

CITY OF LOUISBURG, KANSAS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
January 5, 2026

Workshop Livestream link:

<https://boxcast.tv/view/louisburg-city-council-workshop-uftmmrzhpz9rpje0npop>

Council Livestream link:

<https://boxcast.tv/view/louisburg-city-council-rnh2fck4tpruavefnqgm>

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 - Absent
Fire Chief Gerry Rittinghouse
Communications Coordinator Jean Carder

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Ryan Graves led the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Cook requested the Executive Session be moved under Public Comments.

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Margrave moved, seconded by Graves and carried 5-0, to approve the December 15, 2025, minutes as presented.

APPROVAL OF THE BILLS

Councilmember Steve Town moved, seconded by Councilmember Tiffany Ellison and carried 5-0, to approve the bills as presented.

Cook asked how many more utility loan payments remained and what it was for. Law stated it is the low interest gas loan taken out from Winter Storm Uri. Finance Director Richard Mikesic said the last payment will be January 1, 2031.

Cook asked if the payment to Sattler LLC was for the Fox Hall display cabinet requested by the Fox Hall/Cemetery Board to showcase memorabilia. Law stated it was and that price included everything with the exception of the glass and that would be an additional nominal fee.

MAYOR'S REPORT

CMB Licenses:

The Go To on-premises CMB renewal

Stone moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to approve the CMB on-premises license renewal for The Go To.

Margrave questioned how often the renewals happen. City Clerk McGowin said yearly as they all expire December 31 of each year.

The Go To off-premises CMB new license

Stone moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to approve the CMB off-premises new license to The Go To.

Express Stop CMB renewal

Graves moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to approve the CMB renewal for Express Stop.

AMOCO CMB License Renewal

Town moved, seconded by Stone and carried 5-0, to approve the CMB license renewal for AMOCO.

Mayor read a memo reminding council of the KOMA training for the Governing Body scheduled for the next evening

Cook asked about updating the land/lease agreement with Cutshaw Farms. Communications Coordinator Jean Carder said staff is aware and is working on it.

SCHEDULED VISITORS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:39 p.m. Graves moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, City Council recess into executive session to discuss an individual employee's performance pursuant to the non-elected personnel matter exception under K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(1) for 45 minutes with the open meeting resuming at 7:25 with the presence of Kristina Dietrick requested.

Open meeting resumed in Council Chambers at 7:25 p.m.

No action was taken.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Stone – Stone requested staff look at the traffic signal located at South Fifth and Metcalf as the light was not turning green heading east and when it did, it was a very short green light. Law will look into it.

Graves – Graves asked about the speed zone change on K-68 east of Metcalf and asked if there have been any updates from KDOT. Law stated he would check into it this week.

Ellison – None.

Margrave – None.

Town – None.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

FINANCE:

Investment Bids - Finance Director Richard Mikesic discussed an investment that is up for bid, noting a change in the Kansas Lateral Pool and referencing a change in state law. He asked the council if there were any questions regarding how these changes might affect the city; there were none.

Three bids were received for a \$3 million investment. Staff recommended acceptance of the best bid from Landmark at 3.65 percent, which is higher than the KMET rate.

First National Bank	2.96 percent
First Option Bank	3.50 percent
Landmark Bank	3.65 percent

Ellison moved, seconded by Graves and carried 5-0, to approve the investment of \$3 million to Landmark Bank as presented.

PLANNING:

Law stated the department has been extremely busy and Carder has been filling in. Law said that two applications have been received for the job position. There was discussion on qualifications and where the job has been posted.

POLICE: Absent

FIRE: No Report

PUBLIC WORKS:

Recycled Tire Tables / Benches Grant - Law presented information requested by the council at the last council meeting to revisit the program requirements and language.

Stone moved, seconded by Town and carried 5-0, to allow staff to apply for the grant.

Ellison inquired about who would write the grant. Law stated that Carder, with the assistance of the Public Works Director Ben Miller and Facility Coordinator Danny Summa, would write the grant.

Gas System Radio Read Indexes - Miller stated this is a budgeted item for 2026 to purchase gas indexes and the software system; the system was approved for purchase in 2025. His request is for council to now approve the purchase of the indexes. Law stated there is budget authority to spend up to the max of \$250,000 or limit to the \$214,000 which was left after the software purchase. He stated Sensus is a sole proprietor so this item would not be eligible to bid out.

Ellison moved, seconded by Stone and carried 5-0, to approve utilizing Core and Main for the purchase and installation of 1,282 gas indexes and to allocate \$250,000 for this project.

Sanitary Sewer Point Repairs - Miller stated there were several spots that had severe damage with the pipes and work to line these pipes couldn't be completed until they were repaired. Two bids were received:

G-B Construction	\$38,540.00
Kissick Construction	\$31,299.98

Miller recommended going with Kissick for the repairs but was unsure of how quickly they could get us on the schedule. Stone and Graves would like to have a timeframe of when the work could be done before moving forward due to the significant cost. Graves asked if waiting created a health hazard, to which Miller responded we have had a lot of issues in these areas that staff maintains in-house. Consensus was for Miller to bring back a timeline and recommendation to the next council meeting.

ADMINISTRATION:

Amity Sidewalk Project closeout report - Law stated this is a receive and file item. He recognizes there is still a question on the crossing and are waiting to hear back from KDOT. Cook asked if this project should be closed out if it is not done. Law stated the crossing is a separate item.

