



City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

July 02, 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; Sandra Overstreet, HR Director; Chief James Kidd, Keene Police Department; Chief Dan Warner; Keene Fire & Rescue; and 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 6:00 p.m. and Council Member Foster gave the invocation.

2. Mayor Announcements

Mayor Pro Tem Gillin announced that City Hall offices are closed tomorrow in observance of Independence Day and reminded everyone of the city events in celebration. She announced that anyone interested in running for Council or Mayor is invited to attend the City Secretary's Candidate Orientation on Tuesday, or to schedule time with the City Secretary, to prepare for the application acceptance period beginning July 18.

3. Public Comments

Paul Gnadt, Director of the Keene Chamber of Commerce, shared information about the parade and celebration, recognizing the many volunteers that have worked so hard to put on this event for the community.

Owen Larson, 1002 Shelly Drive, expressed his frustration with the lack of response on the retaining wall that is on the backside of his property, built by the developer.

Eddie Arellano, 1004 Shelly Drive, he has the same issue with the retaining wall causing flooding issues and damage to his property. He paid out of pocket to have a French drain installed professionally.

Troy Smith, Council Member Place I, spoke about writing truth in social media and how misinformation can harm and divide. He affirmed that the City is being transparent, and encouraged all to reach out to staff and Council Members with questions and concerns should they have any.

4. Reports

Informational reports only; no action to be taken.

A. Receive an update from the City Manager and Director of Finance on the Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 audits, Local Government Code Chapter 103, and the letter received from the Office of the Attorney General, and update on the IRS audit.

Jonathan Seitz, City Manager, introduced this item and shared that the Finance Department has been through so much to get the City's finance reporting to a state of excellent transparency and in line with professional standards. The auditors have everything to complete the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) Audit. Once it is complete, the Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) audit can be completed. The reason

for the struggle to get these completed includes that the bank reconciliations were not complete since 2021, there were 6,000 transactions that had not been processed, several bank accounts were not listed in the records, and more. The Finance Department of the last five years did what they could to keep up with recordkeeping and reporting, even though it was not up to the standards that are needed for full transparency. The current Finance Department under the direction of Ms. Lam has worked nonstop to unravel the records and report everything correctly and turn it over to the auditors. These two audits will be a more accurate picture of the city's financial state than previous audits.

B. City Manager's Comments: General City Development Updates, City Secretary Holly Russell is officially TRMC Certified, Candidate Orientation, Elisa Carver Park, Fire Marshal hired

Mr. Seitz reported on the status of developments in the city such as Metalplate and a possible other Industrial Park business addition, that the City Secretary completed her certification and is now a Texas Registered Municipal Clerk as was required by Council, Ms. Russell is presenting an Candidate Orientation on July 7 for anyone wanting to know how to run for office, Ms. Elisa Carver dropped in to City Hall and thanked the City and EDC-B Board for their continued improvements of Elisa Carver Park, and a full time Fire Marshal has been selected and 75 percent of the salary is provided by the ESD.

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 May 07, 2026.

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda as presented, and seconded. The motion carried.

Motion made by Foster, Seconded by Smith.

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

6. Public Hearing Items

There was no public hearing scheduled for this meeting.

7. General

General business items for discussion:

A. Discuss and receive information from the City Manager and City Hall staff to address misinformation circulating on social media regarding city matters.

Mr. Seitz explained that staff monitor social media and bring concerns to Administration so that topics can be addressed if needed. Council Member Foster asked questions about the building that purchased for the Police Department that was discussed on social media. Ms. Gillin answered that she did not receive one cent for assisting with bringing the opportunity to purchase the building to the City. Mr. Seitz addressed the cost of attorney fees associated with the litigation concerning the building. He also answered the breakdown of what all the city is invoiced for by the attorney. Council Member Easley asked Mr. Seitz to address the water meter discussion on social media. Mr. Seitz reminded Council that there were about a third of the smart meters not working. Part of the communication issue was the antenna was taken down for the water tower painting, and the meters were constantly trying to communicate and running down their batteries. Public Works has worked to replace those meter batteries and get them back online to communicate the actual water usage to the City.

B. Review, discuss, and take action on a resolution approving of the establishment of a Business Improvement Grant program to be provided by the Keene Economic Development Corporation (Type A) Board.

Mr. Seitz explained the Keene EDC Type A Board passed a resolution to create an improvements grant for local businesses and needs Council approval for the program. A motion was made to approve Resolution No. 2026-500 establishing a business improvement grant program for new or existing businesses located within the city limits of Keene, and seconded. The motion carried.

Motion made by Foster, Seconded by Shaw.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-500

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM FOR NEW OR EXISTING BUSINESSES LOCATED WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS OF KEENE, TEXAS; AND PROVIDING THAT THIS RESOLUTION SHALL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM AND AFTER ITS PASSAGE AND ADOPTION.

C. Review, discuss, and consider action on a Petition for Release from the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) from the property owner(s) of Tract 288 of the Seth Morris Survey, Abstract Number 536, in Johnson County, Texas, also designated as 6572 FM 3136, Alvarado, Texas.

Holly Russell, City Secretary, explained about the property and the petition, and that it is passed the statutory 45 days for the city to respond. The property is already out of the ETJ for this reason but is being presented to make Council aware of the petition. The City Attorney recommends no action since the constitutionality of Senate Bill 2038 is being challenged in court. There was no action on this item.

8. Executive Session

There was no recess for Executive session at this meeting.

9. Reconvene into Open Session

There were no items needing action.

10. Requests for Future Agenda Items

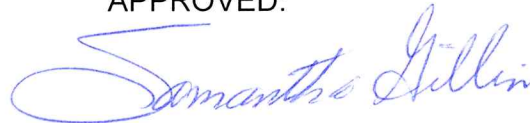
Mr. Seitz announced the schedule for the dates of the budget workshops, on July 16, 23, and 30th.

11. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

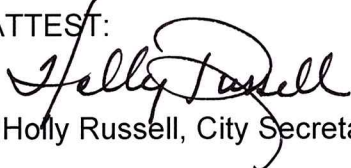
Approved on this the 6th day of August 2026.

APPROVED:



Samantha Gillin, Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:



Holly Russell, City Secretary