



# City of Lawton

## City Council

### MINUTES

Lawton City Hall  
212 SW 9th Street  
Lawton, Oklahoma  
73501-3944

**Tuesday, January 28, 2025**

**6:00 PM**

**Lawton City Hall  
Council Chambers/Auditorium**

#### **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER WITH INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**"Official action can be taken only on items which appear on the agenda. The Council may adopt, approve, ratify, deny, defer, recommend, or continue any agenda item. The Council may also propose and enact floor amendments to any matter presented before them. When more information is needed to act on an item, the Council may refer the matter to the City Manager or the City Attorney. The Council may also refer items to standing committees of the Council or a board, commission, or authority for additional study. Under certain circumstances, items are deferred to a specific later date or stricken from the agenda entirely."**

#### **ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Mary Ann Hankins, Ward 1  
R.L. Smith, Ward 2  
Linda Chapman, Ward 3  
George Gill, Ward 4  
Allan Hampton, Ward 5  
Bob Weger, Ward 6  
Sherene L. Williams, Ward 7  
Randy Warren, Ward 8

**ABSENT:** None.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Stanley Booker, Mayor  
John Ratliff, City Manager  
John Andrew, City Attorney  
Donalynn Blazek-Scherler, City Clerk

Mayor Booker remarked that he believed the majority of the audience was present for Item #29 and announced that it would be moved to the beginning of the agenda for their convenience.

## **PRESENTATION:**

**EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT AWARD:** City Manager Ratliff presented the Employee Spotlight Award to Peter Mortensen of the Public Works Department, specifically from the Electronics Communications Department. Mr. Mortensen was recognized for his responsiveness, professionalism, and excellent customer service. It was noted that this award is nominated and selected by peers, not management. In addition to the Employee Spotlight Award, Mr. Mortensen also received the Emergency Technologist of the Quarter Award from the state 911 Management Authority.

The Citizen of the Month presentation for Darby's Big Furniture was stricken.

## **REPORTS: MAYOR/CITY COUNCIL**

No council member reports were given due to time constraints.

### **MAYOR'S NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS**

The Mayor's New Year's Address was postponed to the next meeting.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:** Lawton citizens who have completed a Request to Speak Form and wish to address business not listed on the agenda may step forward at this time.

**To ensure compliance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act, the Mayor and Council will receive comments but will NOT engage in direct responses. However, they may refer matters to the appropriate department or individual for further consideration and follow-up action.**

**To participate, speakers must submit a Request to Speak Form to the City Clerk and reside within the Lawton city limits. Each speaker is allotted 3 minutes, with a maximum of 9 minutes per topic, and Audience Participation is limited to 30 minutes total. All participants are expected to follow the Rules of Decorum as outlined in Council Policy 1-6.**

Kasa Whiteley expressed her concerns regarding Westwin Elements and CMVR, particularly in relation to the ongoing lawsuit. She inquired about who she could speak to in order to address this issue.

Mayor Booker encouraged Whiteley to read the article published by the Southwest Ledger for more accurate information on the situation and also suggested she contact the City Manager's Office for further details.

## **CONSENT AGENDA:**

The following items are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted with one motion. Should discussion be desired on an item, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda prior to action and considered separately.

Motion: Council Member Weger moved to approve the consent agenda with the exception of striking Item 15 and pulling Items 9 and 14. Seconded by Council Member Hampton. Vote: Approved 8-0.

1. Consider approving one (1) damage claim (recommended for approval) and **25-0010**

authorizing payment for Joseph and Amanda Layton in the amount of \$100.00.

**Attachments:** [DC-2024-072, Layton, Joseph and Amanda Memorandum](#)

2. Consider the following damage claim recommended for denial: The Claims Center obo American Power Electric (AEP) in the amount of \$321.16. **25-0011**

**Attachments:** [DC-2024-070, AEP Memorandum](#)

3. Consider approving a Resolution amending the City of Lawton FY25 budget, as amended, by appropriating \$395,000.00 to the Capital Improvement Projects Fund (Fund 435) to fund abatements through the Neighborhood Services Division. **24-2215**

**Attachments:** [01.28.25 D&D Abatements Resolution](#)

4. Consider approving a resolution amending the City of Lawton FY25 budget, as amended, by appropriating \$4,456,402.38 in insurance proceeds to the City-at-Large Construction, Improvements and Additions account for roof repairs at Central Mall Plaza. **25-0045**

