CITY OF ARCOLA

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MINUTES

Arcola City Hall
13222 Highway 6
Arcola, Texas 77583

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2025

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MINUTES

6:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD

Mayor Veeda V. Williams called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

INVOCATION

Council Member Rosemary Bigby

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council Member Fred Burton

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr in Council Member Fred Burton's absence.

ROLL CALL

Mayor, Council Members and Administration

QUORUM PRESENT

City Council Members that were present.

Mayor Pro -Tem G. Abarr; Council Member E. Jones; Council Member R. Bigby; Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD

Absent: Council Member F. Jackson; Council Member F. Burton

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS

GENERAL AUDIENCE. Citizens who desire to address the City Council with comments of a general nature will be received at this time. The total amount of time that a member of the public may address the City Council is limited to three (3) minutes, provided that any member of the public who addresses the City Council through a translator is limited to six (6) minutes. In accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, the City Council is restricted from discussing or taking any action on items not listed on the agenda. It is our policy to have all speakers identify themselves by providing their name and residential address when making comments.

CONSENT AND REGULAR AGENDA ITEM. Citizens who desire to address the City Council, with regard to matters on the Consent Agenda or Regular Agenda will be received either at this time or, if they state at this time that they elect to do so, during the City Council's consideration of the item. The total amount of time that a member of the public may address the City Council on a given item is limited to three (3) minutes, provided that any member of the public who addresses the City Council on a given item through a translator is limited to six (6) minutes. Comments or discussion by the City Council Members will only be made at the time the agenda item is scheduled for consideration. It is our policy to have all speakers identify themselves by providing their name and residential address when making comments.

II. CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 551.0415 of the Texas Government Code, the City Council of the City of Arcola may receive reports about items of community interest from City staff and/or a member of the City Council, but no action or possible action shall be taken or discussed concerning the subject of such report, except as provided by Section 551.042 of the Texas Government Code.

Mayor Veeda Williams, Council Member Evelyn Jones, Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr, and Council Member Rosemary Bigby.

Mayor Williams recognized council member rosemary Bigby, who expressed concern about road conditions on north pine street, noting there was a large pothole that drivers had to navigate around. Council member Bigby asked if the issue could be addressed. Mayor Williams responded that this would be part of a larger street project that would address the issue, rather than just patching it.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

All Consent Agenda items listed are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council Member requests, in which event the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

A. Consideration of and Action on the approval of the minutes of the workshop on Monday, September 08, 2025 and regular meeting on Tuesday, September 09, 2025 and special meeting Tuesday, September 16, 2025. ***Ingrid Flornoy, City Secretary***

B. Consideration of and Action to approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Fort Bend County Homeland Security and Emergency Management. ***Arika Carr-Bryant, Police Chief***

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Approve** all items on the consent agenda. Council Member Evelyn Jones seconded the motion. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

IV. PRESENTATIONS (INFORMATION ONLY)

A. September 2025 Permit Monthly Report- ***Marquis Walker***

B. City Engineer Report- ***Llarance Turner, Kaluza, Inc.***

C. Officer Commendation Awards- ***Arika Carr-Bryant, Police Chief***

D. State of the City- ***Mayor Veeda. V. Williams, PhD***

V. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

A. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve the September 2025 Municipal Operations and Consulting (MOC) report. ***Roland Leal, MOC Area Manager Operations***

Roland Leal, MOC Area Manager Operations, presented the September 2025 report. He reported 982 water connections and 1,931 sewer connections (688 being from Freshwater 1). The city well produced 7,447,000 gallons, with 7,308,000 gallons billed, representing 98% accountability. There were 71 delinquent water and sewer accounts, 51 sewer-only delinquent accounts, and one plugged account. Total revenue was $161,317.74.

The wastewater treatment plant had 2.85 inches of rain and was operating at 38% of permitted capacity. Mr. Leal reported total gallons flowing through the sewer plant from the city of Arcola was 11,284,000 with a daily average flow of 364,000 gallons. Freshwater 1 contributed 4,849,300 gallons with a daily average of 156,429 gallons.

Mr. Leal also presented information on uncollectible accounts, noting one water and sewer account (a renter) with $535.38 outstanding after deposit application, and one sewer account with a zero balance after deposit application.

Mayor Pro- Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Approve** the operator's report. Council Member Evelyn Jones seconded the motion. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

B. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve an extension of the sewer line to the Maintenance Department’s building not to exceed $5,066.91 (Enterprise Fund). ***Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD***

Mayor Williams explained that this item was to extend a sewer line from the maintenance building to connect to the city's sewer system, as the building currently lacks this connection.

