

**CITY OF LAWRENCE
Common Council
November 3, 2025
Regular Meeting**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilors Liz Masur, Carlos Jennings, Kristie Krone, Rick Wells, Lisa Chavis, Zach Cramer, Sherron Freeman, Tyrrell Giles and Betty Robinson

MEMBERS BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: None

MEMBERS ABSENT:

ALSO, BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: Douglas Roskowski and Megan J.

ALSO PRESENT: Clerk Adkisson, and Scott Krapf, of Frost Brown Todd

STAFF PRESENT: Eric Martin and Terri Falker, Jim Perron, Chief Curtis Bigsbee, Jami Weinrich, Roman Coffey, Renea Rafala, Janette Jenkins, Chief Bob Wallace, Jared Hooten, and Firefighter Nick Rehmel

STAFF BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: None

Council President Betty Robinson called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance was administered, followed by a moment of silence.

Roll call was taken. Nine (9) council members were present. President Robinson recognized there was a quorum.

It was also recognized there were extra copies of the agenda located at the back of the room along with a sign-up sheet for comments from the citizens.

COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS: Council members were invited to share comments or recognitions.

- **Councilor Giles** commended the **Department of Public Works (DPW)** and Jim's team for removing trees from medians and sidewalks, improving safety and appearance in the community.
- **Councilor Masur** thanked the **Streets Department** for quickly repairing a traffic sign at David and 46th Street following a constituent complaint.
- **Councilor Wells** recognized the **Indiana State Highway Department** for addressing concerns about median cuts on Pendleton Pike, allowing easier access for Cohron's Mobile Homes and Funtime Camper.

Councilor Cramer made an extended statement addressing concerns about the **2026 city budget**, highlighting the following:

- The proposed budget is larger than last year's despite declining revenues.
- It draws down city reserves, weakening financial stability.
- The administration submitted an imbalanced budget knowingly.
- Cramer stated he will vote *to approve the budget* only to keep city operations running, **not** as an endorsement of the budget process.
- Called for greater **transparency, fiscal responsibility, and leadership.**

Councilor Wells expressed similar concerns:

- Warned that city reserves may be depleted within two years.
- Opposed further tax increases (property, wheel, or income tax) until the administration reduces spending and demonstrates fiscal discipline.

Councilor Jennings also commented:

- Described the budget process as “chaotic” and lacking transparency.
- Noted that the proposed 2026 budget **spends \$3.5 million more** than collected in revenues.
- Criticized reliance on transfers from water, sewer, and Fort Harrison Reuse authorities.
- Stated he would vote “yes” **to maintain operations**, but “holding his nose” due to poor fiscal management.
- Condemned the mayor’s veto of the Council’s independent financial advisor contract, calling it “obstruction.”

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS OR RESOLUTIONS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES’ REGULAR MEETING 10-15-2025

Councilor Jennings made a motion to approve the minutes. Councilor Giles 2nd the motion. Vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously, 9 – 0

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS 10-6-2025: Councilor Masur moved to approve vouchers and claims. The motion was 2nd by Councilor Jennings. Payroll Claims for \$3,587,034.07 [August 31, 2025, September 15, 2025 and September 30, 2025 payroll] and Invoices [for vendors] as presented today [for \$3,561,007.87]. Vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously, 9 – 0.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS 11-3-2025: Councilor Jennings moved to approve vouchers and claims. The motion was 2nd by Councilor Cramer. Payroll Claims for \$1,094,284.62 [October 15, 2025 payroll] and Invoices [for vendors] as presented today [for \$3,100,527.05].

Motion carried unanimously, 9 – 0.