**Attachments:** [01.28.25 Central Mall Plaza Roof Resolution](#)

5. Consider adopting a resolution authorizing traffic control measures with the addition of a W2-1, advanced street sign on North and South-bound 82nd street, leading to Bishop Road. **24-2246**

**Attachments:** [82nd and Bishop Rd  
Bishop 82nd Resolution](#)

6. Consider authorizing staff to apply for the Oklahoma Code Enforcement Association Community Improvement Grant in the amount of \$1,500 for the removal of debris in Ward 1. **25-0008**

**Attachments:** [Oklahoma Code Enforcement Association Community Grant Application  
2025 Template](#)

7. Consider approving a grant application with the Oklahoma Department of Aerospace and Aeronautics to fund a study on improving air service at the Lawton/Fort Sill Regional Airport. **25-0053**

**Attachments:** [State Grant Application](#)

8. Consider awarding a contract in the amount of \$4,005,180 to King Solution Services, LLC, for the construction of PU2413 2024 Sewer Rehabilitation Phase I Construction Project to rehabilitate approximately 15,990 LF of high maintenance sewer lines throughout the city. **24-2250**

**Attachments:** [Recommendation of Award  
Bid Tab - PU2413  
PU2413 Contract & Bonds unsigned  
PU2413 Project Location Maps](#)

9. Consider approving an agreement for professional services between the City **25-0018**

of Lawton and Farzaneh Law Firm, PC for their expertise with immigration law relating to employment visas for select City of Lawton employees and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the Agreement.

**Attachments:** [Proposed Agreement with Farzaneh Law Firm P.C.](#)

Council Member Williams inquired about the employee's duty position, their employment status, and renewal costs for the visa. The City Manager explained that the agreement covers one employee currently, who works as an Associate City Engineer. It was clarified that the contract would cover services for any non-U.S. citizen employees who might need visa assistance in the future.

**Motion:** Council Member Warren moved to approve an agreement for professional services between the City of Lawton and Farzaneh Law Firm, PC for their expertise with immigration law relating to employment visas for select City of Lawton employees and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the Agreement. Seconded by Council Member Hampton. Vote: Approved 8-0.

10. Consider approving an additional \$19,111.50 for Excess Cyber Crime coverage. 25-0028

**Attachments:** [24-2220 \\$750K Excess Cyber Crime Quote.pdf](#)

11. Consider extending contract (CL23-009) Liquid Ammonium Sulfate with Brenntag Southwest, Inc. Chemical use in the treatment of water. 25-0032

**Attachments:** [Original Contract](#)  
[Dept. Memo Yr 3](#)  
[Brenntag Ext. Form Yr 3 - signed](#)

12. Consider extending contract (CL23-010) Sodium Hydroxide with Petra Chemical Company, LLC. Chemical used in the treatment of water. 25-0033

**Attachments:** [Petra Chemical Ext. Form Yr 3 - Signed](#)  
[Dept. Ext. Memo Yr 3](#)  
[Original Contract](#)

13. Consider approving an employment agreement between the City of Lawton and Nathan Johnson for the position of Municipal Judge and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the agreement. 25-0037

**Attachments:** [Judge's Agreement 2025](#)

14. Consider approving an extendable Operating and Professional Services Agreement, providing entertainment and fireworks for the 2025 Lawton Fort Sill Freedom Festival by LimeLight Productions and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the contract. 25-0038

**Attachments:** [2025 Limelight Professional Services Agreement](#)

Council Member Williams asked about the total funding spent on last year's event. Jason Poudrier, Arts and Humanities, explained that the total cost for the two-day Freedom Festival was approximately \$178,000, which included both a drone show and fireworks display. He estimated attendance at 30,000

to 40,000 people, noting that the Chamber of Commerce's tracking system recorded about 8,000 to 10,000 unique visitors from outside the community.

When asked about revenue, Poudrier explained that as a city function, the event is designed to break even. He noted that the festival was originally established to provide a controlled fireworks display when personal fireworks were banned in city limits. He mentioned that over the past 3-4 years, they have worked to bring in additional sponsorships to offset costs and involve more citizens in the planning committee.

**Motion:** Council Member Smith moved to approve an extendable Operating and Professional Services Agreement, providing entertainment and fireworks for the 2025 Lawton Fort Sill Freedom Festival by LimeLight Productions and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the contract. Seconded by Council Member Chapman. Vote: Approved 8-0.

