



City of Farmers Branch

Action Meeting Minutes

City Council

Farmers Branch City Hall
13000 Wm Dodson Pkwy
Farmers Branch, TX 75234

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

4:00 PM

Council Chambers

The full video of this meeting is available on the City website at <https://farmersbranch.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.

Council Present: Mayor Terry Lynne, Mayor Pro Tem David Reid (*arrived at 4:12 p.m.*), Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Roger Neal, Councilwoman Lupe Gonzalez, Councilwoman Tina Bennett-Burton, Councilwoman Elizabeth Villafranca

City Staff Present: City Manager Ben Williamson, City Attorney David Berman, Director of Administrative Services Stacy Henderson, Director of Finance Jay Patel, Director of Parks and Recreations Rob Diaz, Deputy Director of Economic Development Darren Harris, Director of Community Services Derek Hull, Police Chief Kevin McCoy, Fire Chief Daniel Latimer, Director of Innovation and Technology Joey Brock, Director of Human Resources Jeffrey Ross, Senior Management Analyst Erin Flores, and other City staff

CALL TO ORDER – SPECIAL CALLED MEETING (4:00 P.M.)

Mayor Lynne called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON STUDY SESSION ITEMS

There were no members of the public wishing to address Council.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

C.1 Consider approving Resolution No. 2026-089 canvassing and declaring the election results of the June 13, 2026, City of Farmers Branch Runoff Election for the office of the Mayor, issuing the Certificate of Election; and take appropriate action.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Reid, seconded by Councilwoman Villafranca, to approve Resolution No. 2026-089 canvassing and declaring the election results of the June 13, 2026, City of Farmers Branch Runoff Election for the office of Mayor and issuing the Certificate of Election.

Aye: Mayor Pro Tem David Reid, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Roger Neal, Councilwoman Lupe Gonzalez, Councilwoman Tina Bennett-Burton, Councilwoman Elizabeth Villafranca

C.2 Conduct City Council Orientation for newly elected and existing Councilmembers and review Governance, Legal, and Ethical responsibilities and requirements.

Harassment and Hostile Work Environment Awareness

Director of Human Resources Jeffrey Ross presented training regarding harassment and hostile work environment awareness. Highlights of the presentation included:

Workplace Harassment Overview

- Recent Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) statistics regarding discrimination, harassment, and retaliation claims.

- The role of elected officials as agents of the City under federal and state law.
- Overview of the City's Code of Ethics and applicable state and federal employment laws.

Harassment and Hostile Work Environment

- Definitions of quid pro quo harassment and hostile work environment.
- Protected classes under federal and state law.
- Standards used to determine whether conduct constitutes unlawful harassment.
- Examples of verbal, non-verbal, physical, electronic, and other inappropriate workplace behaviors.

Retaliation

- Definition of retaliation and examples of prohibited retaliatory conduct.
- Explanation that retaliation continues to be the most frequently reported and substantiated workplace claim.
- Discussion of the importance of avoiding adverse actions against individuals who report misconduct or participate in investigations.

Responsibilities of Elected Officials

- Potential legal consequences associated with harassment, discrimination, and retaliation.
- Procedures for reporting inappropriate conduct.
- Expectations for maintaining a respectful, professional workplace and fostering a positive organizational culture.

Council Discussion

Council Members thanked staff for the presentation. No additional directions were provided.

Budget 101 Orientation

Finance Director Jay Patel presented training on City budgeting. Highlights of the presentation included:

Budget Development Process

- Annual budget development timeline from strategic planning through budget adoption.
- Departmental budget preparation and review process.
- Budget adoption schedule and Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award program.

City Budget Overview

- Overview of the City's approximately \$170 million annual budget.
- Description of the General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Enterprise Funds, Internal Service Funds, and Capital Project Funds.
- Distribution of expenditures among major operational categories.

General Fund Overview

- Primary General Fund revenue sources, including property taxes, sales taxes, and charges for services.
- Allocation of expenditures among public safety, general government, parks and recreation, and public works.

Property Tax Process

- Overview of certified property values and annual tax rate calculations.
- Explanation of the Interest and Sinking (I&S) rate, No-New-Revenue rate, and Voter Approval rate.
- Discussion of homestead and senior property tax exemptions.

Sales Tax and Utility Funds

- Historical sales tax trends and conservative revenue forecasting.
- Overview of water and wastewater fund operations.
- Hotel/Motel Fund revenue restrictions and permitted uses.

Debt Service and Capital Improvement Program

- Overview of debt service obligations.
- Long-term capital improvement planning for streets, utilities, facilities, and infrastructure projects.

Fund Balance

- Importance of maintaining healthy reserve balances.
- Relationship between fund balance, financial stability, and the City's AAA bond rating.

Council Discussion

Council discussed commercial versus residential property tax distribution, water utility revenues, Hotel/Motel Fund balances, General Fund reserve targets, bond rating considerations, and resident awareness of available homestead and senior property tax exemptions.

Council Requests/Follow-Up Items

- Provide additional information regarding General Fund revenue categories, including rental income and forfeiture revenues. (Councilwoman Villafranca)
- Provide additional information regarding water utility service charges and future discussion regarding wastewater billing calculations. (Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)
- Research best practices regarding General Fund reserve levels and the relationship between reserve policies and the City's AAA bond rating. (Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)

Media Engagement Guidelines

Communications Manager Ariel Wallace presented an overview of the City's media engagement guidelines for elected officials. Highlights of the presentation included:

Council-Manager Form of Government

- Overview of the Council-Manager form of government and the respective roles of the City Council, City Manager, Communications Department, and department directors.
- Importance of consistent, accurate, and transparent communication with the public.

