



# City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

March 05, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Keene City Hall - Robert G. Cooper Council Chamber  
1000 N. Old Betsy Rd., Cleburne, Texas 76031

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Recorded Live Stream Available at <https://www.youtube.com/@cityofkeenetexas>

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**Members present:** Samantha Gillin, Mayor Pro Tem; and Council Members Bob Chapman, Chuck Easley, Rob Foster, Johnny Shaw, and Troy Smith.

**City Staff present:** Jonathan Seitz, City Manager; Holly Russell, City Secretary; Sandra Overstreet, HR Director; Mira Lam, Finance Director; Don Martin, Director of Development & Neighborhood Services; Lt. Robert Steele, Keene Police Department; Chief Dan Warner; Keene Fire & Rescue; Keith Barrow, Digital Marketing Coordinator.

## 1. Call to Order, Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, Pledge to Texas Flag

Mayor Pro Tem Gillin called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and Council Member Smith gave the invocation.

## 2. Mayor Announcements

Mayor Pro Tem Gillin announced there is a low cost vaccine clinic scheduled for Saturday, March 7, at 10:00 a.m., in the Community Center.

## 3. Public Comments

Kevin Romanelli, 1501 Gleeson, spoke about citizens needing to dress appropriately when speaking at Council meetings since the viewing audience may be young.

## 4. Reports

*Informational reports only; no action to be taken.*

- A. *City Manager's Comments – Council and Director Training Report, Partnership with Local Youth Association and ball field improvement, Audit Update, Lisa Parrish Recognition Party.*

Jonathan Seitz, City Manager, gave a brief report on the success of the Council Training that was held March 1st and 2nd, and thanked Council for their participation; explained the partnership with the Joshua Athletic Association to allow Keene youth to participate in baseball and to assist with the baseball field improvements and care; explained the status of the IRS audit and the Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 annual audits; and gave a "thank you" to all those involved with planning and those who attended the reception for Mayor Parrish.

Council Member Smith thanked Mr. Seitz for the training and appreciated the vast amount of information shared and communication with the Directors. Council Member Foster thanked Cari Warwick, Management Assistant, for her work in coordinating the scheduling of the training. There was question about if the City had changed auditors, to which Mr. Seitz answered that it is a new auditor that was approved by Council at a past meeting, and they are diving deeper than previous companies did in the past.

## 5. Public Hearing Items

There was no Public Hearing held during this meeting.

## 6. Consent Agenda

*All items listed below have been previously discussed, require no deliberation, or are routine by the City Council and will be enacted with one motion. There will be no separate discussion of the items. Items to be withdrawn from the Consent Agenda for separate discussion by the City Council. If discussion is desired, the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately. Otherwise, approval of the consent agenda authorizes the City Manager to implement each item in accordance with the staff's recommendation.*

- B. Consider approval of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Keene Police Department and the Keene ISD Police Department for the 2025-2026 school year.*
- C. Consider approval of Ordinance No. 2026-691 updating the masonry requirements listed in Ordinance No. 2023-665 as approved at the January 15, 2026 meeting.*
- D. Consider receipt and acceptance of the Keene Police Department's 2025 Racial Profiling Report.*
- E. Consider approval of a resolution authorizing continued participation with the Steering Committee of Cities Served by Atmos.*
- F. Consider approval of a resolution authorizing continued participation with the Steering Committee of Cities Served by Oncor.*

There was a motion to approve Consent Agenda Items B-F as presented and seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Foster, Seconded by Easley.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Gillin, Chapman, Easley, Foster, Smith, Shaw

- A. Consider approval of the minutes of the regular Keene City Council meeting held on February 05, 2026.*

City Secretary Holly Russell had requested that Item A be removed for discussion and explained that she has not completed the information pertaining to the Financial Report given and read the sentence that was added to the minutes. A motion was made to accept the revised minutes as presented, and was seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Foster, Seconded by Shaw.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Gillin, Chapman, Easley, Foster, Smith, Shaw

## 7. General

*General business items for discussion:*

- A. Review, discuss, and take action on a resolution authorizing the submission of an application to the Texas Department of Agriculture for the 2026 TxCDBG Downtown Revitalization Program and authorizing the designation of a downtown district area.*

Mr. Seitz introduced Kristen Boswell, Grant Administrator with PMI. Ms. Boswell explained the proposed area recommended to be designated as "downtown Keene" for the Downtown Revitalization Grant. Phase One requires a resolution to apply for the \$1 million grant, agree to provide the \$50,000 in matching funds if awarded, and designates an area as the downtown area for Keene. The proposed area encompasses area north of the University, as well as South of the University since the grant allows for road and sidewalk

improvements. Council asked about the timeline and processes involved with the grant, to which Ms. Boswell gave a thorough overview.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. 2026-496 authorizing the submission of an application to the Texas Department of Agriculture for the 2026 TxCDBG Downtown Revitalization Program and authorizing the designation of a downtown district area, and seconded. The motion carried.

Motion made by Foster, Seconded by Shaw.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Gillin, Chapman, Easley, Foster, Smith, Shaw

- B. Review, discuss, and consider action on a resolution and agreement for allowing the use of city-owned property for use by a local non-profit as a community garden space.*

Mr. Seitz introduced this item, and introduced Joveta Kanion with Nature's Open Door Outreach Services. It was explained that the nonprofit group wished to lease the city-owned property on Texas Avenue to create a community garden. Ms. Kanion explained the plan for the community garden, and the benefits of gardening for all ages. Don Martin, Director of Neighborhood and Development Services, explained that the organization needs to be in place and have their pertinent documents in place for the formal creation of the organization. City staff are very supportive of the plan and wish to assist the program.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. 2026-488 allowing the City to lease city-owned property to Nature's Open Door Outreach Services, Inc, and approve the agreement for allowing the use of the related city-owned property for use as a community garden space; and was seconded.

