

CITY OF WINONA
Regular City Council Meeting
520 Dallas St. Winona, TX
Tuesday, July 15th, 2025

MINUTES

On this 15th day of July 2025, the Winona City Council convened at the Community Center located at 520 Dallas St, Winona, Texas at 5:30 pm in a Regular City Council Meeting. The meeting was open to the public and the following were present:

Members Present: Mayor Rachel Moreno, Mayor Pro-Tem Dee Roden, Alderman Gary Fox, Alderman Shanna Clark, Alderman Luis Diaz, Alderman Terry Cole (arrived at 6:22pm)

Members Absent: none

Guest Present: Craig McCollum, illegible name, B. McDonald

A. CALL TO ORDER

FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS

Roll Call. Public notice of this meeting has been given, and a quorum is present.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & INVOCATION

At this time Mayor Rachel Moreno asked everyone to observe in the Pledge of Allegiance and Mayor Pro-Tem Dee Roden gave the invocation prayer.

C. VISITORS OPEN FORUM

No speakers at this time

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

April 21st, 2025, special Call; May 20th, 2025, Regular; and June 13th, 2025, Special Call meeting minutes.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dee Roden made the motion to approve April 21st, 2025, special Call minutes; May 20th, 2025, Regular minutes with spelling corrections on section F-2; and June 13th, 2025, Special Call meeting minutes and seconded by Alderman Shanna Clark.

All in favor; none opposed. Motion carried unanimously.

E. MONTHLY REPORTS OR UPDATES:

1. Utility Department

a) Monthly report: Updated by Craig McCollum. Changed more meters out at the school, almost all the school meters have now been changed except for the admin building. Shared the report from Glenn Trimble. The water loss for May was at 1% and the water loss for June was at 2.7%.

2. Park/City Beautification

Updated by Mayor Pro-Tem Dee Roden no updates at this meeting.

3. Mayor's Updates

a) Update on permits submitted for processing.

Updated by Mayor Rachel Moreno. Approved the Verizon Tower permit and work should be starting within the next 90 days.

b) Who would like to attend the TML Conference this year? It will be held in Ft Worth this year.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dee Roden, Alderman Shanna Clark, and maybe Alderman Luis Diaz, Mayor Rachel Moreno, and City Secretary Deana Powell

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- c) CERT (community emergency response team) training on August 16th and 30th from 9am-5pm at the Winona Community Center, 520 Dallas St, 20hr training program.**
Mayor Rachel Moreno explained the CERT Program. It will be put on by Brandon Moore with Smith County Emergency Management Coordinator. City to provide pizza for both all-day trainings.
- d) Park Stuff added**
We have added 6 trash cans around the park. We are waiting for the weather to paint the basketball/pickle ball court.
- e) Update from the GFOA Conference**
City Secretary and I attended the Government Finance conference in Washington D.C. that was a nationwide conference and learned a lot of great information that we have brought back with us and met quite a few people from other states and learned a lot from them as well.

F. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:

- 1. Discussion and possible action to approve a revised pretreatment ordinance for the wastewater treatment service.**
This item will be tabled until the August meeting.
- 2. Presentation of TDA Form A1024 CDBG Section 3 Goals and Concepts as related to the CDBG Program and Grant Contract Number CDV23-0264.**
All council members present were Mayor Pro-Tem Dee Roden, Alderman Gary Fox, Alderman Shanna Clark, Alderman Luis Diaz and all members have acknowledged receipt of the presentation and have all looked over said presentation without questions.
- 3. Discussion and possible action to accept the SC 911 budget for 2025/2026 as presented.**
Alderman Shanna Clark made the motion to accept the SC 911 Budget for 2025/2026 and seconded by Alderman Gary Fox.
All in favor; none opposed. Motion carried unanimously
- 4. Discussion and possible action on appointing someone to head the Park/City Beautification committee.**
Tabled from May meeting, we have sent out on the bill backer seeking community volunteers for two months in a row with no response for interest. We can utilize the high school students that need community service with their scholarship programs; the FFA are willing to be helping hands where needed, the smith county probation can be used for community service hours, the Winona little league is willing to help, along with the Women of Winona group that helps with the decorating of the park at Christmas.
Alderman Gary Fox made the motion to nominate Mayor Pro-Tem Dee Roden as the coordinator over the park and city beautification and seconded by Alderman Luis Diaz.
All in favor; none opposed. Motion carried unanimously.

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- 5. Discussion and possible action to adopt the new employee contribution rate of 8% through the TMRS system to go into effect as of September 1, 2025, and to update section 5.6 City Retirement Benefit section of the employee handbook according to the decision.**

Alderman Gary Fox made the motion to increase the employee contribution rate from the current 7% rate to the new 8% rate with TMRS to go into effect as of September 1st, 2025, and to update section 5.6 City Retirement Benefit section of the employee handbook to reflect this decision and seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Dee Roden.

All in favor; none opposed. Motion carried unanimously.

- 6. Discussion and possible action to approve road repairs and bids for Wildcat Dr and Church St.**

We had two bids come in for the repairs to Wildcat Dr. One from Rayford Truck and Tractor (currently doing the roads for the CDBG grant project) at \$57,000.00 to do a seal coat and chip rock overlay from Dallas St all the way to Johnson Rd. and the second bid came from AK Contracting, LLC at \$236,119.00 to grind up the road, put down new base and new asphalt from Dallas St. to Johnson Rd.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dee Roden made the motion to go with Rayford Truck and Tractor for \$57,000.00 and seconded by Alderman Luis Diaz.

All in favor; none opposed. Motion carried unanimously.

