



CITY OF ARCOLA

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MINUTES

Arcola City Hall
13222 Highway 6
Arcola, Texas 77583

TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2026

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

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 Rosemary Bigby

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 Greg 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) Ana Meuseses- Lara - addressed the council regarding recent events at a town hall meeting. She stated that Council Member Evelyn Jones had made defamatory statements about her during the recent town hall meeting, which she characterized as slander and libel, and questioned why Jones remained on city council despite this conduct.
- 2) Heliodoro "Elio" Lara – Mr. Lara's wife Ana Meuseses-Lara translated for him stating the following: Elio Lara followed with a formal request citing city ordinance number O-2025-04-03, section 12.040.02 regarding council rules of procedure, order, and decorum. He quoted the ordinance stating that the presiding officer must preserve order and prevent personal attacks, and that no council member shall use language that is personally offensive or brings contempt upon others. Based on these rules, he formally requested that Council Member Evelyn Jones step down from city council for slandering his wife, embarrassing Mrs. Burton, and disgracing his family by suggesting his wife was someone's girlfriend during the public meeting.

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 Burton offered a personal apology to the speakers on behalf of the city of Arcola for what he characterized as embarrassing conduct by the council. He agreed that Council Member Jones should step down, expressing concern that such statements could lead to community members making assumptions and passing judgment when seeing the family around their neighborhood. Burton emphasized that the original town hall meeting was meant to address a neighborhood issue brought to his attention, and that listening to constituents is part of his job as a council member.

Council Member Jones acknowledged that she had come to the meeting prepared to apologize for the heated exchange at the previous town hall meeting, explaining that she "can't stand lies too much." While she apologized for her conduct, she maintained that she "didn't say anything that was not true" and stated she would not step down from her position.

Council Member Bigby observed that the previous meeting had gotten out of hand and that inappropriate things were said by various parties. She noted that Council Member Burton had also made inappropriate comments toward her in the past, calling her names, but said she could deal with such behavior. She acknowledged that people get heated and say inappropriate things during tense discussions.

Mayor Williams expressed disappointment that the city of Arcola had become known for such conduct and hoped that all council members would abide by rules of decorum going forward. She noted that the council had seen many untrue accusations over time, including allegations of the administration stealing money and various personal attacks, and hoped they could move forward focusing on city business.

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, February 09, 2026, and regular meeting on Tuesday, February 10, 2026. *Ingrid Flornoy, City Secretary*

Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Approve** the minutes of the workshop on Monday, February 09, 2026, and regular meeting on Tuesday, February 10, 2026, seconded by Council Member Evelyn Jones. The motion **Passed** unanimously.

Ayes: Mayor Pro-Tem Greg 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. February 2026 Permit Monthly Report- *Marquis Walker, Permit Administrator – Included in backup*
- B. City Engineer Report- *Llarance Turner, Kaluza, Inc. – Included in backup*
- C. State of the City- *Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD*

Mayor Williams reported that the state of the city is very good, with Arcola attracting new investments. The city is focusing on programs for healthcare, youth, and transportation. Meetings for the Howell Street repair project are delayed due to scheduling issues with property owners. Williams plans to propose identity markers for subdivisions like Pinedale Manor and Arcola Farms, with the south end yet to choose a name. The wellness park is on schedule, awaiting a new gate. The new Amy Coleman Middle School will open in fall 2026. Traffic and sidewalk concerns near Post Oak Pointe are handled by other entities and are outside the city's control. Traffic issues on FM 521 are improving with ongoing police assistance. Political candidate forums will not be hosted at city hall. After mold remediation on the maintenance building, the city opted for repairs over new construction, saving money with repairs through April 3rd. Martin Marietta will fix the fence in Pinedale Manor by April 30th to address dust and noise issues. Mayor Pro-Tem Abarr praised Williams for securing a county-funded community center and full ownership of a nearly \$3 million water plant.

V. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

- A. Discussion, Consideration of and Possible Action to approve the February 2026 Municipal Operations and Consulting (MOC) report. *Roland Leal, MOC Area Manager Operations*

MOC Area Manager Roland Leal reported 988 water connections for February 2026 with 18 vacant, 688 sewer connections from Freshwater 1, and total sewer connections of 1,929 to the city's treatment plant. The water plant produced 6.372 million gallons while billing 6.107 million gallons for 96% accountability. Delinquent accounts included 107 water and sewer accounts and 54 sewer-only accounts with none being plugged. Total revenue was \$130,177.73.

The wastewater treatment plant operated at 36% permitted capacity with samples in compliance - 15% flow from Freshwater 1 and 21% from Arcola. All monitoring parameters remained well within permitted limits.

Leal requested approval for one return payment for a cutoff in the amount of \$128.75. He also reported that TCEQ conducted a field inspection following an odor complaint, finding no violations and determining the plant was operating properly. The smell issue was traced to Gulf Coast Water Authority's work that required damming the creek longer than planned, causing stagnant water and fish die-off. The problem has since been resolved.

Council Member Burton inquired about a water leak in Post Oak Point over the weekend. Leal was not aware of the specific incident but offered to investigate and check service lines in the area.

A council member asked about the variance between water produced and billed. Leal explained that flushing required by TCEQ and any unmetered water loss account for the difference, noting that the district's 96% accountability rate is very good compared to industry standards above 88%.

City Engineer Turner mentioned that Gulf Coast Water Authority plans to replace a culvert under McKeever Road in the future, which could potentially cause similar issues if contractors exceed allocated timeframes. He emphasized the importance of advance notification to prevent problems like the previous 3-4 week canal shutdown that caused odor issues.

Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Approve** the cutoff request made by Roland Leal, 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

Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Approve** the February 2026 MOC 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 the amendment of the Flower Policy Ordinance to increase the purchase amount to \$200.00 (General Fund). *Dr. Annette Goldberg, City Administrator*

City Secretary Ingrid Flornoy explained that this amendment increases the flower policy spending limit from \$150 to \$200 due to increased pricing.

Council Member Rosemary Bigby made a motion to **Approve** to amend the flower policy, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr. 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

VI. CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

- A.** Discussion, consideration of and possible action to award the construction contract to **Craig and Heidt, Inc.** for the **Howell Street, Howell Court, Peach Lane, Greg Street, West Davis Street, North Street, and Sears Road Pavement Rehabilitation**, City of Arcola, Fort Bend County, Texas, in an amount not to exceed \$612,049.35 (Certificate of Obligation). *Llarance Turner, Kaluza, Inc.*

City Engineer Llarance Turner reported that bids were opened February 19th with six contractors submitting proposals. After reviewing all bids for accuracy, Kaluza, Inc. recommend awarding the contract to Craig and Heidt for \$612,049.35. The company has previous experience working in Fort Bend County and the Gulf Coast area.

Mayor Pro-Tem Abarr asked about timing for one street requiring additional approval. Turner explained that contractors would work on other streets first while waiting for authorization on the remaining street, providing approximately one to two months for resolution.

Council Member Burton questioned whether the engineer had conducted a citywide assessment or only examined streets specified by Mayor Williams. Turner confirmed he evaluated the streets as directed by the administration.

Council Member Evelyn Jones made a motion to **Approve** to award the construction contract to Craig and Heidt for the Howell Street, Howell Court, Peach Lane, Greg Street, West Davis Street, North Street, and Sears Road pavement rehabilitation not to exceed \$612,049.35, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr. The motion **Passed**.

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

Nay: Fred Burton Motion Carried 4-1

- B. Discussion, consideration of and possible action to award the construction contract to **TECA** for the **West Fork Chocolate Bayou Drainage Improvements from FM 521 to South Pine**, City of Arcola, Fort Bend County, Texas in an amount not to exceed \$272,510.26 (Certificate of Obligation). *Llarance Turner, Kaluza, Inc.*

Turner reported that six bidders submitted proposals for this drainage project opened February 19th. TECA Construction submitted the low bid of \$272,510.26. While Kaluza had not worked with this contractor previously, reference checks revealed no negative feedback about their work quality.

