

# HEWITT TEXAS

## CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP/REGULAR MEETING

March 2, 2026, at 6:00 PM

Hewitt Public Library, 200 Patriot Court, Hewitt, TX 76643

### MINUTES

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**Steve Fortenberry**, Mayor: Ward 3, – **Erica Bruce**, Mayor Pro Tem: Ward 3  
**Michael S. Bancale**, Council Member: At-Large – **Johnny Stephens**, Council Member: Ward 1  
**Bob Potter**, Council Member: Ward 2 – **Brad Turner**, Council Member: Ward 1  
**Vacant Seat**, Council Member: Ward 2

#### WORKSHOP MEETING - 6:00 PM

#### WORKSHOP DECLARATION OF A QUORUM AND CALL TO ORDER

*Mayor Steve Fortenberry called the Workshop Meeting to order at 6:05 p.m., announced all members were present, and declared a quorum.*

#### WORKSHOP AGENDA

1. Presentation and discussion concerning Animal Control Operations.  
*Police Chief John McGrath presented a statistical summary of Animal Control calls and discussed staff efforts to keep animals out of the shelter. He reviewed the costs of transporting animals to the Animal Shelter and proposed operational improvements, including adding a microchip program and a spay-and-neuter partnership with the Animal Birth Control Clinic. Chief McGrath also reported that work was underway to construct the temporary holding shelter approved in the budget, which will help staff manage animals locally and reduce the high costs associated with transporting them to the shelter.*
2. Presentation and discussion regarding the distinction between Fire Department service responses, specifically mutual aid and automatic aid.  
*Fire Chief Jonathan Christian summarized the key differences and advantages of mutual aid and automatic aid. Chief Christian also discussed fire service coverage within the Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ).*

#### WORKSHOP ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION:** Mayor Pro Tem Erica Bruce moved to adjourn the Workshop meeting at 6:45 p.m.

**SECOND:** Council Member Bob Potter

**AYES:** Bancale, Potter, Stephens, Turner, Bruce, and Fortenberry

**NAYES:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**MOTION PASSED.**

## REGULAR MEETING - 7:00 PM

### DECLARATION OF A QUORUM AND CALL TO ORDER

*Mayor Steve Fortenberry called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., announced all members were present, and declared a quorum.*

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

*Mayor Steve Fortenberry led the Pledge of Allegiance.*

### SPECIAL PRESENTATION(S) AND RECOGNITION(S)

3. Presentation of Hewitt's 2025 Racial Profiling Report.

*Police Chief John McGrath highlighted the report and noted that it validated the Hewitt Police Department's full compliance with the state racial profiling statutes regarding prevention policies, data collection, vehicle search analysis, and reporting.*

4. Presentation and recognition of the Hewitt Public Library's 2025 Achievement of Excellence Award from the Texas Municipal Library Directors' Association.

*Mayor Steve Fortenberry presented the award to Library Director Matthew Glaser. Mayor Fortenberry commended the Library staff for their excellent work.*

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

The City Council invites citizens to speak on any topic not already scheduled for a public hearing. The Texas Open Meetings Act prohibits the Council from discussing, responding to, or acting on any comments or items not posted on the agenda. (Note: Citizens who wish to speak must complete a "Public Comment Form" and present it to the City Secretary before the meeting.)

*City Attorney Mike Dixon requested that the Mayor reorder the Public Comments for agenda items #7 and #11.*

### REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

5. Approve minutes of the February 9, 2026, City Council Workshop/Special Meeting.

**MOTION:** Council Member Michale Bancale moved to approve the minutes as presented, but to allow for corrections.

**SECOND:** Council Member Bob Potter

**AYES:** Bancale, Potter, Stephens, Turner, Bruce, and Fortenberry

**NAYES:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**MOTION PASSED.**

6. Presentation of the report from the City Engineer Miles Whitney, P.E.

Update on utility projects.

Update on pending street projects.

Update on pending drainage projects.

*City Engineer Miles Whitney, P.E., reviewed the listed projects.*

7. Discussion concerning the Devonshire Station Senior Community Development Project.  
*City Manager Bo Thomas introduced Milet Hopping, President/CEO of the Waco Housing Authority, who presented a summary of the proposed project. Micah Strange and Colton Kyle of Housing Solution Alliance were also present to answer the Council's questions about the proposed project.*

A general discussion followed on street access, drainage, utilities, and the project's overall impacts.

