

City of Litchfield
120 E. Ryder, Litchfield, Illinois
Official Open Session Meeting Minutes
February 19, 2026
6:30 P.M.

Mayor Fleming called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Present on roll call were, Alderperson Marilyn Sisson, Alderperson Sara Zumwalt, Alderperson Dwayne Gerl, Alderperson Robbin Huffman, Alderperson Josh Hughes, Alderperson Bob Garcia, and Alderperson Ray Kellenberger. The mayor declared that a quorum was present.

Others Present: Breann Vazquez, City Administrator, Vickie Throne, City Clerk, Trent Carriger, City Attorney

Absent: Alderperson Bert Holloway

Recognition of Visitors and Special Guest: None

City Report:

Mayor Fleming reported that there is a sign in front of the old Sears Hometown building announcing that Five Below is coming to Litchfield. It states they are hiring.

Mayor Fleming reported that we are seeing an increase in busted water mains due to the freezing and thawing. He thanked the citizens for their patience as the city has worked diligently to repair these busted water mains.

Alderperson Hughes asked for an update on the road conditions that have deteriorated after last summer's paving. He reported that the gravel has been washed into ditches. City Administrator Breann Vazquez reported that they are meeting with HMG Engineers next week. They will be discussing a better plan for oiling and chipping roads as we move forward and discuss a plan of action for the wards that were oiled and chipped last year.

Public Participation

Mayor Fleming reported that we have one speaker signed up for the public participation this evening. John Hanafin asked for the amount that Alderperson are paid each year. Alderperson Huffman reported that they are paid \$250.00 per month per tax and that amount is not dependent on whether they attend each meeting. Mr. Hanafin reported that Andy Ritchie who lived in Litchfield is moving and resigning his seat. He asked if there were any Republicans on the council that would like to replace Mr. Ritchie to please let the county know. The county pays \$60.00 per diem.

Appointments:

None

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Other Business:

Aldersperson Garcia made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Kellenberger, to approve minutes from the regular meeting held on February 5, 2026.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Gerl, Zumwalt, Hughes, Garcia, Huffman, Kellenberger, Sisson

Nay: None.

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

Aldersperson Gerl made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Huffman to approve the expenditure report and payroll report for the current period.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Garcia, Sisson, Gerl, Zumwalt, Huffman, Kellenberger, Hughes

Nay: None.

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None

Motion carried.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Economic Development

Aldersperson Kellenberger made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Hughes, approving and authorizing the Mayor to execute a façade improvement grant agreement with TKW Enterprises, LLC for 413 N. State Street and other actions related thereto.

Discussion: Aldersperson Hughes asked if we have a sense of what is going into this building. City Administrator Breann Vazquez reported that Glenn West Law Firm is located in this building.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Huffman, Kellenberger, Hughes, Garcia, Sisson, Gerly Zumwalt

Nay: None.

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

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Aldersperson Kellenberger made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Sisson, to approve a Resolution approving and authorizing the Mayor to execute a façade improvement grant agreement with Short Furniture Company, Inc. for 319 N. Sate Street and other actions related thereto.

Discussion: Aldersperson Hughes and Mayor Fleming commended Chris Short for all his hard work and effort that he has put into updating his store front.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Zumwalt, Huffman, Kellenberger, Hughes, Garcia, Sisson, Gerl

Nay: None.

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

Police

Aldersperson Hughes made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Kellenberger, to approve a Resolution approving and authorizing the Mayor to execute an Employment Agreement with Robert Carpenter for the position of Chief of Police.

Discussion: Aldersperson Holloway was unable to attend tonight's meeting and provided a letter of support endorsing the hire of Robert Carpenter. Vickie Throne, City Clerk, read the letter provided. Mayor Fleming reported that they did spend a significant amount of time on the hiring process. He thanked the committee which included Interim Chief Reents, the Chief's Association, Aldersperson Holloway and City Administrator Breann Vazquez.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Hughes, Sisson, Zumwalt, Huffman, Kellenberger

Nay: Garcia, Gerl

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: Zumwalt.

Motion carried.

Building & Zoning

Aldersperson Zumwalt made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Huffman, to approve an Ordinance approving a final plat for Wildflower Subdivision.

