



City of West Orange

City Hall
2700 Western Avenue
West Orange, TX 77630

City Council
Budget Hearing
Minutes

Thursday, September 4, 2025 5:00 p.m. Council Chambers

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:
Mayor Randy Branch Michael Shugart, Sr. Jay Odom
Lanie Brown Meritta Kennedy Gail Langton

APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:
Theresa Van Meter Chris Leavins Simmie Gibson

OTHERS PRESENT:
Blake Breaux

Call to Order

Mayor Branch called the hearing to order at 5:00 p.m. He announced that a quorum was present. The invocation was then given by Council Member Shugart. The mayor then led in the Pledges of Allegiance to the United States and Texas flags.

Mayor Branch explained that the purpose of this meeting was to receive and discuss Council and citizen input regarding the proposed budget for the City of West Orange for fiscal year 2026.

Public Hearing on Proposed Budget for FY 2026

CITY OF WEST ORANGE, TEXAS				
2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET SUMMARY				
	<u>Operations</u>	<u>Capital Outlay</u>	<u>Total</u>	
10 General Administration	\$ 505,976	\$ -	\$ 505,976	
11 Building Official	92,905	-	\$ 92,905	
12 Fire Department	159,044	-	\$ 159,044	
13 Sanitation	628,509	-	\$ 628,509	
14 Humane	87,155	-	\$ 87,155	
15 Police	2,226,501	-	\$ 2,226,501	
16 Municipal Court	197,357	-	\$ 197,357	
17 Street	448,365	25,389	\$ 473,754	
18 Parks & Facilities	80,413	-	\$ 80,413	
21 Maintenance Shop	93,740	-	\$ 93,740	
	\$ 4,519,965	\$ 25,389	\$ 4,545,354	
TOTAL REVENUE		\$ 3,811,670		
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES		\$ 4,519,965		
TOTAL CAPITAL OUTLAY		25,389		
		\$ 4,545,354		
Potential shortfall		\$ (733,684)		
(to be funded from prior years' retained income)				
+Court Technology Fund Transfer		\$ 9,986		
+ Capital Imp. Fund Transfer		25,389		
		\$ (698,309)		
NET POTENTIAL SHORTFALL		\$ (698,309)		

Council Member Brown asked for the balance in the Court Technology and Capital Improvement Funds. Mrs. Van Meter checked on that and reported back that the Court Technology Fund had a balance of \$12,762.16, and the Capital Improvement Fund had a balance of \$1,084,790.03.

The next question, brought forth from Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy, pertained to the Fire Department. She questioned if the \$18,000 budgeted for Equipment/Engine Repair would be enough for repairs on a 23-year-old truck. Asst. Fire Chief Gibson responded that he did not know. He added that he has spent about \$14,000 within the past two years on that truck.

He also reported that he will be getting a \$300,000 grant from the Texas Forest Service – all fire departments in the state will be getting this. He recommended not purchasing a brush truck with these funds, but putting them toward another fire engine. Council Member Shugart asked how much more would be needed to purchase a new engine. Asst. Chief Gibson responded, “\$600,000 to \$700,000.” He also recommended selling the old engine upon receipt of a new one. He was asked how much he believed it could be sold for. He explained that since it was not a custom truck, he only expected to sell it for about \$50,000, however if it had been a custom truck, he would expect \$100,000. Mayor Branch stated, “We will work on that when the time comes.”

With there being no further questions or discussion brought forth, Mayor Branch adjourned the hearing portion of the meeting and then presented an ordinance adopting this budget to Council.

Discussion and Possible Action on Ordinance No. 493, adopting the City’s budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, requiring a tax rate of \$0.3795 per \$100 assessed value – A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy to approve Ordinance No. 493, thereby adopting the City’s budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, requiring a tax rate of \$0.3795 per \$100 assessed value. Council Member Brown seconded this motion. Mayor Branch clarified that this vote was on the budget only – not the tax rate.

Before a vote was cast, discussion turned to the amount of increase in the property tax rate that would be “required” for this budget. Mayor Branch explained that the actual increase was 0.0015, which would only increase the property taxes on a \$100,000 home by \$1.50 per year.

With there being no further discussion on the proposed budget, a record vote was then cast:

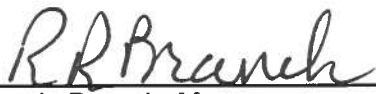
Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy	Aye
Council Member Langton	Aye
Council Member Odom	Aye
Mayor Branch	Aye
Council Member Brown	Aye
Council Member Shugart	Aye

The budget for fiscal year 2026 for the City of West Orange was thereby adopted as presented.

Adjournment

With there being no further business before Council, Mayor Branch adjourned the hearing at 5:23 p.m.





Randy Branch, Mayor

ATTEST:



Theresa Van Meter, City Secretary