

**CITY OF LOUISBURG, KANSAS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
February 17, 2026**

Workshop Livestream link:

<https://boxcast.tv/view/louisburg-city-council-workshop-bldhsz9fxiuteqgkotbt>

Council Livestream link:

<https://boxcast.tv/view/louisburg-city-council-ggymjy3xpsqqerykb2tp>

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 and Kalee Stone were present.

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
Communications Coordinator Jean Carder

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Steve Town led the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Cook would like to change Item 12 City Attorney Report to Executive Session for attorney client privilege.

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Stone moved, seconded by Councilmember Scott Margrave to approve the February 2, 2026, minutes as presented. Cook requested a correction to the minutes

on the top of page three. The statement currently reading “Graves asked for requirements of various boards” should be revised to read “Graves asked for the HPC requirements.”

Cook also requested a punctuation correction at the bottom of page three, asking that a period be inserted after “expected life span” so that the phrase reads “expected life span. Cost not to exceed.” After discussion, it was decided to insert a comma rather than period.

Motion failed 0-5

Councilmember Tiffany Ellison moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to approve the February 2, 2026, minutes with the corrections.

APPROVAL OF THE BILLS

Town moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to approve the bills as presented.

There were no questions on the bills.

MAYOR’S REPORT

Annual Appointments

Cook provided a list of appointments for council consideration. Cook also noted the current city attorney Mark Hagen stated he would continue to provide services until the City Attorney appointment was filled. There was a discussion on how council wanted to vote on the appointments. It was decided to vote on separate sections and individual appointments for the officers.

City Clerk – Jessica McGowen (1-year term) (Corrected spelling to McGowin)

Graves moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to appoint Jessica McGowin for a one-year term.

Finance Director/Treasurer – Richard Mikesic (1year-term)

Graves asked for clarification as to the Finance Director being listed as an appointment as it was not listed in the city code. Cook said it is listed as City Treasurer/ Finance Director, so she broke them apart. Ellison noted that City Treasurer and City Clerk are the only ones listed as “shall” appoint. Graves said since the code lists it as City Treasurer/Finance he would like to make it one motion.

Ellison moved, seconded by Town and carried 5-0, to appoint Richard Mikesic as the City Treasurer/Finance Director.

City Prosecutor – Tyson Bramley (1-year term)

Graves moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to appoint Tyson Bramley as the City Prosecutor.

Municipal Court Judge – Jacklyn Paletta (1-year term)

Ellison moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to appoint Jacklyn Paletta as the Municipal Court Judge.

Public Works Director – Ben Miller (1-year term)

Town moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to appoint Ben Miller as the Public Works Director.

Planning Director – To be filled

Chief of Police – Josh Weber (1-year term)

Town moved, seconded by Stone, to appoint Josh Weber as the Chief of Police. Motion carried 4-0-1 with Graves abstaining citing the same reason he stated last year.

Fire Chief – Gerald Rittinghouse (1-year term)

Town moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to appoint Gerald Rittinghouse as the Fire Chief.

Public Officer – Nathan Law (1-year term)

Margrave moved, seconded by Graves and carried 5-0, to appoint Nathan Law as the Public Officer.

Council / Commission Liaisons (1-year term)

It was discussed that these are not appointments, so Council received as presented.

Park and Tree Board – Tiffany Ellison

Fox Hall/Cemetery Board – Scott Margrave

Planning and Zoning/BZA – Steve Town

LRC – Kalee Stone

Historical Preservation – Ryan Graves

Convention and Tourism – Scott Margrave

MCDPUA – Steve Town

President / Mayor Pro Tem (1-year term)

Cook would like to have Steve Town as the Mayor Pro Tem.

Stone moved to name Steve Town the President of the Council Pro Tem, seconded by Margrave

Ellison asked if there could be discussion. Law provided guidance that this position is generally nominated by the Council not appointed by the mayor. Cook stated that she can recommend and the nominee does not have to accept the nomination. Ellison also stated her understanding was the nominee was supposed to accept the nomination. Cook asked Town if he accepted the nomination. Town accepted the nomination.

