

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE ZION CITY COUNCIL HELD ON FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2026 AT 3:00 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, 2828 SHERIDAN ROAD, ZION, ILLINOIS

.....

Mayor McKinney called the meeting to order.

On call of the roll the following answered present: Commissioners McDowell, Fischer, Stackhouse, Frierson and Mayor. A quorum was present.

Also present: Fire Chief Justin Stried, Police Chief Eric Barden, Public Works Director Vic Ransom, Finance Director Melissa Wellendorf, City Administrator David Knabel and City Attorney James Vasselli. Building & Zoning Director Rich Ianson and Economic Development Director Sonolito Bronson were absent.

William Bremner led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

AGENDA CHANGES

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Stackhouse to accept the City Council meeting agenda as presented.

The vote on roll call was: Commissioner McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor aye. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING/IEPA PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY LOAN PROGRAM

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Stackhouse to open the Public Hearing for the City of Zion Phase 1 Environmental Investigation Determination (PEID), for projects funded through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Public Water Supply Loan Program associated with IEPA Loan Numbers L177565 through L177567 and L177927 through L177929 at 3:04 p.m. The vote on roll call was: Commissioner McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney aye. Motion carried.

Director Ransom noted that the public hearing is being held to receive public comments related to the environmental impacts of the proposed water system improvements and to satisfy the public participation requirements of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Notice of the public hearing was provided in accordance with the applicable State requirements, and relevant project information has been made available for public view.

He invited members of the public to speak asking anyone wishing to speak to state their name and address for the record. All comments should be limited to the subject of the public hearing. He noted that there was a representative present from Burke Engineering to answer any questions.

There were no public comments.

He asked a final time if there was anyone that wished to speak or submit comments regarding the Phase 1 Environmental Investigation Determination for the projects. Hearing none, the Public Hearing was closed at 3:06 p.m. It was noted that due to the fact that there were no public comments received, it will be considered as part of the City's submittal to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner Stackhouse to close the Public Hearing for the City of Zion Phase 1 Environmental Investigation Determination at 3:06 p.m. The vote on roll call was: Commissioner McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney aye. Motion carried.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mary Lou Hiltibran, ESDA Director, gave a monthly report of the recent activities that ESDA performed in assistance to the City. She noted that 14 members stood Honor Guard for the visitation of Nate Williams and drove escort to the cemetery. It is a big loss for them as Mr. Williams was their longest serving member and the will be very much missed.

Bernardo Urdaneta, Cultivate Power, noted that he is working on a project with Chris Khayat to bring a proposal for a solar development at 40375 Kenosha Road in Zion. He stated that last summer the Council made it clear that the housing component would have to be included for it to be considered. They will be going before Planning & Zoning on April 2nd. He noted that he would be available to answer questions about the proposal after the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Stackhouse that the Minutes be approved as follows:

- (a) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** a Regular Meeting held on February 17, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.; approval but not release of Closed Session Minutes of a meeting held on February 17, 2026 at 7:45 p.m.

The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, abstain; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson, abstain and Mayor McKinney aye. Motion carried

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Stackhouse that the Bills be approved as follows:

- (b) **BILLS:** Vouchers 151520 through 151363 drawn on Huntington National Bank N.A., Total: \$1,198,778.73

The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson aye and Mayor McKinney aye. Motion carried

RESOLUTION/LEGAL COUNSEL REPRESENTATION/ILLINOIS PROPERTY TAX APPEAL BOARD

Attorney Vasselli stated it is standard procedure to adopt the proposed resolution in order to authorize Vasselli Law, LLC to file an appearance and intervene on behalf of the City in the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board (PTAB) Case No. 2025-01931 with Appellant Old National Bank, concerning property commonly known at 3303 Sheridan Road in Zion (tax number 04-27-304-001).

It was moved by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Frierson that a Resolution (26-R-3) be passed authorizing and approving the engagement of legal counsel to intervene and represent the City of Zion before the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board (PTAB). The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney aye. Motion carried. Resolution passed.

ORDINANCE/MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT/GENSERVE LLC

A memo (26-DOC-16) was received from Chief Stried requesting approval of an agreement for generators located at Fire Station 1, Fire Station 2 and the ESDA Center. Chief Stried stated that service and ongoing preventative maintenance is very much needed on each unit, and GenServ has been recommended to continue providing generator service to City equipment. He is requesting and recommending approval of the agreement in the total amount for all generators of \$3,000 and is included in each department's Building and Grounds budget. He noted it is a \$225 increase from last year.