NEW BUSINESS: **Public Hearing – Petition No. 25-ZON-03 (Public Notice Advertised)**

Subject: Rezoning of property located at **8006 and 8016 Sweet Lane**

Request: Rezoning from SU-1 (Special Use) to D-2 (Residential)

Public hearing opened: 6:57 PM

- Petitioner: 10 minutes
- Public in favor: 10 minutes combined
- Public opposed: 10 minutes combined
- Petitioner rebuttal: 5 minutes
- Public rebuttal: 5 minutes combined

Amendment to the Hearing Rules was motioned by Councilor Jennings and 2nd by Councilor Chavis. A voice vote was taken and passed unanimously. (9 – 0) Adopted (by voice vote)

Presentation by Petitioner Representative: *Russell Brown*, Attorney with Clark Quinn, LLP.

Summary of Request:

- Rezoning request for approximately **2.049 acres** from SU-1 to D-2.
- Property was formerly part of Holy Spirit Lutheran Church land.
- Intended use: Residential homes (four total lots, privately owned).
- The rezoning is needed to allow home construction on Lots 1 and 2.
- All relevant stormwater, access, and fire protection requirements have been reviewed and approved.
- No remonstrance or opposition received.

Council Discussion:

- Questions raised about the **shared private driveway**, future ownership, and utility access.
- Attorney Brown confirmed that:
 - The drive will be a **privately maintained common area**, similar to an HOA arrangement.
 - Each home will have **separate meters** for utilities.
 - Driveway and easements approved by the **Marion County Plat Committee**.
 - Drainage and fire access plans approved.

City Staff Report Presented by: *Renea Rafa*, Director of Public Works.

- The **City of Lawrence** supports the rezoning.
- Confirmed that:
 - All stormwater and utility plans have been reviewed and approved.
 - There will be four separate sewer and water connections.
 - The private drive will not be maintained by the City.
 - Remaining yellow parcel from the original petition will remain zoned SU-1.

9. Public Comments

- **In Favor:** None present.
- **Opposed:** None present.
- **Online Comments:** None received.

Public Hearing Closed: 7:22 PM

Vote on Rezoning Petition No. 25-ZON-03:

Result: Approved unanimously (9–0).

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

- **Committee of the Whole:** Met to discuss proposals.
- No additional committee reports submitted.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- 1) **Proposal No. 3, 2025:**
An ordinance amending Title 1, Article 2, Chapter 5 of the City Code of Ordinances.

Discussion:

- Clarification sought regarding the status of the proposal and whether it was properly reported out of committee.
- Due to uncertainty, a **10-minute recess** was called to verify the CBA (Committee Business Agenda) status.

Meeting recessed at: 7:31 PM

The meeting was called back to order at 7:41, by Council President Betty Robinson. A quorum was present.

Present:

Councilors Giles, Wells, Chavis, Cramer, Robinson, Jennings, Freeman, Krone, Masur.

Review of Proposal #3 (2025): Remains tabled in the Committee of the Whole. No further action taken.

2) Proposal No. 6, 2025:

An Ordinance Amending Title 3, Article 3, Chapter 13 Of The Code Of Ordinances.

Review of Proposal #6 (2025): Remains tabled in the Committee of the Whole. No further action taken.

3) Proposal No. 7, 2025:

An Ordinance Adopting a Code of Ethics.

Review of Proposal #7 (2025): Remains before the Code and Rules Committee for consideration.

4) Proposal No. 8, 2025:

Ordinance fixing compensation for elected officials for the year 2026.

Discussion:

- Councilors discussed whether elected officials' salaries should include a 3% cost-of-living increase (COLA).
- Concerns were raised regarding budget constraints and use of cash reserves.
- Some members expressed preference to prioritize civilian employee raises over elected official increases.

A motion was made by Councilor Cramer and seconded by Councilor Wells to **amend Proposal No. 8, 2025** to include a **3% raise for the City Clerk only**.

Vote on Amendment (Voice Vote): Result: Amendment passed unanimously (9-0).

A motion was made by Councilor Chavis and 2nd by Councilor Masur on **Proposal No. 8, 2025 as Amended**.

