

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Pro Tempore Nikki Bufford called the special meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmembers David M. Viafore, Karen Mauer-Smith, Brett L. Wittner, Nikki Bufford, Jim Andrews, and Mayor Shannon Reynolds were present. Councilmember Viafore and Mayor Reynolds attended the meeting virtually.

Councilmember Hunter T. George was excused at roll call and joined the meeting at 6:04 P.M.

PRELIMINARY 2026 BUDGET – 4th BUDGET WORK SESSION

Finance Director Deskins presented an overview of the fourth budget work session for the Preliminary 2026 Budget, including updates on the Equipment Rental and Replacement (ER&R) program, staffing requests, and capital requests.

Public Works Director Bemis presented an updated overview of equipment replacement needs, including the Public Works generator and the Street Sweeper. Director Bemis reported that the generator is nearing the end of its service life and that a shortfall exists for its replacement and installation. He also reported that military surplus and auctioned generators were evaluated but were determined not to be compatible options. Finance Director Deskins noted that the remaining costs would be allocated across the four utility funds, with a small percentage charged to the General Fund due to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) function.

Council discussions included exploring surplus generators, cost allocation for the EOC function, the risk of delaying replacement, seeking grants and delegation assistance, the potential to use fund balance, and prioritizing maintenance of existing assets. Director Bemis noted that he is working with Emergency Management to identify potential grants to offset costs. There was a brief discussion on appropriating funds with a proviso requiring Council approval before expenditure.

Director Bemis reviewed the Street Sweeper replacement evaluation process, including demonstrations of the Elgin regenerative air sweeper and the Mark VI mechanical sweeper. He explained that regenerative air sweepers operate with a vacuum system, while mechanical sweepers are more effective in wet conditions. City Manager Masko recommended delaying the inclusion of the sweeper replacement in the 2026 budget and suggested it could be returned as a mid-year budget amendment if needed. Director Bemis also reviewed the replacement schedules for the 2008 2-yard dump truck, the 5-yard dump truck, the 2008 crane truck, and the 2014 maintenance F-150, all of which will be deferred at this time. There was a brief discussion on F-150 Lightning pricing and fleet management software.

Police Chief Celis presented a request to replace two 2016 Ford Interceptor patrol vehicles and reported that Systems for Public Safety has two discounted black patrol vehicles available, offering approximately \$15,000 in savings compared to the original estimate. Council supported proceeding to secure the vehicles, either in the 2026 budget or using 2025 ER&R funds.

City Manager Masko stated that the City has two options: to include the purchase in the final 2025 budget amendment or issue a purchase order effective January 1, 2026. Council also discussed salary savings from vacancies in the Police Department, recovering a \$10,000

retention bonus, City policies and procedures related to the bonus recapture, and a formal repayment schedule. City Manager Masko will work with Finance to determine the most appropriate budget year for vehicle purchases.

Public Works Director Bemis presented the request to replace the deteriorating pool thermal cover. Council discussed Kevlar-type pool covers, liability protection, and preservation of the pool. There was a consensus to move forward with the pool cover replacement.

Director Bemis also presented an HVAC request for the pool office and party room. Councilmember Viafore requested that the vendor split the bid into two separate prices for the pool party room unit and the office unit for additional consideration at the next meeting.

Police Chief Celis presented a proposal to lease AXON in-car video systems for 11 patrol vehicles and reported that the system would improve documentation and officer and public safety. City Manager Masko reviewed the impact on the operating budget and fund balance. Council discussion included risk management benefits, ending fund balance impact, and increased public records and administrative workload and costs. There was consensus not to include the in-car video system lease in the 2026 budget at this time and to continue monitoring grant and funding opportunities.

Parks and Recreation Director Grover presented the proposal to convert a seasonal casual Recreation Leader to a 0.5 FTE permanent position. Council discussions included senior programming growth, potential sponsorships, and donations. There was a consensus to convert the Recreation Leader position to a permanent 0.5 FTE.

Director Grover presented a proposal to increase the Community Events Specialist position from 0.75 FTE to a full-time FTE. City Manager Masko noted that the City's events calendar has grown in recent years. Staff recommended tabling the request to allow time to identify additional sponsorship and revenue opportunities, develop a more detailed business plan, and evaluate the City's signature events. There was a consensus to not include the Community Events Specialist full-time request in the 2026 budget at this time.

Public Works Director Bemis presented a proposal to reclassify the Public Works Administrative Assistant from 0.875 FTE to a full-time Utility Billing Clerk. Director Bemis noted that the position is funded entirely by the utility funds and has no impact on the General Fund. There was a consensus to approve the reclassification and convert the position to a full-time Utility Billing Clerk, with costs allocated across the four utility funds.

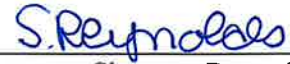
Council requested an updated "roll-up" view of the budget that includes a summary of the changes from the preliminary budget and impacts on fund balances.

There was a brief discussion regarding the trade-offs required in a tight budget environment and appreciation for staff's understanding and commitment to responsible budgeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Wittner MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 P.M., seconded by Councilmember George.

The Motion Carried (7-0).

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "S. Reynolds", written over a horizontal line.

Shannon Reynolds, Mayor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Arlette Burkhardt", written over a horizontal line.

Arlette Burkhardt, City Clerk