



City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

May 07, 2026 at 6:00 PM

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

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

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

Members Absent: none

City Staff present: Jonathan Seitz, City Manager; Holly Russell, City Secretary; Don Martin, Director of Development & Neighborhood Services; Mira, Lam, Director of Finance; Chief James Kidd, Keene Police Department; Chief Dan Warner; Keene Fire & Rescue; Keith Barrow, Digital Marketing Coordinator; Maggie Alegria, Development Services Coordinator.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Gillin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and Council Member Smith gave the invocation.

2. Mayor Announcements

Mayor Pro Tem Gillin announced that City Hall offices will be closed for Memorial Day, and the Project Hero Bike Ride is this coming Saturday through Keene. She shared the proclamations she gave in observance of professional recognition weeks: International Firefighters Day, Municipal Clerks Week, National Police Week, and National Public Works Week. She also announced a proclamation will be given in honor of Ms. Ruth Just upon her retirement from teaching for over 35 years at Keene Adventist Elementary.

3. Public Comments

Roy Robinson, former Mayor of Keene and longtime resident, spoke about not receiving the notification letter for the rezone request. He also thanked all of Council for everything they are doing for the city.

4. Reports

Informational reports only; no action to be taken.

- A. *Receive the Quarterly Financial and Investment Reports for the months of January 1 through March 31, 2026, from Mira Lam, Director of Finance.*

Mira Lam, Director of Finance gave the quarterly Financial and Investment Report for the quarter ending March 31, 2026, to Council. The General Fund revenue is currently 11 percent over the budgeted amount, and expenses are three percent under budget thanks to staff being conservative with spending. The Water/Sewer fund revenue is five percent under the budgeted amount for the fiscal year, but was 19 percent higher than the amount received for this same time last fiscal year. While the residential utility billing is still generating more than compared to the same time of the fiscal year last year, it is still nine percent lower than what was budgeted. Water/Sewer Fund expenditures is currently two percent under budget. Mr. Seitz explained that there are currently two wells down, and the city is still waiting on parts to arrive. Council Member Foster asked if the loss is recoverable, to which it was answered that it is once the well systems are back online.

- B. *City Manager's Comments – SWAU Callicott Student Park sidewalk dedication, Project Hero, Downtown Revitalization Grant, City Comprehensive Plan (RCP) Grant, Luz Arauzo Park, City Development*

Jonathan Seitz, City Manager, shared that SWAU was dedicating the walking trail at Callicott Student Park this evening in memory of Wizan Sebulburo; invited anyone interested in welcoming the Project Hero riders to City Hall on Saturday to arrive about 8:00 a.m.; gave status updates on the Downtown Revitalization Grant and the Resilient Communities Grant; the EDC Type B Board has already started considering equipment for the Luz Arauzo Park; and that the Stonehurst development has began building homes as well; and shared the notice from Republic Services on the contracted rate increase. He also shared a report from Paul Gnad to update Council on the meeting that was held to plan the Memorial Day service, and it will now be held in the fall for Veterans Day. Council Member Easley asked about considering a new well or water source. Mr Seitz shared that the city has

5. 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.

- A. *Consider approval of the minutes of the regular Keene City Council meeting held on April 02, 2026.*

There was a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, and seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Smith, Seconded by Shaw.

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

Voting Abstaining: Foster

6. Public Hearing Items

Public hearing and take possible action regarding the following items.

- A. *Hold a public hearing to hear citizen comments and hold a discussion on a zoning change request from Agricultural (A-G) to Single-Family Residential (SF-2) submitted by Nathan Bowers with Ambition Group, LLC for the following property:*

A 9.270-acre tract of land located in the Jeremiah Williams Survey, Abstract No. 890, within the City of Keene, Johnson County, Texas.

Mayor Pro Tem Gillin opened the public hearing at 6:34 p.m. She asked if there was anyone from the public here to make a comment. No one was present to speak from the public. The public hearing was closed at 6:36 p.m.

