

**CITY OF LOUISBURG, KANSAS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
December 1, 2025**

Workshop Livestream link:

<https://boxcast.tv/view/louisburg-city-council-workshop-ow3nnn0avoxwzu8lwd48>

Council Livestream link:

<https://boxcast.tv/view/louisburg-city-council-gxiazubedrddao6t9itx>

The Council of the City of Louisburg, Kansas, met at 6:30 p.m. in regular session in the City Hall Council Chambers. Mayor Donna Cook presiding.

Councilmembers Steve Town, Scott Margrave, Tiffany Ellison, Ryan Graves, Kalee Stone

City Administrator Nathan Law
City Clerk Jessica McGowin
Public Works Director Ben Miller
Finance Director Richard Mikesic
Police Chief Josh Weber
Fire Chief Gerry Rittinghouse
Planning Director Katherine Louderbaugh
Communications Coordinator Jean Carder

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Steve Town led the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

There was a request to add 10B Planning Director Job Description and 10E Offer of Employment to the agenda.

Councilmember Tiffany Ellison moved, seconded by Councilmember Scott Margrave and carried 5-0, to adopt the agenda with the amendment.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Town moved, seconded by Councilmember Ryan Graves and carried 5-0, to approve the November 17, 2025, minutes as presented.

APPROVAL OF THE BILLS

Ellison moved to approve the bills as presented and seconded by Councilmember Kalee Stone. Ellison asked if the Groundskeeper bill showing \$7,200 for the month of September was for one mow or one month. Finance Director Richard Mikesic stated he believes it is for multiple mows. Public Works Director Ben Miller agreed. Ellison asked for the invoice to be emailed to all councilmembers. Cook said she would review the bills tomorrow, take a photo and send that to councilmembers.

Mayor Donna Cook asked if staff bids out for the credit card processing services. Mikesic stated that we are changing processors with the new utility billing system.

The motion carried 5-0.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Cook stated all councilmembers received an e-mail from Dennis Strumberger requesting council reconsider his previous request for fixing his yard. Ellison stated that she didn't believe he sent it to all councilmembers that only she and Cook received it. Stone stated she has never received an email from Mr. Strumberger. Other councilmembers stated they had received the initial email but not a second one. Ellison asked if Strumberger completed the work himself would the city be able to provide resources already available such as topsoil. Miller stated the City does not have quality topsoil available. Graves said unless something has changed or unless new information can be presented since the last council meeting, he is not interested in revisiting the item. Town and Margrave agreed with Graves. Stone agreed and said she made an informed decision last time it was voted on. Cook will send the second email to all the councilmembers.

CMB License Renewal

Family Dollar Store - Stone moved, seconded by Graves and carried 5-0, to approve the CMB license for Family Dollar Store.

SCHEDULED VISITORS

Nila Ridings – 753 Danford Drive

Ms. Ridings requested the City amend the existing City Code provision requiring developers to establish a homeowners' association (HOA). She stated the Code currently mandates developers to create HOAs and, based on her 20 years of industry experience, she does not believe municipalities always adopt such requirements with complete information. She asked the Council rescind the mandate and provided background regarding her past dealings with HOAs. During discussion, Cook asked whether this matter could be reviewed by the Planning Commission. Law responded staff could compile information for the Planning Commission and noted that he had previously met with Ms. Ridings. He explained there are operational issues such as stormwater systems, retention ponds, and similar infrastructure that HOAs typically maintain and fund, and the Council would need to understand these impacts when considering any change to the Code. Graves stated he is open to considering the removal of the HOA requirement. Ellison asked whether Ms. Ridings could provide examples of cities that have removed HOA mandates. Ms. Ridings replied that no other city has done so. Ellison stated she would like to receive more information before determining a path forward. Margrave commented that he is not a supporter of HOAs. Town added that he would like additional information before making any decision.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

COUNCIL REPORTS

Town- Thanked city crews for efforts in plowing the streets and hoped everyone had a good holiday.

Margrave – None.

Ellison – Ellison discussed the housing development that was presented at the last meeting and expressed appreciation for staff efforts but questioned how the city can avoid situations where extensive work is completed before issues surface. She emphasized the need to ensure developers feel welcome while also providing citizens with sufficient time and information to prepare. She questioned who supports citizens in the process, given that developers bring expert teams while residents often have only a few days to respond. Stone also emphasized improving public notice and acknowledged the value of citizen participation, while recognizing collaborating with the boards are important. It was questioned whether developers should meet with council earlier in the process. Law explained the role of the Comprehensive Plan and recommended refining the city’s vision and goals to create a more cohesive process, including continued joint workshops. Ellison asked about the public hearing notice requirements. Planning Director Katherine Louderbaugh explained the state required 20-day mailed notice process noting the costs are paid by the developer. Graves suggested reviewing zoning proactively to ensure zoning aligns with surrounding areas. Law clarified staff does not work for developers but ensures compliance with requirements before items go to PC. Ellison asked whether developers could pay for studies selected by the city to ensure impartiality. Louderbaugh stated she has not seen that model used elsewhere. There was discussion about whether Council should receive preliminary consideration on proposals before they reach Planning. Louderbaugh noted timing concerns and uncertainty about making such a step mandatory. The topic will be added to a future agenda. Town asked when those specific developers may return another application since it was voted down. Louderbaugh stated six months for a rezone request, or sooner if pursuing R-1. The Council agreed to revisit the issue once the new Planning Director is in place.