Mayor Pro-Tem Abarr asked about increased inspection oversight for the new contractor. Turner assured that all contractors receive the same level of scrutiny and inspection regardless of previous working relationships, following a "trust but verify" approach.

Mayor Williams questioned the timeline from project approval in August 2025 to current bidding. Turner explained that governmental procurement procedures require specific steps including plan development, twice-published advertisements, pre-bid meetings, and coordination with council meeting schedules, typically taking about 60 days from bid opening to council approval.

Turner described the project scope as primarily debris removal, tree removal, and cleaning high spots in the drainage channel. He noted ongoing challenges with property owners building obstructions across the drainage way, requiring vigilant monitoring and maintenance after completion.

Council Member Evelyn Jones made a motion to **Approve** to award the construction contract TECA for the West Fork Chocolate Bayou drainage improvement from FM 521 to South Pine, City of Arcola, Fort Bend County, Texas in an amount not to exceed \$272,510.26, 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

- C. Discussion, consideration of and possible action to approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Houston- Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) to participate in the H-GAC Funding Development Program for assistance with grant readiness and funding opportunities. *Airka Carr-Bryant, Police Chief*

Police Chief Airka Carr-Bryant explained that H-GAC launched this program in October to help municipalities with grant planning, identification, and application processes. The program includes classes and guidance at no cost to the city. H-GAC has expressed strong interest in the city's community engagement initiative program.

Council Member Evelyn Jones made a motion to **Approve** a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Houston- Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) to participate in the H-GAC Funding

Development Program for assistance with grant readiness and funding opportunities, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr. The motion **Passed**.

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

- D.** Discussion, consideration of and possible action to approve the JOINT ELECTION AGREEMENT AND CONTRACT FOR ELECTION SERVICES between Fort Bend County and the City of Arcola for a joint May 2, 2026 election (General Fund). *Ingrid Flornoy, City Secretary*

City Secretary Ingrid Flornoy explained that Fort Bend County Elections Administration will handle all election services for the May 2nd election. She noted that she had not yet received confirmation of the main polling location for Arcola since Mustang Center is closed for renovations, but all current location information remains preliminary and subject to change.

Council Member Evelyn Jones made a motion to **Approve** the JOINT ELECTION AGREEMENT AND CONTRACT FOR ELECTION SERVICES between Fort Bend County and the City of Arcola for a joint May 2, 2026 election, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr. 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

VII. ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

- A.** Discussion, consideration of and possible action to adopt a resolution establishing the City Council of the City of Arcola, Texas position on a pending community-related matter. *Mayor Veeda V. Williams, PhD*

Mayor Williams explained that this resolution would clarify the city's position regarding a facility coming to Pinedale Manor, emphasizing that the city does not support fighting the facility or language suggesting it would bring the neighborhood down. She stated that previous statements were made by an individual council member taking a personal stance based on residency, not representing the city's position. The city's official position is compliance with federal law and non-discrimination.

Mayor Williams requested council authorization for the city attorney to draft a resolution for the next meeting clarifying this position.

Council Member Evelyn Jones made a motion to **Approve** to the city attorney to draft a resolution for the next meeting clarifying the city's position on community-related matters, seconded by Council Member Rosemary Bigby. The motion **Passed**.

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

Nay: Fred Burton Motion Carried 4-1

VIII. CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

The City Council will convene into Closed Executive Session as authorized under Sections 551.071 and 551.074 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. Arcola Digital Sign
 - b. Previous Firm
 - c. Residential Plumbing reimbursement
- B. **Personnel Matters.** The City Council will deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of (Section 551.074).

RECESS: At 7:02 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

Following Members of City Council were Present:

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

IX. 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 7:16 p.m. with action Arcola digital sign and residential plumbing reimbursement, and there was no action taken on the previous firm.

Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Authorize** to authorize the city attorney to pursue getting the return of the Arcola digital sign, 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

Mayor Pro-Tem Greg Abarr made a motion to **Approve** the payment for repairs of the wastewater collection line on West Davis for the amount of \$550, 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

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m. Motion to **Adjourn** was made by Council Member Rosemary Bigby and 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

Ingrid Flornoy, City Secretary

