



City of Farmers Branch

Action Meeting Minutes

City Council

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

Tuesday, July 21, 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, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Roger Neal, Councilwoman Lupe Gonzalez, Councilwoman Tina Bennett-Burton, Councilwoman Elizabeth Villafranca

City Staff Present: City Manager Ben Williamson, Deputy City Manager Jawaria Tareen, City Attorney David Berman, Director of Administrative Services Stacy Henderson, Director of Finance Jay Patel, Director of Parks and Recreation Rob Diaz, Deputy Director of Economic Development Darren Harris, Director of Community Services Derek Hull, Police Chief Kevin McCoy, 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 the Council.

STUDY SESSION ITEMS

C.1 Review and discuss Consent and Regular agenda items.

Council had no questions regarding the Consent and Regular agenda items.

C.2 Discuss and receive a presentation on the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget Update, including fiscal outlook, revenue considerations, strategic investment areas, and ongoing budget development topics.

Finance Director Patel gave a presentation on the following:

Budget Development and Revenue

- Certified property values are expected shortly and will allow staff to finalize property-tax revenue projections and begin tax-rate discussions in August.
- The proposed budget book is scheduled to be submitted by the July 31 Charter deadline.

Compensation and Proposed Fee Changes

- The proposed budget includes a 1% merit-based increase for eligible City employees, excluding directors and deputy directors.

- Proposed fee changes include renaming the solid-waste fee as a landfill-closure fee and increasing the card-processing fee from 2.5% to 3.5%.
- The card-processing fee would be applied uniformly to credit and debit card transactions, including automatic card payments.
- The proposed fee changes will return to the City Council for consideration by ordinance in August.

Budget Communication and Public Engagement

- Staff will continue providing budget information through social media, Budget 101 videos, displays at City facilities, printed materials, and a budget-in-brief pamphlet.
- Printed materials are expected to be available before the budget town hall and distributed at public facilities.
- The communication efforts are intended to prepare residents for the town hall and provide opportunities for questions and participation.

Current-Year Budget Closeout

- Finance staff will work with departments to update current-year revenue and expenditure forecasts.
- Staff will return in September with the updated forecast and any necessary budget amendments.

Council Requests/Follow-Up Items

- Provide information comparing alternative employee health insurance plans, including the advantages and disadvantages of each option. (Councilwoman Villafranca)
- Keep the City Council informed regarding the development of the proposed community garden, including grant opportunities and potential partnerships. (Councilwoman Villafranca)
- Revise the budget communication materials to reflect the goal of maintaining or potentially reducing the property tax rate. (Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)
- Evaluate whether additional time or other accommodations could be provided for utility customers who wish to pay by cash or check, and expand communication regarding payment methods that do not incur the card-processing fee. (Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)

C.3 Discuss and provide directions on implementing a Community Garden.

Management Analyst Erin Flores and Director of Parks and Recreation Rob Diaz gave a presentation on the following:

Project Background and Purpose

- The community garden was identified by the City Council as an opportunity to enhance neighborhoods through the City's strategic-planning process.
- Staff is coordinating across departments to determine the proposed garden's location, design, operating procedures, educational components, and long-term maintenance needs.
- The presentation was intended to begin the planning discussion and obtain Council feedback before staff develops more detailed recommendations.

Funding and Partnerships

- Staff is researching grants, sponsorships, community partnerships, and opportunities to complete portions of the project in-house to minimize the cost to taxpayers.
- Several potential grant programs are not currently accepting applications but are expected to reopen later in the year.
- Businesses and community organizations may have opportunities to sponsor individual plots or raised garden beds.

Operations and Participation

- Staff anticipates establishing an application process, volunteer requirements, and policies governing participation and use of the garden.
- Operational considerations include plot assignments, irrigation, water costs, maintenance

responsibilities, security, lighting, fencing, and public access.

- Staff is also evaluating composting, mulching, educational programming, and the appropriate process for screening or registering participants.