Graves – Thanked Miller and the Fire and Police Department for their prompt response to a gas leak at his home.

Stone – None.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Finance – Nothing to report

Planning

25004-SUP- Special Use Permit for a Front Yard Fence & Safety Bollards- 901A West Amity Street - City Clerk Jessica McGowin stated there was one public speaker for this agenda item: Susan Waggerman 34736 Mission Belleview, Louisburg.

Louderbaugh reported she spoke with Susan Waggerman to resolve previous miscommunication. The intent of the project is to make the building more safe rather than to create a patio seating area. She noted the bollards on the east side are intended to be placed farther back. Law stated he had spoken with Mr. Hagen who had hoped for a formal statement from KDOT, but none has been provided. Waggerman indicated the proposed bollards would be outside the clear zone; however, staff recommended keeping all structures entirely out of the clear zone as a precaution. Waggerman stated she wanted to ensure alignment and emphasizing her need for the space. In response to Ellison's questions, she explained the fenced area is intended as a quiet relaxation and meditation space for individuals who do not wish to work in the thrift store, and also as a way to honor Anthony. Safari Hair Style still occupies part of the building, but the proposed fenced space itself would include only Anthony's bench and no additional activities. When asked about pulling the fence out of the clear zone, Waggerman expressed concern about the financial impact on their nonprofit. She noted she had considered placing a gazebo elsewhere on the property but not within the proposed fenced area. She stated the fence is needed for safety and to make users feel secure. Ellison asked about potential future uses if the property changed ownership. Louderbaugh stated that future uses should be considered and the Planning Commission's recommended stipulations would still apply. Ellison reiterated that approval would apply to future use as well and stressed the importance of keeping all elements out of the clear zone. Several councilmembers including Stone, Graves, and Margrave expressed support for maintaining the clear zone requirement, despite the financial burden. Town stated he was unclear on the goal of the project. The builder noted the existing footing remains and the fence would sit outside the existing foundation. Ellison asked whether a bracket system could be used, but Waggerman said they prefer posts sunk into the ground for stability and that brackets would

provide a false sense of safety. Waggerman asked whether fundraising for the project would be acceptable. Ellison confirmed the city does not regulate fundraising activities. Town requested an overhead rendering of the proposed layout for review.

Ellison moved to approve the case with stipulations with the addition of the stipulation 10 to reflect former stipulation No. 5 (“*No fence or bollards shall extend into the 16’ clear zone as noted by the Kansas Department of Transportation. This is measured from the face of the curb South into the property.*”) as it appears in the memo for Case 25004-SUP- Special Use Permit to allow for a Front Yard Fence & Safety Bollards. Stone seconded the motion. It carried 4-1 with Town voting no.

Update on roof-mounted screening at The Go-To Restaurant - Louderbaugh indicated The Go-To Restaurant is requesting a variance for the roof-mounted screening. Louderbaugh noted variances do not include rooftop considerations, and she has begun drafting proposed language to present to the Planning Commission. Cook asked whether the variance language would apply to the other two businesses and not solely The Go-To. Ellison inquired about the associated fee, and Louderbaugh confirmed a variance fee is \$300. Ellison asked whether the fee could be waived. Louderbaugh said variances do not come before the Council just Building & Zoning Appeals. Stone asked whether Louderbaugh could bring the matter back to the Council so they could consider waiving the fee. This item will be brought back.

Planning Director Job Description - Louderbaugh stated she will be moving out of State and therefore will be leaving employment with the City. Councilmembers thanked Louderbaugh for her time at the city.

Law would like to post the job as soon as possible and provided council with a draft job description with additional information added by Louderbaugh. Law stated there would need to be discussion on whether the planning position is more focused on building permits or planning as Louderbaugh has spent countless hours processing permits. Law also stated that Communications Coordinator Jean Carder

has stepped in with assisting in this position but he would like to get the job posted as soon as possible so no one is pulled away from their other duties. Louderbaugh spoke on the changes she made to the job description. Cook stated she wanted to wait to post it and would like a marked copy of the job description on what was changed or updated. Stone said the job description was previously approved by council and the only difference was the additional duties Louderbaugh added. She said she wants to move forward with posting the job. Louderbaugh will email the job description to councilmembers with the highlighted changes.

