



CITY COUNCIL MEETING - SEPTEMBER 9, 2025 MINUTES

City Hall, 120 El Chico Trl., Suite A, Willow Park, TX 76087

Tuesday, September 09, 2025 at 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Mayor Teresa Palmer called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and inquired if a quorum was present. City Secretary Deana said yes, there is a quorum present for this meeting.

PRESENT

MAYOR Teresa Palmer
COUNCILMEMBER Eric Contreras
COUNCILMEMBER Chawn Gilliland
COUNCILMEMBER Scott Smith
COUNCILMEMBER Nathan Crummel

STAFF PRESENT:

City Manager Bryan Grimes
City Secretary Deana McMullen
City Attorney Andy Messer

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

Councilmember Scott Smith gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance given by all present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (Limited to five minutes per person)

To address the City Council, residents must complete a speaker form and turn it in to the City Secretary at least five (5) minutes before the start of the meeting. The Rules of Procedure state that all comments are to be limited to five (5) minutes for each speaker provided that there are no more than ten (10) speakers. If there are more than ten (10) speakers, the Mayor and/or the City Council may reduce the applicable time limits to speak to three (3) minutes. Pursuant to the Texas Open Meetings Act, the Council is not permitted to take action or discuss any item not listed on the agenda. The Council may: (1) make a statement of fact regarding the item, (2) make a statement concerning the policy regarding the item; (3) propose the item be placed on a future agenda (Tex. Govt. Code 551.042). Each speaker shall approach the podium or designated speaker location and state his/her name and address before speaking. Speakers shall address the City Council with civility that is conducive to appropriate public discussion. Speakers may only address the City Council and not individual officials, commission

members, committee members, or employees. The public cannot speak from the gallery, but only from the podium or designated speaker location.

Gwendolyn Galley - Read aloud a tribute to Dixie Smith

Carol Wagner

Stephen Watson

Cathy Connolly

Marcy Galley

Gene Martin

CONSENT AGENDA

These items consist of non-controversial or "housekeeping" items required by law. Items may be considered individually by any Council member making such request prior to a motion and vote on the Consent Items.

Motion was made to approve the consent agenda approving City Council minutes for July 8, 2025 and July 15, 2025 as presented and pull City Council minutes for July 28, 2025 for correction and present at the next regular city council meeting.

Motion made by COUNCILMEMBER Contreras, Seconded by COUNCILMEMBER Smith.

Voting Yea: COUNCILMEMBER Contreras, COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland, COUNCILMEMBER Smith, COUNCILMEMBER Crummel

- 1. City Council meeting minutes for July 8, 2025.**
- 2. City Council Special meeting minutes for July 15, 2025.**
- 3. City Council Special meeting minutes for July 28, 2025.**

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

- 4. Discussion & Action: to consider approval of Engagement Letter for City Attorney Services with Messer Fort; and discussion of permanent vs. temporary; procurement/process and authorization for Request for Qualifications procedure. (Council Member Chawn Gilliland; Mayor Pro Tem Nathan Crummel)(Mayor Teresa Palmer)**

Mr. Andy Messer of Messer & Fort Law Firm discussed the details of the engagement letter and answered questions from the Council.

Motion was made to approve the Engagement letter for City Attorney Services with Messer Fort and have them serve as the permanent City Attorney for Willow Park.

Motion made by COUNCILMEMBER Crummel, Seconded by COUNCILMEMBER Smith.

Voting Yea: COUNCILMEMBER Contreras, COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland, COUNCILMEMBER Smith, COUNCILMEMBER Crummel

5. **Discussion & Action: to accept the resignation of Council Member Greg Runnebaum, Place 3.** *(Mayor Pro Tem Nathan Crummel; Council Member Scott Smith)*

Mayor Pro Tem Nathan Crummel said thank you to Mr. Runnebaum for his service to the Community for over a decade. He was a strong leader. This is just a formality because his time was up on August 23, 2025.