15. Consider approving a limited event support agreement between the City of Lawton and Fort Sill Moral Welfare and Recreation(MWR) for support of the Warrior Run 2025. 25-0046

**Attachments:** [Event Flier for Warrior Run 2025](#)  
[Warrior Marathon Agreement](#)

This item was stricken.

16. Consider determining and approving the actual costs of the dismantling and removal of dilapidated buildings and other expenses that may be necessary in conjunction with the same by approving invoices for demolition of properties as required by State Statue 11-22-112.4 for properties located at 1511 SW Dr Charles W Whitlow Avenue, 813 SW H Avenue, 1216 NW Andrews Avenue, 1611 NW Lawton Avenue and 56 NW 24th Street. 25-0007

**Attachments:** [Invoices](#)

17. Consider approving the Claims List for January 3, 2025, through January 16, 2025. 25-0044
18. Consider approving the minutes of the January 13, 2025 and January 14, 2025 City Council meetings. 25-0050
19. Consider approving appointments to boards and commissions. 25-0049

**Attachments:** [Board Appointments- 01.28.2025](#)

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

20. Receive a presentation on a conceptual plan and, contingent upon Council approving a Resolution of Reimbursement, consider approving Amendment No. 1 to the contract PR2308 Elmer Thomas Park Amphitheater and Boardwalk Project with C.H. Guernsey for the design services on this project. 25-0054

**Attachments:** [PR2308 Amend. No 1](#)

Mike Jones, Engineering, introduced JD Clark, staff architect shared with Guernsey, who presented a conceptual plan for the Elmer Thomas Park Amphitheater and Boardwalk Project. The presentation highlighted numerous improvements planned for the area around Lake Helen, including:

- Two new parking lots adding 150 spaces
- A food truck area for events
- Redevelopment of the existing amphitheater with a stage and shell
- Concession stands and bathrooms
- Boardwalks connecting the dam and peninsulas
- A boat house for rentals
- Pedestrian bridges connecting both sides of the lake
- Trails extending around the lake
- Sculptures and art installations
- An observation tower with a height just under 75 feet
- A large "Lawton" monument sign visible from Cache Road, I-44, and the park
- A waterfall feature that would utilize water from the existing splash pad and Aquatic Center

The presentation included renderings showing the improvements during both day and night, emphasizing the focus on creating a park that can be used safely after dark with appropriate lighting. The design plans include spaces for various events, from large gatherings in the amphitheater (with capacity for approximately 6,000 people) to small venues along the boardwalks.

Mr. Clark noted that the buildings will share design elements with other structures in the park to create a consistent identity. The proposed project timeline showed design work beginning in February through August, permitting and bidding through December, and construction from December through June 2027, allowing the project to be completed in time for the 2027 Freedom Festival.

Council Member Chapman emphasized the importance of securing funding for maintenance, growth, security, and sprinkler systems to ensure the park remains in excellent condition. Mr. Clark confirmed that the lake would be dredged during construction of the pedestrian bridge to improve its depth, though the area of the lake would remain the same.

Dewayne Burk, Deputy City Manager, explained that the amendment would authorize Guernsey to start the actual design process contingent upon bringing back a resolution of reimbursement. He noted that while they have funding for the contract amendment from the general fund, they plan to recapture those funds from CIP funding. The project was originally considered for phased implementation, but it was determined that completing it all at once within a two-year window would save several million dollars in inflationary costs.

Warren noted that by the end of 2027 or early 2028, the city should have an aquatic center, youth sports center, and a magnificent entry way to the city, all made possible by citizens who voted for Propel 2040.

**Motion:** Council Member Gill moved to approve Amendment No. 1 to the contract PR2308 Elmer Thomas Park Amphitheater and Boardwalk Project with C.H. Guernsey for the design services on this

project, contingent upon Council approving a Resolution of Reimbursement. Seconded by Council Member Warren. Vote: Approved 8-0.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS:**

- 21.** Conduct an election of a Mayor Pro Tem for Calendar Year 2025 and take action as deemed necessary. **25-0022**

Mayor Booker praised Council Member Warren for his contributions as Mayor Pro Tem, noting that he consistently researches issues, develops plans, and utilizes artificial intelligence to advance the Council's work.

