



City of West Orange

City Hall
2700 Western Avenue
West Orange, TX 77630

City Council Regular Session Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 9, 2026

5:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Randy Branch
Michael Shugart, Sr.

Jay Odom
Lanie Brown

Gail Langton

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:

Meritta Kennedy

APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Jon Sherwin
Christopher Leavins

Mike Stelly
Simmie Gibson

David Roberts

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jane Branch
Cathey Fleming
Brendon Roberts
Demetrius Hunter

Richard Bland
Richard Jones
Tyler Roberts
Tremaine Wilson

Blake Breaux
Myre Lavergne
Peggy Smith
Benjamin Tannery

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 February 9, 2026 Council Meeting - A motion to accept the minutes of the February 9, 2026 Council Meeting was made by Council Member Brown, followed by a second from Council Member Langton. A vote was cast; motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on proclaiming April 2026 "Fair Housing Month" – A motion was made by Council Member Brown, followed by a second from Council Member Odom to proclaim the month of April, 2026 as "Fair Housing Month" in the City of West Orange. A vote was cast; motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments

No comments.

Staff Reports

Public Works – Jon Sherwin

Mr. Sherwin reported the following activities for the month of February, 2026

- **Construction Projects**
 - Waste Water Treatment Plant construction is on schedule
 - Dayton Street reconstruction – on schedule and waiting on change order
 - Generator project – generators ordered and CenterPoint Energy scheduled for gas
- **Building Official**
 - 20 permits issued in January
 - 24 permits completed
- **Sanitation**
 - 16 loads of green waste collected
 - 0 loads of C&D to landfill (Truck was down for a large portion of month.)
- **Animal Control**
 - 62 calls in January
 - 4 intakes in January
 - 1 claimed / 3 adopted / 2 rescued
- **Street**

- Patching of Streets and driveways
- Cleaning ditches
- **Parks**
 - Litter and vegetative waste removal
- **Shop**
 - Normal repairs and maintenance of City assets
 - Monthly 30-for-30 – all Police and Fire Vehicles in good working condition

Police Department – Michael Stelly

Chief Stelly reported the following activities for the month of February, 2026

- Traffic contacts: 282
- Crashes reported: 3
- Arrests: 32
- Reports: 30
- Calls for service: 348
- Miles driven: 11,059

Code Enforcement

Violations Investigated: 28

Violations filed w/Court: 2

Fire Department – Simmie Gibson

Asst. Chief Gibson reported the following activities for the month of February, 2026

- Building fire: 1
- Trash fire: 1
- EMS call: 3
- Gas leaks: 3
- Service call: 1
- Cancelled in route: 2
- Mutual aid: 5
- Alarm: 2

Public Hearing

Mayor Branch convened the Public Hearing at 5:07 pm to solicit input from the community concerning awareness for the support of fair housing as well as to address concerns of residents related to fair housing. No comments were made and the mayor closed the public hearing at 5:08 pm.

Regular Session

Discussion and Possible Action on a variance request submitted by Ms. Peggy Smith for Section (B)3 of Ordinance No. 302-F, pertaining to Application Requirements for a Permit to place a manufactured home within the City of West Orange – Ms. Smith addressed the council stating that she has one signature giving permission and one neighbor that refuses to sign. Council Member Brown and Mayor Branch responded to Ms. Smith stating the requirements outlined in Ordinance 302-F and informed her to attempt to obtain all of the required signatures. Mayor Branch then informed her that she is welcome to come back to ask for a variance once she has made an effort to contact the adjacent property owners. No action was taken.

Discussion and Possible Action on an application to the WOVFD submitted by Brendon Roberts – Council Member Shugart made a motion for the City to accept Brendon Roberts' application and allow him into the WOVFD. Council Member Brown seconded this motion. With there being no discussion, the mayor called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on an application to the WOVFD submitted by John Edwards – Council Member Shugart made a motion for the City to accept John Edwards' application and allow him into the WOVFD. Council Member Brown seconded this motion. With there being no discussion, the mayor called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on acceptance of Texas A&M Forest Service Grant #AE-203-136198 for Equipment for the WOVFD (\$25,000 grant requiring 5% match) - Council Member Brown moved that the City accept this grant. A second to this motion was made by Council Member Odom. Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on acceptance of Texas A&M Forest Service Grant #AE-203-253 for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the WOVFD (\$25,000 grant requiring 5% match) – Council Member Brown moved that the City accept this grant. A second to this motion was made by Council Member Odom. Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible action on acceptance of Texas A&M Forest Service Grant #AE-203-148104 for Training Aids for the WOVFD (\$10,000 grant requiring -0- match) - Council Member Brown moved that the City accept this grant. A second to this motion was made by Council Member Odom. Council Member Odom then stated that the \$25,000 grant will cost the City about \$2,500 and that the previous administration spent \$301,674 between 2015 to 2020. He stated that the current administration has spent \$916,110.58 from 2021 to February 2026 and stating that is clear that this administration supports the WOVFD. Council Member Odom then thanked the volunteers for what they do. Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on acceptance of the Certification of Unopposed Candidates for the May 2, 2026 General Election – Council Member Brown made a motion to accept the Certification of Unopposed Candidates for the May 2, 2026 General Election. Council Member Mike Shugart made the second motion. Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on Ordinance No. 498, an Ordinance cancelling the May 2, 2026 General Election – Council Member Brown made a motion to pass Ordinance 498, cancelling the May 2, 2026 General Election. Council Member Langton seconded the motion. Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on Ordinance No. 497-A, an ordinance amending Ordinance No. 497, calling for a Special Election in the City of West Orange, Texas, to put before the voters the reauthorization of the Street Maintenance Tax and three amendments to the City Charter – Council Member Odom made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 497-A, an ordinance amending Ordinance No. 497, calling for a Special Election in the City of West Orange, Texas, to put before the voters the reauthorization of the Street Maintenance Tax and three amendments to the City Charter. Council Member Brown seconded the motion. Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible action on approval of the Notice of Election for the May 2, 2026 Special Election - Council Member Brown made a motion to approve the Notice of Election for the May 2, 2026 Special Election. The motion was seconded by Council Member Odom. Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor Branch then announced the following meetings:

- Organizational meeting of "Keep West Orange Beautiful" - Monday, March 30, 2026; 5:30 p.m.; City Council Chambers
- City offices closed Friday, April 3rd & Monday, April 6th in honor of Good Friday and Easter
- Spring Cleanup- Friday & Saturday, April 10th & 11th; 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Next Council Meeting- Monday, April 13, 2026; 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

With there being no further business before Council, the mayor adjourned the meeting at 5:32 p.m.



R R Branch

Randy Branch, Mayor

ATTEST:

Theresa Van Meter

Theresa Van Meter, City Secretary