

MINUTES OF JUNE 22, 2026, PUBLIC HEARING & SPECIAL MEETING

On this, the 22nd day of June 2026, the City Council convened in a public hearing and special session in the City Community Center. The public hearing and special meeting being open to the public and notice of said meeting having been given as prescribed by Chapter 51 of the Government Code with the following being present and in attendance to wit:

Mayor Pro Tem Mark Sweatt, Council Members Micah Casas, Melissa Hibbitts, Leslie Ivy, Melisa McIntosh, Winfred McQueen, and Lloyd Roberts. Mayor Joe Davis and Council Member Zack Altman were absent. Employees present were City Administrator Jack Owens, City Secretary Amalia Gaxiola, Police Chief Rex Plant, Librarian Jackie Owens, and Water Clerk Marla Green. Others present were Ronny Wilson, Ami Tribble, Bob and Sherry Tribble, C.W. Ivey, Roger Estlack, Kristen Dwight, Priscilla Ruiz, Samantha Ruiz, Mollie and Harold Moffitt, Kim Cloyd, Kevin Huddleston, Becky Crockett, Zora Dale, Susan McQueen, Shayne Branigan, Cindy Woodard, Kila Manuel, Melody Middleton, Catherine Clark, Joanna and Roman Buckner, Ronda Lindsey, Jill Lindsey, Meme Bass, and Kathy Fowler.

1. CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem Sweatt called the public hearing to order at 6:03 p.m. and noted a quorum present. Alderman Roberts voiced the invocation, and Alderman Casas led the pledge of allegiance.

2. OPEN PUBLIC HEARING TO DISCUSS LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES FOR THE CITY, INCLUDING CONTINUATION OR CLOSURE OF THE MEMPHIS POLICE DEPARTMENT OR OUTSOURCING SERVICES TO THE HALL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE – CITIZENS ARE LIMITED TO THREE (3) MINUTES TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Joanna Buckner asked when the decision has to be made as a budgetary concern is what gets taken away if council keeps the police department. Mayor Pro Tem Sweatt said the city does not have an abundance of money and if we keep this service, something will go away like the swimming pool, library, employee benefits, employees, along with a multitude of things. He stated that last year they tried to make the police department work and it's been tried for years and it has fallen behind budget wise. Hiring is also an issue as well as the limited pay affects it. Joanna asked on if the city goes the route of using the Sheriff's Office, how does it impact the budget. Mayor Pro Tem Sweatt said there is an interlocal agreement in place right now for six thousand two hundred fifty dollars a month for services in town till the end of September where it will then be renegotiated so it depends on how the interlocal agreement is signed as to how the services and how much will be provided to the Sheriff's Office. Susan McQueen asked council what the yearly seventy-five thousand dollars provided to the Sheriff's Office be used for. Mayor Pro Tem Sweatt said to his understanding they will hire more officers, and Susan McQueen asked why the city couldn't hire more and where the budgeted money will go from the police department. Sweatt said the city doesn't have the money. Ronny Wilson added that you can't put leftover money anywhere when you don't

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have it to begin with and consensus of the council agreed. Ronny said that Donley County pays one hundred forty-five thousand dollars to the County to cover the city plus three percent increase every year. Wellington pays two hundred sixty thousand dollars which is half of the Sheriff's Departments budget. To Mr. Wilsons understanding, the city is running at a four hundred eighty-thousand-dollar deficit with the police department so the agreement with the Sheriff's is seventy-five thousand dollars a year. Ronny said that SB22 came out in 2025 and it allows the state of Texas to grant rural communities two hundred fifty thousand dollars to help raise salaries of the Sheriff's department which causes issues with the cities as they do not get this help. There are also negotiations with Lancium to help the Sheriff's department. The seventy-five thousand dollars the city pays the County along with the SB22 will allow the county to hire two additional officers to work the City of Memphis which frees up money for the city. Ronny will hate the library to be lost as well as the swimming pool. Taxes from the data center will also benefit the county, which makes the county much more suitable for meeting the needs of officers and equipping them better. Alderwoman Ivy asked Jack to explain the lost tax base for the coming budget year. Administrator Owens stated that Gina sends a preliminary report at the start of budgeting and there is a six-million-dollar loss in tax base. Cindy Woodard, a retired city employee, told everyone in attendance about the yearlong struggles of hiring and keeping chiefs and officers due to low wages and working hours. She stated that overall, in the last twenty-three years, the city had gone through eleven police chiefs and sixty officers, and this is the fifth time they have only had one officer in the department. Cindy finished with talking about how past City Secretary Newlyn Ward and council go through the struggles of making the budget balance and Cindy also experienced this and now City Administrator Jack Owens and City Secretary Amalia Gaxiola are experiencing the same and how keeping the police department operational has come at the expense of other departments where cuts are made. Cindy recommends creating a consolidated law enforcement agency that will protect and serve everyone. Melody Middleton said living in Hedley they only had the sheriffs dept and they always had someone there to take care of them and if hall county has the opportunity to give the city a couple officers and that frees up some of the budget then that is a really good way to go but she also wants to know that they will be taken care of because she has been one that called and waited on someone to show up or didn't show up. She also thinks it's better to have someone that was dedicated to our area that would take care of us and she is also a part of the little league so they have had to take part of the budget so she would like to see the library, pool, and things that serve our community continue because they are important and keeping the kids involved and in safe spots so she asks that the city keep those things and use the sheriff's office. Ronda Lindsey said it seems that the facts and performance are staggeringly stacked against it being viable to continue and maintain so she asks what's the hold back on making the decision. Mayor Pro Tem Sweatt said the council is here for the citizens of Memphis and what they want and it's great for citizens to show up so they can voice and say how they feel so those things can be taken into account. Alderman Lloyd Roberts said we are a general law type a city and we have to follow the state statue. He mentioned the city having a night watchman at one point and mentioned why not have a City Marshall. He said in Texas the governing body of a general law city can legally transition its police force to a City Marshall

