



City of West Orange

City Hall
2700 Western Avenue
West Orange, TX 77630

City Council Regular Session Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 14, 2025

5:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Meritta Kennedy
Gail Langton

Jay Odom

Michael Shugart, Sr.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:

Randy Branch

Lanie Brown

APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Jon Sherwin
Simmie Gibson

Christopher Leavins

Theresa Van Meter

OTHERS PRESENT:

Sonny Hubbard
Tyler Roberts
James Fisette
Sharon Thomas

Peter Amy
Clayton Baker
Richard Bland
Tommy Lummus

William Lu
Richard Jones
Nathan Perrault
Tremaine Wilson

Call to Order

Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Council Member Shugart gave the invocation followed by the Mayor Pro-Tem 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 June 9, 2025 Council Meeting - Council Member Odom moved that these minutes be approved as presented. His motion received a second from Council Member Langton. With there being no discussion, Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy called for a vote, with the motion passing unanimously.

Staff Reports

Public Works – Jon Sherwin

In Mr. Sherwin reported the following activities for the month of June, 2025:

- **Construction Projects**
 - Waste Water Treatment Plant construction is on schedule.
 - Drainage improvement project – concrete ditch complete; a few punch-list items to finish
 - Installation of fire hydrants throughout the City by ToMex continues – 82% complete
- **Building Official**
 - 24 permits issued (1 new residential)
 - 28 permits completed
- **Sanitation**
 - 27 loads of green waste collected @ %150 = \$4,050
 - 1 load (2) tons of C&D to landfill
- **Animal Control**
 - 14 calls
 - 1 intake
 - 0 claimed / 1 adopted / 11 rescued
 - 0 court filings
- **Street**
 - 3 tons of limestone base installed
 - 2 tons of cold mix installed
 - Driveway installation

- **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 – Jon Sherwin

In Chief Stelly's absence, Mr. Sherwin gave the following statistics for the month of June, 2025:

- Traffic contacts: 365
- Crashes reported: 4
- Arrests: 34
- Reports: 42
- Calls for service: 525
- Miles driven: 12,636

Code Enforcement

Violations Investigated: 87

Violations filed w/Court: 9

Fire Department –

Assistant Chief Gibson gave the following report for the WOVPD for the month of June, 2025:

- Cooking fires: 1
- Trash or rubbish fires: 3
- Medical Assists: 2
- Emergency medical service incidents: 1
- Hazardous conditions: 1
- Cancelled enroute: 1
- System malfunctions: 1
- Smoke detector malfunctions: 1
- Alarm system malfunctions: 1
- Mutual aid incidents: 4

Regular Session

Presentation by Live Oak Environmental representatives – Mr. Hubbard began his presentation by stating that he did not have any “business” to discuss with Council, but simply wanted to meet with them and pass on what they have done and what they are trying to accomplish. He added that they have overcome some past bad management choices. They also hire everyone possible.

Mr. Hubbard then introduced Mr. Nathan Perrault, the new Site Manager for this area. Mr. Perrault told the Council that his main focus is customer service. He told them that if they have an issue, to call him directly. He added that he does not take lightly what he has seen and what he has been told. He wants to make corrections and he wants to build relationships with the communities they serve.

Council Member Odom questioned Mr. Perrault regarding a news story he heard regarding Lumberton. He asked Mr. Perrault to verify that if trash is not going to be picked up for some reason, their citizens get a text message saying that. Mr. Perrault responded that the news media did not report that incorrectly. They do send out texts to the customers. He also informed Council that if West Orange is skipped one day for any reason, it will be picked up the following day...not put off until the following week. He has also added a second truck to the West Orange route.

Mr. Perrault then addressed the issues with the city-owned dumpsters. He stated that they are all damaged and he would like to know how to get them repaired or replaced. Mr. Sherwin responded that, in the past, the City paid for the damaged dumpsters to be brought to the Piney Woods' shop and their employees repaired them. He stated that the ones he has seen recently are not repairable. They need to be replaced, and there is no money in this year's, nor next year's budget, to do so. He added that the City is down to three usable dumpsters. They cost approximately \$1,200 each. Mr. Perrault then offered to earmark a few of their dumpsters for West Orange use. He then asked Mr. Sherwin if they could dispose of those unrepairable dumpsters. Mr. Sherwin replied that he would appreciate them doing so.

Presentation by Peter Amy regarding concerns over ditch drainage on his street – Mr. Amy addressed Council regarding concerns over ditch drainage in front of his house. He stated that water just sits in his ditch, while further down where it is supposed to flow is “bone-dry.”

He stated that another controversy is that property owners, by city ordinance, are to maintain their ditches. He has the deepest ditch in that area, and it is becoming more and more difficult for him to get down in it to weed-eat. When he does, mud flies and slings in his face. He explained that he had met with the Public Works Director, who told him that he would develop a plan and get back with him. He has not yet heard from him regarding this plan. He does not want his ditch dug any deeper.

Mr. Sherwin responded to Mr. Amy's concerns by informing him that he has turned this issue over to engineers who are currently working on a plan/design to address his street and several others in the city. It is part of another of the City's citywide drainage projects. He is waiting to hear back from these engineers on a plan of action.

Mr. Amy then asked Mr. Sherwin if he could put some dirt in his ditch to fill in the low spots. Mr. Sherwin responded that the city could bring in a little sand to see if it resolves his problem. Mr. Amy then asked for a timeline for this sand to be brought out. Mr. Sherwin responded that he felt uncomfortable giving Mr. Amy a specific date that the work would be done.

Mr. Amy then thanked Council for their time.