A vote was then taken for the original motion and carried 4-0-1 with Town abstaining.

Official Depository / Newspaper (1-year term):

First National Bank

First Option Bank

Landmark Bank

Bank Midwest

Citizens State Bank

Newspaper- Miami County Republic

Graves moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to accept the Official Depositories and Newspaper as listed.

Planning Commission Board (3-year term)

Christian Brown (Re-Appointment)

Stone moved, seconded by Town and moved 5-0, to approve Christian Brown to the Planning Commission board.

Clint Ernst (New Appointment)

Ellison inquired on the number of applications received for the Planning Commission. Cook stated she received three. Ellison asked if that included Christian Brown. Cook stated yes but then stated the three did not include Brown. Ellison asked what the process is to vet the applicants. Cook stated this was just a yes or no if they wanted Christian Brown. It was stated the Council already approved Christian Brown. Cook asked if Clint Ernst was a yes or a no. Ellison stated she didn't believe this was a yes or no type of thing. Cook stated these are appointments. Ellison asked if the other candidates were interviewed. Cook said no because they did not come in at the same time. Stone asked if interviews are usually conducted and Cook said no. Stone then asked if there needed to be a motion for each one. City Clerk McGowin said a motion is needed because these are appointments approved by the Governing Body. Law stated that it may not be required one way or the other, but Council has already been making motions for each one. Ellison said she doesn't think there is any stipulation the Council can't have discussion about these nominations. Cook then stated they are appointments

and according to the League of Kansas Municipalities and the City Attorney this was just a yes or no. Cook asked if there was a motion to approve Clint Ernst. Stone asked Ellison if in the past the mayor had interviewed other candidates. Ellison stated Council established a timeline this year, so members of the public are invited to apply, and the timeline serves a purpose of transparency and accountability to the public so that those who apply are receiving the same consideration as every other candidate. Cook stated this was started in January and she had zero applicants. Ellison stated they started in December, and three applicants had applied. Cook reiterated the candidates applied at different times. Stone asked if it were possible the other candidates might not be qualified. Ellison stated she is aware of two qualified candidates that applied and were not given consideration and that it feels like this was side stepping the process. Cook asked to finish her appointments and stated that when she looked at the appointments, she liked Clint Ernst to be on the Planning Commission.

Stone moved to appoint Clint Ernst to the Planning Commission. Motion died for a lack of second.

Cook stated she will have to find another candidate. Stone asked if they could have discussion. Cook stated no these are not for discussion. Ellison asked Cook how she was determining that there could not be discussion. Cook stated the League of Municipalities. Stone stated that she would like to know as a council member what the council wants to see, such as a different process, and that the conversation should have been done prior to this meeting as she only recalls them wanting an appointment list prior to this meeting. Law provided clarification on the process and stated from this point that Mayoral appointments have to be acted upon within 45 days, or they are effective as appointments, and he appreciated Stone's question, so there can be clarification on how to move forward. Stone said she just wants to know what they want as a council, stating that in the past when she was on the council, she did not know who applied and questioned if the council was wanting to make sure everyone had an interview. Margrave stated he assumed that everyone would be interviewed by the mayor. Stone stated she didn't think it was fair to deny this one and then go down the list and not do the same for everyone else. Graves stated they approved a timeline this year and there was a period of

review for interviews and a date a list was supposed to be given to council and that wasn't met. Stone and Graves were in discussion and Cook stopped the conversation. Cook stated they were done with Planning Commission and moving on to Park and Tree Board. Ellison asked if the mayor would provide a different nominee to the next meeting for that position. Cook said she will bring someone, but she thinks they should open it back up for people to apply. Ellison asked why. Cook said she had three applications that came in at three different times and stated that she waited on the council for a month, because council members had said they would help find someone. Ellison asked for clarification on that. Cook said the council members said they would help her find people. Graves clarified that it was asked if there were special requirements for that position, since the mayor was having a hard time finding people and didn't remember receiving an answer before the third. (February 3rd)

Park and Tree Board (3-year term)

Kenny Dover (Re-appointment)

Ellison moved, seconded by Stone and carried 5-0, to appoint Kenny Dover to the Park and Tree Board.

