CITY OF LANDER

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 6:00 PM

City Council Chambers, 240 Lincoln Street

MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Mayor White led the Pledge of Allegiance and called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Chad Cassady, Julia Stuble, Melinda Cox, Josh Hahn, and Mayor Missy White. COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: John Larsen and Dan Hahn. Declaration of a quorum. STAFF PRESENT: Police Chief Kelly Waugh, Public Works Director Lance Hopkin, Assistant Mayor RaJean Strube Fossen, City Treasurer Kristy Koehn, City Attorney Adam Phillips, City Clerk Rachelle Fontaine.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** Moved by Council Member Cox, seconded by Council Member Cassady. Council Members voting Yea: Cassady, Cox, Stuble, and J Hahn. Motion passed.

3. **NEW BUSINESS (NON-ACTION ITEMS)**

   A. Administer the oath of office and swear in David Milovich as Sergeant for the Lander Police Department.

   City Attorney Adam Phillips Administer the oath of office and swear in David Milovich as Sergeant for the Lander Police Department.

   B. Administer the oath of office and swear in Casey Tadewald as Corporal for the Lander Police Department.

   City Attorney Adam Phillips Administer the oath of office and swear in Casey Tadewald as Corporal for the Lander Police Department.

   C. Presentation of the FBI Director's Letter to Chief Waugh

   Mayor White explained that the FBI policy prevented the presentation from happening during a public City Council meeting involving elected officials. The presentation instead took place earlier that afternoon.

   The Lander Police Department is building a stronger partnership with the FBI, especially with newly assigned Lander FBI supervisor Justin Kempf. The goal is to coordinate investigations connected to crimes that may spill over from the Wind River Reservation into nearby communities such as Lander, Riverton, and Dubois.

   The department is working toward having some officers sworn in for FBI task force operations. This would allow Lander officers to assist on reservation-related cases while the FBI covers overtime and related expenses. The partnership would also provide major professional development for local officers and give the department access to FBI resources, including investigative, tactical, and computer-crime expertise.

   D. Acknowledgment of the Lander Chamber of Commerce Notice of Termination of MOU and Return of Lodging Tax Administration.

   The Council acknowledged the Lander Chamber of Commerce’s notice ending its MOU with the City and returning administration of the Tourism Asset Development Tax to the City.

   Brian Fabel, Executive Director of the Lander Chamber of Commerce, explained that the Chamber submitted its termination letter around April 30. He said the main reason was that public funds should remain in public hands, and because the Chamber is not a public entity, he felt the City was the more appropriate body to administer the lodging tax.

   Council Members thanked him and emphasized that ending the formal MOU does not mean ending the partnership. They said the Chamber and City still share goals around the visitor center, local business support, economic development, and Lander’s future. Council members also praised the Chamber’s improved communication, saying it helps build trust and avoid surprises.

4. **PUBLIC HEARING- UTILITY RATES FOR WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICE FY 2026-2027**

   A. Mayor White opened the Public Hearing at 6:19 PM.

B. Introduce and read

City Clerk Fontaine explained the public hearing on the proposed utility rate increases was originally scheduled for June 9, 2026, but was properly re-advertised after the hearing date was changed. The notices were included in the Council packet.

Public Works Director Hopkin stated that staff are recommending a 7% increase in water rates and a 9% increase in sewer rates. He explained that sewer rates are significantly underfunded compared with the infrastructure and treatment costs involved. The City is facing higher expenses at the sewer facility, including likely future projects related to nutrients, ammonia, EPA and DEQ requirements, and a headworks structure to separate trash.

The increases are intended to support the City's infrastructure and core services goals, especially maintaining critical infrastructure and addressing deferred maintenance. Staff noted that many water pipes, especially ductile iron pipes in clay soils, are deteriorating and undersized for fire flow. Sewer lines also need attention because leaks allow extra water into the system.

C. Public comment. None

D. Mayor White closed the public hearing at 6:22 PM.

5. COMMUNICATION FROM THE FLOOR

A. Public Comment

Charles Woolwine strongly opposed Resolution 1390, which would authorize open containers of alcohol within Lander City limits on July 4, 2026. The speaker argued that allowing alcohol and fireworks at the same time creates serious risks, especially for children.

He said a vote in favor of the resolution would be, in his opinion, a vote against the health, welfare, and safety of Lander's children.

