



City of West Orange

City Hall
2700 Western Avenue
West Orange, TX 77630

City Council Regular Session Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 9, 2025

5:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Randy Branch
Meritta Kennedy

Jay Odom
Lanie Brown

Michael Shugart, Sr.
Gail Langton

APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Mike Stelly

Theresa Van Meter

OTHERS PRESENT:

Natalie Villarreal
Jane Branch
April Lombardo
April Wilson

Debbie Schlicher
Kirk Roccaforte
Sharon Thomas

Tammie Marshall
Colby Bracken
Tremaine Wilson

Call to Order

Mayor Branch called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Council Member Shugart gave the invocation followed by the mayor leading the Pledges of Allegiance to both the United States and Texas flags.

Consent Agenda

Discussion and Possible Action on:

- **approval of the minutes of the May 8, 2025 Council Meeting** - A motion was made by Council Member Brown to approve these minutes as presented. Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy seconded this motion. A vote was cast; motion carried.
- **a proclamation recognizing First Baptist Church, West Orange** – A motion was made by Mayor Branch to approve this proclamation, recognizing June 22, 2025 as “First Baptist Church, West Orange” Day in the City of West Orange. A second to this motion was made by Council Member Odom. Mayor Branch read the proclamation aloud. A vote was then cast; motion carried.

Staff Reports

Public Works – Mike Stelly

In Mr. Sherwin’s absence, Chief Stelly reported the following activities for the month of May, 2025:

- **Construction Projects**
 - Waste Water Treatment Plant construction is on schedule.
 - Drainage improvement project – concrete ditch started at MacArthur to South is about 90% complete
 - Chip seal installed on Irving & FM 105 by TxDOT
 - Installation of fire hydrants throughout the City by ToMex continues
- **Building Official**
 - 21 permits issued
 - 33 permits completed
- **Sanitation**
 - 23 loads of green waste collected @ %150 = \$3,450
 - 0 loads (0) tons of C&D to landfill
- **Animal Control**
 - 67 calls
 - 18 intakes
 - 0 claimed / 3 adopted / 4 rescued
 - 0 court filings
- **Street**
 - 7 tons of limestone base installed

- 3 tons of cold mix installed
- **Parks**
 - Mowing & litter removal
- **Shop**
 - Ditch mowing continues
 - Normal repairs and maintenance of City assets
 - Monthly 30-for-30 – All Police and Fire vehicles in good-working order

Police Department – Mike Stelly

Chief Stelly gave the following statistics for the month of May, 2025:

- Traffic contacts: 255
- Crashes reported: 12
- Arrests: 37
- Reports: 44
- Calls for service: 454
- Miles driven: 14,479

Code Enforcement

Violations Investigated: 55

Violations filed w/Court: 14

Council Member Odom then informed Council that he has recently spoken with Mrs. Sybil Hughes and she is “elated” about the concrete-lining that has been added to the drainage ditch behind her house.

Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy wished to thank Council for passing the proclamation and sponsoring the Historical Marker for First Baptist Church of West Orange.

Regular Session

Discussion and Possible Action on a previously-tabled request submitted by Mr. Ranjit Pillai to replat property located at 900 Newton Street to allow for future commercial development – Mr. Colby Bracken addressed Council on behalf of Mr. Pillai, who was out of state at the time of the meeting. He explained that his understanding from Mr. Pillai was that he plans to rehabilitate/rebuild the buildings currently on the site. Council Member Shugart asked what his plans were for the empty field. Mr. Bracken responded that it would be some type of commercial development.

A motion was made by Council Member Brown to table this item until such time as Mr. Pillai could be present to answer questions. A second to the motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy. The mayor called for a vote, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on a request from Mr. Rasheed Kazmi and Ms. Natalie Villareal for a variance to Ordinance No. 302-F, Section 2 (E-6) regarding lot size restrictions for placement of manufactured homes – A motion to deny this request from Mr. Rasheed Kazmi and Ms. Natalie Villareal for a variance to Ordinance No. 302-F, Section 2 (E-6) regarding lot size restrictions for placement of manufactured homes was made by Council Member Odom, followed by a second from Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy.

