



**TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP
AND REGULAR MEETING**
Wednesday, August 06, 2025 at 6:00 PM
Fulton Council Chambers, 201 N. 7th Street

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT

Mayor Kelli Cole
Mayor Pro Tem Robert Loflin
Place 2 Chris Garis Place
Place 3 MaryAnn Pahmiyer
Place 4 Margo Nielsen
Place 5 Laura McCorkle

STAFF PRESENT

Stephanie Garcia, City Secretary
Ty Gerstenberger, Chief
Steven Robertson, Comptroller
Matt Olenick, Director of Operations

Mayor Cole called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – U.S. Flag and Texas Flag

Mayor Cole led everyone in the pledges.

OBSERVE A MOMENT OF SILENCE/PRAAYER

Mayor Cole led everyone in a moment of silence.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD (PUBLIC FORUM)

Public participation is valued and at this time, comments limited to three (3) minutes will be taken from persons who have signed the Speaker's Card located on the table inside the Council Chambers and delivered to the City Secretary before the meeting begins. Written comments received by submission to the City Secretary in person or emailed to citysec@fultontexas.org by 3:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting, on any subject matter that is not on the agenda, will be read and summarized in the minutes of the meeting. Persons wishing to address the Council and who have registered using the Speaker's Card will have up to three (3) minutes to speak. In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, Council may not discuss or take action on any item that has not been posted on the agenda. While civil public criticism is not prohibited; disorderly conduct or disturbance of the peace as prohibited by law shall be cause for the chair to terminate the offender's time to speak.

Kathy Kane requested to be heard during the workshop at item number 7.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

1. Presentations and general discussion of Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) fund request from the Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor Cole read the item. Shelly Stuart introduced herself and discussed the changes within the Chamber and the running of the Visitor Center. She also discussed the advertising for the Town that was done through the Visitor Center during the year. She introduced Diane Purdue as the Visitor Center Manager. Alderwoman Nielson inquired about the change in the Chamber. Mrs. Stuart addressed her questions.

2. Presentations and general discussion of Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) fund request from the Aransas County Council on Aging.

Mayor Cole read the item. Debbie Thompson introduced herself and informed the Council of what they do and how they are planning to spend the funds requested. She also mentioned that they keep up with the zip codes of the people that attend their yearly fundraiser which helps to show how the event advertises for the Town. Alderwoman McCorkle commented on the quality of the meals. Chief Gerstenberger also commented on the good of the entity. Mrs. Thompson indicated they prepare approximately 200 meals a day.

3. Presentations and general discussion of Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) fund request from the Texas Maritime Museum.

Mayor Cole read the item. Michael Ables introduced himself and gave a brief overview of the Maritime organization. He informed the Council what they do at the museum for the community. He indicated that 83% of people come to the museum and there has been a 79% increase in their membership. Mr. Ables stated with the use of the hot funds they can continue to increase the traffic at the museum and input into the community. Alderwoman Nielson asked if the funds were used for outreach. Mr. Ables addressed her question.

4. Presentations and general discussion of Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) fund request from the Friends of Fulton Mansion.

Mayor Cole read the item. Jane Hill and Dorothy Wood introduced themselves and discussed the Mansion's value in the community. Mrs. Hill indicated that attendance has increased by almost double in the last year. Mrs. Hill informed the Council of the activities held at the Mansion. Mrs. Wood discussed their goals and changes to the use of the amphitheater in which they feel will continue to bring visitors to the Town.

5. Presentations and general discussion of Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) fund request from the ACTS Aviation Non-Profit Fund - NCF Houston.

Mayor Cole read the item. Cody Stewart introduced himself and informed the Council that each year they host a large airshow. Every Friday of the event is an educational day which teaches all things aviation. Alderwoman Pahmiyer asked if the hotel motel request would be used for more than this one event. Mr. Stewart informed her it was for this event.

6. Presentations and general discussion of Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) fund request from the Visit Rockport Fulton.

Mayor Cole read the item. Jatin Bakhta and Nannette Eiland introduced themselves and informed the Council what the entity would be preparing the marketing for the local entities and the Town. Mr. Bakhta indicated that this entity would have local control of all expenditures and data. He also discussed his feeling on the success of joining the venture and advertising through this entity.

7. Presentation and general discussion of proposed FY 2025-26 Budget.

Mayor Cole read the item and asked Steven Robertson, Comptroller, to begin the discussion. Mr. Robertson began with the hotel occupancy fund. There was discussion regarding the requested amount for the Council of Aging. The Council indicated they would like to stay \$2500. Alderwoman Nielsen asked that the Daughters of the Republic possibly give a presentation for the School House Museum in the future.

Tax Rate: Mr. Robertson indicated that there has been a slight decrease in revenue and there will be about a \$14 increase in taxes. At this time, the Town will be proposing the Voter Approval Rate. Mr. Robertson discussed the levy amounts, and Mayor Cole also noted the tax ceiling amounts.

General fund: Mr. Robertson indicated there has been a slight decline in sales tax. He informed the Council that there were very little changes to the budget since the last budget workshop.

Debt Service: Mr. Robertson noted that there is no new debt issued, and property tax is slightly higher.

Police Department: Mr. Robertson informed the Council that there has been an increase in fines, and an increase in the budget due to the hiring of new officers.