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by passing a local ordinance. He also said the City Marshall could enforce City Ordinances. Meme Bass asked what money would pay for the City Marshall because what is being talked about here is that the city is in a shortfall. Roberts said the Marshall does not have to work full time and Meme stated that we need the coverage and with the Sheriff's office we have that. Alderman Roberts stated that this is just an option that takes time to review. Ronda Lindsey wanted to add that right now the city is a one man show and she talked about a dog attack and the dog being left with the owner afterwards since it had its shots which is not right. Mayor Pro Tem Sweatt talked about city ordinance enforcement being negotiated still. Alderwoman Ivy talked about other counties outsourcing their code enforcement which is an option. Chief Plant one hundred percent agrees that we can't keep going this way and agrees that the city should contract with the Sheriff's office and the code enforcement can be dealt with down the road. He said the Animal Control/Code Enforcement right now cannot write citations, but he can write summons with the Judge. Ronny Wilson, Kristen Dwight, and Chief Plant talked about the closure of a police department being hard to open back up once closed but it is possible if there's money. Alderman Roberts talked about the Marshall option and how it allows for the department to not be defunded and Marshall could also do the code enforcement. Ronny Wilson addressed the data center willing to help, and the county could possibly go to an eight-person department which could help the city to work out financially. Administrator Owens talked about the budget and how we have workshops coming up. Owens also talked about ten years' worth of data for the police department and how it has not worked financially. Citizens and council talked about other cities paying someone to do code enforcement and the cities receiving a percentage only.

3. CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

The consensus of the council agreed to close the public hearing at 7:00. Mayor Pro Tem Sweatt called for a short bathroom break before proceeding.

4. CALL SPECIAL CALLED MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Sweatt called the special meeting to order at 7:11 p.m. and noted a quorum present.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment.

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. MOTION TO REMOVE THE TABLED ITEMS OFF THE TABLE

Alderwoman McIntosh made the motion to remove the tabled item off the table, seconded by Alderman Roberts. The vote passed with 6 in favor.

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b. DISCUSS CREATION OF CITY ORDINANCE OF RV PARKS

Alderman Casas asked who sent the pictures in that were provided to council. Administrator Owens said there was a citizen who is concerned about RV parks that are close to residence which are bringing concerns of fencing, dogs at large, trash, and people walking on their property, so they wanted to make sure the council is aware. Mayor Pro Tem Sweatt asked about the refuse for storage of trash and a fly tight watertight rodent proof container which has to be disposed of by the city which we do not have which was presented in the provided ordinance. Alderwoman Ivy said we can change that to city dumpsters in section VI ii. Alderwoman Hibbitts talked about taking out section VI e. Mayor Pro Tem Sweatt added that he does not agree with the fencing by giving an example of residential aesthetics. Alderwoman Hibbitts stated that residential is not the same as a business when it comes to fencing. Ronny Wilson talked about three RVs in the backyard of a residence on Montgomery Street. Alderwoman Hibbitts mentioned the fencing exemption that is in the provided ordinance. Alderman Roberts noted the change on the provided ordinance to read general law type a city and not home rule city. Alderwoman Ivy mentioned talking with Kelli Little at Kathy Fowlers office regarding the liability insurance proposal and it's the average coverage. Ronny Wilson addressed council on letting citizens make money off this and it also brings tax revenue to the city as well since they will purchase things at local stores. Alderman Casas asked how long these people coming to work will stay here and Ronny said about three to five years. Roman Buckner asked to address council regarding ordinances and enforcement and stick to state guidelines because once over or above, then the city has to enforce it which can be an issue. He also talked about people that will stay here after the centers are built. Alderwoman Ivy addressed on several people contact her about this and said the council is not trying to keep people from making money and how it's a great opportunity for Memphis however there are people that live here now and after and will dispute property taxes as they feel the RV parks lower the value of their property. Alderwoman Ivy also said that she does not mind being the voice of others but that their presence and words can mean more than her relaying and potentially crossing words. Ivy talked about the fencing permit exemption and how the RV park owner asks the neighbor if they want them to build a fence and if they say no and later come back saying they want a fence then it's up to the neighbor to get it which they are trying to make it fair for everyone. Alderwoman Ivy finished by reminding people to voice their opinions because three years ago the majority of the people wanted a police department and that's what the council worked towards. Roman Buckner and Jackie Owens voiced on following state statue and not going above and beyond due to enforcement issues and how it will create more for the city.

