



CITY OF ARCOLA

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MINUTES

Arcola City Hall
13222 Highway 6
Arcola, Texas 77583

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 09, 2025

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MINUTES

6:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD

Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

INVOCATION

Council Member Evelyn Jones

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council Member Fred Burton

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; Council Member Fred Burton; Council Member Florence Jackson and Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD

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.

1) Fred Burton

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 V. Williams, PhD, Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr, Council Member Evelyn Jones, Council Member Florence Jackson, Council Member Fred Burton, and Council Member Rosemary Bigby.

Council Member Evelyn Jones- she praised the Mayor for being accessible to citizens with problems and for working hard to do what's best for the city. Jones also expressed concern about council members acting in ways that make themselves "look bad" and suggested they should think of others rather than themselves.

Council Member Rosemary Bigby- clarified that she had inquired about Burton's shirt because she knew Annette had ordered shirts, and she didn't know if Burton had contacted Annette about ordering one. She explained that there's a protocol for ordering shirts and suggested that Burton hadn't followed it.

Council Member Fred Burton- Burton emphasized that council members should not address public comments directly as they are not typically agenda items and are not intended for direct discussion from the council.

Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD- responded that public comments often contain misinformation, and she wants to ensure residents receive accurate information on the record.

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 to approve the minutes of the workshop on Monday, November 17, 2025 and regular meeting on Tuesday, November 18, 2025. *Ingrid Flornoy, City Secretary*

Council Member Evelyn Jones made a motion to **Approve** the minutes of the workshop on Monday, November 17, 2025 and regular meeting on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, seconded by Council Member Rosemary Bigby. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

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

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 5-0

IV. **PRESENTATIONS (INFORMATION ONLY)**

- A. Level III Court Clerck Certificate Presentation to Jennifer Huhn- *Patricia Riffel, Director of the Municipal Court*
- B. November 2025 Permit Monthly Report- *Marquis Walker, Permit Administrator*

Marquis Walker presented the November 2025 permit report, noting a total of 15 permits issued: 1 electrical permit, 6 building permits, 2 plumbing permits, 2 fence permits, 3 commercial vendor permits, and 1 COVID permit.

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

Llarance Turner provided an update on ongoing construction projects. He reported that the Arcola water plant expansion is proceeding on schedule, with the ring wall installed and vertical construction set to begin soon. The project is expected to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2026. Turner also mentioned that the lift station number 3 rehabilitation is complete, with dewatering underway before installing the new sanitary sewer line.

Regarding design projects, Turner noted that the 4.1 expansion permit is still awaiting TCEQ approval with a draft permit released. The relocation of utilities for 521 has plans nearly complete, pending right-of-way acquisition. The expansion from 1.4 to 1.8 plans are approximately 70% complete. Additionally, design plans for street bids are being prepared.

- D. Community Beautification Project- *Jamesetta Randle, Police Department Administrative Assistant*

Jamesetta Randle presented information about the community beautification project, which aims to help residents who cannot afford permit fees to improve their homes. The project will use federal income guidelines to determine eligibility, with decisions made by a five-person committee including a city employee, a homeowner, a council member, and residents of Arcola. Randle emphasized that the process would be fair and based on need rather than favoritism.

During discussion, it was clarified that the project would only involve waiving permit fees for eligible residents, not performing actual work on properties. Residents would still need to hire their own contractors for the work. Council Member Jones expressed concern that older residents might be reluctant to provide personal information for the application process.

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

Mayor Williams provided an update on recent city activities, including a successful Thanksgiving food distribution that helped 100 families with both Thanksgiving dinner and a week's worth of groceries. She announced an upcoming senior brunch on December 18 from 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM, noting the popularity of bingo and other activities with senior residents.

The Mayor also reported progress at the wellness park, with asphalt work completed and plans for fencing, landscaping, and luxury restroom facilities underway. She mentioned that council members had toured the water plant construction site and that tank construction is tentatively scheduled to begin January 12, taking approximately one week to complete.

V. **REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS**

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

Roland Leal presented the November 2025 MOC report for the billing period of October 15 through November 14. He reported 992 total connections, with 19 vacant, and 1,929 total sewer connections, including 688 from Freshwater 1. The water plant produced 7,495,000 gallons with 7,480,000 gallons billed, resulting in 100% accountability. There were 99 delinquent water and sewer accounts and 59 delinquent sewer-only accounts. The wastewater treatment plant was operating in compliance at 33% of permitted capacity with 3.25 inches of rain recorded for the period. The plant processed 9,858,000 gallons from Arcola and 4,749,000 gallons from Freshwater 1. Leal requested approval for one uncollectible sewer-only account totaling \$443.50 after the deposit was applied.

