, noting that a grant writer could assist staff in securing additional funding opportunities and could potentially be cost neutral through awarded grants.

### **Develop Conference Center and Hotel**

Council identified developing a conference center and hotel as a priority and categorized the initiative as high quality and low cost. Discussion noted that the project could support economic development while complementing efforts to preserve and expand Old Town.

### **Implement Police Training Center**

Council identified implementing a police training center as a priority and categorized the initiative as high quality and low cost.

### **Open and staff Fire Station 4 and Adopt new Comprehensive Plan**

Council identified opening and staffing Fire Station 4 and adopting a new Comprehensive Plan as priorities, categorizing both initiatives as high quality and low cost.

### **Fund Hulen extension to I-35W**

The Hulen extension to I-35W was identified as high quality but during discussion was removed from the five-year priority list due to the project timeline extending beyond five years.

### **Redevelop former City Market site**

Council noted that redevelopment of the former City Market site aligns with Old Town redevelopment efforts.

### **Increase Animal Shelter administrative staffing**

Increasing administrative staffing for Animal Shelter was identified as a high quality priority to support operations.

### **Review existing Strategic Plan**

Council reviewed the existing Strategic Plan. Staff indicated the current focus areas remain appropriate, and Council agreed to keep the Strategic Plan as is while incorporating items discussed during the retreat.

Councilmember Phil Anderson requested staff consider adding Veterans Day as a holiday for City employees in recognition of employee veterans.

Project/Goal	High Quality	Low Cost	Fast
Secure federal funding to remove Hulen low-water crossing	X	X	
Pursue grants for infrastructure and public safety	X		X
Reassess 4A/4B funding to support general fund initiatives			
Use stormwater fee to improve drainage			X
Fund FM 1020 widening			
Add dedicated grant staff	X	X	
Develop conference center and hotel	X	X	
Preserve and expand Old Town	X	X	
Implement police training center	X	X	
Open and staff Fire Station 4	X	X	
Adopt new comprehensive plan	X		
Fund Hulen extension to I-35 – longer five, but start working			
Redevelop former City Market site (old town development)			
Increase animal shelter administrative staffing	x		

### Debt Management Policy

Mark Davies, Finance Director, presented the City’s Debt Management Policy, highlighting the need to maintain coverage ratios 1.25x for general debt, 1.10x for Water & Sewer, 1.15x for 4A/4B and fund balances of at least 20% of annual expenditures to ensure fiscal stability and strong credit ratings. Stricter ratios could improve ratings and lower interest costs but may require immediate rate increases or project reductions, while relaxed ratios could free cash short-term but raise long-term financial risk. Council agreed to keep the policy as is, with Councilmember Russell supporting the 1.25x coverage ratio and suggesting a 10-year extension to debt profiles.

### RECESS AND BACK TO ORDER

Mayor Fletcher recessed for a short break at 1:08 p.m. and called the meeting back to order at 1:18 p.m. with all members present as recorded above.

### EMS Fee Schedule

Casey Davis, Fire Chief, presented the FY26 Ambulance Fee Schedule and SB916 compliance, noting that best practice is to base rates on the Medicare Ambulance Inflation Factor to adjust annually and avoid losing allowable increases. Gradual rate increases were recommended, with consideration for impacts on private insurance. Staff will be adding an item to the city council agenda to consider amending the city’s fee schedule for FY 25-26 by amending fees associated with emergency medical and ambulance services. Council agreed to amend the city council agenda. Staff will amend the city council agenda to include an ordinance amending the fee schedule for EMS and an update on the trees at Centennial Park.

### Winter Shield 26 Overview: Winter Weather Update:

Casey Davis, Fire Chief, presented an overview of the recent ice storm response, highlighting the Emergency Operations Center’s strong performance and all collaboration with city staff. Council and staff discussed key areas for improvement and ongoing operations, including maintaining consistent hours at warming stations (Brick, Senior Center, and Library) while reviewing MOUs for churches, establishing a communication line with the Chisholm Trail Jeep Club, addressing equipment and facility needs such as the Brick generator, street

treatment trade-offs, insulating the brine bay, and adding a 24-hour kitchen at the service center. Concerns were raised about the fine dust from sanding used for ice control, and it was confirmed that the six-hour activation trigger for warming stations was effective. The city will not offer preventative dripping credit, and messaging will be updated accordingly. Overall, the response was proactive and effective, with additional steps identified for equipment, communication, and operational improvements.

### **RECESS AND BACK TO ORDER**

Mayor Fletcher recessed for a short break at 2:37 p.m. and called the meeting back to order at 2:46 p.m. with all members present as recorded above.

#### **Errors and Omissions:**

Randy Morrison, Director of Capital Engineering, and Matt Ribitzki, Deputy City Attorney, presented errors and omissions in city projects. The presentation covered project timelines, core estimating stages, and recent project data. They noted that third-party liability coverage is not included, meaning claims must be pursued based on loss rather than contract amount, highlighting key legal considerations. There were no questions from Council.

#### **NLC Participation.**

Monica Solko, Deputy City Secretary, presented on the City's NLC participation, highlighting expenses from the past three years. Council discussed canceling participation. Councilmember Russell noted that, due to the canceled elections, \$62,000 in election savings could be reallocated, including \$16,000 originally for NLC, to fund an electronic content management system with a public portal. All council members supported earmarking the funds for this project.

*Mayor Chris Fletcher left the meeting at 3:21 p.m. and returned at 3:25 p.m.*

#### **City Council Meetings**

Tommy Ludwig, City Manager, presented the City Council meeting format. Council discussion focused on preferring more detailed memos rather than relying on presentations.

Key points included:

- Members review memos and ordinances for historical context and background, rather than presentations.
- Some supported earlier meeting times, but more breaks are needed for meetings longer than six hours.
- Preference to move certain items from consent to full council presentations to allow discussion or action.
- Staff guidance: maintain detailed memos and presentations, schedule sufficient breaks, and bring items forward without reports or presentations when appropriate.

#### **Retreat Review**

Council reflected on the retreat, highlighting successes and areas for improvement:

##### What went well:

- Dot Exercise with boards but need additional explanation would be helpful.

- Open dialogue and discussion among members.
- Department presentation and interaction with department directors in a relaxed environment.
- Enjoyed the ice breaker exercises.
- DeAnna Philips effectively moderated the retreat.
- Directors were able to discuss critical needs and their supplemental requests.
- Highlighted legislative opportunities, such as showing up in Austin for Hotel/Motel discussions.

Areas for improvement:

- Department goals should be provided in advance of the meeting.
- Citizen survey feedback should be collected and incorporated before the retreat.
- Ensure implementation plans are clear, particularly for initiatives awaiting funding or legislative action.

Next year:

- Maintain effective dialogue and director participation while improving preparation and integration of citizen input and departmental goals.

4. **GENERAL**

- A. CSO#6060-02-2026, resolution nominating candidates to fill a vacancy on the Board of Directors for the Central Appraisal District of Johnson County. (Staff Contact: Janalea Hembree, Assistant to the City Manager)**

*Item 4A was discussed and voted on above.*

5. **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. The City Council may reconvene into open session and take action on posted items.

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

- No executive session was needed.

6. **ADJOURN**

Motion made by Adam Russell and seconded by Victoria Johnson to adjourn.

Mayor Chris Fletcher adjourned the meeting.

**Time: 3:58 p.m.**

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Monica Solko  
Deputy City Secretary