**Motion:** Council Member Hankins moved to nominate Randy Warren for Mayor Pro Tem, noting his extensive experience on the Council and his well-informed leadership. Seconded by Council Member Smith. Vote: Approved 8-0.

- 22.** Hold a public hearing and consider a resolution, requested administratively, to amend the 2030 Land Use Plan by adding Tract 3, more particularly described below, located at 8902 SW 11th Street (aka part of the City's landfill) as Industrial and take appropriate action as deemed necessary. **25-0031**

**Attachments:** [Resolution No. 25-](#)  
[Location Map - Tract 1 2 and 3 - Landfill Rezoning](#)  
[Executed Mailing Notice Landfill](#)  
[Executed Newspaper Notice Landfill](#)  
[01.16.2025 CPC](#)

Christine James, Planning, presented a request to amend the 2030 Land Use Plan to add the recently annexed piece of the landfill to the land use map as industrial. She explained that the property was annexed into the city at the beginning of 2024 and would be used for landfill purposes, including monitoring stations.

Mayor Booker opened the public hearing. With no one coming forward to speak, the public hearing was closed.

**Motion:** Council Member Gill moved to approve a resolution to amend the 2030 Land Use Plan by adding Tract 3 located at 8902 SW 11th Street as Industrial. Seconded by Council Member Williams. Vote: Approved 8-0.

- 23.** Hold a public hearing and consider an ordinance, requested administratively, to change the zoning and a request for a Use Permitted on Review for property located at 8902 SW 11th Street (aka the City's landfill) and take appropriate action as deemed necessary. **25-0034**

**Attachments:** [Ordinance No. 25-](#)  
[Location Map - Tract 1 2 and 3 - Landfill Rezoning](#)

[Executed Mailing Notice Landfill](#)  
[Executed Newspaper Notice Landfill](#)  
[01.16.2025 CPC](#)

James presented the companion rezoning request for the same property, requesting to rezone Tracts 1 and 2 from A1 to I4 Heavy Industrial and Track 3 from temporary I4 to permanent I4. She noted that a junkyard/landfill is not an outright permitted use in I4 but is allowed as a use permitted on review, so that approval was also needed.

Mayor Booker opened the public hearing. With no one coming forward to speak, the public hearing was closed.

**Motion:** Council Member Hampton moved to approve an ordinance for rezoning request for the property located at 8902 SW 11th Street, changing the zoning classification from A1 General Agriculture District to I4 Heavy Industrial District and from temporary I4 to permanent I4, waive the reading of the ordinance, and read the title only. Seconded by Council Member Williams.

The title was read: "An ordinance changing the existing zoning classification from the A1 General Agriculture District to I4 Heavy Industrial District zoning classification on the tracts of land which are here and after more particularly described in section one and temporary I4 Heavy Industrial District to I4 Heavy Industrial District zoning classification on the tract of land which is here and after more particularly described in section two here of."

Vote: Approved 8-0.

24. Receive a briefing on the Pavement Maintenance Program Guide to be implemented by the Public Works Department, and take any action deemed necessary. 25-0023

**Attachments:** [FINAL PAVEMENT MAINTENANCE PROGRAM GUIDE](#)

Michael Watrous, Public Works, presented a guide for the pavement maintenance program, which was requested in September 2023 and had been passed by the Streets and Bridges Committee earlier in the month.

Mayor Booker expressed concern about protecting the progress made in the street program and ensuring future councils don't revert to past practices. He asked about making the guide a council policy that could only be changed by the council. Michael explained that a separate council policy would be presented at the next meeting, assuming it's approved by the Streets and Bridges Committee.

City Attorney Andrew suggested that a charter change would be the most effective way to make it difficult for future councils to amend something. A council policy can be amended at any time by the council.

**Motion:** Council Member Gill moved to approve the Pavement Maintenance Program Guide to be implemented by the Public Works Department. Seconded by Council Member Williams.

Vote: Approved 8-0.



25. Consider authorizing Mayor Booker to engage Crawford and Associates to conduct an efficiency study to compare the City of Lawton with six peer cities and take action as deemed necessary. 25-0051

Mayor Booker explained that this item would authorize Crawford and Associates to conduct an efficiency study comparing Lawton with six peer cities. He noted that the Oklahoma Municipal League had initially planned to standardize reporting of data across cities but that project had stalled. The Mayor spoke with Frank Crawford, a municipal auditor, about the challenge of comparing departments across cities due to differing structures (e.g., in Norman, the street department mows road rights-of-way, while in Lawton, this is done by the parks department).