c. DISCUSS/CONSIDER HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS FOR 2026/2027

Administrator Owens went over the four options with TML, and he also let council know he spoke with Kathy Fowler regarding different options for health benefits. Owens let council know about the meeting with Jeff Teel from TML with Kathy Fowler, Melisa McIntosh, Melissa Hibbitts, Leslie Ivy, and Amalia Gaxiola in attendance and according to our census,

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these are the options that we have. Owens stated that Fowler believed that TML was the best option that the city has for our group. Alderwoman Ivy talked about marketplace which is not a group policy and how it would be monitored if they have/keep it up. Owens said there could be a stipend option. Alderman McQueen made the motion to go with option 1 with TML, Alderwoman McIntosh seconded, after discussion and no votes, Alderman McQueen amended his motion to go with the current option with TML for 2026/2027, seconded by Alderwoman McIntosh. The vote passed with 6 in favor.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. DISCUSS/CONSIDER POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES FOR THE CITY, INCLUDING THE CONTINUATION OR CLOSURE OF THE MEMPHIS POLICE DEPARTMENT OR OUTSOURCING SERVICES TO THE HALL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Administrator Owens said there are several options here which are choosing to wind down the police department and entering an interlocal agreement with the Sheriff's Office which come with other actions needed later or continuing business as usual. Owens stated that he needs clarity on what is chosen to know how to proceed with budget. Council talked about a Marshall and a third-party contractor for code enforcement being some options. Mayor Pro Tem Sweatt went over how the citizens have spoken up regarding getting rid of the police department and going with the Sheriff's Office. Alderwoman McIntosh made the motion to proceed entering an interlocal agreement with the Sheriff's Office and close the Police Department effectively for the new fiscal year, seconded by Alderwoman Ivy. The vote passed with 6 in favor.

b. DISCUSS/CONSIDER CONTINUATION OF BUILDING PERMITS FOR RV PARKS

Alderman Casas asked if we found a master electrician. Owens said the city got a call from Liberty Services and they can do it for seventy-five to one hundred dollars each. Owens stated that no new permits have been done. Alderwoman Hibbitts said the stop was done because the ordinance had not been done and put in place. No action.

c. CONSIDER MAYOR AND COUNCIL ITEMS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST

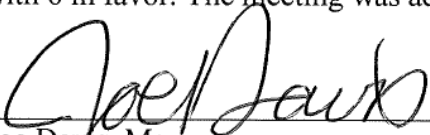
Mayor Pro Tem Sweatt thanked everyone for showing up. Alderwoman Ivy thanked everyone for coming and she appreciates all. Alderwoman Hibbitts agrees with them and before she joined the council, she did not know things. Alderman Casas wished all a Happy belated Father's Day and thanked everyone for showing up which helps council make decisions. Alderman Roberts thanks Jack for what he does and Amalia and glad to be back on council. Alderman Winfred thanked everyone for being here and citizens knowledge is needed and can't answer questions if they don't hear from them and thanked council and city

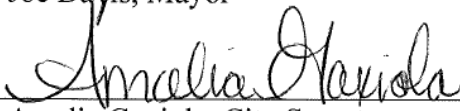
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employees and we strive to do the right things. Alderwoman McIntosh thanked everyone for coming and changes are hard and council wants to make the right decision because this is home and wants Memphis to prosper and coming out helps to go in the right direction. She also talked about making the decision to close the police department and moneywise it needed to be done, and she believes the Sheriff's Office will cover us and we should move forward and not backwards.

d. ADJOURN

Alderwoman Ivy made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Roberts. The vote passed with 6 in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Approved: 
Joe Davis, Mayor

Attest: 
Amalia Gaxiola, City Secretary