



City Council Special Meeting Minutes

with corrections

July 28, 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 Foster gave the invocation.

2. Mayor Announcements

Mayor Pro Tem Gillin reminded the public that the period to file for a place on the ballot is now open until August 17; and that the Keene Police Department is accepting school supply donations until July 31.

3. Public Comments

There were no public comments made.

4. General

General business items for discussion:

A. Review, discuss, and consider a proposal from Medical Access & Service Advantage (MASA) on the possibility of offering elective memberships to residents of Keene that cover out-of-pocket costs for emergency ground and air ambulances.

Sandra Overstreet, Director of Human Resources, introduced Rodney Dryden, HUB International, to explain what Medical Access & Service Advantage (MASA) is and what can be made available to residents. For those cities with EMS, unpaid transports is lost revenue. If a patient has MASA, it reduces the cost to the customer and also gives revenue to the EMS. Due to Federal Laws, ~~Medicare and~~ Medicaid are not eligible, but those that are insured, **have Medicare, or are** uninsured are eligible to opt-in to MASA. It would help reduce costs for ground transport, air transport, hospital to hospital transport, and EMS treat-and-no-transport incidents anywhere in the United States, US territories, and Canada. Mr. Dryden explained that all residents would be enrolled, and then must opt-out if they do not want the service. The cost of the program is added to the water bill. MASA provides all the communication to assist in informing residents about their choice to opt-out, written in English, Spanish, and even Marshallese. For those that have not paid their bill for 60-days, their MASA account will be suspended and they city will not be billed for that account. For those that opt-out and later wish to participate, they may.

A motion was made to table this item until the September regular meeting, and seconded.

Motion made by Smith, Seconded by Easley.

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

5. BUDGET WORKSHOP: Fiscal Year 2027**

Informational reports only; no action to be taken.

A. Receive information and discuss personnel and fringe benefits regarding the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 (FY27) Proposed Budget. Topics include renewing the proposed health insurance cost.

Sandra Overstreet, Director of Human Resources, and Rodney Dryden, HUB International, presented the bids received for health and dental insurance for employees. Bids were received from Curative and Texas Health. Curative's bids did include the PPO+Max plan, but it is recommended that the city offer health benefits to employees at the PPO rate, and those who wish to keep the Max plan would have to pay the difference between PPO and PPO+Max plans. Overall there was a nine percent increase to the Curative costs. In January, Curative added a program called Lantern for orthopedic services and procedures to assist with additional help in covering those costs. Dental programs were received from several companies. Mutual of Omaha came back with a renewal rate of a seven percent increase. MetLife and Renaissance has a smaller price increase than Mutual of Omaha. They City bases its cost off of the Low Plan. If an employee elects the High Plan, they absorb the difference.

It was explained that there is a provision under the Local Government Code that allows Elected Officials to be offered insurance. Mayor Pro Tem Gillin spoke about being volunteers, and did not believe the city was ready to offer insurance to Council. There was concern about it being a conflict of interest. Mr. Dryden offered to send more information about the local government code. Council Member Smith spoke to the option being an incentive to serve. Council Member Chapman stated he did not like the optics of electing to offer insurance. Mr. Dryden stated that if Council wanted to elect to add Council, they would need to do so by resolution. It was asked if there needed to be a decision this evening, to which was answered that no decision was required at this meeting, and that Mr. Dryden was only making Council aware that offering elected officials insurance coverage was allowed by law and available to cities to decide.

Mr. Seitz presented on other personnel costs that affect the budget such as the first responders step plan and proposed three percent COLA increase to staffing pay rate. Knowing that the City has to adopt the No-New-Revenue Tax Rate, administration took a very conservative approach to the personnel related budgeting. Finance needs another person to assist with new requirements, reporting, and general accounting practices. Mira Lam, Director of Finance, explained the strain on her department and the large amount of extra unpaid hours her department has given the city in order to get processes completed. She explained the need to one more employee to assist in these processes and it will assist in less outsourcing of processes. The ideal person would be a certified accountant knowledgeable of fund accounting and are estimating a salary of about \$66,000 plus benefits. Mr. Seitz highlighted the increase in personnel and where the funds would come from, such as the Johnson County ESD covering 75 percent of several fire staff. Requested new staff are an accountant, the Fire Marshall, three fire fighters, and a water/sewer general maintenance worker.

B. Review, discuss, and possible action to consider the medical and dental benefits for city employees for Fiscal Year 2026-2027.

A motion was made to approve the renewing medical insurance with Curative at the baseline of the PPO plan and offer PPO+Max plan to employees at their cost to pay the difference, and renew the current dental insurance with Mutual of Omaha, and seconded.

Motion made by Foster, Seconded by Shaw.

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

** Taxpayer Impact Statement			
Property Tax Due on Median Valued Homestead			
2024 Rate vs 2025 Rate vs 2025 No New Revenue Rate			
	Rate per \$100 of Value	Median-Valued Homestead Property	Tax Due
2024 Adopted Tax Rate	\$0.834134	\$ 196,567	\$ 1,639.63
2025 Adopted Tax Rate	\$0.828978	\$ 213,409	\$ 1,769.11
2025 No New Revenue Rate	\$0.816257	\$ 213,409	\$ 1,741.97

*****The 2025 tax year property tax rate listed above as the "2025 Proposed Rate" was adopted on September 25, 2025, and is currently in effect. The information provided above is required by State law. The agenda discussion posted for this meeting is a preliminary discussion regarding projected revenues and expenses necessary to begin and proceed with the preparation of a budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 as required by law. In accordance with State law, information necessary for the City to provide a proposed 2026 tax rate will be available from Johnson County Appraisal District on or after July 25, 2026; however, when a proposed budget has been prepared and the City has received the Appraisal District information necessary to provide a proposed 2026 tax year rate, the table above will be updated with information regarding the 2026 tax year proposed rate, and a proposed budget will be posted online and accessible from the City of Keene homepage at www.keenetx.com.***

6. Executive Session

There was no recess for Executive Session at this meeting.

7. Reconvene into Open Session

There were no items needing action.

8. Requests for Future Agenda Items

Mr. Seitz shared that the Central Appraisal District of Johnson County sent an email that provided the Certified *Estimated* Appraised Values on the deadline to receive the actual certified appraisal numbers, and explained that the delay is caused by the Appraisal District's change in software. He explained that the report is completely different than what was provided in the past and difficult to read. He hopes to have the updated report before Thursday, if not Administration will cover the revenue portion of the budget workshop at the August 6 meeting.

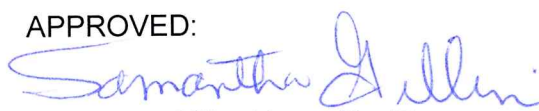
It was requested to add the possibility of setting a second meeting for August 20, if one is needed.

9. Adjourn

With there being no further business, Mayor Pro Tem Gillin adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Approved **with corrections** on this the 6th day of August 2026.

APPROVED:


Samantha Gillin, Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:


Holly Russell, City Secretary