Don Martin, Director of Neighborhood and Development Services, introduced the item to Council. He explained the developer wishes to divide the property into four lots. Council Members asked questions about the concerns of the property being divided into four long, narrow lots. Mr. Phillip Jackson, Chair of the Planning & Zoning Commission, gave the recommendation to approve to Council on this request. Adam Bartells with Ambition Group was present to also take questions. Mr. Martin and the City Attorney addressed Mr. Robinson's concern that he had not received a notice letter of the public hearings, stating that a letter was mailed to his address as instructed by law, but it cannot be responsible for the letter not arriving once it has been given over to the postal service.

Ms. Gillin announced that item General Business Discussion Item 7A would be considered before Public Hearing Item 6B.

- 7A. *Review, discuss and consider action on the zoning change request submitted by Nathan Bowers with Ambition Group, LLC., by ordinance.*

Ms. Gillin asked if there was any further discussion on this item, and there was none. A motion was made to approve the rezone request by Ordinance No. 2026-693 approving the change

from Agricultural (A-G) to Single-Family Residential (SF-2) submitted by Nathan Bowers with Ambition Group, LLC; failed for lack of a second. Council then went on to Public Hearing Item 6B

The following discussion happened after General Business Discussion Item 7G, when Council Member Foster asked to revisit this item.

Council Member Foster spoke to not wanting developers or landowners thinking that they could not approach Council for approval because a plan or plat does not make sense to Council. He wanted the public to know that Council is open to all plans and options. Don Martin, Director of Neighborhood & Development Services, asked why the rezone failed to be approved. Several Council mentioned they did not like the replat into four narrow lots. The City Attorney shared the city's ordinances that outline the reasons in which the Council can deny a request. Ms. Gillin asked for another motion on 7A. A motion was made to approve the rezone request by Ordinance No. 2026-693 approving the change from Agricultural (A-G) to Single-Family Residential (SF-2) submitted by Nathan Bowers with Ambition Group, LLC; and was seconded. The motion failed.

Motion made by Foster, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gillin.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Gillin, Foster

Voting Against: Chapman, Easley, Smith, Shaw

There were more discussion and questions between staff and Council, and consideration of tabling the item. Most of Council was not in favor of making the applicant wait until July 2, and could not give staff clear direction to give the applicant on possible changes to make. A motion was made to approve the rezone request by Ordinance No. 2026-693 approving the change from Agricultural (A-G) to Single-Family Residential (SF-2) submitted by Nathan Bowers with Ambition Group, LLC; and was seconded. The motion passed.

Motion made by Shaw, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gillin.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Gillin, Foster, Shaw

Voting Against: Chapman, Smith

Voting Abstaining: Easley

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-693

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KEENE, TEXAS, AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO REZONE PROPERTY DESCRIBED AS APPROXIMATELY A 29.270-ACRE TRACT OF LAND LOCATED IN THE JEREMIAH WILLIAMS SURVEY, ABSTRACT NO. 890, WITHIN THE CITY OF KEENE, JOHNSON COUNTY, TEXAS, GENERALLY LOCATED AT 2929 COUNTY ROAD 805, WITHIN THE CITY OF KEENE, TEXAS, FROM ZONING CLASSIFICATION (A) AGRICULTURAL TO (SF-2) SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT-2; AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP; PROVIDING A PENALTY OF UP TO \$2,000 PER DAY; PROVIDING REPEALING, SAVINGS, AND SEVERABILITY CLAUSES; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

B. Hold a public hearing to hear citizen comments and hold a discussion on a zoning change request from Single-Family Residential (SF-2) to Commercial District-Office and Light Retail (C-2) submitted by Dan Griffin with Provident Land Investors, LLC for the following four properties:

- *A 2.014-acre tract of land located in the J. Pennington Survey, Abstract No. 701, and the D. Mize Survey, Abstract No. 567 within the City of Keene, Johnson County, Texas. (ROW)*
- *A 2.824-acre tract of land located in the J. Pennington Survey, Abstract No. 701, the D. Mize Survey, Abstract No. 567 and the B.B.B.&C. RR. CO. Survey, Abstract No. 114 within the City of Keene, Johnson County, Texas.*
- *A 2.03-acre tract of land located in the J. Pennington Survey, Abstract No. 701 within the City of Keene, Johnson County, Texas.*
- *A 1.61-acre tract of land located in the J. Pennington Survey, Abstract No. 701 and the David Mize Survey, Abstract No. 567 within the City of Keene, Johnson County, Texas.*

Mayor Pro Tem Gillin opened the public hearing at 6:56 p.m. There were no comments made. The public hearing was closed at 6:57 p.m.