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Frierson that an Ordinance (26-O-13) be passed authorizing and approving a power maintenance agreement with GenServe LLC. for generators located at Fire Station 1, Fire Station 2 and the ESDA Center. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

ORDINANCE/EMERGENCY STREET LIGHT REPAIRS

A memo (26-DOC-17) was received from Director Ransom requesting approval of an Agreed Unit Price Proposal (AUP) for an emergency street light repair along Sheridan Road between 31st and 34th Street. Director Ransom stated that the streetlights in the area have been off due to more than one known cable fault. It is necessary to directional bore a new underground cable to reconnect several light poles to make a complete circuit.

The emergency repairs are being done by the City's current contracted electrical contractor for routine light maintenance, Home Towne Electric Inc. Emergency repair pricing is not under the provisions of the contract due to the fact that scope of work varies with each occurrence. Staff is requesting and recommending approval of the current AUP, and payment of the future invoice from Home Towne Electric Inc. of Lake Villa, Illinois in the amount of \$38,632.00 Payment will be an amended line item from the FY26 Street and Bridge fund. Commissioner Frierson asked regarding the 2-inch rigid conduit, the proposal reads as 120 feet and is assuming that it is actually 10-times that. Director Ransom stated they ended up combining the two AUPs with the rigid conduit and they are going to eliminate one of the circuits. There was a circuit that went across the street near Culver's. There was a light that was hit and came down and that was part of the problem. Additionally, there was problem by Popeye's. The rigid conduit is shorter than normal because they are going to eliminate a leg of it. The adjustment may be slight but it won't be a max adjustment. Chief Barden stated they are usually 10-foot lengths at a quantity of 120. Mayor McKinney asked for the amount of payment initially, they were talking about it being much more than \$38,000 when they found out the lights were out. Director Ransom stated at first, they had a \$12,000 AUP and then they sent another \$38,000 so they added them together and ended up combining the two into one but it was actually \$12,000 plus \$26,000 which came to \$38,000. It was not the \$58,000 that they originally thought it was. Mayor McKinney noted that it was an area that they have had several calls about over the years.

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Stackhouse that an Ordinance (26-O-14) be passed authorizing and approving a proposal for emergency street light repairs from Home Towne Electric, Inc. in the amount of \$38,632.00. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

ORDINANCE/AGREEMENT/SPYGLASS GROUP, LLC

Administrator Knabel stated the proposed agreement is for the auditing of the City's telecommunication services accounts. He noted that this will be the fourth time they have used the service and have had significant savings in the past. It has been four years since they have looked at the services. There is no cost to the City unless they find overpayment which can go retroactive. Spyglass will take 45% of the savings upon payment. Commissioner Frierson asked what the savings has been in the past. Administrator Knabel noted that the initial savings was about \$140,000 and since then has ranged from \$20,000 to \$50,000.

It was moved by Commissioner Stackhouse, seconded by Commissioner McDowell that an Ordinance (26-O-15) be passed authorizing and approving agreements with Spyglass Group, LLC to provide auditing services to the City of Zion. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Ordinance passed.

TABULATION OF BIDS/CLEANING & MAINTENANCE SERVICE/CITY HALL/POLICE ADMINISTRATION/PUBLIC WORKS

A Tabulation of Bids (26-DOC-18) was received from Director Ianson for Cleaning & Maintenance services for City Hall/Police Administration/Public Works. The City received six bids, but only four were responsive bidders:

SW Cleaning Services	\$44,292.00
Bravo Service, Inc.	\$44,900.00 (non-responsive)
Chi-Town Cleaning Service Co.	\$45,360.00
Total Facility Maintenance	\$46,494.00 (non-responsive)
Perfection Plus Building Services	\$49,500.00
PCSI	\$49,728.00

Based on the past performance history of two of the companies, another two being non-responsive, and the last two having mixed reference responses, Staff is recommending they reject all bids and re-advertise for cleaning services. Commissioner Frierson noted that the City has had to reject bids for this service a few times and asked what the complication is. Administrator Knabel stated that there are certain requirements for Bio Hazard and Blood Borne Pathogen. He noted that they have had ongoing discussions regarding hiring an internal employee but they would be looking at least \$30,000 over what the bids are currently at. It has become a common problem to find good service at a good price.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson, seconded by Commissioner Fischer that a Resolution (26-R-4) be passed rejecting bids and authorizing Staff to seek new bids for cleaning and maintenance services for City Hall, Police Administration and Public Works. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried. Resolution passed.

TIF ASSISTANCE APPLICATION/ROGER WHITMORE AUTOMOTIVE, INC.