Motion made by Council Member Fred Burton to **Approve** the November 2025 Municipal Operations and Consulting report, seconded by Council Member Evelyn Jones. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, Council Member R. Bigby, Council Member F. Jackson, and Council Member F. Burton
Nay: 0 Motion Carried 5-0

B. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve Rate Order and the proposed Utility Policy. *Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD*

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr presented a proposed utility policy for handling delinquent accounts. For water and sewer accounts, the policy states that after one month of delinquency, MOC will mail a delinquent notice; after two months, they will mail a cutoff notice; and if payment isn't made within 30 days of the cutoff notice, service will be terminated. To reconnect, customers must pay all back fees, a \$350 reconnection fee, any additional charges, and an increased deposit of \$150.

For wastewater-only accounts, the policy allows more time: one month of delinquency triggers a delinquent notice; two months triggers a second notice; three months triggers a cutoff notice; and if not paid within 30 days of the cutoff notice, service will be terminated. If services are physically discontinued, there is a reconnection fee equal to the city's costs for discontinuing and reconnecting services. Reconnection requires payment of all charges plus back bills, with a minimum fee of \$350.

The policy also addresses illegal connections to the wastewater system, assessing a fee of \$1,500 plus costs for illegal taps.

Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr to **Approve** the Rate Order and proposed Utility Policy, seconded by Council Member Rosemary Bigby. The motion **Passed**.

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

Nay: Council Member Fred Burton Motion Carried 4-1

VI. CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

- A.** Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action concerning current contract with Teksync Technologies for landline phone service. *Arika Carr-Bryant, Police Chief*

The motion to move to executive session for discussion agenda items VI. A and VI. B was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr, seconded by Council Member Evelyn Jones. Motion **Passed** unanimously.

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

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 5-0

After returning from executive session, the Council took the following action:

Motion to instruct the attorney to write a letter with the intention of terminating the contract with Teksync Technology for lack of performance was made by Mayor Pro Tem Greg Abarr, seconded by Council Member Rosemary Bigby. Motion **Passed** unanimously.

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

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 5-0

- B.** Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve a contract with **Airespring** for landline phone service not to exceed \$800.00 monthly (General Fund). *Arika Carr-Bryant, Police Chief*

Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr to **Table** discussion for a contact with Airespring for landline services, seconded by Council Member Rosemary Bigby.
Motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, Council Member R. Bigby, Council Member F. Jackson, and Council Member F. Burton
Nay: 0 Motion Carried 5-0

VII. ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

- A. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ARCOLA, TEXAS ESTABLISHING THE COMPENSATION FOR THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS; AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR OR DESIGNEE TO AMEND THE CITY BUDGET TO ACCOUNT FOR ANY SUCH COMPENSATION; REPEALING ALL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
Council Members Evelyn Jones and Rosemary Bigby

Council Member Jones presented the ordinance to establish compensation for council members, explaining that it had been discussed previously but never finalized. The proposed compensation would be \$100 for any special meetings beyond the regular council meeting and workshop. Jones noted that the Mayor had declined to be included in this compensation.

City Attorney David Olson clarified that while the council could approve changes to compensation before the end of the calendar year, the changes would not take effect for any council member until after they had been through an election cycle. Council members who are up for election in May 2026 would receive the compensation after being sworn in following that election, while those not up for election until May 2027 would have to wait until after that election.

Motion made by Council Member Evelyn Jones to **Approve** an ordinance establishing compensation for the Mayor and Council Members, seconded by Council Member Rosemary Bigby. The motion **Passed**.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, Council Member R. Bigby, Council Member F. Jackson
Nay: Council Member Fred Burton Motion Carried 4-1

VIII. DISCUSSION ONLY ITEMS

- A. City Hall Electronic Sign- *Council Members Evelyn Jones and Rosemary Bigby*
B. Arcola Community Estates- *Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD*

The motion to move to executive session for discussion agenda items VIII. A and VIII. B was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr, seconded by Council Member Evelyn Jones. Motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro- Tem G. Abarr, Council Member E. Jones, Council Member R. Bigby, Council Member F. Jackson, and Council Member F. Burton Nay: 0 Motion Carried 5-0

IX. 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.

RECESS: At 6:56 p.m., 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.

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

X. 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: Mayor Williams reconvened into the regular meeting at 7:21 p.m. with action taken on agenda items VI. A and VI. B as noted above. No action was taken on agenda items VIII. A and VIII. B.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m. Motion to **Adjourn** was made by Mayor Pro- Tem Greg Abarr and seconded by Council Member Rosemary Bigby **Passed** unanimously.

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

Nay: 0 Motion Carried 5-0

Ingrid Flornoy, City Secretary