ATTORNEY

Not present

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mission, Values, Goals – Continued - Law discussed timeline goals, stating the mission and vision discussion could be done within the given timeline and have a fruitful conversation in February and asked council if this item is something that could be reviewed at the workshop prior to council meetings or if they would like to hold a special workshop. Consensus was the 6 p.m. workshop prior to the council meetings was agreeable. Cook suggested instead of working on missions and values, she would like to spend the time redoing the code book and zoning book. Law said those are on the list. Law said his perspective is this might be a better effort in the short term as this process will help identify the short- and long-term where the community can or should go. While the code book has deficiencies to address, the plan was to have the city attorney review those, but we aren't there yet. The zoning regulations should conform to the City's mission and vision. Graves would like to have a full-time planning director in place prior to going through the codes and zoning regulations. Law stated that he will have prep work for both the mission and the vision at the next workshop. Ellison asked to revisit Cook's comment about the concern from planning commission members. Cook said planners just want to have the zoning regulations updated so they are not spending time on things. Ellison asked if this should be the top discussion at the joint board meeting and added that no one wants them to be frustrated. Cook said multiple boards are frustrated. Ellison said that is why the mission and vision statement will be important.

There was discussion on how long to give each board to speak during the upcoming joint workshop.

Graves said he is not anyone's rubber stamp and feels like the roles of the board members and council are being misconstrued. Stone agreed. Ellison stated the Planning Commission is an advisory board, noting the difference between what boards can do and what council is obligated to do and that council represents the citizens.

Graves said he does not want the joint workshop to turn into a time for airing grievances, and Stone agreed. Graves said that is not the purpose of the workshop. Law said that if everyone is aligned on goals and vision, it should help reduce frustration. He also acknowledged the individuals who volunteer their time and said he feels this is a good place to start.

RFP for Contracted Municipal Attorney Services - Law stated this was a return item and said he updated the timeline however the RFP language stayed the same from the previously approved RFP. The current attorney is only looking to fulfill the remaining term. Ellison and Graves asked if there was a reason given. Law stated no.

Ellison moved, seconded by Stone and carried 5-0, to direct staff to publish the Request for Proposals as provided.

Appointment Process - Law stated this item was a return item with a potential timeline provided. Cook stated Carder posted the application process to Facebook and the city sign. Law stated the current code was inconsistent for some positions, department heads were hired for a position and then questions arose about why the position was an annual appointment. He stated this brings a level of uncertainty for those positions. Ellison clarified that “may” be appointed and “shall” be appointed were two different things and she believes the “may” be appointed positions would be the hired positions. Cook asked if there would need to be a change to city code. Law said yes unless we change to a city of the second class then we will not have an option. Ellison noted that we will not have a choice when the census says we have to move to a city of the second class due to population and then it will have to be addressed. Cook stated she has started working on the appointment list for boards and liaisons but not positions such as the City Clerk. Graves would like to see the boards and commission positions advertised since it is hard to find volunteers. Ellison believes advertisement of the positions allows for public transparency and notifies the public of opportunities to be involved. Graves likes the presented timeline. Cook stated she will get with Carder this week to advertise certain positions.

Presented timeline:

- 12/1-12/31 Advertisement (generic or specific)
- 1/1-1/16 Mayor reviews, vets, interviews, etc.
- 1/19-1/29 Staff assist Mayor in putting together appointments information, including bios.
- 2/2 Mayor provides appointments and bios to Council
- 2/17 Mayor presents appointments for Council confirmation

Graves moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to adopt the timeline from 1/1 forward as presented with the expectation that advertising will be until filled.

Ellison said she wanted to be clear that all bios will be provided at the Feb. 2 meeting. Cook asked if this meant bios for new people only. Ellison said she wants to understand the intent ahead of time if someone is going to be replaced and wants to avoid past situations where the public or council were caught off guard. She said that understanding the “may” and the two “shall” positions are employees and are viewed as such, this approach is meant to provide transparency so staff, council, and the public are not blindsided by dramatic changes without forewarning and discussion.

Graves clarified the City Attorney would be an outliner to the appointments being a contractor.

Draft Employee Handbook - Law presented a draft employee handbook for council review with the intent for council to bring back questions and comments. Law stated the draft was put together with the efforts of HR Partners then sent to department heads for any comments or concerns. He noted it was also reviewed by the HR Partners’ legal team. Cook asked if it was sent back to department heads after they made their initial comments. Law said no but it could be sent back out even though there were not significant changes. Cook asked if council would see what the department head changes were. Law said no, all information was provided to HR Partners. Ellison asked if Cook had a specific concern. Cook said she believes some of it is very vague such as the section about searching people. Ellison asked to be directed to that section. Law said he could send out the reference that is in question to the council. Cook also referenced a section stating that if an employee wanted to run for council, then they would have to step down.

Graves clarified they could take a leave of absence, and it is the same at the county level.

Graves asked where the search section is as he was having a hard time finding it. Law stated it was under safety and security, and also stated he will go back through notes and find the references to send out to council. Ellison asked if a department head talked about this and asked Cook if she had talked directly to the department head. Cook said no, she wants to see what the department heads submitted. Ellison asked for what purpose. Cook said so she can make sure the department heads are being heard. Ellison asked if the department head had gone through the proper channels of speaking to their boss, as this feels like it is second guessing our staff. Cook said it is not. Graves asked Law if he provided all of the department head comments to HR Partners to which Law responded yes. Law noted if there are sections Council is not comfortable, even if allowed by law, it can be changed. Law then directed council to page 39, the section in question, which discusses employee drug testing. Law also stated the verbiage was provided by HR Partners. Carder said these items are discussed on page 14 on employee privacy and pages 15-18. Ellison said it is worth noting the city had an issue about two years ago and it was pertinent that this action in question was taken to secure city property. Law asked for council to review, bring back any questions or comments and he will try to have a HR Partners representative at the next meeting to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:37 p.m. Margrave moved, seconded by Stone and carried 5-0, to adjourn the meeting.

Approved:

Donna Cook, Mayor

Attest:

Jessica McGowin, City Clerk