The proposed study would analyze every department to provide apples-to-apples comparisons that the City Manager, directors, and Council could use to identify efficiencies. The estimated cost is \$25,000.

**Motion:** Council Member Weger moved to authorize Mayor Booker to engage Crawford and Associates to conduct an efficiency study to compare the City of Lawton with six peer cities. Seconded by Council Member Williams. Vote: Approved 8-0.

26. Consider approving a resolution of the City of Lawton, Oklahoma (the “City”) establishing and declaring its official intent to reimburse the City’s general fund on behalf of one or more of the public trusts of which the City is the beneficiary for preliminary and other expenditures relating to the construction, equipping, renovating, and improving of certain capital improvement projects for the benefit of the City, said reimbursement being anticipated to be funded from the proceeds of the bonds issued for the same said construction, equipping, renovating, and improving of certain capital improvement projects for the benefit of the City; and containing other provisions relating thereto. 25-0040

**Attachments:** [7b. Reimbursement Resolution City 2025 FD clean 1.23.25](#)

This item was stricken.

27. Consider approving Council Policy 04-07: Allocation of a portion of City’s use tax to support PROPEL 2040 Projects. 25-0029

**Attachments:** [Council Policy 04-07](#)

Tim Wilson, Deputy City Attorney, explained that this policy would capture the same percentage of the city's use tax as is currently allocated from sales tax (2 and 1/8 cents) for CIP projects under Propel 2040. The effective date would be October 1, which is when Propel 2040 went into effect. He noted that when budgeting projections were done, this allocation was included, so the policy is necessary to fulfill what citizens expect.

**Motion:** Council Member Gill moved to approve Council Policy 04-07: Allocation of a portion of City's use tax to support PROPEL 2040 Projects. Seconded by Council Member Hampton.

Vote: Approved 8-0.

- 28.** Discuss the formation of the Streets, Bridges, Building, and Development Review Committee, conflicts with existing committees and commissions, and provide direction to staff on future action to establish the Streets, Bridges, Building, and Development Review Committee and eliminate conflicts in City Code. **25-0056**

**Attachments:** [Streets Bridges Slide](#)

City Attorney Andrew presented information on the formation of a Streets, Bridges, Building, and Development Review Committee. He explained that the plan is to form this committee where the Traffic Commission is currently located in the code, eliminating the Traffic Commission and incorporating its duties into the new committee. He noted that after discussions with Council Member Gill, there was concern about potential conflicts with the Process and Oversight Committee, but since both committees are composed of elected officials, there likely wouldn't be issues.

No formal action was taken, as the city staff had already been directed to look into this matter. Andrew indicated he would move forward with preparing the necessary changes.

- 29.** Receive a presentation from the City Prosecutor on the current Dangerous Dog issue that continues to plague the city and if necessary direct staff to take appropriate action. **25-0061**

**Attachments:** [Dangerous Dog Presentation final](#)

City Prosecutor Al Rosenbaum gave a presentation on the ongoing dangerous dog issue within the city. He provided the Council with photographs depicting damage caused by these dogs but first cautioned them to read the warning before viewing the images.

Animal Welfare Superintendent Cliff Blasengame stated that after discussions with Rosenbaum over the past several months, there has been a noticeable increase in animal attacks, some involving stray dogs roaming the streets. He provided examples of recent incidents and emphasized that he is not advocating for a ban on dangerous dogs but rather for stronger ordinances to better manage the issue.

Blasengame highlighted the overwhelming strain on the city's animal shelter, which takes in 300 to 500 dogs, cats, and other animals each month. Many of these cases stem from pet owners abandoning animals on the streets or surrendering them. With a shelter capacity of approximately 120 animals, the facility is consistently operating beyond its limits.

Mayor Booker noted that the capacity issues at the shelter may warrant a separate meeting but asked Blasengame whether he has enough manpower to handle the volume of daily calls the shelter receives.

Blasengame responded that, for now, they have sufficient staff, though some team members are still in training. He noted that three new Animal Control Officers were recently hired—one is already in the field, another is undergoing training, and the third is working in the kennel to gain experience in that area. Additionally, he mentioned that the city has approved hiring two more Animal Control Officers, with interviews scheduled soon to fill those positions.