Ms. Villarreal addressed Council, explaining that the variance requested would allow them to have 40’ wide lots, rather than the required 50’. Council then reviewed the diagram of the property that had been submitted. Mr. Corbett explained that any manufactured home brought in would have to be at least 15’ from the existing house. However, if the property gets subdivided, it would only have to be 5’ from the property line.

With there being no further discussion, Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on an application to join the WOVFD submitted by Jacob Jeanise – A motion to approve the application to join the WOVFD submitted by Jacob Jeanise was made by Council Member Odom, with a second from Council Member Brown. Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on allowing the Chief of Police to execute an inter-local agreement with Orange County concerning the Cloud Gavel software, which may also involve a contract with Cloud Gavel - Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy made a motion that the Chief

of Police be authorized to execute an inter-local agreement with Orange County concerning the Cloud Gavel software, which may also involve a contract with Cloud Gavel. This motion received a second from Council Member Brown. Chief Stelly explained that the County is now moving toward electronic search warrants. In order for West Orange officers to have access to this would necessitate them also having access to the software. This would allow the officers to do the Affidavit of Probable Cause that goes to the DA's office. Once approved by the DA's office, it will go to the judge electronically. Once signed by the judge, the warrant is then sent back to the officers to execute.

With there being no further discussion, Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on approval of Amendment #2 (*amending milestones only*) for the City-wide Flood & Drainage Improvements contract with Traylor & Associates, Inc. – A motion to approve Amendment #2 (*amending milestones only*) for the City-wide Flood & Drainage Improvements contract with Traylor & Associates, Inc. was made by Council Member Brown, with a second from Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy. With there being no discussion, a vote was cast; motion carried.

Discussion and Possible Action on renewal of Employee health, vision and dental benefits through TX Health Benefits Pool – Council Member Brown moved that Employee health, vision and dental benefits be renewed for the upcoming year through TX Health Benefits Pool. Council Member Odom seconded her motion. Chief Stelly then explained that there has been an option offered to the City that may help bring the City's claims ratio down. This program, offered through Next Level Prime (which is an Urgent Care facility in Beaumont and Nederland), would cost an additional \$60 per employee per month...but it covers the employee's entire household. Currently, any visits to the ER are applied to employees' deductibles, however with Next Level Prime there is no cost/no copay to the employee...and will not hit the insurance as a claim.

Chief Stelly further explained that this \$60 per employee per month would be in addition to the renewal rates through TX Health Benefits Pool.

Council Member Brown then stated she wished to amend her motion for the City to renew health, vision and dental coverage with TX Health Benefits Pool with the Next Level Prime option. Council Member Odom seconded this amended motion. Mayor Branch then called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on authorizing the City Secretary to seek proposals for Professional Auditing services for the City for FY25, with possibility of extending agreement for up to the next four fiscal years – A motion to authorize the City Secretary to seek proposals for Professional Auditing services for the City for FY25, with possibility of extending agreement for up to the next four fiscal years was made by Council Member Brown. A second to this motion was made by Council Member Odom. Mayor Branch then called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on approval of City's proposal request for Professional Auditing Services - A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy to approve the City's proposal request for Professional Auditing Services as presented. Council Member Brown seconded this motion. With there being no discussion, the mayor called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor Branch then made note of the following dates:

- Unveiling of Historical Marker at First Baptist Church of West Orange – Friday, June 20, 2025; 10:30 a.m.
- All non-emergency offices/departments of the City closed on Friday, July 4, 2025 in observance of Independence Day
- Next Council meeting – Monday, July 14, 2025 – 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

With there being no further business before Council, Mayor Branch adjourned the meeting at 5:29 p.m.

Rh Branch
Randy Branch, Mayor

ATTEST:

Theresa Van Meter
Theresa Van Meter, City Secretary