Don Martin, Director of Neighborhood and Development Services, introduced the item to Council. He explained the developer went back to the residents near this property after Council considered the request last February and took no action. He listened to their concerns and has resubmitted this request so that portions of his properties against the neighboring properties will stay residential, allowing there to be a natural buffer of greenspaces in between the commercial portions and the neighboring properties. Mr. Steve Reid with Provident Land Investors was present to take questions, and reiterated their discussions with the residents to reach a compromise on the rezoning request. Mr. Phillip Jackson, Chair of the Planning & Zoning Commission, gave the recommendation to approve the rezone to Council on this request.

7. General

Item 7A was moved before Public Hearing Item 6B.

- B. *Review, discuss and take action on the zoning change request submitted by Dan Griffin with Provident Land Investors, LLC., by ordinance.*

Ms. Gillin asked if there was any further discussion on this item. A motion was made to approve the rezone request by Ordinance No. 2026-692 approving the change from Single-Family Residential (SF-2) to Commercial District-Office and Light Retail (C-2) submitted by Dan Griffin with Provident Land Investors, LLC; and was seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Foster, Seconded by Chapman.

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-692

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KEENE, TEXAS, AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF (4) FOUR PROPERTIES DESCRIBED AS APPROXIMATELY A 2.014-ACRE TRACT OF LAND LOCATED IN THE J. PENNINGTON SURVEY, ABSTRACT NO. 701, AND THE D. MIZE SURVEY, ABSTRACT NO. 567 (ROW); A 2.824-ACRE TRACT OF LAND LOCATED IN THE J. PENNINGTON SURVEY, ABSTRACT NO. 701, THE D. MIZE SURVEY, ABSTRACT NO. 567 AND THE B.B.B.&C. RR. CO. SURVEY, ABSTRACT NO. 114; A 2.03-ACRE TRACT OF LAND LOCATED IN THE J. PENNINGTON SURVEY, ABSTRACT NO. 701; AND A 1.61-ACRE TRACT OF LAND LOCATED IN THE J. PENNINGTON SURVEY, ABSTRACT NO. 701, AND THE DAVID MIZE SURVEY, ABSTRACT NO. 567, ALL GENERALLY LOCATED AT 201 EAST US HWY 67, WITHIN THE CITY OF KEENE, TEXAS, FROM (SF-2) SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT-2 TO (C-2) GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT-OFFICE AND LIGHT RETAIL; AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP; PROVIDING A PENALTY OF UP TO \$2,000 PER DAY; PROVIDING REPEALING, SAVINGS, AND SEVERABILITY CLAUSES; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

- C. *Receive a report from representative of Metalplate, detailing their business and plans for use of the Industrial Park property they purchased; and discussion regarding the project and give direction to staff, if any.*

Gray Sloop of Metalplate came forward to thank Keene for the warm welcome, introduced the company, and what they plan for their location at the Industrial Park. They are an employee-owned company, and looking to hire locally those who want a long-time career with the company. They began in Alabama in the 1960's then expanded to Houston. Texas in the 1990's. Matt Perez will be the Plant Manager, and Jesse Lopez the Plant Superintendent. There was no action taken on this item.

- D. *Receive an update from the City Manager on the assessment of the water-runoff/drainage issue brought to Council's attention by residents of Shelly Drive and give further direction to staff, if any.*

Mr. Seitz spoke about meeting with the residents who had submitted a petition to Council for attention to a matter of a failing wall that has caused years of water runoff/drainage issues. The City Attorney spoke to the city's responsibility on the matter, stating that it was private property owner issue, and the city has no responsibility to correct this issue. She stated the city did due diligence in the building and permitting when all the houses were built. She noted that the state says a city must spend funds on public issues, and this is not a public issue or for a public purpose. An Engineer from Jacob & Martin was present to give their opinion on the wall and the issue it has caused. There is no record of who put in the wall as there are no plans showing the wall to be placed. There was no direction given and no action taken on this item.