Stone moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to approve the updated job description.

Ellison asked how soon the job would be posted, Law said tomorrow pending HR Partners review.

Police-

Purchase of Upfitted Patrol Vehicle - Chief Weber reported the Police Department is budgeted for a new patrol vehicle in 2026. He explained Superior notified him a 2025 police-pursuit-rated Tahoe had unexpectedly become available. Weber requested that Superior hold the vehicle until January 2026 so the purchase would align with the budget year, and they agreed contingent on a commitment to purchase. Weber stated he learned from Mikesic earlier that evening if the purchase were approved at this meeting, the expense would be charged to the 2025 budget. He recommended moving forward due to the significant cost savings. Ellison questioned the shift from Explorers and Durangos to a Tahoe. Weber stated currently only the Tahoe and the F150 are compatible with installation of a grappler device. Graves asked about the price difference between a Durango and a Tahoe. Mikesic explained that approval tonight would require the cost to be encumbered in the 2025 budget. He noted as of October, the Police Department was approximately 4 percent under budget and trending under, but there is a possibility of exceeding the 2025 budget if the purchase is made. He stated the General Fund contains contingency capacity for such circumstances and the City would not risk violating budgetary laws. He also clarified approving the

purchase under the 2025 budget does not create additional available funds in the 2026 budget.

Stone moved, seconded by Town and carried 5-0, to purchase the 2025 Chevy Tahoe not to exceed the budgeted amount of \$72,500.

Fire

Proposal to Purchase Badges and Associated Collar Brass for Uniform - Fire Chief Gerry Rittinghouse proposed purchasing Class A Style Uniforms stating that the cost of the uniforms was budgeted in the 2025 budget. Rittinghouse said the first step of this is to purchase the badges needed for the members and the collar brass that will go on the uniform. The total cost for the proposed items is \$3,635.50.

Ellison moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0 to approve the purchase of badges for Fire Department dress uniforms from Budget and Wallet for a total cost of \$3,765 from the Fire Department Fund.

Proposal to Purchase Snowplow for B638 - Rittinghouse proposed purchasing a snowplow to be mounted on the City's brush truck to help alleviate the burden on Public Works having to plow the station lots. The plow would also help ensure emergency vehicles can access an address during winter weather. The intent is to use funds from the grass rig slide line item to cover the cost. Law noted that although earlier action was taken this year to remove the rig slide project, the associated funds remain available for use. Ellison asked who would operate the equipment given the limited staffing at the station. Rittinghouse stated he and Weber currently handle snow removal by hand and spend many hours clearing the parking lots. Cook added they have also assisted Public Works with plowing streets throughout the city.

Town moved, seconded by Stone and carried 5-0, to approve the addition of the plow as presented.

Public Works

Burn Site Staff Continuation - Miller provided an update on enforcement staff at the burn site, noting that Evergy has mounted a transformer. He stated an advertisement needs to be issued to determine whether there is interest in staffing the site, and that two staff members would be preferred to alternate shifts. He also reviewed pricing for a Connex building and indicated this appears to be the preferred option for onsite facilities.

Ellison asked whether the next step would be to approve the purchase of the Connex building. Miller responded that staffing needs to be secured first. Ellison then asked about the lead time for acquiring the Connex. Miller stated he would need to verify the turnaround time.

Fire/Police Department Parking Lot Engineering RFP - Miller presented a draft RFP and is seeking approval to publish it.

Stone moved, seconded by Graves and carried 5-0, to approve the publishing of the Police and Fire Department parking lots improvements engineering RFP.

City Hall Backup Generator - Miller stated neither the Fire nor Police Department generators would be able to be used for City Hall. There was discussion about the bids to which Miller responded that none of the companies who bid followed the bid specifications. Stone wanted to be sure the bid process was fair. Ellison appreciated MD Electric only bidding on what was needed. Miller stated the other companies bid out a larger unit and indicated they wanted to stick with their bid. Cook asked if this was for emergency preparedness, because no one has gone through the training. Ellison said the link was sent out. Cook questioned why this item would be purchased without an emergency preparedness plan and asked if we should purchase a mobile generator so it could be pulled around and used where it is needed, such as the Police Department. Graves stated the Fire and Police Department already have backup generators.

Town moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to award the backup generator contract to MD Electric for a not-to-exceed amount of \$72,872.80.

Aquatic Center Painting Bids - Stone asked whether staff was familiar with the recommended company, Busy B LLC. Miller confirmed that he knows the owner,

has seen his work, and noted that he is local. Law added that the company is active and in good standing.