Discussion: Mayor Fleming reported that the subdivision is moving along nicely and you can follow along on the progress via their social media page. Aldersperson Zumwalt has concerns that there is language that does not allow for swing sets to be placed in yards in this subdivision. Aldersperson Zumwalt stressed the importance of children being able to enjoy the outdoors and

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would like to see this language updated to allow swing sets in yards or that a playground area be developed within the subdivision. Mayor Fleming believes that this is something that can be changed at some point.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Kellenberger, Hughes, Garcia, Sisson, Gerl, Zumwalt, Huffman

Nay: None.

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

Aldersperson Zumwalt made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Huffman, to approve an ordinance accepting Surety Bond for Outstanding Infrastructure and Accepting Completed Infrastructure for Wildflower Subdivision.

Discussion: None.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Hughes, Garcia, Sisson, Gerl, Zumwalt, Huffman, Kellenberger

Nay: None.

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

Aldersperson Zumwalt made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Sisson to approve an Ordinance approving a maintenance bond for infrastructure for Wildflower Subdivision.

Discussion: Mayor Fleming addressed the community concerns about the impact on taxes and school district finances. Breann explained the TIF district and its impact on property taxes. Mayor Fleming asked City Administrator Breann Vazquez if this will cause any funding issues for the school district. Breann reported that the school district is one of the taxing bodies that will receive the same amount of property tax withing this district as they did before. They will not receive for the life of the TIF district for 23 years, or until the council releases the TIF the TIF they would not receive the additional increment generated. State Statue does call for them to be entitled to be entitled to a per new student fee. We are actively working with the school district to enter an agreement with them to ensure that they are not affected by this.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Hughes, Garcia, Sisson, Gerl, Zumwalt, Huffman, Kellenberger

Nay: None.

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

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Aldersperson Zumwalt made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Huffman to an Ordinance amending Appendix B, Appendix B S-2 special uses to change “non-commercial recreational uses and clubs” to “recreational uses and clubs”.

Discussion: Breann reported that this is in regard to 705 N. Jefferson, the former Russell School building. The realtor was approached by Purler Wrestling who has wrestling camps outside of Moscow Mills, Missouri. They are a very reputable and plan to purchase the building to host summer camps for their female wrestlers. They will also host wrestling training camps for both male and female wrestlers two evenings per week. The City is very excited about this positive economic impact this will have on the community. The special use permit is nontransferable, meaning that if they walked away from the deal, someone else could not step in and what they are doing with no regulation.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.
Aye: Garcia, Sisson, Gerl, Zumwalt, Huffman, Kellenberger, Hughes
Nay: None.
Absent: Holloway
Abstain: None.
Motion carried.

Aldersperson Zumwalt made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Gerl to approve an Ordinance rezoning 705 N. Jeffer (PIN# 10-33-314-001 & 10-33-314-00) from Single Family to S-2 Single Family.

Discussion: None.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.
Aye: Sisson, Gerl, Zumwalt, Huffman, Kellenberger, Hughes, Garcia
Nay: None.
Absent: Holloway
Abstain: None.
Motion carried.

Aldersperson Zumwalt made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Gerl to approve a Resolution making separate statement of findings of fact in connection with an Ordinance granting a Special Use Permit for recreational use in the S-2 residential zoning district.

Discussion: None.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.
Aye: Gerl, Zumwalt, Huffman, Kellenberger, Hughes, Garcia, Sisson
Nay: None.
Absent: Holloway
Abstain: None.

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Motion carried.

Aldersperson Zumwalt made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Huffman to approve an Ordinance granting a Special Use Permit to Purler Wrestling Inc., for recreational use (specifically, a wrestling training center) at 705 N. Jefferson, PIN# 10-33-314-001 & 10-33-314-002.

Discussion: None

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Sisson, Gerl, Zumwalt, Huffman, Kellenberger, Hughes, Garcia

Nay: None.

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

Aldersperson Zumwalt made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Hughes to approve an Ordinance amending City Code Title XV-Land Usage by repealing and replacing Chapter 153 – Signs as provided herein.