- E. *Review, discuss, and take action to approve a resolution awarding an application and engineering services contract for the 2026 Downtown Revitalization grant and authorize the City Manager to negotiate contract terms.*

Mr. Seitz shared that the city sent out a Request for Qualifications for an Engineering Firm that would handle the Downtown Revitalization project, in anticipation of the grant being awarded. Six firms responded and were reviewed by administration and Council Member Easley. The top scoring firm was Jacob & Martin, who is being recommended for Council to award the contract for this project. A motion was made to approve Resolution No. 2026-498 awarding an application and engineering services contract for the 2026 Downtown Revitalization grant to Jacob & Martin and authorize the City Manager to negotiate contract terms, and seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Shaw, Seconded by Smith.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-498

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF KEENE, TEXAS, AUTHORIZING PROFESSIONAL SERVICE PROVIDER SELECTION FOR A 2026 TEXAS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM – DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROGRAM (DRP) PROJECT THROUGH THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (TDA).

- F. *Review, discuss, and give direction to regarding posting a dress code for those who attend and wish to speak to Council or to revise the Rules of Order and Procedure.*

Mayor Pro Tem Gillin asked Council what questions or discussion they had for this item. Mr. Seitz spoke to being open to all who come through the doors, and the city should consider acting with grace. Though staff will do what Council wishes, he does not recommend legislating this issue. The City Attorney was in agreement. Ray Johnson, 1009 Christine Street, spoke to allowing people to dress comfortably but respectfully. Council gave no direction and took no action on this item.

- G. *Review, discuss to reconsider, and take possible action on the need for the June 18, 2026, regular Council meeting date.*

Mr. Seitz asked if Council still wished to keep the date of June 18th for the next meeting. He recommend cancelling June 18. A motion was made to cancel the June 18 meeting, and seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Foster, Seconded by Shaw.

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

Mr. Foster made a motion to return to Item 6A, and was seconded by Smith. All Council was in favor, and the motion carried. *The discussion after this motion is recorded under items 6A/7A.*

Motion made by Foster, Seconded by Smith.

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

8. Executive Session

Pursuant to the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, the City Council may recess to Executive Session at any time during the meeting that a need arises for the City Council to seek advice from the City Attorney as to any posted item and by the following authority:

- A. Texas Government Code Section 551.071** - Consultation with an attorney for advice about pending litigation (Cause No. DC-C202600174 Vincent Carl Castro v. City of Keene, Texas, Jonathan Seitz, Troyce Samantha Gillin, Robert Allan Foster, Troy William Smith, Johnny Ray Shaw, Robert Eugene Chapman)
- B. Texas Government Code Section 551.071** - Consultation with an attorney for advice about pending litigation (Cause No. DC-C202600200 City of Keene v. Lloyd Thomas, Bonnie Thomas, the Unknown Members of Med Surge North Texas, LLC, all persons claiming any title or interest in land under deed heretofore given to City of Keene)
- C. Texas Government Code Section 551.074** – Personnel Matters to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee: Application received for appointment to the Keene EDC-A Board.

Ms. Russell read the Executive Session agenda items as listed on the published meeting agenda, and Mayor Pro Tem Gillin recessed into Executive Session at 8:24 p.m.

9. Reconvene into Open Session

Mayor Pro Tem Gillin reconvened the open meeting at 9:18 p.m. There was no action taken for Executive Session items.

10. Requests for Future Agenda Items

Council Member Foster asked for the general address of a property, when speaking of a location, be included along with the legal description.

11. Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

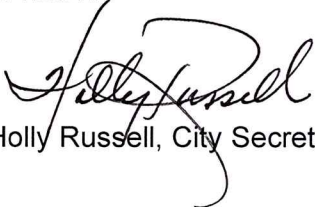
Approved on this the 2nd day of July 2026.

APPROVED:



Samantha Gillin, Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:



Holly Russell, City Secretary