Julia Hacker (Re-appointment)

Stone moved, seconded by Town and carried 5-0, to appoint Julia Hacker to the Park and Tree Board.

Fox Hall/Cemetery Board (3-year term)

Julia Howard (New Appointment) (Corrected spelling to Julie)

Ellison moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to appoint Julie Howard to the Fox Hall/Cemetery Board.

Historical Preservation Board (Commission) (3-year term)

Heather Wilson (Re-appointment)

Town moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to appoint Heather Wilson to the Historical Preservation Commission.

Corrina Hauer (New Appointment)

Ellison moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to appoint Corrina Hauer to the Historical Preservation Commission.

Convention & Tourism Board (Committee) (2-year term)

Paul Scruggs (Re-appointment)

Stone moved, seconded by Town and carried 5-0, to appoint Paul Scruggs to the Convention & Tourism Committee.

Cindy Reynolds (Re-Appointment)

Ellison moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to appoint Cindy Reynolds to the Convention & Tourism Committee.

Katie Clausen (New Appointment)

Graves asked for clarification on the appointment list. He said that it shows Katie with Helen's Garden Family Farm, but her bio says she is a nurse. Cook stated it is her family farm.

Ellison moved, seconded by Graves and carried 5-0, to appoint Katie Clausen to the Convention & Tourism Committee.

Board of Zoning Appeals (3-year term)

Chris Hoffman (Re-Appointment)

Graves moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to appoint Chris Hoffman to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Kirk Shaffer (Re-Appointment)

Town moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to appoint Kirk Shaffer to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Jason Burk (Re-Appointment)

Ellison moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to appoint Jason Burk to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Code of Appeals (5-year term)

Chris Brown (Re-Appointment)

Stone moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to appoint Chris Brown to the Code of Appeals Board. It was noted this is not Christian Brown who was appointed to the Planning Commission.

LRC – Park and Tree Board liaison

Brad Sells (Re-appointment)

Ellison moved, seconded by Town and carried 5-0, to appoint Brad Sells as the LRC liaison to the Park & Tree Board

Cook stated she wanted for the record that she contacted Nathan for an appointment according to 401 (referencing City Code 1-401) and he refused the appointment as the City Administrator. Law provided clarification that in a phone conversation it was stated that Cook had intended to reach out to all annual appointments, providing something in writing for them to sign and return. Law stated that per council action last year even if wasn't voted on unanimously, if she were to provide something like that to him for the City Administrator position, he would not sign it. Ellison asked why Cook was telling them he refused an annual appointment when it is not an annual appointment. Cook called time-out and said it was 1-401 and that she was moving on to the next thing and this was just for the record. Ellison said she would like to put on record that it is wildly inappropriate because he is not an annual appointment. Cook called point of order three times. Ellison asked McGowin to make sure the record reflected the City Administrator position is not an annual appointment and there should be no issue with him refusing to sign something that says that it is. Cook asked McGowin to strike that from the record, to which Ellison responded she cannot do that.

SCHEDULED VISITORS

Jessica Crozier – Nomad Market KC

Crozier provided a handout and spoke to council about a partnership in hosting an Easter event when the Market returns to the outside venue April 4. Crozier stated they welcome city involvement and spoke about the event. Graves asked if she was planning on talking to the Convention & Tourism and Park and Tree Board.

Crozier stated that she can, but it was recommended she start with council.

Consensus was that staff could volunteer to participate in the event if interested.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:06 p.m. Stone moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to recess into executive session to discuss an individual employee's performance pursuant to the non-elected personnel matter exception K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(1) with the presence of Kristina Dieterich (HR Partners) requested with the open meeting to resume in the City Council Chamber at 7:36 p.m.

Open meeting resumed in Council Chambers at 7:36 p.m.

No action was taken.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Stone – None.