Motion was made to accept the resignation of Councilmember Greg Runnebaum, City Council Place 3.

Motion made by COUNCILMEMBER Crummel, Seconded by COUNCILMEMBER Contreras.

Voting Yea: COUNCILMEMBER Contreras, COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland, Smith, COUNCILMEMBER Crummel

6. **Discussion & Action: to discuss, consider, and act on to setting the date, time, and place for a public hearing on the tax rate and proposed budget for the period beginning October 1, 2025 thru September 30, 2026.** *(City Manager Bryan Grimes)*

In accordance with Section 551.043 of the Texas Government Code, the City of Willow Park provides the following Taxpayer Impact Statement for the upcoming fiscal year budget: For the median-valued homestead property a comparison of the current property tax bill in dollars pertaining to the property for the current fiscal year ("FY"), an estimate if the proposed budget is adopted for the upcoming FY, and an estimate of a balanced budget at the no-new-revenue tax rate for the upcoming FY is below:

Taxpayer Impact Statement

Property Tax Due on Median Valued Homestead

2024 Rate vs. 2025 Proposed Rate vs. 2025 No New Revenue Rate

	Rate per \$100 of Median Valued		Tax Due
	Value	Homestead Property	
2024 Adopted Tax Rate	\$0.432546	\$357,677	\$1,547.11
2025 Proposed Tax Rate	\$0.421646	\$380,310	\$1,603.56
2025 No New Revenue Rate	\$0.424084	\$380,310	\$1,612.83

City Manager Bryan Grimes stated that we would be scheduling a Public Hearing on the proposed 2025-2026 FY Budget on Tuesday September 23, 2025 at 6:00 at the regular scheduled meeting. We will adopt the Budget on that night.

Motion was made to hold a Public Hearing on the proposed FY 25-26 Budget and adopt it on Tuesday, September 23rd at 6:00 pm.

Motion made by COUNCILMEMBER Contreras, Seconded by COUNCILMEMBER Crummel.

Voting Yea: COUNCILMEMBER Contreras, COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland, COUNCILMEMBER Smith, COUNCILMEMBER Crummel

7. Discussion & Action: to discuss, consider and act on approving a proposed ad valorem tax rate for the period beginning October 1, 2025 thru September 30, 2026 and Setting the Public Hearing date and time. (City Manager Bryan Grimes)

Motion was made to hold a Special meeting for a Public Hearing on the proposed Tax Rate on Wednesday September 24, 2025 at 6:00 pm and consider adoption of the ordinance that will set the tax rate for FY 25-26 as discussed in work sessions held earlier in the summer.

Motion made by COUNCILMEMBER Crummel, Seconded by COUNCILMEMBER Contreras.

Voting Yea: COUNCILMEMBER Contreras, COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland, COUNCILMEMBER Smith, COUNCILMEMBER Crummel

8. Discussion & Action: Each City Council Member and Mayor Palmer will choose 1 candidate from the list to Interview for the Vacancy of City Council Place 3; and City Council to appoint and fill City Council Member, Place 3 vacancy; and administer Oath by Mayor Palmer. (Mayor Pro Tem Nathan Crummel; Council Member Scott Smith)(Mayor Teresa Palmer)

Mayor Teresa Palmer read the list of Applicants to be considered for the Vacant City Council Place 3 Seat for an unexpired term.

Those Candidates were: Michael Chandler; Gene Martin; Derek Gregory; Levi Adler; Buddy Wright; Janette Kurban and Charles Hodge.

Councilmember Scott chose: Buddy Wright; Councilmember Nathan Crummel chose: Buddy Wright; Councilmember Chawn Gilliland chose: Buddy Wright; Councilmember Eric Contreras chose: Charles Hodge; Mayor Teresa Palmer chose: Janette Kurban.

Each candidate that was chosen was interviewed in Open Session while the other candidates waited in the Conference Room. The City Councilmembers and Mayor Palmer asked a variety of questions as to why they should be chosen as the next City Councilmember Place 3.