Sewer Fund: Mr. Robertson shared with the Council that there is an expected decrease in sewer revenue due to the water shortage. There have been no other major changes since the last budget workshop.

Convention Center Fund: The bookings are being made into 2027. Mr. Robertson shared that there may be a change in the insurance allocation if there is an increase in the yearly insurance. Alderman Loflin suggested funding for replacement of air conditioners. There was also discussion regarding the fees of the Convention Center.

Pier Fund: Mr. Robertson indicated that the pier is doing very well, which allowed an increase in the budget for repairs and maintenance.

Kathy Kane – Ms. Kane informed the Council while she appreciates how conservative the Town is she is concerned with the police fund. She feels there are affordable options with the County and City and does not feel this is a fiscally sound decision. Mr. Robertson indicated there is \$80,000 in the fund that is not part of the total increase. He also indicated the Town has worked hard to make this happen without a tax increase. It was also noted that the Town's dispatch fees were lowered by \$50,000 a year.

CONSENT AGENDA

All consent agenda items listed are considered to be routine by the Town Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a council Member so requests, in

which event the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

8. **Discuss/Approve/Disapprove** minutes of the Regular Meeting held on July 2, 2025 and the Special Meeting - Budget Workshop held on July 15, 2025.
9. **Discuss/Approve/Disapprove** the June 2025 financial report.

Motion made by Place 3 Pahmiyer, Seconded by Place 2 Garis to approve the Consent Agenda.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Loflin, Place 2 Garis, Place 3 Pahmiyer, Place 4 Nielsen, Place 5 McCorkle

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

10. **Discuss/Approve/Disapprove** the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement for Tax Assessment and Collection of Property Tax in 2025-2026 Between County of Aransas, Texas, and The Town of Fulton, Texas.

Mayor Cole read the item. There was no discussion.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Loflin, Seconded by Place 2 Garis to approve the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement for Tax Assessment and Collection of Property Tax in 2025-2026 Between County of Aransas, Texas, and The Town of Fulton, Texas.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Loflin, Place 2 Garis, Place 3 Pahmiyer, Place 4 Nielsen, Place 5 McCorkle

11. **Discuss/Approve/Disapprove** Resolution No. R-04-2025; a resolution of the Town of Fulton regarding the appointment of members to the Board of Directors of the Aransas County Appraisal District.

Mayor Cole read the item. There was discussion about how the Town will be represented. Mayor Cole shared with the Council that a formula is used to determine a seat on the board and that the Town does not have enough citizens to solidify a seat. The Town will be represented by the City of Rockport representative.

Motion made by Place 5 McCorkle, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Loflin to approve the Resolution No. R-04-2025; a resolution of the Town of Fulton regarding the appointment of members to the Board of Directors of the Aransas County Appraisal District.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Loflin, Place 2 Garis, Place 3 Pahmiyer, Place 4 Nielsen, Place 5 McCorkle

12. **Discuss/Approve/Disapprove** Resolution No. R-05-2025; a resolution authorizing the publication of delinquent taxpayers' names in local newspapers in September 2025.

Mayor Cole read the item. There was no discussion.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Loflin, Seconded by Place 2 Garis to approve the Resolution No. R-05-2025; a resolution authorizing the publication of delinquent taxpayers' names in local newspapers in September 2025.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Loflin, Place 2 Garis, Place 3 Pahmiyer, Place 4 Nielsen, Place 5 McCorkle

- 13. Discuss/Approve/Disapprove** Ordinance No. 326; an ordinance abolishing the requirement of a bond for the Police Chief; repealing ordinances in conflict; providing severability; providing for publication.

Mayor Cole read the item. Hal George, the Town's attorney, indicated a bond is no longer required.

Motion made by Place 2 Garis, Seconded by Place 5 McCorkle to approve the Ordinance No. 326; an ordinance abolishing the requirement of a bond for the Police Chief; repealing ordinances in conflict; providing severability; providing for publication.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Loflin, Place 2 Garis, Place 3 Pahmiyer, Place 4 Nielsen, Place 5 McCorkle

CLOSED SESSION

The Town Council may elect to go into closed session pursuant to Chapter 551, Government Code on any Agenda item where appropriate and particularly Sections 551.071 (consultation with attorney) and 551.074 (personnel matters), Government Code.

The Council did not convene into Closed Session.

OPEN SESSION

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove any and all action necessary with regard to the preceding matter(s).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

14. Mayor's Update.

Mayor Cole mentioned that the smaller streets and drainage project with Aransas County and the General Land Office is still progressing.

Police Dept.: Ty Gerstenberger, Chief of Police, informed the Council that the new officer had been sworn in, and all was going well with the cadet. Chief Gerstenberger is excited about training the new officers to respond to the Fulton citizens.

Alderwoman Pahmiyer noted she would have appreciated more advanced notice of the hiring of the new officer.

15. The next Regular Fulton Town Council Meeting will be held Wednesday, August 20, 2025, beginning at 6:00 pm.

Mayor Cole announced the date and time of the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Cole entertained a motion to adjourn.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Loflin, Seconded by Place 2 Garis to adjourn the meeting.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Loflin, Place 2 Garis, Place 3 Pahmiyer, Place 4 Nielsen, Place 5 McCorkle

The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Kelli Cole, Mayor

Stephanie Garcia, City Secretary