- 7. Discussion and possible action to hire Gina Duke full-time beginning August 1st, 2025, rate if pay and with full benefits and give the mayor permission to hire a part-time person for the afternoon shift, rate of pay, with benefit of holiday pay according to the employee handbook.**

This discussion went into executive session and motion was made back in regular session. Alderman Terry Cole made the motion to hire Gina Duke full time as utility clerk at \$18hr with full benefits and to hire a part-time afternoon clerk at \$7.25hr to work from 1-5 M-F with benefits of holiday pay according to the employee handbook and seconded by Alderman Shanna Clark.

All in favor; none opposed. Motion carried unanimously.

- 8. Discussion and possible action to approve by ordinance a new rate structure, to be effective immediately, from the town hall meeting presentation by TRWA and their review. To cover item G3 from June meeting agenda.**

This item went into executive session and motion was made back in regular session.

The rates presented to the council for approval are as follows:

Create a commercial tier rate structure and decrease the residential tier rates for both water and sewer. Suggesting that all base rates remain the same.

Residential water rates to be decreased starting with tier 2 2,001-6,000 gallons from \$6.00 per thousand to \$5.00 per thousand, tier 3 6,001-10,000 gallons from \$7.00 per thousand to \$6.00 per thousand, and tier 4 10,001-20,000 gallons from \$10.00 per thousand to \$9.00 per thousand, leaving tiers 1, 5, 6, and 7 as they are; and creating a commercial tier structure of tier 1 0-2,000 at \$9.00 per thousand, tier 2 2,001-6,000 at \$12.00 per thousand, tier 3 6,001-

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10,000 at \$14.00 per thousand, tier 4 10,001-20,000 at \$20.00 per thousand, tier 5 20,001-40,000 at \$24.00 per thousand, tier 6 40,001-60,000 at \$28.00 per thousand, and tier 7 60,001 gallons and up at \$32.00 per thousand.

Residential sewer rates to be decreased starting with tier 1 0-2,000 from \$7.00 per thousand to \$5.50 per thousand, tier 2 2,001-6,000 gallons from \$11.00 per thousand to \$9.50 per thousand, tier 3 6,001-10,000 gallons from \$13.00 per thousand to \$11.50 per thousand, tier 4 10,001-20,000 gallons from \$15.00 per thousand to \$13.50 per thousand, tier 5 20,001-40,000 gallons from \$17.00 per thousand to \$15.50 per thousand, tier 6 40,001-60,000 from \$19.50 per thousand to \$18.00 per thousand, and tier 6 from \$21.50 per thousand to \$20.00 per thousand, and creating a commercial tier structure of tier 1 0-2,000 at \$10.00 per thousand, tier 2 2,001-6,000 at \$22.00 per thousand, tier 3 6,001-10,000 at \$39.00 per thousand, tier 4 10,001-20,000 at \$45.00 per thousand, tier 5 20,001-40,000 at \$51.00 per thousand, tier 6 40,001-60,000 at \$58.50 per thousand, and tier 7 60,001 gallons and up at \$65.00 per thousand, and to have the schools sewer billed on one bill with one base rate at the largest meter that is tied to sewer services (currently \$350 base) for all flow to the city's wastewater plant less any irrigation meters. It is suggested that these new rates go into effect immediately to reflect on the next billing cycle.

Alderman Terry Cole made the motion to accept the new rates as presented and seconded by Alderman Gary Fox.

All in favor; none opposed. Motion carried unanimously.

- 9. Discussion and possible action to terminate the current legal services agreement with Birdsong and Armstrong, P.C. and to approve the engagement of Messer Fort, PLLC as the City of Winona's legal counsel for general legal representation, effective August 15th, 2025. This transition will include the transfer of all relevant case files, records, and ongoing legal matters to the new firm, subject to applicable confidentiality and client consent requirements.**

This discussion went into executive session and motion was made back in regular session.

Alderman Terry Cole made the motion to accept the termination of our current legal services with Birdsong and Armstrong, P.C. and to accept the engagement with Messer Fort, PLLC as the city's legal counsel for general legal representation, effective August 15th, 2025, and for all relevant case files, records, and ongoing legal matters to the new firm, subject to applicable confidentiality and client consent requirements and seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Dee Roden.

All in favor; none opposed. Motion carried unanimously.

G. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The City Council reserves the right to convene into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any of the matters listed above, as authorized by the Texas Open Meeting Act, Government Code, Section 551.071 (Consult with Attorney), 551.072 (Deliberations about Real Property), 551.073 (Deliberations about Gifts and Donations), 551.074 (Personal Matters), 551.076 (Deliberations about Security Devices), and 551.087 (Economic Development). This session is a closed session.

Mayor Rachel Moreno closed regular session at 6:19pm and opened the first executive session at 6:20pm to discuss the items listed below.

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1. Section 551.071(2) – the roles and duties of the mayor and the city council
2. Section 551.071(2) – city's responses to requests for access to documents by Councilmembers, including the request submitted by Councilmember Cole
3. Section 551.074 (1) – hiring of personnel Gina Duke and possible part time personnel.

Mayor Rachel Moreno closed the executive session at 7:39pm and reopened the regular session at 7:39pm.

Mayor Rachel Moreno closed the regular session at 7:49pm and reopened the executive session at 8:03pm to discuss the item listed below.

Alderman Luis Diaz, and Alderman Terry Cole recused themselves from this executive session for the reason of a conflict of interest.

4. Section 551.071(1) – litigation involving Nolan Farms, LLC v. City of Winona, Texas, Cause No. 23-2042-A, 7th District Court of Smith County, Texas

Mayor Rachel Moreno closed the executive session at 8:39pm and reopened the regular session at 8:39pm.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Shanna Clark made the motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:40pm.

Seconded by Alderman Gary Fox.

All in favor; none opposed. Motion carried unanimously.

With no further business to come before the council, this meeting was adjourned.

Rachel Moreno, Mayor

Deana Powell, City Secretary