Graves – None.

Ellison – Ellison inquired about vandalism concerns on the pickleball courts and asked about the screening. Ellison questioned if the screening was approved by council as she feels it may make vandalism easier by obstructing visibility of activity inside the courts. Stone explained that the screening was installed for sight and sound mitigation. Ellison said she would be in favor of it coming down. Stone said the pickleball players like it. There was discussion on the latch for the gate.

Law will check with facility coordinator Danny Summa to see if that has been added.

Margrave – Margrave asked about the rules for burning leaves. Fire Chief Gerry Rittinghouse stated open burn is Friday and Saturday in the city limits, the wind speed must be between 5-15 mph, while fire pits can burn anytime with a screen cover. Town asked if fire pits must be manned the entire time. Rittinghouse said if the department gets a call they will show up and put it out. Graves asked during a burn ban and does that include fire pits and grills. Rittinghouse said it does not include grilling, but it does include fire pits.

Town – None.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

FINANCE:

Finance Director Richard Mikesic presented the 2025 finance report, stating the information was being presented for transparency. Mikesic noted the report is not considered final until the audit is complete. Margrave asked when the audit will happen, Mikesic stated around March 1 and his expectation is to share the results at the first meeting in April.

FIRE:

Thermal Imaging Cameras – Rittinghouse requested the purchase of six handheld thermal cameras stating the cameras are an essential tool helping with search and rescue and fire location. Graves inquired if this was a budgeted item. Law said it was budgeted for \$9,000. Stone and Margrave asked if six cameras would be sufficient. Law stated with the current budget two more cameras could be added.

Stone moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to approve the purchase of eight Seek Fire Pro 300 thermal imaging cameras in the amount of \$9,095.60 from Conrad Fire Equipment.

Bay Floor Heating Boiler Replacement – Rittinghouse is requesting approval to replace the boiler at the Fire Department, stating it had a complete malfunction and

is not repairable. He also noted this is the only source of heat for the bay. He received three bids:

Martin Mechanical	\$23,850.65
Supreme Mechanical Services (SMS)	\$17,210
Lancaster Brothers	\$32,682

Rittinghouse recommends approving SMS due to the price point and warranty. He noted the company is local. Rittinghouse also believes having a maintenance contract with an HVAC company could be beneficial.

Cook asked what budget this would come from. Law said the unbudgeted project would come from the Fire Fund as part of the General Fund.

Stone moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to approve Supreme Mechanical Services in the amount of \$17,210.

Town inquired whether the County would pay half. Rittinghouse stated the County pays rent for the space so the city would be responsible for the building since we own it.

PUBLIC WORKS:

2026 Street Work RFP – Ellison moved, seconded by Stone and carried 5-0, to approve publishing the 2026 Annual Street Repair RFP.

2026 Annual Crack Seal RFP – Margrave moved, seconded by Stone and carried 5-0, to approve publishing the 2026 Annual Crack Seal RFP.

2027 F-650 Dump Truck Procurement – Public Works Director Ben Miller stated he received two bids; he noted due to the size of the truck there were only two dealerships that could provide a bid. He stated each price included the dump bed; however the snowplow would be an additional \$13,348.78 which puts the item over budget by \$3,972.78. It was noted that the overage would be split over multiple funds.

Olathe Ford \$111,670

Midway Ford \$105,624

Ellison moved, seconded by Graves and carried 5-0, to approve the procurement of the F-650 with dump bed from Midway Ford for \$105,624 with the installation of a Boss Snowplow from American Equipment for the not-to-exceed price of \$13,348.78.

Stone asked Miller if he had information regarding the diving board warranty. Miller stated there is a warranty and in-house installation will not affect the warranty. Law noted the Project Tracker also provided updates.

POLICE – None.

PLANNING

Street Name Change – Law explained there is a variation of Sunrise in a subdivision north and south of the highway but is not the same street name.

The request is to rename Sunrise Ave, located in the Starbrooke subdivision, as there are no houses built on this street. If approved, staff will send an affidavit to the County.