He criticized the continuation of what he viewed as a dangerous long-standing tradition, saying that just because Lander has allowed it for decades does not mean it should continue. They urged City leaders to "break the cycle" of alcohol-related child endangerment and put children's safety first by rejecting the resolution.

6. MAYOR AND COUNCIL UPDATES

Council Member Stuble stated that she had been having many conversations with business owners, business leaders, residents, and people connected to Lander about the proposed utility rate increases.

She said this type of public engagement helps the Council make better decisions and better represent both City residents and people in the broader community. She encouraged people to contact her and said she would continue trying to be visible and available around town.

She also thanked everyone who filed to run for office. Voters benefit from having choices, informed debate, and candidates willing to serve.

Council Member J Hahn asked about the $25,000 included in the City budget for the pool and whether the City planned to create a new MOU with Fremont County School District.

J Hahn inquired whether the City and school district would meet to find a clearer, more sustainable way to support the pool, increase revenue, and reduce ongoing funding shortfalls.

Mayor White said she has been in ongoing conversations with Superintendent Harris, including a recent 40-minute call. She could not share many specifics yet because the school board was meeting that night and the superintendent wanted to speak with them first.

The broader message was that everyone recognizes the pool as important to the Lander community for school use, swimming lessons, drowning prevention, fitness, and general public access. However, the pool faces a substantial funding shortfall of roughly $400,000, so even returning to the previous funding model would not fully solve the problem.

There was discussion about how the City's $25,000 might be used, such as helping offset the funding gap, extending hours, or supporting a scholarship fund for families who cannot afford passes.

Council members also clarified that because the City's contribution may be a one-time payment, the mechanism would likely be a resolution, not a new MOU. Councilmember Cox suggested putting the pool discussion on a future agenda so Council can better define the City's role and discuss the issue publicly. The Mayor said a school district representative may be able to attend an upcoming meeting to update Council on what has happened so far.

White reported attending the Summer WAM Convention.

The City created and posted a new social media policy after repeated inappropriate comments from an individual who used vulgar, profane, and threatening language toward City staff. White emphasized that the City welcomes dissenting opinions, but threats and abusive language are not acceptable. The policy is now posted on all City social media pages.

She also addressed public questions about why the City conducts water master plans and water studies. She explained that outside funding agencies require detailed planning before they provide money for water projects. Those agencies need to see that projects are well designed, accurately costed, and properly justified. While the planning process can frustrate residents, it is necessary for the City to qualify for external infrastructure funding.

Council Member Cox raised concerns about communication and information-sharing among Council and staff. She noted that some council members can attend staff meetings while others cannot, which can create an imbalance in who receives information. She stated that staff reports are especially important for council members who cannot attend those meetings, because those reports provide the snapshot of information they need to make informed decisions. Cox encouraged staff to be intentional, concise, and clear about what the Council needs to know, especially when items require action by a specific deadline.

There was also discussion about the meeting schedule. The Mayor confirmed that the City has moved to holding regular business meetings on both the second and fourth meeting dates, rather than calling frequent special meetings. This change is intended to reduce the need for special meeting notices, newspaper publication costs, and extra administrative work when time-sensitive voting items come up.

7. STAFF REPORTS

Chief Waugh gave a police department update covering training, staffing, partnerships, events, and public safety planning.

He explained that several Lander officers have completed Gracie Survival Tactics instructor training, which is a jiu-jitsu-based law enforcement control and use-of-force training. He said the department wants to stay ahead of evolving national standards and have in-house instructors who can train local staff.

He also described growing partnerships with the FBI and U.S. Marshals. Because major incidents may require local, state, and federal officers to respond together, the department is working to train jointly with those agencies before an emergency happens. Two Lander officers will attend U.S. Marshals in-service training at a very low cost compared with similar outside training.

On staffing, the police department has one opening, seven applications, and plans to move forward with hiring by the end of the month. Staff are also working on a proposed e-bike ordinance that is being reviewed internally and legally before coming to Council.

Chief Waugh announced an end-of-summer public safety event planned for August 15 at City Park, modeled somewhat after National Night Out. It will include police, fire, the National Guard, prevention groups, Highway Patrol activities, food, games, emergency vehicles, and possibly a Black Hawk helicopter demonstration.