Following the interviews of the three applicants a motion was made to appoint Buddy Wright to Council Place 3 for an unexpired term.

Motion made by COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland, Seconded by COUNCILMEMBER Crummel.

Voting Yea: COUNCILMEMBER Contreras, COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland, COUNCILMEMBER Smith, COUNCILMEMBER Crummel

9. Discussion & Action: to consider the appointment of Deputy City Secretary and/or the possible engagement of a search firm, such as Strategic Government Resources (SGR), for interim city secretary services. (Mayor Pro Tem Nathan Crummel; City Manager Bryan Grimes)(Mayor Teresa Palmer)

Mayor Palmer stated that she had spoken with City Secretary Deana McMullen and the absences should cut down significantly. It would be best to appoint a Deputy City Secretary and to avoid confusion it should only be one person. Mayor Palmer recommended Andi Saylor to be appointed as Deputy City Secretary and to attend training as needed.

Motion was made to appoint Andrea Saylor as Deputy City Secretary as recommended.

Motion made by COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland, Seconded by COUNCILMEMBER Smith.

Voting Yea: COUNCILMEMBER Contreras, COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland, COUNCILMEMBER Smith, COUNCILMEMBER Crummel and COUNCILMEMBER Wright.

10. Discussion: Texas Legislative update and its impact on Open Meetings Act. (City Manager Bryan Grimes)

City Manager Bryan Grimes informed the City Council that the Legislature changed the law effective on September 1, 2025 that there is a new rule regarding posting of the Meeting Agendas. It will now have to be Posted 3 working days prior to the meeting rather than the normal 72 hours in advance. The day it is posted and the day of the meeting do not count. So our Agendas will have to be posted no later than the Wednesday prior to the meeting the following Tuesday.

No action was taken on this item.

11. Discussion/Action to review the practice of having "sponsorships" for agenda items. (Councilmember Eric Contreras)

Councilmember Eric Contreras asked the Mayor and Council to review the practice of having "Sponsorships" listed for agenda items. Councilmember Contreras stated that he did not understand the need for having a name of someone who requested the item for the Agenda listed next to the Agenda item. Mayor Palmer stated that there is a law that states this can be done so that members of the public as well as Council and staff are able to know who is asking for the item(s) listed.

There is no issue for having this listed on the Agenda.

There was no action on this item.

12. Discussion & Action: to approve an interlocal agreement with Parker County for jail services. *(WPPD Chief Ray Lacy; Lt. Quincy Hamilton)*

Chief of Police Ray Lacey addressed the Council requesting approval of an interlocal agreement with Parker County for jail services. Chief Lacey stated that this was an annual contract that had been in place for several years and requires council action for approval.

Motion was made to approve the interlocal agreement with Parker County Sheriff Office for jail services with Willow Park for the Fund Year 2025-2026.

Motion made by COUNCILMEMBER Smith, Seconded by COUNCILMEMBER Contreras.

Voting Yea: COUNCILMEMBER Contreras, COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland, COUNCILMEMBER Smith, COUNCILMEMBER Crummel and COUNCILMEMBER Wright.

13. Discussion: Home Rule Charter Commission Report to the Mayor and City Council. *(Mayor Teresa Palmer)*

Mr. Gene Martin gave an updated report for the Home Rule Charter Commission.

11 of the 14 appointed members were present at the last meeting, Tandy Blackstock was selected as the Commission Secretary, Consideration of adopting a Mission Statement for the HRCC and developing a survey. The Commission has adopted a consensus approach for decision making.

There was also discussion as to whether the City Attorney should attend the HRCC meetings. No one on the board had any questions that needed a legal opinion.

No action was taken on this item. However the City Council members are in favor of having a City Attorney present for the Home Rule Charter Committee meetings.