Discussion: City Attorney Trent Carriger reported that there were concerns after the last election regarding the city treating political signs differently in regulations than they do other temporary signs under the First Amendment. That is constitutionally unallowed because of the freedom of speech provision. The Planning Commission has been working on a plan that will treat all temporary signs the same. If the council would like to adhere to what the Planning Commission has recommended there would need to be a motion to amend the ordinance to have the size be no bigger than four square feet. A question was asked what if someone does not adhere to the language in the ordinance. Breann reported that the State of Illinois allows us to fine up to \$750.00 per day for the violation. We would handle this as we do all other issues and with violations. The Code Enforcement officer would speak to them and give them a timeframe to comply and that typically comes with a warning letter. If they chose to not comply, we would then pursue code enforcement violations. It is clarified as well that you are only allowed to have a maximum of 4 signs per yard. If you have more, you will be in violation. The sign size will be capped at a total of 4 square feet regardless of the shape.

Aldersperson Zumwalt made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Hughes to amend city code, title 15, land usage, by repealing and replacing chapter 153 with a maximum sign size of four square feet for temporary signs.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Hughes, Zumwalt, Huffman, Sisson, Gerl, Kellenberger

Nay: Garcia

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

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Aldersperson Zumwalt made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Hughes to approve the amended Ordinance amending City Code Title XV-Land Usage, by repealing and replacing Chapter 153-Signs as provided herein.

Discussion: None

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Gerl, Zumwalt, Huffman, Kellenberger, Hughes, Sisson

Nay: Garcia

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

Sewer

Aldersperson Garcia made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Hughes to approve Durkin Equipment's quote to replace the Wastewater Treatment Facility Malfunctioning Return Activated Sludge (RAS) flow meter at cost not to exceed \$10,750.00.

Discussion: None

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Gerl, Zumwalt, Huffman, Kellenberger, Hughes, Sisson, Garcia

Nay: None.

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

Water

Aldersperson Garcia made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Sisson to approve a Resolution waiving normal and customary bidding procedures for Phase II of the State Street Waterline Replacement Project.

Discussion: Breann clarified that they were the only bidder on phase one. Bill Grider reported that we are on the home stretch of phase one and hope to finish up within the next week.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Gerl, Zumwalt, Huffman, Kellenberger, Hughes, Sisson, Garcia

Nay: None.

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

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Executive Session

A Motion to Enter into Executive Session, as allowed under the Illinois Open Meetings Act, as found in Chapter 5 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes, Section 120, to address these certain and restricted items:

1. "Discussion of minutes of meeting lawfully closed under this Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06." (5ILCS 120/2(2)(C)(21)
2. "The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired. (5ILCS 120/2(C)(5)
3. "The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the public body ... " (5ILCS 120/2(2)(C)(1)
4. "Litigation, when an action against affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recoded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting." pursuant to (5ILCS 120/2(2)(C)(11)

Aldersperson Sisson made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Zumwalt to enter executive session at 7:01 p.m.

Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.

Aye: Huffman, Gerl, Zumwalt, Kellenberger, Sisson, Hughes, Garcia

Nay: None.

Absent: Holloway

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

Regular Session resumed at 7:46 p.m.

New Business

Aldersperson Zumwalt made a motion, seconded by Aldersperson Gerl to approve the Executive Session Minutes from the February 5, 2026, meeting.

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Mayor Fleming directed a roll call vote.
Aye: Gerl, Garcia, Kellenberger, Hughes, Zumwalt, Huffman, Sisson
Nay: None.
Absent: Holloway
Abstain: None.
Motion carried.

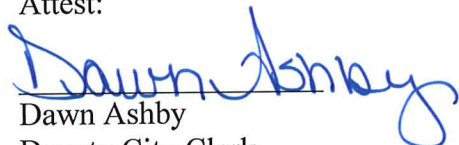
Adjournment

Having no further business Alderperson Kellenberger made a motion seconded by Alderperson Gerl to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 p.m.


Mayor Fleming directed a voice vote.
Aye: 7
Nay: 0
Absent: Holloway
Abstain: None.
Motion carried.

Submitted by: Vickie Throne, City Clerk

Attest:


Dawn Ashby
Deputy City Clerk

Approved:



Jacob Fleming
Mayor