Mayor Pro Tem Erica Bruce expressed concerns about the lack of city staff representation at public meetings, traffic access, utilities, drainage, and overall transparency regarding the project, as well as whether another public meeting would be held for concerned residents.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mayor Steve Fortenberry opened the public comments section for those wishing to speak. The following appeared to discuss the proposed Devonshire Station Senior Community Development project:

Lauren Muhl, 116 Emmalyn, Hewitt, TX  
Zachary Esmond, 251 Briarleaf Cir., Hewitt, TX  
Ronald L. Cook, 109 Claudette, Hewitt, TX  
Sara A. Cook, 109 Claudette, Hewitt, TX

The following appeared to address the Lacy Lakeview Proposed AI Data Park Awareness: Amy Gage, 232 E. Frost Street, Lacy Lakeview, TX

8. Briefing and discussion concerning the Financial Statements ending January 31, 2026.  
*City Manager Bo Thomas advised that Finance Director Lee Garcia previously sent the January 31, 2026, Financial Statements electronically on February 13, 2026, for review. The Council raised no questions or concerns.*
9. Discussion and possible action on **Ordinance No. 2026-03** declaring unopposed candidates elected to office and cancelling the May 2, 2026, General Election as prescribed in the Texas Election Code.  
*City Manager, Bo Thomas, presented and read the ordinance captioned "An Ordinance of the City of Hewitt, Texas, declaring unopposed candidates in the May 2, 2026, General Election elected to office; canceling the general election scheduled to be held on May 2, 2026." Mr. Thomas listed the unopposed candidates: Brenda Turner (Ward 1, Place 2); Mike Hamilton (Ward 2, Place 2); and Steve Fortenberry (Ward 3, Place 2).*  
**MOTION:** Council Member Michael Bancale moved to approve **Ordinance No. 2026-03**, declaring unopposed candidates elected to office and canceling the May 2, 2026, General Election.  
**SECOND:** Mayor Pro Tem Erica Bruce  
**AYES:** Bancale, Potter, Stephens, Bruce, and Fortenberry  
**NAYES:** None  
**ABSENT:** None  
**ABSTAINED:** Turner  
**MOTION PASSED.**

10. Request for future workshops and/or agenda items.

*City Manager Bo Thomas presented and advised that workshops were covered through April; however, this agenda item is included to allow the Council to present their request for future workshops and/or agenda items. There were no agenda items provided.*

**Mayor Steve Fortenberry reordered the agenda to address Item #11 to listen to those wishing to address it.**

11. Discussion and possible action regarding Prevailing Wage Determination for Fire Station No. 2 from the Executive Session Consultation with Attorney, if needed.

*City Attorney Mike Dixon stated that his recommendation was that the Council determine that there is no good cause to believe that the contractor or its subcontractors have violated the Texas Prevailing Wage laws. The Council asked general questions of those individuals who spoke on this agenda item.*

The following appeared to discuss the prevailing wage claim for Fire Station No. 2:

Philip Lawhon, 1813 Orchard Lane, Waco, TX 76705

Tyler Brown, 1813 Orchard Lane, Waco, TX 76705

Justin Welch, Attorney, representing Collier Electric.

#### **RECESS REGULAR SESSION TO CONVENE EXECUTIVE SESSION**

*Mayor Steve Fortenberry recessed the Regular Meeting to convene the following Executive Session at 9:04 p.m.*

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** Executive Session: Notice is given that a closed meeting will be held pursuant to Section 551.071 of the Texas Government Code (V.T.C.A.) so that the Council may consult and seek confidential legal advice from the City Attorney.

#### **RECONVENE REGULAR MEETING**

*Mayor Steve Fortenberry reconvened the Regular Meeting at 10:04 p.m. to vote on Agenda Item No. 11 regarding the Prevailing Wage Determination for Fire Station No. 2 from the Executive Session consultation with the attorney.*

11. Discussion and possible action regarding Prevailing Wage Determination for Fire Station No. 2 from Executive Session Consultation with Attorney.

*City Attorney Mike Dixon restated his recommendation to the City Council that the Council determine that there is no good cause to believe that the contractor or its subcontractors have violated the Texas Prevailing Wage laws.*

**MOTION:** Council Member Michael Bancale moved that there was no good cause to believe that the contractor or its subcontractors had violated the Texas Prevailing Wage laws.

**SECOND:** Council Member Johnny Stephens

**AYES:** Bancale, Potter, Stephens, Turner, and Fortenberry

**NAYES:** Bruce

**ABSENT:** None

**MOTION PASSED.**

**RECESSED REGULAR MEETING TO CONVENE EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 10:05 P.M.**

*Mayor Steve Fortenberry recessed the Regular Meeting to convene the following Executive Session at 10:05 p.m.*

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** Executive Session: Notice is given that a closed meeting will be held pursuant to Section 551.074 of the Texas Government Code (V.T.C.A.) so that the Council may discuss personnel matters regarding the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee (City Manager).

**RECONVENE THE REGULAR MEETING**

*Mayor Steve Fortenberry reconvened the Regular Meeting at 10:27 p.m.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Council Member Michael Bancale moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 10:29 p.m.

**SECOND:** Mayor Pro Tem Erica Bruce

**AYES:** Bancale, Potter, Stephens, Turner, Bruce, and Fortenberry

**NAYES:** None

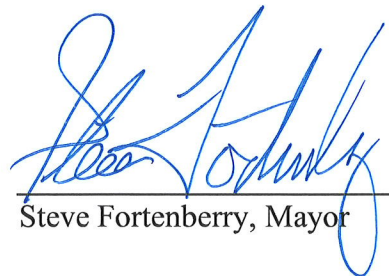
**ABSENT:** None

**MOTION PASSED.**

Approved: 03-16-2026

ATTEST:

  
Lydia Lopez, City Secretary

  
Steve Fortenberry, Mayor