Vote on Amended Proposal No. 8, 2025:

Passed unanimously (9–0).

5) Proposal No. 9 2025:

Ordinance fixing salaries for appointed officers and employees of the Police and Fire Departments for 2026.

A Motion made by Councilor Chavis and 2nd by Councilor Wells.

Passed unanimously (9 – 0).

6) Proposal No. 10, 2025:

Ordinance fixing salaries of appointed officers and employees of the City of Lawrence for 2026.

Amendment #1:

A motion was made to include a **3% cost-of-living increase** for all appointed officers and employees.

Vote (Voice): Passed unanimously (9–0).

Amendment #2:

A motion was made to **remove unfilled and unbudgeted positions** from the 2026 salary ordinance, including:

- Deputy Chief of Staff
- Public Information Officer
- City Planner
- City Quartermaster
- Engineer Tech
- Grant Coordinator
- IT Coordinator
- Recreation Assistant
- Recreation Coordinator
- Staff Accountant

Discussion:

Controller confirmed all positions listed were vacant and not budgeted for 2026. Council clarified no current employees would be affected.

Vote on Amendment #2 (Voice): Passed unanimously (9–0).

Vote on Proposal #10 as Amended: Passed unanimously (9–0).

7) Proposal No. 11, 2025:

Adoption of the 2026 Budget (Form 4).

Presentation:

Controller presented **Form 4**, reflecting approximately **\$745,000 in reductions** as approved by council during prior work sessions.

Discussion:

Councilors commended the cooperative process in finalizing the budget and acknowledged ongoing fiscal challenges.

Amendment #1:

A motion was made by Councilor Chavis to amend Proposal No. 11, 2025 (Budget Form 4) as shown by Controller Terri Falker. Motion was 2nd by Councilor Giles.

Vote (Voice) on Amendment 1: Passed (5–4).

Robinson – Yes, Giles– Yes, Chavis – Yes, Jennings – No, Freeman – No, Masur – Yes, Krone – Yes, Cramer – No, Wells – No.

A motion was made by Councilor Chavis to approve Proposal No. 11, 2025 as amended and Councilor Giles 2nd the motion.

Vote (Voice) on Amended Proposal No. 11, 2025 (Budget Form 4):

Passed (7–2).

Robinson – Yes, Giles– Yes, Chavis – Yes, Jennings – Yes, Freeman – No, Masur – Yes, Krone – Yes, Cramer – Yes, Wells – No.

QUESTIONS TOTHE ADMINISTRATION:

On behalf of the Whitfield Administration, Mr. Jim Perron thanked the Council for its collaboration during a challenging budget process, emphasizing fiscal difficulties faced statewide.

Greg Goodnight attended to answer questions.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS: Citizens' Comments (*Limited to 3 minutes per speaker*)

JD Masur, 6203 Carrington Drive:

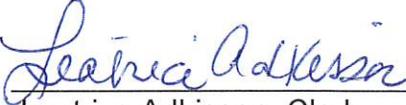
Commended council's work on the budget; discussed challenges related to non-taxable properties (DFAS, National Guard, State Park) and encouraged pursuit of state-level revenue solutions.

Chris Collier, 1105 Hermosa Drive:

Expressed concern over transparency, depletion of reserves, and lack of visible capital projects from ARPA funds. Supported decision not to raise elected officials' salaries.

ADJOURNMENT: Councilor Robinson called for adjournment. There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m., by President Robinson.


Betty Robinson, President


Leatrice Adkisson, Clerk

These minutes are not intended to be verbatim. They are a summary of discussions held, except for the motions.

Summary of Key Votes

Proposal	Description	Result
#8	Elected officials' compensation (3% raise for Clerk only)	Passed 9-0
#9	Police & Fire Department salaries	Passed 9-0
#10	City employees' salaries (3% COLA; removed vacant positions)	Passed 9-0
#11	Adoption of 2026 Amended Budget (Form 4)	Passed 7-2

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