Current Community Garden Model

- The existing garden operates through assigned plots, with gardeners performing most routine work and City staff providing limited maintenance and organizational assistance.
- Produce from the existing garden is regularly donated to Metrocrest Services.
- Staff will consider how existing gardeners could be accommodated if the new garden is developed at a different location.

Council Requests/Follow-Up Items

- Consider incorporating composting and mulching opportunities into the community garden plan. (Councilwoman Bennett-Burton)
- Explore partnerships with Metrocrest Services, other charitable organizations, and schools for volunteer participation, educational programming, and produce distribution. (Mayor Pro Tem Reid)
- Evaluate whether existing community garden participants can be accommodated at a new location before plots are made available to additional participants. (Councilwoman Villafranca)
- Consider appropriate security measures for the proposed garden, including lighting, fencing, and controlled access. (Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)

C.4 Presentation regarding Blockchain Technology, Artificial Intelligence, and an AI Resident Call Assistance System.

Councilwoman Bennett-Burton requested that the item be tabled to a future meeting pending additional information. The item was not considered. Mayor Lynne announced that this item is being tabled to a future meeting.

C.5 Discussion and feedback regarding draft landscape amendments to the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.

Planning Director Tara Bradley gave a presentation on the following:

Purpose and Background

- The proposed amendments are intended to update minimum landscaping requirements, improve transitions between land uses, and revise related terminology and definitions.
- The draft incorporates feedback previously received from the Planning & Zoning Commission in 2023 and the City Council in 2024.
- Staff developed amendments to better align the City's landscaping standards with those of surrounding communities and support future infill and redevelopment.

Residential Landscaping

- The current ordinance does not establish minimum residential landscaping requirements.
- The proposed ordinance would require a minimum shade tree and soil stabilization for new residential development and qualifying redevelopment.
- Existing residential properties would not be considered nonconforming solely because they do not meet the proposed requirements.

Nonresidential Landscaping

- The proposed standards would increase landscaping requirements for multifamily, industrial, commercial, institutional, and retail development.
- A portion of the required multifamily landscaping could consist of hardscape amenities.
- Parking-lot landscaping would count toward the overall landscaping requirement.

Managed Natural Landscapes

- The proposed ordinance would expressly allow managed natural landscapes, including drought-tolerant landscaping, xeriscaping, and pollinator gardens.
- These options would be available for both residential and non-residential properties.

Next Steps

- Staff will incorporate Council feedback into the draft ordinance.
- The revised ordinance is expected to be returned to the Planning & Zoning Commission before being presented to the City Council for consideration.

Council Requests/Follow-Up Items

- Clarify the minimum size and measurement requirements for replacement and newly planted trees to prevent smaller trees from being combined to satisfy the requirement and to ensure that required trees provide meaningful shade. (Councilwoman Bennett-Burton and Councilwoman Villafranca)
- Confirm how the proposed requirements would apply to existing residential properties, complete demolition and redevelopment projects, and residential landscape-plan requirements. (Councilwoman Bennett-Burton and Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)
- Review the residential provisions to reduce unnecessary regulation of private property while emphasizing education, native plants, drought-tolerant landscaping, xeriscaping, and water conservation. (Mayor Lynne, Councilwoman Villafranca, Councilwoman Gonzalez, and Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)
- Provide residents with educational information identifying plants and trees that are native to or perform well in Farmers Branch. (Mayor Lynne and Councilwoman Villafranca)
- Review the draft for clarity, enforceability, and potential Code Enforcement impacts, including irrigation requirements, maintenance standards, neighborhood compatibility, and whether the plant lists are mandatory or advisory. (Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)
- Evaluate whether decorative rain barrels may be permitted in front yards without screening requirements as part of the City's water-conservation efforts. (Mayor Pro Tem Reid)
- Revise the 30-day replacement requirement for dead landscaping to account for seasonal planting conditions and plant availability. (Councilwomen Gonzalez and Bennett-Burton)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There were no Executive Session items at this meeting.