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Approve** the extension of the sewer line to the maintenance trailer. Council Member Rosemary Bigby seconded the motion. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

C. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve the Fiscal Year 2024 Financial Audit conducted by **BrooksWatson & Co., PLLC**. ***Dr. Annette Goldberg, City Administrator***

Dr. Annette Goldberg, City Administrator, introduced John Watson, President of Brooks Watson and Company LLC, who performed the audit.

Mr. Watson presented a comprehensive overview of the FY 2024 audit, explaining that it was conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. He noted that the City received an unmodified opinion, which is the highest level of assurance a CPA can provide.

Key financial highlights included:

- The City's net position was $21,610,167, an increase of approximately $681,000 for the year
- Governmental funds had a combined ending fund balance of about $3,800,000, an increase of about $402,000
- Unassigned fund balance for the general fund was $3,369,000, about 72% of total general fund expenditures
- Net pension liability decreased by $39,113 to $44,872

Mr. Watson provided a detailed breakdown of governmental revenues and expenses, as well as the water and sewer proprietary fund performance. He noted that the water and sewer fund had an operating loss of approximately $132,000, suggesting this was an area for consideration.

Regarding the City's pension, Mr. Watson reported a funded ratio of 92.37%, up from 83.17% the previous year and well above the national average of 78.1%. He mentioned that the contribution rates decreased from 3.7% to 3.23% of payroll.

Mr. Watson also noted two audit letters with standard required communications and mentioned that GASB 101, a new accounting standard affecting how accrued sick time is accounted for, would be applicable in the coming year.

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Accept** the 2024 financial audit report. Council Member Evelyn Jones seconded the motion. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

D. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action on the approval of the City of Arcola Comprehensive Financial Policy. ***Dr. Annette Goldberg, City Administrator***

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr noted that he, Dr. Goldberg, and Finance had been working on this policy but identified some items that needed modification. He recommended tabling this item until the next council meeting.

Council Member Evelyn Jones made a motion to **Table** the item until the next meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr seconded the motion. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

E. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action on the Quarterly Investment Report for Fiscal Year 2025 (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4). ***Dr. Annette Goldberg, City Administrator***

Dr. Annette Goldberg presented the quarterly investment reports for all four quarters of FY 2025:

First Quarter (Oct-Dec 2024):

- Ending balance of $6,876,870
- Total interest: $86,594
- Average interest rates: Oct (4.91%), Nov (4.73%), Dec (4.5%)

Second Quarter (Jan-Mar 2025):

- Ending balance of $7,554,423
- Total interest: $74,607.67
- Combined interest for Q1-Q2: $161,361
- Average interest rates: Jan (4.39%), Feb (4.35%), Mar (4.33%)

Third Quarter (Apr-Jun 2025):

- Ending balance of $7,528,726
- Total interest: $86,611
- Combined interest for Q1-Q3: $248,042

Fourth Quarter (Jul-Sep 2025):

- Ending balance of $12,208,584 (including a new fund for Certificate of Obligation Improvement Projects issued in July)
- Total interest: $134,683
- Total interest for all quarters: $382,724

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Approve** the investment report. Council Member Rosemary Bigby seconded the motion. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

F. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to amend the city's **Purchasing Policy** to reflect the changes in Senate Bill 1173 of the 89th Legislation Session, taking competitive bidding requirements from $50,000 to $100,000. ***Dr. Annette Goldberg, City Administrator***

Dr. Goldberg explained that this amendment would align the city's purchasing policy with changes in Senate Bill 1173 from the 89th Legislative Session, which increased the competitive bidding requirement threshold from $50,000 to $100,000.

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Approve** the updated purchase policy. Council Member Rosemary Bigby seconded the motion. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

G. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve a contract with **Ballew Construction** for ditch rehab, grading, drainage, and base material at the Wellness Park not to exceed $79,492.58 (AMMD Development Agreement). ***Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD and Llarance Turner, Kaluza Inc.***

Mayor Williams introduced the item and asked Llarance Turner from Kaluza Inc. to provide details on the scope of work. Mr. Turner explained that the project would include:

- Creating access from the existing paved area to the south
- Installing base material to stabilize the subgrade
- Installing a drainage culvert leading from the existing paved area south to Macnicoll Street
- Creating a drainage ditch along the south property line to channel water runoff
- Grading the entire area

Mayor Williams expressed her excitement about finally beginning work on the Wellness Park.

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Approve** the contract with Ballard Construction for the work at the wellness park. Council Member Evelyn Jones seconded the motion. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

Mayor Williams commented that her "dreams are finally coming to reality" and expressed appreciation for being able to move forward with this project.

H. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve an ordinance relating to council meeting date and hours: amending Subsection (A) of Section 2.04.010 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Arcola, Texas; and containing findings and provisions relating to the subject. ***Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD***

Mayor Williams explained that this ordinance would clarify the city's meeting schedule. The current language specifies that workshops are held on the second Monday of each month, but this doesn't always align with the Tuesday council meetings. The ordinance would also clarify that if a regularly scheduled meeting falls on a holiday, it would be held on the following Tuesday.

Council Member Evelyn Jones made a motion to **Approve** the ordinance related to council meeting dates and hours, amending subsection A of section 2.04.0.01 of the code of ordinance of the city of Arcola, Texas. Council Member Rosemary Bigby seconded the motion. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

VI. <u>CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS</u>

A. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve a contract with **BrooksWatson & Co., PLLC** for auditing services for Fiscal Year 2025 not to exceed $42,150.00 (General Fund). ***Dr. .Annette Goldberg, City Administrator***

Dr. Goldberg explained that BrooksWatson & Co. had performed exceptionally well and helped improve the city's processes. The basic audit would cost $34,650, with an additional $7,500 for a single audit if the city received over $700,000 in grants, for a total not to exceed $42,150.

Mayor Williams added that the firm conducted a deep dive audit as previously requested by the council.

Council Member Evelyn Jones made a motion to **<u>Approve</u>** BrooksWatson and Company PLLC for services for fiscal year 2025 not to exceed $42,150. Council Member Rosemary Bigby seconded the motion. The motion **<u>Passed</u>** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

B. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve a licensing agreement with **True North Software** to provide Records Management System services not to exceed the amount of $15,000.00 (General Fund). ***Arika Carr-Bryant, Police Chief***

Police Chief Arika Carr-Bryant explained that this software was budgeted to provide a new records management system for police vehicles. The system will provide GPS tracking and interfacing with Fort Bend County's system, allowing officers to complete their work from their vehicles.

Mayor Williams noted that this represented a transfer from one system to another at a comparable price.

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **<u>Approve</u>** the license agreement with True North Software not to exceed $15,000. Council Member Evelyn Jones seconded the motion. The motion **<u>Passed</u>** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

C. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve an agreement with **True North Software** for annual maintenance services not to exceed the amount of $5,000.00 starting Fiscal Year 2027 (General Fund). ***Arika Carr-Bryant, Police Chief***

Police Chief Arika Carr-Bryant explained that this was for the annual maintenance of the records management system, which would not start until the next fiscal year. She noted that the cost is significantly lower than the maintenance costs for the current system.

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Approve** the licensing agreement with True North Software for annual maintenance not to exceed $5,000. Council Member Evelyn Jones seconded the motion. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

D. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve an agreement with **iWORQ Systems Inc.** for permitting software not to exceed $15,000.00 (General Fund). ***Arika Carr-Bryant, Police Chief***

Police Chief Arika Carr-Bryant explained that this software would allow necessary changes to the permitting system, making it more user-friendly for citizens. The system would consolidate code enforcement, fire marshal, and permits under one system.

Mayor Williams added that this was another case of transferring from one system to another at a comparable price.

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Approve** the agreement with iWords System Inc for software not to exceed $15,000. Council Member Evelyn Jones seconded the motion. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Mayor Williams noted that these changes were part of ongoing efforts to improve processes and make the city more effective and efficient. She added that the cities of Stafford and Iowa Colony also use this software, providing Arcola with sister cities to turn to for guidance if needed.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

VII. CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

The City Council will convene into Closed Executive Session as authorized under Section 551.071 of the Texas Government Code for:

A. Consultation with Attorney. City Council may consult its attorney about contemplated litigation and matters in which the duty of the City Attorney requires the discussion to be conducted in close executive session.

a. 5424 Ladonia- Utility Tap Fees

RECESS: At 6:54 PM, Mayor Williams announced that the City Council would convene into Closed Executive Session as authorized under Section 551.071 of the Texas Government Code for Consultation with Attorney.

PRESENT

All Members of City Council were Present.
Council Member E. Jones; Mayor Pro-Tem G. Abarr; Council Member R. Bigby;
Mayor Veeda Williams; Annette Goldberg, City Administrator; David Olson, City Attorney; and Ingrid Flornoy, City Secretary

VIII. COUNCIL ADJOURNS CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION AND RECONVENES INTO REGULAR SESSION

A. Council Members may take possible action on matters discussed in Closed Executive Session. ***David Olson, City Attorney***

RECONVENED: The Mayor Williams reconvened into the regular meeting at 7:13 p.m. with no action taken after closed executive session.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 pm. Motion to **Adjourn** was made by Council Member Rosemary Bigby and seconded by Council Member Evelyn Jones **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, and Council Member R. Bigby

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 3-0

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Ingrid Flornoy