A memo (26-DOC-19) was received from Director Bronson requesting approval of an application for TIF assistance submitted by Roger Whitmore Automotive, Inc. On December 8, 2025, the Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Board considered an Application for Assistance submitted by Roger Whitmore Automotive, Inc. in the amount of \$77,773.00 for the IL Route 173/Lewis Avenue Redevelopment Area (TIF #7). The request is for financial assistance to install a new HVAC system and roof at 1711 Kenosha Road and the new signage at 3525 IL Route 173. At the meeting, Administrator Knabel noted that the TIF fund is still relatively new and currently operating at a significant deficit. While this is not a reflection on the merits of the application, the City Council may have concerns about approving additional TIF grants until the funds becomes more financially stable. After discussion, the TIF Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of Mr. Whitmore's application.

Since the meeting, Mr. Whitmore has submitted a written request asking that an additional \$1,277 be added to the TIF Board's recommendation amount to cover increased vendor costs, bringing the total request to \$79,000. While Staff supports the TIF Board's recommendation, the concerns noted by Administrator Knabel should be taken into consideration. Staff is seeking direction from the Council on how to proceed. Three options have been identified:

- Approve the TIF Board's recommendation in the amount of \$77,773
- Approve the TIF Board's recommendation and Mr. Whitmore's revised request in the amount not to exceed \$79,000
- Deny the petitioner's request

Commissioner Fischer noted that the adjustment of \$1,227 is minimal and along with the TIF Board approval, he approves of the application. He understands the concern regarding the deficit of the TIF but noted the funding will come back up. Commissioner Frierson stated that he does not like making a habit of spending money they don't have and noted that there are plenty of other projects with the out-lots and other businesses in that corridor. Commissioner Stackhouse noted that she also is not in favor of spending money that the City doesn't have. Commissioner McDowell asked how long it would be until the TIF would be solvent. Administrator Knabel stated that about \$2.8 million is owed and they have the Fire Station 2 project in that TIF. He believes it could be 5-6 year before it is solvent. Commissioner McDowell asked how long it has been since the requestor's last request. It was noted it was last June. It was noted there was a third option to amend the motion to table the item until the first meeting in April.

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Stackhouse that the consideration of a TIF Assistance request from Roger Whitmore Automotive, Inc. be tabled until the April 7, 2026 meeting. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTARY

Director Ransom stated a few meetings ago he talked about the Roundabouts at Russell Road at Kenosha Road and Lewis Avenue. The road closure for Russell Road and Kenosha Road will start April 13 and should end July 11th. The next one at Russell Road and Lewis Avenue will start shortly after that one ends.

Fire Chief Stried shared some safety reminders as spring nears. He encouraged residents to check their outside grills and Carbon Monoxide Detectors.

Police Chief Barden stated that they have been in negotiations and discussions with the schools on the School Resource Officer (SRO) programs. He noted that things have gone great and he is proud of the program. They are currently meeting about adding another officer.

Director Wallendorf noted that they have a new Account Technologist which will make the department fully staffed. They are starting budgets and doing financial statements. They turned in the 2021-year Audit to the State and are working on the 2022-year Audit. They are hoping to get the Paylocity module up and running soon.

Administrator Knabel stated at the prior meeting they passed a CEJA Abatement Resolution. The resolution contained conditional language regarding PTELL. He noted that legislation was passed addressing this thanks to Senator Edly Allen and Representative Joyce Mason. He will have discussions with the County how this may affect the tax bills. Mayor McKinney asked if he had any numbers on the amount taxes may go down.

Administrator Knabel stated he is hoping to see 15-20% savings on taxes. If residents share boundaries with Beach Park, they should see a savings of about 5%. He noted that Representative Joyce Mason was instrumental in getting the CEJA legislation passed.

Mayor McKinney wished Commissioner Stackhouse a Happy Belated Birthday and Chief Barden and Mr. Bremner a Happy Birthday.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 3		City Offices Closed for the Holiday
April 4	9:00 a.m.	Easter Egg Hunt – Shiloh Park
April 7	7:00 p.m.	Zion City Council Meeting
April 21	6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Zion Township Board Meeting Zion City Council Meeting

Upcoming food pantry dates at ZB East:

- March 28th
- April 25th
- May 30th
- June 27th

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Frierson that the Council recess to Closed Session at 3:40 p.m., pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 “Open Meetings”, for the discussion of filed, pending, possible and/or probable or imminent litigation, personnel, purchase or sale of real estate, collective bargaining, legal counsel and personnel. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

It was moved by Commissioner Frierson seconded by Commissioner Stackhouse to reconvene the Regular Council meeting at 4:29 p.m. with all members present. The vote on roll call was: Commissioners McDowell, aye; Fischer, aye; Stackhouse, aye; Frierson, aye and Mayor McKinney, aye. Motion carried.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, it was moved by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Frierson and unanimously approved the meeting be adjourned at 4:30 p.m. Motion carried.

City Clerk