

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
ALDERMAN OF THE CITY OF FAYETTE,
MISSOURI
TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Aldermen of the City of Fayette was called to order at 6:00 p.m., March 24, 2026, by Mayor Greg Stidham.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone in the Chamber rose for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Alderwoman Michelle Ishmael.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call verified Six Board Members present for the meeting.

Responding to the Roll Call: Alderman David Frees, Alderwoman Ronda Gerlt, Alderman Patrick Roll, Alderman Grafton Cook, Alderwoman Michelle Ishmael and Alderman JB Waggoner.

ADDITIONS TO AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Alderman Frees moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Alderwoman Ishmael seconded the motion. Six voting Aye. Nays – none. Motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMAN
HELD ON MARCH 10, 2026**

Alderwoman Ishmael moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held March 10, 2026. Alderman Waggoner seconded the motion. Six voting Aye. Nays – none. Motion passed.

INVITED GUESTS:

- **Hank Hilderbrand – Sewer connection at his address**

Mr. Hilderbrand explained that several years ago, the City's sewer lines were relined; however, the sewer line to his property at 319 S. Main Street, was not connected at that time. In the Summer of 2024, his sewer line was tied into the main sewer system.

Approximately eight months later, his sewer began backing up. It was jetted at that time, but after another eight months it started backing up again. The city crew ran a camera and found out that the old clay tile pipe was broken.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated that he had to replace his sewer line and believes the damage was caused by the initial failure to connect his line to the main sewer. He also noted that he hired several plumbers who tried to snake the line but were unable to do so due to the lining in the main sewer obstructing it. Mr. Hilderbrand said that he spent approximately \$6,500 on what he believes was a problem caused by the company contracted by the City for the sewer upgrades.

Mayor Stidham stated that additional time will be needed to review the matter with the City's insurance broker, as well as to contact the contractor and the company responsible for the inspection.

- **Caleb Walker – Workers Compensation insurance renewal**

Mr. Walker presented two quotes to the Council for the renewal of Workers compensation insurance. He stated that Missouri Employers Mutual has provided very good service to the City over the past few years; however, they are proposing significant rate increases this year.

He noted that the quote from Missouri Rural Services Workers' Compensation Insurance Trust is considerably lower and that the company has worked with the City in the past. Mr. Walker explained that Missouri Employers Mutual's quote is approximately \$24,000 higher than Missouri Rural Services Workers' Compensation Insurance Trust's. However, he also advised that, due to a claim from last year, the rate may increase as a result of the MOD (Experience Modification Rate).

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

- **Marsha Broadus**

Ms. Broadus informed the Council that over the past two or three weeks she has observed vehicles parking all day on Morrison Street, around the square. She noted that there is a three-hour parking sign on one portion of the street, but not on the opposite corner. Ms. Broadus requested that the City install appropriate parking signage in that area.

Marshal Wells explained that enforcing the three-hour parking limit is challenging, as officers are occupied with other duties and are not consistently present in that location.

- **Regina Powell**

Ms. Powell expressed her concern for the youth and kids in the City, noting that they are broken, both the children and their homes. She stated that the kids in town need activities to keep them away from social media and negative influences and emphasized the community should come together to surround them.

- **Bekki Galloway**

Ms. Galloway informed the Council that the Tree Board received the plaque for the Liberty Tree and that the trees scheduled for planting will arrive next week.

Regarding the feral cat issue, Ms. Galloway reported that Paws will not be able to assist with trapping the cats in the City due to limited staff of only three people; however, they are able to loan traps. She emphasized that the issue must be addressed as a community effort, including not feeding the cats outdoors. Ms. Galloway also noted that Paws has funding available for spay and neuter services but does not provide transportation, so the City would need volunteers to assist. Finally, she suggested making an amendment to the current cat ordinance to require a trapping permit.

Mayor Stidham stated that the Council will review the available options for addressing the feral cat issue.

CITY STAFF REPORTS

- **Timothy Wells – City Marshal**

Marshal Wells asked for a moment of silence for the 12-year-old girl who passed away. He also informed that they are working closely with outside agencies to investigate the circumstances surrounding her death.

Mayor Stidham noted that he has received emails regarding two dogs that run loose. Marshal Wells stated that he will address the issue.

Marshal Wells presented to the Council the average salary for City Marshals in fourth-class cities and requested the Council consider a salary increase for the City Marshal position, which is currently \$62,000 per year. He suggested a 3% annual increase, which would bring the salary to \$69,440 in the fourth year of service.

Attorney Nickolaus stated that if the Council did not decide on this issue at this meeting, the Council would not be able to act on it after the upcoming elections.

Alderman Frees moved to approve the salary increase for the City Marshal to \$70,000 effective July 1, 2026. Alderwoman Ishmael seconded the motion.