EXECUTIVE SESSION *It is anticipated that all, or a portion of the discussion of the foregoing item will be conducted in closed executive session under authority of the Section 551 of the Texas Open Meetings Act. However, no action will be taken on this item until the City Council reconvenes in open session.*

Mayor Teresa Palmer adjourned the regular meeting of the Willow Park City Council into Executive Session to discuss the items listed on Agenda at 8:08 pm.

Those in attendance were Mayor Palmer, Mayor Pro Tem Nathan Crummel, Councilmember Eric Contreras, Councilmember Chawn Gilliland, Councilmember Scott Smith newly appointed Councilmember Buddy Wright, City Manager Bryan Grimes, City Attorney Andy Messer.

14. Section 551.071, Consultation with Attorney; Section 551.074, Personnel Matters - City Manager; Employment Agreement; Severance Agreement.

15. Section 551.071, Consultation with City Attorney; Section 551.087, Economic Development Negotiations, Dean Ranch Development.

16. Section 551.071, Consultation with City Attorney regarding pending or contemplated litigation: Beall Dean Ranch Development (Demand Letter from City of Fort Worth and City of Aledo).

17. Section 551.074, Personnel Matters – Deliberate the appointment of Planning & Zoning Commission members.

RECONVENE *into Open Session and consider action, if any, on the item discussed in Executive Session.*

Mayor Teresa Palmer reconvened the regular meeting of the Willow Park City Council at 10:04 pm

Motion was made to have the City Attorney negotiate a severance agreement or a contract extension agreement with City Manager's Attorney.

Motion made by COUNCILMEMBER Crummel, Seconded by COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland.

Voting Yea: COUNCILMEMBER Contreras, COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland, COUNCILMEMBER Smith, COUNCILMEMBER Crummel and COUNCILMEMBER Wright

18. Discussion & Action: on the possible engagement of a search firm, such as Strategic Government Resources (SGR), for interim city manager services.
(Mayor Teresa Palmer)

Mayor Teresa Palmer stated that due to the action taken on Item 14 from the Executive Session, this item was a mute point.

No action was taken on this item.

INFORMATIONAL

City Manager Comments:

Bryan Grimes informed the Council that the TML Annual Conference is being held on October 29th thru 31st in Fort Worth this year and if anyone wishes to attend the Conference, please let staff know so that we can get you registered. Also the Attorney Law Firm, Messer & Fort is holding a Celebration event on Oct 7th from 5-8 pm for anyone who may want to attend.

City Council Comments:

Mayor Pro Tem Nathan Crummel - Thank all of the people who spoke at tonight's meeting. Please keep showing up. Really enjoyed having the candidate interviews in Open Session as opposed to Executive Session. Would like to see a future Agenda item that would set the standards and process of appointing someone to a Vacancy on the City Council.

Councilmember Scott Smith - Wanted to Thank Public Works Director Chase McBride for running me around showing me every water well site, the infrastructure and everything Public Works. I was blown away by what is in place. Thank you!

Councilmember Chawn Gilliland - Thank you to the applicants for the council place 3 vacancy. Welcome Buddy Wright to the position. Kudos to the Police Department for arresting an individual that was given life in prison for distributing Fentanyl in Willow Park.

Mayor Teresa Palmer - I agree with Council regarding the open session interviews. It was a Wonderful way to conduct the search for a new Councilmember. On the September 23, 2025 regular meeting we will have an update and report from Mr. Derek Turner regarding the Bankhead Highway Extension project.

ADJOURN:

With there being nothing further to discuss or consider Mayor Teresa Palmer called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion was made to adjourn the regular meeting of the Willow Park City Council at 10:10 pm.

Motion made by COUNCILMEMBER Crummel, Seconded by COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland.

Voting Yea: COUNCILMEMBER Contreras, COUNCILMEMBER Gilliland, COUNCILMEMBER Smith, COUNCILMEMBER Crummel

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS THE ____ DAY OF _____ 2025.

Teresa Palmer, Mayor

ATTEST:

Deana McMullen
City Secretary