Smith thanked Blasengame for his efforts and expressed his belief that there are no inherently “bad dogs,” but rather irresponsible owners. He also noted that he has never seen as many stray animals roaming the streets as there are now.

Williams asked whether the audience would have the opportunity to view the pictures presented to the Council, stating that she believed it was important for them to see a few for reference.

Rosenbaum explained that because he was unable to provide a warning to the entire audience, he chose not to display the photos publicly.

Mayor Booker noted that approximately 30 "Request to Speak" forms had been submitted. However, given the rules and procedures of Audience Participation, it was not possible to accommodate that many speakers. As a result, it was decided to allocate nine minutes for those speaking in favor of the item and nine minutes for those speaking against it. He explained that the requests had been numbered in the order they were received and would be addressed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Mayor Booker opened the floor for audience participation, beginning by asking if anyone was in favor of the item.

Kelly Harris], shared with the Council his experience of being attacked by a dog while walking in his own front yard. He expressed his support for a ban on dangerous dogs, explaining the reasons behind his position.

Mayor Booker announced that preference would be given to citizens who live within the city limits, as this was a city issue.

Dennis Shepard shared that his three pit bulls are therapy dogs, helping him manage severe PTSD as a combat veteran. He provided multiple examples to demonstrate that his dogs are not dangerous and emphasized that it is the responsibility of the owners, not the dogs themselves, for ensuring safety.

Monica Hoover recounted an incident that occurred while she was heading to work. She noticed a dog on the side of the road and called animal control, only to be informed by the dispatcher that there was only one Animal Control officer on duty. While waiting for assistance, a young boy was attacked by the dog. Hoover expressed serious concerns about the city's lack of resources for animal control, highlighting the dangers posed by the insufficient staffing.

Astrid Turner shared her thoughts on potential solutions to the issue. She suggested funding animal birth control programs rather than attempting to close them down, increasing animal control involvement, and implementing more enforcement and fines for violations of existing laws.

Becky Kalika shared her perspective on the broader issue, pointing out that low income, low socioeconomic status, and irresponsible ownership are key factors contributing to the problem. She emphasized the need for better resources for pet owners and stronger regulations to address these challenges.

Mayor Booker announced that for anyone who did not have the opportunity to speak, they could submit their ideas to their council member via email.

The Council continued their discussions on the issue, exchanging opinions and perspectives on the matter.

Mayor Booker asked if the Council would like to take any action on the matter.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

- 30.** Receive a report from the Lawton Police Department on data related to burglaries within the City of Lawton, discuss matters related to the Lawton Police Department, and take action as deemed necessary.

**25-0030**

**Attachments:** [2018-2024 Burglary Crime Data](#)

Deputy Police Chief Winham presented data on burglaries in Lawton over the past 10 years. The report showed a steady decline from 1,485 reported burglaries in 2013 to 839 in 2024, representing a 43.5% reduction. From 2022 to 2023, there was a slight decrease from 844 to 818 burglaries (about 3%), with a small uptick to 837 in 2024.

Chief Winham explained that burglary reports are received through dispatch calls, reports to desk officers, and online reporting. He confirmed that the department responds to all burglary calls, though response times may vary based on call prioritization.

Mayor Booker shared that he had received complaints about police not responding to burglaries but was pleasantly surprised by the positive data. He emphasized the importance of building public trust by publicizing these improvements and requested quarterly reports showing calls received, calls answered, and burglaries solved.

Chief Winham highlighted recent successes, including catching a burglar hiding in a business bathroom and solving a home burglary at Larry Neal's residence. He also mentioned how technology, particularly Flock cameras, has helped solve crimes. He noted one recent case where officers were able to identify a vehicle involved in copper theft within 30 seconds using new technology.

Council Member Gill inquired about structure fires related to homeless individuals breaking into vacant properties. Fire Chief Raanon Adams reported that approximately 30% of the 171 structure fires in 2024 were believed to be started by homeless or vagrant individuals. He noted that while they can identify the cause, it's often difficult to identify the specific individuals responsible, as they typically flee before authorities arrive.

No formal motion was made on this informational item.

## **STAFF REPORTS:**

- 31.** Receive a report on the use of Fluoride in Lawton's drinking water.

**24-2133**

**Attachments:** [Fluoride Presentation\(2\)](#)

Carl Gray, Water Treatment Plant Superintendent, presented information about fluoride use in Lawton's drinking water. He explained that fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral that inhibits dental cavities and stimulates new bone formation. Water fluoridation is recognized as the best method to deliver fluoride to all community members regardless of socioeconomic status.

