CITY OF LAVONIA COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING – MINUTES

July 6, 2026

5:30 PM

Present: Mayor Courtney Umbehant
Councilman – Eddie Floyd
Councilman – Michael Schulman
Councilman - Jeremy Madden
Councilman - Andrew Murphy

Attorney: Jay Doss

Media: M. J. Kneizer– WLHR
Charlie Eavenson – Franklin County Citizen

Staff: City Manager - Robert Ogburn
Asst. City Clerk – Barbara Busby
Police Chief – Shane Edmisten
DDA Director – Ashley Umbehant

Item 1. **Call to Order**:
Mayor Umbehant called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

Item 2. **Invocation and Pledge of Alliance to the American flag:** led by Councilman Madden.

Item 3. **Confirmation of a Quorum:**
Mayor Umbehant confirmed that all members were present, and a quorum was established.

Item 4. **Consent Agenda Items** & **Approval of Minutes:**

a) Approval of the July Meeting Agenda as presented.

b) Approval of Minutes – June 1, 2026, Regular Meeting; June 12, 2026, Work Session

c) Acceptance of the June 2026 Financial Report as presented.

Motion to approve the consent agenda items was made by Councilman Schulman and seconded by Councilman Murphy. The motion carried unanimously.

Item 5. **FY 2025 Budget Amendments Resolution**
Financial advisor, Beth Thomas, presented the FY 2025 Budget Amendments Resolution, explaining that the adjustments formalize operational decisions made throughout the

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fiscal year and represent the final outstanding item needed to complete and issue the FY 2025 audit.

The majority of the amendment — approximately 75 percent — addresses the recording of a capital lease for an ABM and its first payment. The remainder reflects salary and wage adjustments consistent with decisions made during FY 2025 operations.

Motion to approve the FY 2025 Budget Amendments Resolution was made by Councilman Murphy and seconded by Councilman Madden. The motion carried unanimously.

Item 6. Franklin County Library Board Appointment

Mayor Umbehant presented a nominee for the Franklin County Library Board appointment. He confirmed that the nominee, Emily Grace Jones, meets the residency requirement of living within the city of Lavonia. Ms. Jones is employed at Sacred Heart Hospital as a nutritionist. Mayor Umbehant asked for a motion to approve the appointment.

Motion to approve the appointment of Emily Grace Jones to the Franklin County Library Board was made by Councilman Schulman and seconded by Councilman Floyd. The motion carried unanimously.

Item 7. Water Fund Line of Credit Renewal

Mayor Umbehant presented the Water Fund Line of Credit renewal, describing it as a standard revolving credit line renewed on a six-month cycle.

Motion to approve the renewal of the Water Fund Line of Credit was made by Councilman Madden and seconded by Councilman Floyd. The motion carried unanimously.

Item 8. Surplus Vehicles:

Mayor Umbehant presented three vehicles recommended for surplus disposition:

a. 2013 Kubota Tractor - Serial #75458
b. 2021 Chevrolet Silverado - VIN 3GCNWAEFXMG277845
c. 2021 Chevrolet Silverado – VIN 3GCNWAEF8MG334107

Motion to approve the three vehicles as presented for surplus was made by Councilman Murphy and seconded by Councilman Schulman. The motion carried unanimously.

Item 9. Legal:
a. Alcohol Ordinance Amendment: Beverage Shop License, 1st Read

City Attorney Jay Doss presented a proposed amendment to the City's alcohol ordinance to establish a new Beverage Shop License classification. He explained that this license category is designed for establishments such as specialty drink or beverage shops that serve wine, beer, or similar beverages as a secondary component of their primary business. All standard alcohol license requirements — including a background check — would apply.

Attorney Doss further explained that the amendment incorporates a percentage-based sales requirement rather than a seat-count requirement as used in the restaurant context. Specifically, at least 60 percent of sales must derive from non-alcoholic beverages, with no more than 40 percent from alcoholic beverages

Motion to approve the first read of the amendment to the Alcohol Ordinance establishing a Beverage Shop License was made by Councilman Floyd and seconded by Councilman Murphy. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Alcohol License Application – Frida's Tacos

Mayor Umbehant presented an alcohol license application for Frida's Tacos, to be located in the corner of the Silo Shopping Center. He confirmed that all application paperwork requirements had been met and that the background check had been completed with no adverse findings. The license is for consumption on premises.

Motion to approve the alcohol license application for Frida's Tacos was made by Councilman Murphy and seconded by Councilman Floyd. The motion carried unanimously.

Item 10. **Mayor's Report:**

Mayor Umbehant offered several updates and acknowledgments. He recognized Lieutenant Mitchell of the Lavonia Police Department for his work organizing the "Crimes, Clues, and Country" scavenger event held the prior month, in which participants followed clues based on an actual city crime throughout downtown Lavonia. The Mayor noted the event was well-received by the community.

He also highlighted the America 250 celebration as a significant success, reporting attendance of over 3,800 people downtown — describing it as likely the single largest single-timed event the city had hosted.

Mayor Umbehant announced that the J Creek Cloggers would be returning to Lavonia that Friday evening, with food trucks and vendors in attendance. He also noted that a Nineties Mix Tapes event was scheduled for July 24th.

Item 11. **City Manager's Report:**

City Manager Ogburn provided several project and operational updates:

Water Treatment Plant – Phase 1 Bid Award: The City has selected Sol Construction, LLC, which has an established prior working relationship with the city, to complete Phase 1 of the water treatment plant improvements. He noted that bids ranged from $9 million to $12 million, and the scope was scaled down to align with the City's $5 million budget, prioritizing the most critical water system improvements. A notice of award had been sent out.

Wright Street Speed Limit: A 25 mph speed limit sign has been installed on Wright Street in response to prior resident concerns. The City Manager noted that after coordination with the Police Department, no evidence of excessive speeding was found

to justify the installation of speed bumps, citing the additional complications speed bumps present for emergency vehicles.

LMIG Road Projects: The second phase of the LMIG project for Wright Street is underway, with bids expected to be solicited shortly given the project falls below the formal bid threshold. The Gerard Road project is currently out for bid with a due date of July 31st. The City Manager expressed a goal of completing both road projects by year's end.

Smith Road Waterline Extension: The Smith Road waterline extension has been completed, creating a loop in that area. The City Manager indicated the project was well-received and that the City is now awaiting property owners to connect to the new line.

East Main Drainage: Drainage work near the railroad tracks on East Main Street has been completed. The remaining work is limited to restoring the adjacent driveway and sidewalk.

The City Manager closed his report by thanking city staff for their hard work during a particularly hot period, and acknowledging the positive contributions of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

Item 12. **Final Comments:**
No final comments were recorded.

Item 13. **Adjourn:**
Mayor Umbehant adjourned the meeting at 5:40 P.M.

Upcoming Meetings:
July 21, 2026 – Work Session (If needed)
August 3, 2026 – City of Lavonia – Regular Council Meeting @ 5:30 P.M.

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Courtney Umbehant, Mayor Barbara Busby, Assistant City Clerk