He also reported on the recent DUI task force presence during Brewfest weekend. Officers made 96 traffic stops over 8 hours with zero DUI arrests related to the event, and only one DUI over the weekend that was not directly tied to Brewfest. The DUI command van was provided through a grant-supported statewide program at no direct cost to Lander.

Finally, he said the department is preparing for a large Fourth of July parade and is looking for creative ways to keep people safely separated from floats and equipment. He said parade safety is a major concern, and the department is actively working on solutions.

Public Works Director Hopkin gave an update on utility franchise work, especially recent fiber installation by Visionary in the Sunset Addition. He explained that many questions came up about where City right-of-way begins and ends, what is City property, and where private property lines are. In some areas, fiber work occurred in the public right-of-way but residents have sprinklers, sidewalks, plants and other private improvements in the easement. Under the franchise agreement, anything disturbed in the public right-of-way must be restored to equal or better conditions.

He said the City allowed fiber work within public right-of-way, but there were problems with contractor communication. Property owners were supposed to be notified, and contractors were supposed to stay within the right-of-way unless they had private permission. Council members noted residents were upset when equipment entered yards or sod was dug up without proper notice.

Council discussed strengthening the City's permit process so future franchise work has clearer requirements and stronger enforcement tools, including the ability to pause or stop work if contractors fail to notify residents, stay within permitted areas, or follow project conditions. Lance said the current permit is fairly generic and should be strengthened.

There was also discussion about how residents can determine right-of-way and easement locations. Hopkin explained that right-of-way widths vary across town and depend on plats, property pins, and recorded easements. Property owners can use Fremont County GIS, subdivision plats, courthouse records, or parcel research to see whether utility easements exist on their property.

Hopkin then gave project updates. The airport apron project is being rebid, with more contractor interest than before, though construction may not happen until the following construction season. Jefferson Street is expected to be completed by late June or early July, with recycled millings being reused in the project. Lincoln Street will likely continue past July 4, with efforts to open intersections and consolidate equipment for the holiday. Buena Vista work is expected to begin in mid-July.

Assistant Mayor Strube Fossen reported several grant updates that provide benefits to the City with little or no local cost.

The City will benefit from three LOR Foundation grants. One provides $26,400 for safe intersection improvements around Lander Middle School, including traffic-pattern changes, and thermoplastic crossings. Another provides $9,973 for a shade structure at the Lander Dog Park. A third provides $7,350 for upgrades and shade improvements at the City Park stage through Lander Presents.

She also reported that the City received $3,000 from Wyoming Community Gas for Fibar playground surfacing material, with no City match.

For the Fire Department, staff said the City was not awarded the $1 million FEMA fire truck grant, but a new FEMA grant request has been submitted for replacement self-contained breathing apparatus, or air packs. If awarded, that grant would provide $446,500, with a $23,500 City match coming from already budgeted fire truck funds. The Fire Department also applied for a $10,000 State Farm Good Neighbor Firefighter Safety grant to upgrade hoses and fittings, with no City match.

Council noted disappointment about missing the fire truck grant, which the City has applied for several times. Staff explained that FEMA fire grants are nationally competitive, and Lander may be less competitive because the requested truck may be aged by years but not by hours of use. They also noted the City's last successful FEMA fire grant came when a former staff member had evaluator training and better insight into FEMA's grant criteria.

City Treasurer Koehn reported on several finance and administrative updates. She met with Meeder Investments and included Kevin Kulow in the meeting so there is backup knowledge and continuity if she is unavailable. The City is looking at ways to position some investments to earn more income, and Meter Investments will begin reviewing month-end balances before bringing back a possible proposal.

She is also working on budget items, including moving most budget information into Caselle and preparing to transfer it into Airtable. In addition, she and Kevin are preparing for the June 30 fiscal year-end by reviewing payroll changes, accounts payable timing, and items that need to be reported in the correct fiscal year for audit purposes.

Koehn also worked with Caselle to set up a special revenue fund for the TAD and is reviewing GASB requirements to ensure the City handles it properly. She suggested that creating a new TAD special revenue fund should likely come before Council.

Finally, she contacted State Lands and Investments and prepared an updated loan schedule in response to questions about the City's loans and large bills due between meetings. She said the schedule should help clarify where the City stands financially and would be discussed more under the final action item.

City Clerk Fontaine reported that she and Adam are continuing to review the City's policy manual, with the goal of sending it to Council soon for phased review and discussion. The main policy decision for Council will likely be how to handle overtime; most other changes involve updating language and putting existing practices, such as ADA-related procedures, into writing.