Stone moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to accept the quote from Busy B LLC in the amount of \$14,545.70 to paint the interior of the Aquatic Center bathhouse, concession stand, outside trim, doors and clock.

Ellison inquired when the work would start. Miller responded in the spring.

Utility Radio Read System - Miller and Law stated staff recommend moving forward with Sensus software and forgoing the previously approved Neptune 360 system. Sensus can read both water and gas meters, and field tests have confirmed this. Law explained this approach is intended to save money, as the City plans to fully transition to Sensus using 2026 budgeted funds and approving Sensus now would eliminate paying the previously approved \$5,421 to have Neptune 360 for a couple of months. The cost of the software is \$32,090, which would be paid this year in the 2025 budget to be able to integrate with the new utility billing system.

Ellison moved, seconded by Town and carried 5-0, to approve contracting with Sensus to provide water and gas meter readings for city utilities at a cost of \$32,090 to be paid evenly from the Water and Gas Operating Funds and to occur in 2025 in lieu of and cancelling the previous decision to purchase Neptune 360.

Offer of Employment - Miller would like to hire Michael Heene for the Public Service Worker 1 at the pay scale 2-4C. Ellison asked how the 2-4C will work with the salary adjustments. Law responded it will adjust with the 2026 budgeted adjustments.

Ellison moved, seconded by Graves and carried 5-0, to approve the hire of Michael Heene for Public Service Worker 1 at a pay scale of 2-4C.

ADMIN REPORT

LRC Community Garden Action Plan

McGowin stated there is one public speaker for this agenda item, Brad Sells, LRC director, 27750 Normandy Rd, Louisburg.

Sells, LRC Director, presented an action plan for a community garden space. Sells stated the plan includes 10 raised beds that can be removed at any time, ensuring no permanent restrictions. An old fence will be repurposed to enclose the space, constructed without concrete, and Sells will build it himself. The initial garden area is planned to be approximately 20x40 feet. Each raised bed will seek sponsorship, and Sells will manage overall operations. The project is expected to have no cost to the city, with a total budget of around \$500, the garden will primarily be funded through volunteer hours and reuse of materials. Access to the garden will be determined via a lottery system. Sells also discussed plans to host events such as plant swaps, gardening and cooking classes. He stated the project is anticipated to start after the first of the year, potentially in February. Stone asked about the lottery process and wants to make sure there is outreach to older residents to let them know about the garden as many of them do not use Facebook. Law stated staff could include information in the city newsletter. Sells confirmed all materials used will be movable and will not compromise the integrity of the ground.

Ellison moved, seconded by Stone and carried 5-0, to approve the use of space near the water tower for LRC to construct raised garden beds for the purpose for the opportunity of a community garden.

ATTORNEY

Not present

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Cleaning Contract Term Renewal or Notice - Law stated the recommendation is to allow the current contract to auto renew.

Ellison moved, seconded by Graves and carried 5-0, to allow for an annual auto-renewal of the current contract.

NetStandard Contract Review - Chief Weber recommended extending services with NetStandard. Graves inquired if previous issues with the company had been resolved. Weber stated a new project coordinator has improved communication, though the email migration is still in process. He noted that a government

shutdown delayed work by approximately two months but confirmed that NetStandard has worked with the City on handling extra charges.

Ellison moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to extend services provided by NetStandard and allow the agreements to auto-renew for one year.

MARC STP Priorities Committee - Law reported he contacted neighboring communities, and while they do not currently participate, they agreed that having a seat at the table could be beneficial. Cook asked for Council's opinion on the matter. Ellison stated she sees potential benefits but is somewhat undecided. Graves asked whether staff thinks participation would be advantageous. Law noted the city has not been actively involved over the past year. Law requested Council's approval to revisit the topic when it aligns with the City's interests. He also mentioned with the upcoming change in the Planning Director position, he would like to bring this item back for discussion around April.

Annual Pay Considerations - Law requested council approval to allow department heads, along with himself, be allowed to proceed with the employee evaluation process. Ellison asked how he anticipates conducting the evaluations. Law responded the process will place a heavier emphasis on addressing any corrections needed and on ongoing monitoring. Cook inquired about the pay adjustments for the Police Department, specifically regarding the \$2 per hour increase approved during the budget process. Law confirmed the approved budgeted amounts will be followed with no deviations, except as applicable to his own position.

Town moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to authorize the City Administrator to work with department heads through the annual evaluation process, to approve pay changes to coincide with the beginning of 2026 as best aligns with regular pay period, and allowing for pay changes as approved within the 2026 budget.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:18 p.m. Stone moved, seconded by Graves and carried 5-0, to adjourn the meeting.

Approved:

Donna Cook, Mayor

Attest:

Jessica McGowin, City Clerk