Roll Call vote: Ayes: Alderman Frees, Alderwoman Gerlt, Alderman Cook, Alderwoman Ishmael, Alderman Waggoner. Nays – Alderman Roll. Motion passed.

- **Sonny Conrow – Electric Superintendent**
Did not attend the meeting.
- **Dennis Daniels – Street Superintendent**
Did not attend the meeting.
- **Jason Hampton – Building Inspector**
Did not attend the meeting.
- **Deanna Cooper – City Administrator**
Ms. Cooper provided the Council with updates on the following topics:
 - The concrete work for the pre-asphalt and pre-seal phase has been completed.
 - Street crew will work with CMU students during their service day to take the picnic tables made from crap tires, funded through the DNR grant, to the parks.
 - To apply for the MoDOT grant for the Mulberry Street bridge, the City must wait until July 1st, when the application process opens. The grant is an 80-20 matching grant.
 - A bridge engineering assessment program is also available, which is covered 100% by MoDOT. This study would allow the City to determine the available options for Mulberry Street bridge.
 - The 2022 audit and single audits have been completed, and the City will receive the management letter soon. The auditors will continue with 2023, 2024 and 2025 audits, with completion expected by October 2026.
- **City Attorney – Nathan Nickolaus**
Attorney Nickolaus informed the Council that a bill has been introduced to the House that would classify all hemp products as illegal and placing them in the same category of intoxicating products. He suggested that the City wait to see the outcome of this legislation before proceeding with an ordinance.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE # 2026-02 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE A SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH MO DOT EXTENDING THE PROJECT END DATE OF THE MO DOT TAP-9901(543) GRANT – SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS ON NORTH MAIN STREET

1st Reading by Title only

Alderman Waggoner moved to approve the 1st Reading by Title only of the Ordinance # 2026-02 authorizing the mayor to execute a supplemental agreement with MO DOT extending the project end date of the MO DOT Tap-9901(543) Grant. Alderman Frees seconded the motion.

Roll Call vote: Ayes: Alderman Frees, Alderwoman Gerlt, alderman Roll, Alderman Cook, Alderwoman Ishmael, alderman Waggoner. Nays – none. Motion passed.

2nd and Final Reading by Title only

Alderman Roll moved to approve the 2nd and Final Reading by Title only of the Ordinance # 2026-02 authorizing the mayor to execute a supplemental agreement with MO DOT extending the project end date of the MO DOT Tap-9901(543) Grant. Alderwoman Ishmael seconded the motion.

Roll Call vote: Ayes: Alderman Frees, Alderwoman Gerlt, Alderman Roll, Alderman Cook, Alderwoman Ishmael, Alderman Waggoner. Nays – none. Motion passed.

2. DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE # 2026-03 REGARDING FERAL CATS

1st Reading by Title only

Alderman Cook moved to table the discussion of the Ordinance #2026-03 regarding feral cats. Alderman Frees seconded the motion.

Roll Call vote: Ayes: Alderman Frees, Alderman Roll, Alderman Cook, Alderwoman Ishmael, Alderman Waggoner. Nays: Alderwoman Gerlt. Motion passed.

3. DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL OF FAYETTE HOUSING AUTHORITY REQUEST FOR PILOT FEES EXEMPTION

The Council discussed the Fayette Housing Authority request for Pilot fees exemption. Alderman Cook expressed appreciation for the generosity of other entities that have waived the fees and noted that the City will still be responsible for infrastructure and neighborhood upgrades. He also stated that solar energy system and other energy savings measures to be installed by the Fayette Housing Authority may result in a reduction of the City's utility revenue.

Alderwoman Gerlt stated that since Pilot fees are in lieu of property taxes, that CMU should be required to pay property taxes. Alderman Waggoner responded that CMU pays taxes on the activities not related to its mission, in compliance with federal law requiring non-profits to pay taxes on unrelated activities. He also stated that the original 1967 agreement between the Federal Government and the City of Fayette is a contract that should be honored.

Alderman Frees suggested that if the Council decided forgiving the past five years of Pilot payments, do not waive future payments.

Alderman Cook moved to approve the Fayette Housing Authority's request for exemption from Pilot fees for the past five years (2020 to 2025), but not for future years. Alderman Frees seconded the motion.

Roll Call vote: Ayes: Alderman Frees, Alderwoman Gerlt, Alderman Cook, Alderman Waggoner. Nays: Alderman Roll. Abstain: Alderwoman Ishmael. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL OF WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE PROVIDER

Alderman Roll moved to approve Missouri Rural Services Workers' Compensation Insurance Trust. Alderman Waggoner seconded the motion. Six voting Aye. Nays – none. Motion passed.

2. DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL OF HOWARD COUNTY REGIONAL WATER COMMISSION PROMISSORY NOTE REFUND ALLOCATION

Mr. Curtis Hammons, Water Superintendent, explained that he attended the last Howard County Regional Water meeting where their attorney presented three promissory note refund options, 1- Forgiveness of the obligation of the promissory note; 2- Repayment of outstanding amount in full; 3- Repayment of the outstanding amount through a payment plan of \$5,000 a month off the bill until it was paid. He noted that there will be another meeting in two weeks to make the final decision.

Mr. Hammons recommended taking the option of the refund of \$5,000 a month off the bill until it was paid.

Alderman Waggoner moved to table the discussion of the Howard County Regional Water Commission Promissory Note refund until the next meeting. Alderwoman Ishmael seconded the motion. Six voting Aye. Nays – none. Motion passed.

3. APPOINTMENT OF TARA BUSH TO THE FAYETTE HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD

Alderwoman Gerlt moved to approve the appointment of Tara Bush to the Fayette Housing Authority Board. Alderman Frees seconded the motion. Six voting Aye. Nays – none. Motion passed.

4. OPENING OF SEALED BIDS FOR A 3-YEAR LEASE OF FARMLAND LOCATED NEAR THE FAYETTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT

No bids were received; ads will be posted again.

Alderwoman Ishmael moved to table the Opening of Sealed bids for a 3-year Lease of Farmland located near the Fayette Water Treatment Plant. Alderman Frees seconded the motion. Six voting Aye. Nays – none. Motion passed.

5. OPENING OF SEALED BIDS FOR A 3-YEAR LEASE OF HAY TO BE MOWED AND REMOVED FROM DC ROGERS LAKE AREA

No bids were received; ads will be posted again.

Aldерwoman Ishmael moved to table the Opening of Sealed bids for a 3-year Lease of Hay to be mowed and removed from DC Rogers Lake area. Alderman Frees seconded the motion. Six voting Aye. Nays – none. Motion passed.

6. OPENING OF SEALED BIDS FOR MOWING A PORTION OF THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE FAYETTE CEMETERY

No bids were received; ads will be posted again.

Aldерwoman Ishmael moved to table the Opening of Sealed bids for Mowing a portion of the Southeast corner of the Fayette Cemetery. Alderman Frees seconded the motion. Six voting Aye. Nays – none. Motion passed.

7. DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION # 2026-06 APPROVING INVOICES FOR PAYMENT

Aldерwoman Gerlt moved to approve the Resolution #2026-06 approving invoices for payment and salaries in the total sum of \$239,637.23 which includes, General Fund \$32,069.01, Electric Fund \$185,292.55, Water Fund \$14,821.24, Sewer Fund \$7,454.43. Aldерwoman Ishmael seconded the motion. Six voting Aye. Nays – none. Motion passed.

BOARD OF ALDERMAN COMMENTS & COMMITTEE UPDATE

Alderman David Frees - East Ward

Alderman Frees stated that, in response to Ms. Powell’s comments activities for children and youth in town, the City could organize summer activities in the park, such as a frisbee tournament or a fishing derby, with the support from the Conservation Department.

Aldерwoman Ronda Gerlt - East Ward

Aldерwoman Gerlt reminded the Council about the Candidate Forum scheduled for Thursday at 7:00 pm at the Keller building, organized by the Golden State Club. She also referenced the recent tragedy involving the death of a 12-year-old girl, noting that many people do not fully understand the devastation such events cause. She encouraged everyone to be kind to one another, stating that we must do better as a community and be more mindful in our faith.

Alderman Patrick Roll - Northwest Ward

Nothing to report.

Alderman Grafton Cook - Southwest Ward

Nothing to report.

Aldерwoman Michelle Ishmael - Northwest Ward

Aldерwoman Ishmael stated that she would be happy to participate in a focus group with representatives from the School, the Downtown Fayette organization, local churches and other community members to explore ways to support children in our community. She noted that the City has resources including the trail

at D.C. Rogers Lake, as well as organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Optimist Club, Boy & Girls Club, and other sports programs.

Alderman JB Waggoner - Southwest Ward


Following up with the discussion regarding activities for youth and children, Alderman Waggoner stated that the City has volunteer organizations that would be appropriate to lead on these types of initiatives. He also noted to the City Marshal that, even in times of tragedy, it is important to continue with our responsibilities, such as enforcing parking regulations, sometimes with a simple reminder with a notice on a windshield. He stated that the Council and City can only manage a limited workload but can instead serve as a conduit for providing resources, coordination, and communication, as well as helping to drive the message to various organizations.

Alderman Waggoner expressed his appreciation to the City Administrator for the communication on social media regarding the street improvement priorities.

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Frees motioned to move to closed session at 8:00 p.m. Alderman Waggoner seconded the motion. Six voting Aye. Nays – 0. Motion Passed.

Respectfully submitted by:


_____ Maria Rogers, City Clerk


_____ Greg Stidham, Mayor