Margrave asked if both the Police Chief and Fire Chief were in favor. Rittinghouse said it removes an odd street out of the equation.

Margrave moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to approve changing the street name Sunrise Ave. in the Starbrooke subdivision to Sunset Drive.

Starbrooke Lot Split – Law stated our regulations require lot splits to be done prior to a permit being issued. He said staff will bring language to Planning Commission for consideration in allowing for lot splits to occur after construction has started. Summit Homes is requesting lot splits for recently constructed duplexes in Starbrooke.

Ellison moved, seconded by Graves and carried 5-0, to approve lot splits for Lots 135A & B and 136A & B of the Starbrooke – Phase 6 subdivision.

ADMINISTRATION:

Water Leak Adjustment – Ellison moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to approve the one-time water leak adjustment in the amount of \$81.59 for Tallgrass Energy at 1504 N. Metcalf Rd.

Municipal Court Updates – Law stated this was a receive and file item. The information was provided by Municipal Court Judge Jacklyn Paletta and updates council on changes in the fine schedule and software.

Cook asked if all fines could be changed. Law stated that some fines are set by State Statute and cannot be changed locally, and our court must abide by the minimum and maximums listed in the statute.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:14 p.m. Stone moved, seconded by Graves and carried 5-0, to recess into executive session for attorney consultation for item deemed as privileged in attorney-client relationship pursuant to exception K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(2) with the presence of the City Administrator and the city attorney to be present via Zoom. The open meeting will resume in the City Council Chamber at 8:40 p.m.

Open meeting resumed in Council Chambers at 8:40 p.m.

No action was taken.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Governing Body Handbook – Law noted the final draft of the handbook is ready for approval.

Stone moved, seconded by Ellison and carried 5-0, to adopt the Governing Body Handbook as presented.

League of Kansas Municipalities – Membership Renewal – Law reminded Council the change in the fee calculation resulted from the adjustment made last year when the League moved from a base fee structure to a population-based percentage model. He also noted that although the invoice was dated in December, it was only recently received. Ellison asked whether the organization provides

annual code updates based on changes in state law. Law responded that the League provides legislative updates while the City's code updates are completed through Ranson Financial. Ellison also inquired about training opportunities. Law explained the membership includes access to discounted training sessions, as well as certain resources that are available exclusively to members.

Stone moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to approve the annual membership renewal with the League of Kansas Municipalities at a cost of \$4,256.52, to be paid for as included in the 2026 budget.

PHB/HAWK Signal funding Concept Paper – Law provided an update stating KDOT would allow for a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB) at the intersection of Rogers Road and Amity. He explained there is a grant opportunity available with an 80/20 cost share, and that JEO Consulting has offered to prepare the concept paper on the City's behalf at no cost. Law noted the grant may not be as timely as desired. Council discussed the amount already expended on traffic studies and questioned how frequently the existing signal is utilized for pedestrian crossings. Margrave expressed surprise at the projected cost and stated he was frustrated with himself for not identifying the issue earlier. Despite the expense, he believes the improvement is necessary. Graves agreed and asked whether the city would retain the option to decline the grant if awarded. Law confirmed that acceptance would remain at the City's discretion. Stone raised concerns about how the PHB would function across four lanes of traffic and requested a visual example. Law said he would provide a photo or rendering to Council via email at a later date. Ellison inquired whether the traffic engineering study included any recommendation for a full traffic signal, noting she would not want to install a PHB only to later determine that a full signal is required. Graves added that he does not want to create a series of four-way stops along Amity.

Consensus is to allow JEO Consulting to submit the concept paper on the City's behalf.

Short-Term Rental Registration – Law stated this is an item that Miami County Commission recently implemented with the World Cup coming and said this

would be a good opportunity to discuss this if council had any interest. There was discussion and council consensus was they were not interested.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:04 p.m. Ellison moved, seconded by Margrave and carried 5-0, to adjourn the meeting.

Approved:

Donna Cook, Mayor

Attest:

Jessica McGowin, City Clerk