Discussion and Possible Action on accepting Frank Carpenter as a full-time employee – A motion was made by Council Member Odom, followed by a second from Council Member Langton, to accept Officer Frank Carpenter as a full-time employee with the City. A vote was cast; motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on committee recommendation for Auditing Services – Council Member Odom made a motion that the recommendation to contract with Keri Michutka, CPA be approved. Council Member Shugart seconded his motion. A vote was cast; motion carried.

Discussion and Possible Action on allowing the PWD to vacate the alleyways adjacent to Lot 1,2,3 & E 21.4' of 4 Blk 10 West Orange 171.4X159', Lot E 21.4' of 13 & Lot all of 14 thru 16 Blk 10 West Orange and Lot S 21.5' OF 5, all of 6-11 & Lot W 21.5' of 12 Blk 7 West Orange – Council Member Odom made a motion that this item be tabled until such time as the Water District has completed their survey work on this property. Council Member Shugart seconded his motion. Council Member Odom then stated that he wished to go “on record” as not being in favor of giving away any property that belongs to the city, but that it needs to be known if there is any type of pipeline drainage, utilities, etc. on this piece of property. With there being no further discussion, Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on approval of a contract extension for Disaster Recovery Services – Council Member Odom made a motion to approve the contract extension for Disaster Recovery Services. Council Member Shugart seconded his motion. Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy explained that this company collects debris after a disaster (such as a hurricane). She then called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on approval of a contract extension with Tetra-Tech for monitoring services - Council Member Odom made a motion to approve the contract extension with Tetra-Tech for monitoring services. Council Member Shugart seconded this motion. Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy explained that this company monitors the type/amount of debris collected after a disaster. She then called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on authorizing Public Works Director to request bids for the Police Department and Fire Department generators project – Council Member made a motion that Council authorize the Public Works Director to request bids for the Police Department and Fire Department generators project. His motion was seconded by Council Member Shugart. Mr. Sherwin explained that the generators currently at both departments run on diesel. The new generators will run on natural gas. Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy then called for a vote on the motion. It passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on authorization of disposal of out-of-service fleet equipment via auction – Council Member Odom made a motion to authorize the disposal of out-of-service fleet equipment via auction. Council Member Shugart seconded his motion.

Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy stated that she would like to have on record what equipment is being disposed of via auction. Mr. Sherwin replied that he could furnish her with that list. She then called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on approval of establishing a policy addressing the collection of personal vehicle tires within the City – Council Member Odom made a motion that this policy addressing the collection of personal vehicle tires within the City be approved as presented. Council Member Langton seconded his motion. Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy asked Mr. Sherwin to explain how this would work. He responded that whenever a citizen had passenger vehicle tires to be disposed of, they would call City Hall. He, or one of his employees, would go to that location to make sure that these were passenger tires, not commercial tires, and also that there is no debris mixed in with the tires. He would then report the number of tires and cost to the front office so that they can contact the citizen. Once the citizen pays the pickup fee for the tire collection, the City would pick them up and dispose of them. A vote on the motion was then made, with the policy being unanimously approved.

Discussion and Possible Action on a Resolution consenting to the creation of Orange County Emergency Services District #5. A petition has been filed with Orange County, Texas for said creation and will be brought forth to the voters in the proposed district. This district creation will encompass an area that includes the city. – Council Member Odom made a motion that Council pass this Resolution consenting to the creation of Orange County Emergency Services District #5. A petition has been filed with Orange County, Texas for said creation and will be brought forth to the voters in the proposed district. This district creation will encompass an area that includes the city.

Council Member Shugart stated that he does not believe this issue has been handled properly. He said that people were out in the city collecting signatures on a petition before Council was made aware of anything. He said the Council should have been informed first so that they would know what was going on. He added that the only reason he is voting for this is because it has to be approved by Council before it can move forward so the citizens can have a vote.

Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy stated that it is her understanding that even though the Resolution is passed, if the supporting numbers do not show that an ESD can be sustained, the Council would have a right to rescind their consent. She announced that Orange County Commissioners Court would be holding a public hearing on this proposed ESD on Tuesday, August 5th at 9:00 a.m. She also reported that there will be another Public Workshop here in West Orange before that date. It has not yet been scheduled, but when it is, the time/date will be announced.

Mr. Leavins stated, just for clarification, the City's role at this point. "Once the petitions are filed with the County, the City receives notice from the proponents that it was filed, and the City either consents or does not consent to it. If the City does not consent, it does not necessarily kill it. All it does is to allow another petition to come forward...I think within the next six months for the same services to be provided in the city by the City. But by consenting, then the City is allowing the process to go forward and the territory within the city is going to be included within the district."

Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy stated that the City still has the right to rescind its consent. Mr. Leavins responded that rescinding consent is not mentioned in Chapter 775 (Texas Health and Safety Code). He added that TML has a publication where the question is asked if territory can be removed from a district after consent has been given. It is likely not, but there is really nothing that dictates one way or another.

Asst. Chief Gibson stated that the City's Charter covers fire service. Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy responded that the Charter says the City "may" provide fire service, not that it "shall" provide fire service.

With there being no further discussion, Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Council Member Odom then offered to share his Council Packet with any resident who wishes to see it. They are welcome to look over it and ask questions, should there be any.

Announcements

Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy announced that the next Council meeting has been scheduled for Monday, August 11, 2025 – 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

With there being no further business before Council, Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy adjourned the meeting at 5:43 p.m.

R R Branch
Randy Branch, Mayor

ATTEST:
Theresa Van Meter
Theresa Van Meter, City Secretary