The Medicine Park Water Treatment Plant adds hydro fluorosilicic acid to maintain a 0.7 mg/L fluoride concentration in drinking water, as recommended by the U.S. Department of Health since 2015. This level effectively reduces tooth decay while minimizing the risk of dental fluorosis (brown mottling of teeth). The annual budget for fluoride is approximately \$29,000, representing a small portion of the plant's chemical expenditures.

In response to questions, Mr. Gray noted that the raw water naturally contains about 0.23 mg/L of fluoride, so the plant adds approximately 0.47 mg/L to reach the target concentration. He mentioned that wells being drilled as an alternative water source have much higher fluoride levels (6-7 mg/L) that would require additional treatment to remove.

No formal motion was made on this informational item.

- 32.** Provide City Council with an update on the Monthly Sales Tax Revenue for the month of December reporting. **25-0013**

**Attachments:** [12. FY 2024 - Monthly Sales Tax Analysis.xlsx - council](#)

Finance Director Rebecca Johnson reported that December sales tax revenue (representing October spending) showed a 1% decline from the previous year. She encouraged Lawtonians to spend money locally. She explained that the budget expectation line on the provided graphs represents a three-year average, and actual collections were running above budget expectations. Mayor Booker requested that future reports include year-to-date figures to provide a clearer picture of revenue in relation to budgetary needs.

No formal motion was made on this informational item.

- 33.** Provide City Council with an update on the FY 2024 Audit Process. **23-991**

Finance Director Rebecca Johnson reported that staff is working on the FY 2024 audit and communicating daily with auditors to meet the March deadline. She noted one delay related to a component unit's annual audit for 2024 but said staff is working to expedite that process to prevent delays. She confirmed that the goal remains to be fully caught up with audits by the first meeting in March.

No formal motion was made on this informational item.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS:**

**Motion:** Council Member Gill moved to go into executive session. Seconded by Council Member Hampton. Vote: Approved 8-0.

The City Council remained in executive session from 9:18 PM to 10:44 PM. No action was taken in executive session.

**Motion:** Council Member Gill moved to return from executive session. Seconded by Council Member Chapman. Vote: Approved 8-0

- 34.** Pursuant to Section 307B.4, Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, consider convening in executive session to discuss the pending action in the United States **25-0025**

District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma titled Kent Jackson, as Personal Representative of the Estate of Israel Williams v. City of Lawton, et al, Case No. 5:23-cv-00284-G, and if necessary, take appropriate action in open session.

**Motion:** Council Member Gill moved to clarify that the First Amendment to the Professional Services Agreement with the law firm of Steedley and Neil that was approved at the January 14, 2025 council meeting shall have an effective date retroactive to January 8, 2025. Seconded by Council Member Hampton. Vote: Approved 8-0.

- 35.** Pursuant to Section 307B.4, Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, consider convening **25-0042**  
in executive session to discuss a possible pending action concerning a HOME  
Program Report received from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban  
Development to the City of Lawton on January 10, 2025, and if necessary,  
take action in open session.

**Motion:** Council Member Smith moved to approve directing the City Manager to direct the Finance Department to transfer funds of \$484,350 from the general fund to the appropriate housing fund and to respond to the HOME finding letter dated January 10, 2025, stating that the funds will be transferred within the next 60 days. Seconded by Council Member Hampton. Vote: Approved 8-0.

- 36.** Pursuant to Section 307B.4, Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, consider convening **25-0057**  
in executive session to discuss litigation in the case Donna L. Raite v. City of  
Lawton and City of Lawton Public Works Administration, CJ-2022-177, and,  
if necessary, take appropriate action in open session.

No action was taken in open session.

- 37.** Pursuant to Section 307B.4, Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, consider convening **25-0064**  
in executive session to discuss a pending claim for potential litigation against  
the real property owners of the demolished nursing home located at 1301 NW  
Andrews Avenue, and take appropriate action in open session.

No action was taken in open session.

- 38.** Pursuant to Section 307B.1, Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, consider convening **23-1099**  
in executive session to review the employment of John Ratliff as City  
Manager, and in open session take other action as necessary.

No action was taken in open session.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** Council Member Gill moved to adjourn. Seconded by Council Member Hampton. Vote: Approved 8-0.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:48PM.

The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48 hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."