



City of Farmers Branch Action Meeting Minutes City Council

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

Tuesday, June 16, 2026

6:00 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 (*remote attendance*)

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, 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 - STUDY SESSION (4:00 P.M.)

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON STUDY SESSION ITEMS

- Maxwell Brodrick congratulated Mayor Lynne on his re-election and expressed appreciation for the City's amenities.

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 Jay Patel provided an update regarding development of the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget.

- Budget Development Process
 - Staff continues conducting line-item reviews of departmental budgets.
 - Budget requests are being evaluated to ensure alignment with City Council priorities.
 - Staff remains focused on maintaining a transparent budget development process.
 - Additional budget topics will be presented during future study sessions.
- Property Tax Overview
 - Review of property tax exemptions available to residents.
 - Approximately 70 percent of residents utilize the 20 percent homestead exemption.
 - Approximately 30 percent of residents utilize the senior/disabled exemption.

- Staff noted that tax rates should be evaluated in conjunction with exemptions, service levels, and infrastructure responsibilities when comparing communities.
- Revenue Outlook
 - Sales tax collections remain stable and are currently within one percent of annualized projections.
 - Sales tax revenues are projected to remain relatively flat year-over-year.
 - Staff will continue monitoring revenue trends throughout the budget process.
- Strategic Investment Priorities
 - Pedestrian improvements totaling approximately \$1.8 million.
 - Increase water and wastewater infrastructure funding from \$9 million to \$12.8 million.
 - Information technology maintenance.
 - City facility maintenance.
 - Firehouse Theatre improvements.
 - Community garden initiatives.
 - Minor Home Repair Program activities.
- Employee Compensation and Benefits
 - Staff evaluated multiple employee compensation scenarios, including merit increases ranging from one to three percent.
 - Directors and deputy directors agreed to forego potential salary increases in an effort to maximize opportunities for general staff compensation.
 - Staff is not currently recommending employee salary increases for Fiscal Year 2026-27.
 - Public safety step-plan increases will remain in place.
 - The City intends to absorb anticipated healthcare cost increases rather than pass those costs on to employees.
- Proposed Fee Updates
 - Rename the Solid Waste Fee to the Landfill Closure Reserve Fee to better reflect the purpose of the fund.
 - Increase the utility billing credit card convenience fee from 2.5 percent to 3.5 percent.
 - The proposed increase would allow credit card processing fees to be applied uniformly to all utility customers, including auto-pay customers.

Council Discussion

Council discussed employee compensation, healthcare costs, utility billing credit card processing fees, and the impact of fee increases on residents.

Council Requests/Follow-Up Items

- Provide information regarding the cost of implementing one percent and two percent employee compensation increases. (Councilmember Reid)
- Provide a detailed overview of employee healthcare costs, including the City's share and employee contribution amounts. (Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)
- Provide information regarding the anticipated revenue impact associated with the proposed one percent increase in utility billing credit card processing fees. (Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)
- Provide information regarding the City's total annual credit card processing expenses. (Mayor Lynne)

C.3 Discuss and review the Farmers Branch Manske Library Policies and proposed updates and determine if any revisions are necessary.

Director of Parks and Recreation Robert Diaz presented proposed updates to Manske Library policies.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Recent changes to Texas State Library and Archives Commission accreditation requirements adopted in 2025.
- Review of policies by the Library Board and City Attorney.
- Updates related to circulation practices, collection development, technology use, information security, privacy protections, appeals procedures, rules of conduct, material challenge procedures, safe children provisions, and interlibrary loan practices.
- Policies are currently available on the Library website and have historically been updated administratively.
- Staff proposes bringing library policies forward for annual review.

Council Discussion

Council discussed the annual review process and future policy updates that may result from changing state requirements.

Council Requests/Follow-Up Items

None.

C.4 Discuss a revised policy pertaining to City responses to repetitive Public Information Act requests.

City Attorney David Berman presented a proposed amendment to the City's Public Information Act procedures regarding repetitive requests. Highlights of the presentation included:

- Public Information Act Overview, including:
 - Public Information Act requests generally provide public access to City records, subject to limited statutory exceptions.
 - Most City records, whether paper or electronic, are considered public information.
- Changes in Public Information Requests, including:
 - Significant increases in the volume of Public Information Act requests in recent years.
 - Increased complexity of requests involving:
 - Electronic records.
 - Text messages.
 - Social media content.
 - Video records.
 - Some requests require extensive staff review and processing time.
- Recent Request Activity, including:
 - Multiple requests received from a single requester.
 - Requests involving hundreds of pages of records and significant staff resources.
 - The City's legal obligation to respond to Public Information Act requests.
- Cost Recovery Limitations, including:
 - State law limits the fees municipalities may charge for responding to requests.
 - Requests under 50 pages are generally limited to copying charges.
 - Labor charges may only be recovered under specific circumstances for larger requests.
 - Current fee schedules do not fully reimburse the City for actual staff time and administrative costs.
- Existing Deposit Requirements, including:
 - The City may require an advance deposit when estimated costs exceed \$100.
 - State law establishes procedures governing cost estimates and deposits.
- Proposed Policy Amendment for Repetitive Requests, including:
 - State law authorizes municipalities to adopt additional procedures for repetitive requestors.
 - The proposed policy would apply when a requestor exceeds:
 - 36 hours of personnel time during a fiscal year; or
 - 15 hours of personnel time during a calendar month.

- Staff would track personnel time associated with requests.
- The City could require advance payment of estimated costs before processing additional requests.
- The City could request photo identification under limited circumstances to verify requestor identity.
- The proposed policy would not restrict access to public information but would provide additional administrative tools for managing repetitive requests.
- Exemptions from the Proposed Policy, including:
 - News media organizations.
 - Elected officials acting in their official capacity.
 - Certain nonprofit organizations authorized under state law.