Motion made by Chapman, Seconded by Easley.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Gillin, Chapman, Easley, Foster, Smith, Shaw

- C. Review, discuss, and consider action to approve Rob Foster, Council Member – Ward I, to be the presiding member of Council Meetings should Mayor Pro Tem Gillin be absent, and approve a resolution adding him as the second Council Member signatory to all City of Keene bank accounts at Pinnacle Bank.*

Holly Russell, City Secretary, explained that this item is general housekeeping to set in place who would preside over a Council meeting in accordance with the adopted Rules of Order and Procedure should the Mayor Pro Tem be absent. It also sets up a second Council Member as signatory on the city's bank accounts in the event that Ms. Gillin is not available to sign checks or approve payments.

A motion was made to approve Rob Foster, as the senior-most serving Councilmember, to serve as the presiding member over Council Meetings in the absence of the Mayor Pro Tem, and approve Resolution No. 2026-487 adding him as the second Council Member signatory to all City of Keene bank accounts at Pinnacle Bank, and seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Smith, Seconded by Shaw.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Gillin, Chapman, Easley, Smith, Shaw

Abstaining: Foster

- D. Review, discuss, and consider action to adopt a revised Boards and Commissions Membership Appointment Policy, striking the section prohibiting Council from being appointed to a board or commission.*

Ms. Russell explained that the City Attorney revised the Council's Appointment Policy based on the only direction that was given from the January meeting, which was to strike the portion that prohibited a Council Member from being appointed to a Board. Council may approve the revised draft or give further direction to the City Attorney for another revision. Council Member Chapman spoke against the revision, and Council Member Shaw agreed that the Board appointments needed to be open to more citizens. Council Member Easley spoke to the State's recommendation of Council being active on Boards. He would like to be able to fall back on Council Member appointments should there be no citizens applying to serve and there be a need for Board Members.

Paul Gnadt, resident, spoke to the importance of allowing the places to be given to residents who wish to serve rather than appointing a Council Member.

The idea of Council as reserve members seemed favorable. Council asked that the attorney revise the policy to include Council as a reserve member or an alternate should there be a need. There was no action on this item.

- E. *Review, discuss, and approve the first reading of a resolution approving the following EDC Type B projects approved by the Keene Community Development Corporation: the purchase and installation of a skate park, the purchase and installation of specific sidewalks in the city, the naming of the pocket park to "Luz Arauzo Park and the purchase and installation of improvements to the park, the purchase and installation of additional secondary outdoor warning sirens, and the purchase and installation of additional lighting at Elisa Carver Park.*

Mayor Pro Tem Gillin asked Ms. Russell to read Resolution No. 2026-495 and then asked Council if there was any discussion on the item. Council Member Chapman spoke concerning about the skate park and does not believe the city is ready for such a facility. Council Member Smith had questions for the police and fire departments, asking about the location of the skate park in reference to the feasibility of responding to an incident and asked about the possibility of nuisances increasing if a skate park was opened. Chief Warner responded he did not believe that the location would be an issue and that the bridge can handle the load weight of the ambulance. Lt. Steele responded that a gathering at the skate park would not be different than a gathering on the basketball courts. Officers could handle a situation should it arise, as they would anywhere else. There was question about past discussion of a splash pad, and Mr. Martin explained that the idea slowly died because of the extreme amount of maintenance and costs that a splash pad requires and that it can only be used for a few months of the year.

A motion was made to approve the first reading of Resolution No.2026-495 approving of the Keene EDC Type B Board project expenditures and naming of Luz Arauzo Park, and seconded. The motion carried.

Motion made by Foster, Seconded by Shaw.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Gillin, Chapman, Easley, Foster, Shaw

Voting Nay: Smith

- F. *Review, discuss, and consider approval of reappointments of Donnie Beeson, Daniel Gathings, Gary Heinrich, and Nellie Youngberg to the EDC Type B Board for a two-year term ending March 2028.*

A motion was made to approve the reappointments of Donnie Beeson, Daniel Gathings, Gary Heinrich, and Nellie Youngberg to the EDC Type B Board for a two-year term ending March 2028, and seconded. The motion carried.

Motion made by Foster, Seconded by Easley.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Gillin, Chapman, Easley, Foster, Smith, Shaw

- G. *Review, discuss, and consider approval of reappointments of Stephanie Flannery, Gilbert Perez, and Carter Schwarz to the Planning & Zoning Commission for a two-year term ending March 15, 2028.*

A motion was made to approve the reappointments of Stephanie Flannery, Gilbert Perez, and Carter Schwarz to the Planning & Zoning Commission for a two-year term ending March 15, 2028, and was seconded. The motion carried.

Motion made by Smith, Seconded by Foster.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Gillin, Chapman, Easley, Foster, Smith, Shaw

## **8. Executive Session**

There was no recess for an Executive Session.

## **9. Reconvene into Open Session**

There were no items needing action.

## **10. Requests for Future Agenda Items**

Consider adding a dress code to the Rules of Order and Procedure for all.

## **11. Adjourn**

Mayor Pro Tem Gillin asked if there was any further business to discuss. There being none, she adjourned the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

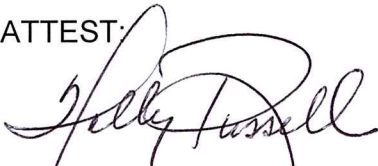
Approved on this the 2nd day of April 2026.

APPROVED:



Samantha Gillin, Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:



Holly Russell, City Secretary