Council discussed whether it would be easier to receive the full manual at once or review it in smaller sections. The preference was to review a few chapters at a time and discuss questions during work sessions.

She also said an e-bike ordinance draft is in progress, based on an example Chief Waugh provided. That ordinance will come to Council later for review and discussion.

Council Member Cassidy also raised the idea of modifying the City's HRA policy. The current policy allows employees to receive HRA benefits after one year with the organization. The proposed idea would let someone decline or forfeit their HRA benefit into a separate pool that could help employees with major medical needs.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approve May 12, 2026, Regular City Council Minutes

B. Approve May 26, 2026, Regular City Council Minutes

Moved by Council Member Cox, seconded by Council Member Cassady. Council Members voting Yea: Cassady, Cox, Stuble, and J Hahn. Motion passed.

9. NEW BUSINESS (ACTION ITEMS)

A. Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Memorandum of Agreement Between Governing Bodies of Fremont County establishing a distribution framework for the potential economic development tax associated with the proposition exclusively for commercial air service, public ground transportation, and emergency medical services, to be placed on the 2026 Primary Election ballot for consideration of the qualified voters in Fremont County, WY, on August 18, 2026, provided that the agreement shall have no operative effect unless and until the qualified voters approve the proposition, election results are certified, and the tax is lawfully imposed and collected.

Moved by Council Member Stuble, seconded by Council Member Cox.

DISCUSSION: Council Member Cassady moved to amend and add the verbage, *"annually, the service providers for emergency medical services, commercial air service and ground transportation shall report to the parties during a public meeting"* at the end of 8 i. Seconded by Council Member J Hhan. Council Members voting Yea on the amendment: Cassady, Cox, Stuble and J. Hahn. Motion to amend passes.

Council Members voting Yea as amended: Cassady, Cox, and Stuble. Council Members voting Nay: J Hahn. Motion passes.

B. Approve Resolution 1387 Amending Resolution 1358 Fees and Utility Rates for Water and Wastewater Service for July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027

Moved by Council Member Cox, seconded by Council Member Cassady. Council Members voting Yea: Cassady, Cox, Stuble. Council Members voting NAY: J Hahn. Motion passed.

C. Approve Resolution 1388, The City of Lander Fee Schedule 2026-2027 A Resolution Replacing Resolutions 1359.

Moved by Council Member Cox, seconded by Council Member Cassady. Council Members voting Yea: Cassady, and Stuble. Council Members voting Nay: Cox and J Hahn. Mayor White voting Aye to break the tie. Motion passed.

D. Approve Resolution 1390 Authorizing Open Containers on July 4, 2026, within the Lander City Limits.

   Moved by Council Member Stuble, seconded by Council Member J Hahn. Council Members voting Yea: Stuble, and J Hahn. Council Members voting Nay: Cox and Cassady. Mayor White voting Aye to break the tie. Motion passed.

E. Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Agreement with the University of Wyoming and Lander Parks and Recreation.

   Moved by Council Member Cox, seconded by Council Member Cassady. Council Members voting Yea: Cassady, Cox, Stuble, and J Hahn. Motion passed.

F. Approve S 26.02 Gannett Peak Estates Phase 2 contingent that the final plat not be filed until the infrastructure construction is completed, inspected and approved by the City Engineer, or the owner provided the required collateral in accordance with 4-9-4.3 O.

   Moved by Council Member J Hahn, seconded by Council Member Cassady. Council Members voting Yea: Cassady, Cox, Stuble, and J Hahn. Motion passed.

G. Authorize staff to enter and pay bills and claims listed on the City of Lander Fiscal Year Transition Payment Authorization, on July 1, 2026, for expenses properly attributable to the 2026–2027 Fiscal Year.

   Moved by Council Member Cox, seconded by Council Member Cassady. Council Members voting Yea: Cassady, Cox, Stuble, and J Hahn. Motion passed.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Council Member Cox, seconded by Council Member J Hahn. Council Members voting Yea: Cassady, Cox, Stuble, and J Hahn. Motion passed.

Being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

The City of Lander

By: ________________________________

Missy White,
City of Lander Mayor

ATTEST:

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Rachelle Fontaine, City Clerk

The entire meeting is available to view at https://www.landerwy.gov/meetings/recent OR https://www.youtube.com/@CityofLander.