The Council recessed the Study Session at 4:52 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER – REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Lynne called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Lynne led the invocation and pledges of allegiance.

CEREMONIAL ITEMS

G.1 Consider approving Resolution No. 2026-085, accepting a donation from the Farmers Branch Woman's Club for The Branch Connection in the amount of \$1,450; and take appropriate action.

Representatives of the Farmers Branch Woman's Club came forward and were recognized for the organization's \$1,450 donation to The Branch Connection and its longstanding support of the community. A representative also briefly highlighted the Club's history, membership opportunities, and annual fundraising efforts.

A motion was made by Mayor Lynne, seconded by Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal, to approve Resolution No. 2026-085 as presented. The motion carried with the following vote:

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

G.2 Consider approving Resolution No. 2026-097, accepting a donation from ATMOS Energy Corporation to the Farmers Branch Fire Department in the amount of \$1,500; and take appropriate action.

Fire Chief Daniel Latimer and an Atmos Energy representative came forward to receive recognition of Atmos Energy Corporation's \$1,500 donation to the Farmers Branch Fire Department. Mayor Lynne and Chief Latimer thanked Atmos Energy for its continued partnership and support of local first responders.

A motion was made by Mayor Lynne, seconded by Councilwoman Gonzalez, to approve Resolution No. 2026-097 as presented. The motion carried with the following vote:

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

ITEMS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST

Communications Manager Ariel Wallace presented the following items of community interest.

- Community town hall regarding the proposed multifamily development at 12150 Medical Parkway on August 3 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall.
- District 5 community dialogue at Brookhaven Country Club on July 22 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., with future meetings held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month.
- Launch of CodeCare, a community initiative connecting residents with volunteers and resources for property maintenance and minor home repairs.
- Community meetings regarding the Spooky Dash 5K on August 5 and September 9 at Venue 1842.
- Free electronics recycling and document shredding event on July 25 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. at City Hall.
- Availability of City news and updates through the City's electronic newsletter.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Price Trosin, 2711 Mountain View, Farmers Branch, Texas, requested consideration of transportation improvements between the Farmers Branch Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) station and the former Valley View Mall site, and repairs to Bee Street and its bike lane.

CONSENT AGENDA

J.1 Consider approving the following City Council meeting minutes; and take appropriate action.

- **June 30, 2026, City Council Board Appointment Workshop**
- **July 7, 2026, City Council Meeting**

J.2. Consider approving Resolution No. 2026-098 authorizing the submission of an application to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) for the Water Supply and Infrastructure Grant Program; and take appropriate action.

J.3 Consider approving annual Board, Commission, and Committee appointments and reappointments for 2026; and take appropriate action.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Reid, seconded by Councilwoman Bennett-Burton to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion carried with the following vote:

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no public hearings during this item.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

L.1 Consider the request for Detailed Site Plan approval for a multifamily residential development on an approximately 5-acre property addressed as 4707 Alpha Road and located within the Planned Development District No. 107 (PD-107) zoning district; and take appropriate action.

Planner Brian Campbell gave a presentation on the following:

Project Overview

- The approximately five-acre property is located at the northeast corner of Alpha and Welch Roads within Planned Development District No. 107.
- The proposed development includes 391 residential units consisting of 261 one-bedroom units and 130 two-bedroom units.
- Planned Development District No. 107 was established specifically for this development in 2022.

Parking and Amenities

- Two multifamily buildings would surround a seven-story parking garage containing 646 spaces, with an additional 10 surface spaces for a total of 656 spaces.
- The proposed parking exceeds the requirement of 1.6 spaces per dwelling unit.
- Amenities include two pool and courtyard areas, a clubhouse and amenity space, outdoor seating with an art installation, and a dog park.

Landscaping and Pedestrian Improvements

- Approximately 28% of the property would be landscaped, and 24 of the 36 existing trees would be preserved.
- A six-foot trail would be constructed along Welch Road, and a 10-foot trail would be provided along Alpha Road with a connection to the existing accessible ramp.
- The buildings would be positioned near Alpha and Welch Roads to support walkability.