Council Discussion

Council discussed cost recovery limitations established by state law, impacts on staff resources, historical trends in records requests, and procedures for estimating and recovering costs associated with requests.

Council Requests/Follow-Up Items

- Provide historical Public Information Act request data, excluding Police Department requests, if available. (Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)

C.5 Receive an update from the Mayor and Council Members regarding board liaison information from outside organizations and other meetings attended.

Council Updates

Council Members and Mayor Lynne provided updates regarding meetings, conferences, board activities, community events, ribbon cuttings, educational sessions, and regional organization meetings attended since the previous City Council meeting.

C.6 Review and discuss future agenda items.

The Council requested the following future agenda items:

- Review the City's annual event calendar and discuss opportunities for additional programming during months with fewer scheduled events. (Councilmember Reid)

Mayor Lynne announced that the reception in the lobby, scheduled for 5:30 p.m., would be rescheduled and held prior to the July 7, 2026, meeting.

Mayor Lynne recessed the Study Session at 5:08 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER - REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Lynne called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Lynne led the invocation and pledges of allegiance.

CEREMONIAL ITEMS

Mayor Lynne announced that the reception honoring the Mayor, scheduled for 5:30 p.m. would be rescheduled and held prior to the July 7, 2026, meeting.

ITEMS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST

Communications Manager Ariel Wallace presented items of community interest, including:

- The City's participation in the celebration of America's 250th Anniversary and the City of Farmers Branch's 80th Anniversary through a citywide patriotic flag display program.
- Public safety transparency resources related to the Police Department's License Plate Reader (LPR) and Drone First Responder (DFR) programs.
- Recent state and national recognition received by Animal Services, Communications, and Fire Department personnel.
- Information regarding the City's upcoming Independence Day celebration, including event activities, admission information, parking impacts, and fireworks.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Kenneth Francik, 3380 Dorado Beach Drive, Farmers Branch, Texas, expressed concerns regarding a proposed social media recognition calendar.
- Christy Dimon, 3180 White Marsh Circle, Farmers Branch, Texas, encouraged the City Council to prioritize expansion of the Farmers Branch Animal Shelter.
- Stacy Tibbitts, 14072 Stardust Lane, Farmers Branch, Texas, commented on potential improvements to the Firehouse Theatre.
- Price Trosin, 2711 Mount View Lane, Farmers Branch, Texas, discussed opportunities to increase residential density and redevelopment within the City. Robert Ball, 3235 Whispering Oak, Farmers Branch, Texas, expressed concerns regarding a proposed social media recognition calendar.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- June 2, 2026, City Council Meeting

K.2 Consider approving Resolution No. 2026-087, approving, reaffirming, and ratifying payment of costs to Dallas County for conducting and administering the City's runoff election held June 13, 2026, in the amount of \$135,050, authorizing the City Manager to provide payment; 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 unanimously with the following vote:

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

PUBLIC HEARING

There were no public hearings during this item.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

M.1 Receive an annual update from the Firehouse Theatre.

Director of Economic Development Darren Harris introduced Firehouse Theatre Executive Director David Moore and Artistic Producer Owen Beans, who gave a presentation on the following:

- Strategic Planning
 - Overview of the Firehouse Theatre mission, vision, and values.
 - Completion of the organization's 2028 Strategic Plan.
 - Review of strategic initiatives related to programming, facilities, education, leadership, and financial sustainability.

- Programming and Events
 - Seven main stage productions and two Firehouse Junior productions presented since the previous annual update.
 - Record-breaking Season Reveal Gala attendance.
 - Introduction of a Performing Arts Series featuring concerts, comedy, and cabaret performances.
 - Overview of upcoming productions scheduled for the remainder of 2026.
- Youth Education
 - Continued growth of summer camps and educational programming.
 - Approximately 75 students expected to participate in summer camps.
 - Availability of need-based scholarships for qualifying participants.
- Attendance and Economic Impact
 - Approximately 20 percent of patrons reside in Farmers Branch.
 - Continued attendance from throughout the Dallas-Fort Worth region.
 - Estimated economic impact of approximately \$1 million through patron spending and organizational payroll.
- Partnerships and Financial Performance
 - Partnerships with local businesses, restaurants, sponsors, and community organizations.
 - Revenue growth from approximately \$750,000 to more than \$1.2 million during the reporting period.
 - Continued growth in programming, donations, sponsorships, and grant funding.
- Facility Operations and Improvements
 - Leasing of additional off-site administrative and storage space.
 - Continued operation of all performances at Historic Fire Station No. 1.
 - Discussion of proposed lobby expansion and concession area improvements.
 - Request for expedited consideration of proposed facility improvements.

Council Discussion

Council Members expressed appreciation for the organization's continued success, educational programming, economic impact, and partnerships with local businesses.

Discussion also included potential facility improvements, timing of proposed building modifications, invoicing processes, HVAC replacement considerations, and the continued partnership between the City and Firehouse Theatre.

Council Requests/Follow-Up Items

- Explore opportunities to expedite proposed facility improvements associated with lobby expansion and concession area modifications. (Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)
- Provide an update regarding HVAC replacement and facility improvement timelines. (Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Neal)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

City Council convened in closed Executive Session at 6:55 p.m.

- D.1 The City Council will convene into closed executive session pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney) to discuss, consult with, and receive legal advice from the City Attorney regarding council interactions, rules of procedure, and matters in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code.**

Mayor Lynne reconvened from Executive Session to the Regular Meeting in Open Session at 8:47 p.m.

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

No action was taken as a result of Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Lynne adjourned the meeting at 8:47 p.m.

Interim City Secretary Stacy Henderson, TRMC

Mayor Terry Lynne