Media Engagement Responsibilities

- Council Members may communicate individual policy positions while distinguishing personal views from officially adopted City policy.
- Operational matters should be referred to the City Manager.
- Council Members were encouraged to notify the City Manager following media interviews to ensure consistent communication.

Media Engagement Best Practices

- Maintain professionalism and transparency when communicating with the media.
- Avoid discussing personnel matters, litigation, procurement, confidential information, or topics prohibited by law.
- Refer operational or technical questions to appropriate City staff when necessary.

Crisis Communications

- Emergency communications are coordinated through the City's Emergency Operations Center.
- Council Members were encouraged to share official City messaging during emergencies to promote consistent public information.

Social Media Guidelines

- Promote City programs, events, and initiatives using verified City information.
- Respond to residents using factual information.
- Ensure City-related information shared on social media has been verified for accuracy.

Council Discussion

Council discussed maintaining positive relationships with members of the media and appropriate methods for addressing perceived media bias through proactive communication and relationship building.

Council Requests/Follow-Up Items

- Provide Council Members with a copy of the City's Communications Policy. (Councilwoman Villafranca)

Governance, Legal, and Ethical Responsibilities

City Attorney David Berman presented an overview of legal and ethical responsibilities applicable to elected officials. Highlights of the presentation included:

Texas Open Meetings Act

- Definition of meetings subject to the Open Meetings Act.
- Requirements regarding quorums, walking quorums, and serial communications.
- Guidance regarding attendance at social events, board meetings, and other public gatherings.
- Procedures governing meeting agendas, citizen comments, and Executive Sessions.
- Criminal penalties associated with violations of the Open Meetings Act.

Public Information Act

- Public access to City records and applicable statutory exceptions.
- Responsibilities of elected officials serving as temporary custodians of public records.
- Requirements regarding the use of personal devices, email accounts, text messages, and handwritten notes for City business.
- Public Information Act request procedures and Attorney General review process for withholding records.

Legal Responsibilities

- Overview of confidential information protected by law.
- Requirements for preserving official records.
- Importance of consulting the City Attorney when questions arise regarding legal compliance.

Council Requests/Follow-Up Items

Council discussed scheduling an additional training session to complete the remaining orientation topics, including conflicts of interest, Robert's Rules of Order, and parliamentary procedure.

Mayor Lynne recessed the Council Orientation at 5:14 p.m.

Mayor Lynne reconvened the Regular Meeting in Open Session at 6:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Lynne read the following items for Executive Session into the record and convened into Executive Session at 6:02 p.m.

- D.1 The City Council will convene into a closed Executive Session pursuant to Section 551.074, Personnel, and Section 551.071, Consultation with Attorney, of the Texas Government Code to consider and deliberate, and to seek legal advice from the City Attorney, regarding complaints alleging a violation of the City's Code of Ethics against a Councilmember for District 1, pursuant to Section 2-284 of the City's Code, filed June 8, 2026.**
- D.2 The City Council will convene into a closed Executive Session pursuant to Section 551.074, Personnel, and Section 551.071, Consultation with Attorney, of the Texas Government Code to consider and deliberate, and to seek legal advice from the City Attorney, regarding complaints alleging a violation of the City's Code of Ethics against a Councilmember for District 2, pursuant to Section 2-284 of the City's Code, filed June 9, 2026.**

The City Council reconvened from Executive Session to the Regular Meeting in Open Session at 7:07 p.m.

TAKE ANY ACTION NECESSARY AS A RESULT OF THE CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

- D.1 The City Council will convene into a closed Executive Session pursuant to Section 551.074, Personnel, and Section 551.071, Consultation with Attorney, of the Texas Government Code to consider and deliberate, and to seek legal advice from the City Attorney, regarding complaints alleging a violation of the City's Code of Ethics against a Councilmember for District 1, pursuant to Section 2-284 of the City's Code, filed June 8, 2026.**

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Reid, seconded by Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal, to instruct the City

Attorney to retain independent outside legal counsel to conduct an investigation into the ethics complaint filed against the Councilmember for District 1.

Aye: Mayor Pro Tem Reid, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal, Councilwoman Villafranca.
Nay: Councilwoman Bennett-Burton
Abstain: Councilwoman Gonzalez.

D.2 The City Council will convene into a closed Executive Session pursuant to Section 551.074, Personnel, and Section 551.071, Consultation with Attorney, of the Texas Government Code to consider and deliberate, and to seek legal advice from the City Attorney, regarding complaints alleging a violation of the City's Code of Ethics against a Councilmember for District 2, pursuant to Section 2-284 of the City's Code, filed June 9, 2026.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Reid, seconded by Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal, to deny moving forward with an investigation into the ethics complaint filed against the Councilmember for District 2.

City Attorney Berman clarified the motion, and Mayor Pro Tem Reid restated the motion.

Aye: Mayor Pro Tem Reid, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal, Councilwoman Gonzalez.
Nay: Councilwoman Villafranca
Abstain: Councilwoman Bennett-Burton

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Lynne adjourned the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Interim City Secretary Stacy Henderson, TRMC

Mayor Terry Lynne