Building Design and Development Standards

- Exterior materials would include brick, stucco, and board-and-batten elements.
- Any future signage would be required to comply with Planned Development District No. 107 and applicable permitting requirements.

- The Police Department reviewed the proposed site plan and did not identify any safety concerns.

Policy and Planning Consistency

- The proposed development satisfies the City’s multifamily development policy except for the mixed-use guideline, as the project does not include commercial uses.
- The development is consistent with the mixed-use designation in the Farmers Branch 2045 Plan and could support additional commercial and retail activity in the surrounding area.
- The Planning & Zoning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the request.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Villafranca, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Reid, to approve the item as presented. The motion carried with the following vote:

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

STUDY SESSION ITEMS

C.6 Receive an update on gateway monument signage options at key entry corridors and neighborhood locations.

Management Analyst Erin Flores gave a presentation on the following:

Vendor Selection and Design Options

- Following Council direction to obtain proposals, staff determined that SSC Signs & Lighting offered the best overall combination of design quality, cost, and turnkey services.
- The proposed concepts include customizable digital message signs and static monument signs.
- Colors, dimensions, lettering, and neighborhood names may be modified to fit specific locations and City preferences.

Estimated Costs and Services

- Digital message signs are estimated to cost approximately \$125,000 to \$165,000, depending on size and specifications.
- The vendor’s services include installation, electrical work, permitting, software, and staff training.
- The signs include a five-year parts warranty and a 10-year guarantee that replacement parts will remain available.

Sign Types and Potential Uses

- Digital signs could be placed along major corridors to communicate City meetings, alerts, events, and other public information.
- Static signs could be used for neighborhood entrances, medians, and lower-speed streets.
- Neighborhood monument signs could be customized to display both the neighborhood name and Farmers Branch identification.

Maintenance and Operations

- Digital messaging would be managed through software accessible from City computers and mobile devices.
- Static-sign maintenance would primarily involve replacement lighting, while digital-display repairs and component replacement would carry higher costs.
- City-owned signs would be covered under the City’s existing property insurance.

Council Requests/Follow-Up Items

- Confirm with the vendor whether an additional protective covering may be installed over the digital display to provide greater protection from severe weather. (Councilwoman Gonzalez)

- Develop recommendations identifying the number, type, approximate cost, and proposed locations of digital message signs throughout the City. (Mayor Lynne)
- Develop a separate or complementary plan for static neighborhood-entry monument signs, including options for displaying neighborhood names. (Mayor Lynne and Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)
- Consider a phased implementation approach combining digital signs along major corridors with static signs at neighborhood entrances and other appropriate locations. (Mayor Lynne and Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)

C.7 Receive an update from the Mayor and Council Members regarding board liaison information from outside organizations and other meetings attended.

Council gave updates regarding outside organizations and other meetings attended.

C.8 Review and discuss future agenda items.

- Research and present funding opportunities available through the 21st Century Road to Housing Act, including applicable grants that may support local housing initiatives. (Councilwoman Gonzalez)
- Provide an updated report on grant funding, including grants that have been reduced or lost and how the City is reallocating funds to cover related expenses. (Councilwoman Bennett-Burton)
- Issue a Request for Qualifications for City legal services and return with recommendations and a negotiated professional services agreement for City Council consideration. The agreement should address the contract term, scope of services, compensation, billing standards, performance expectations, conflicts of interest, termination provisions, and other material terms. (Councilwoman Bennett-Burton)
- Research and present recommendations for establishing an independent ethics committee applicable to elected officials and members of City boards and commissions, including standards of conduct, complaint procedures, due-process protections, committee composition and responsibilities, ethics training, and any necessary ordinance or Charter amendments. (Mayor Pro Tem Reid)

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

There were no Executive Session items to take action on at this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Lynne adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Interim City Secretary Stacy Henderson, TRMC

Mayor Terry Lynne