



**LUCAMA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2025
LUCAMA TOWN HALL
BOARD ROOM**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Mayor, Matthew Creech, (hereinafter “Mayor Creech”) called to order the regular meeting of the Town of Lucama Board of Commissioners (hereinafter “Board”) at 6 pm on June 9, 2025.

2. Roll Call

Mayor Creech conducted roll call – by use of sign-in. The following were present:

Commissioner, Dennis Ford (hereinafter “Comm. Ford”)
Commissioner, Jeff Johnson (hereinafter “Comm. J. Johnson”)
Commissioner, Kim Joyner (hereinafter “Comm. Joyner”)
Commissioner, Jody Teague (hereinafter “Comm. Teague”)
Interim Town Administrator, Ralph Clark (hereinafter “Admin. Clark”)
Town Clerk, Dena Owens (hereinafter “Clerk Owens”)

3. Moment of Silence

Those in attendance observed a moment of silence.

4. Approval of Agenda

Mayor Creech asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

MOTION: Comm. Ford made motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Comm. Joyner. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

5. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting

Mayor Creech gave the Board an opportunity to review the proposed minutes and the financial report for the May 5, 2025, regular meeting.

MOTION: Comm. J. Johnson made a motion to approve the May 5, 2025, minutes and the financial report; seconded by Comm. Ford. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

6. **Welcome of Guests**

Josh Hollis, with the Mid-East Commission, was present to meet with the Board about the updating of the Town's Ordinances. Josh shared information on the creation of the new ordinances for the Town. There was a template ordinance, a base-line ordinance that was to be used, which had the most up to date statutes including 160D updates. It is broken-down between legal provisions, general ordinances and technical ordinances. Legal provision is the local government structure, general ordinances govern the health, safety and welfare of the Town, and technical deals with development related issues.

Many changes in the ordinances deal with the 160D update and other updates where certain language is required to meet statute guidelines. The draft is nearly completed. Once a new section is implemented, the program will automatically renumber everything. Josh expects to have the draft ordinance to the Town within a couple of weeks.

Josh shared the zoning map, which is included in the Town's ordinances. He does realize that there are changes that need to be made to the map, due to rezonings, annexations, etc.

Josh shared with the Board the draft would look like once sent over. He showed the annotations to the side showing where the changes came over for transparency purposes, where the change came from, what was changed, and how it was revised, what was omitted, should there be any. Josh mentioned that there were changes that the mayor had requested. The Board questioned to ascertain what the changes consisted of. Mayor Creech mentioned one instance regarding public bathing, being reworded or redefined.

Josh has plans to have the draft to the Board by Monday, June 23rd.

Interim Admin. Clark mentioned that before any changes to the ordinances could be made, a public hearing would be required where the public has had an opportunity to read the ordinances and have an opportunity to allow their voices to be heard.

7. **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

8. **Old Business**

There was no old business.

9. New Items of Business

Proposed Budget FY26

Interim Admin. Clark presented the proposed balanced budget for FY26 along with key components, such as the organizational chart, fees and charges which include the utility rate schedules, tax rate and salary information.

The tax rate is projected to remain the same at \$.38/\$100 valuation, the water and sewer rates remain the same, and the electric rate remains the same. There was \$200,000 from the electric stabilization fund to cover the rising cost of energy due to the price of natural gas. If the price of natural gas continues to remain at a higher level, a rate adjustment will be required to cover the cost. He recommends that the Town continue to monitor the rate and act prior to January 1, 2026. A rate review should be completed no later than December 1, 2025, for action at the regular December Board meeting.

The current number of total employees of the Town for FY25 is 14 and the proposed budget is requesting 16 total employees. Requests are being made due to the training required in the electrical department, the pole replacement program, and the expected new services due to the proposed developments. There is a position left to fill which will be the Street and Sanitation Superintendent. This position will have expanded duties covering other areas of the operation. Once the water and sewer capital projects begin, there will be a need for an oversight employee for the projects.

There is an allocation in the budget \$100,000 for renovation of the bank building for Town Hall purposes. There is also proposed a water meter changeout program.

This budget does not include the purchase of any new vehicles, however there is an inventory that has been taken for purposes of replacement or something to review when the Town begins replacing vehicles.

The consumer price index for the calendar year 2024 is listed that the cost of living increased by 2.9% and it is recommended that the employees receive a cost-of-living allowance of this amount.

A key to being able to balance the budget without having to impact on the tax rate or other fees is the completion of the audits, which allows the reduction of expenditures in two areas and the reduction in police protection from a contract to calling as needed. There are other areas where improvements have been made which has also improved the Town's finances. Improvements must continue to be made in the operation to offset the rising cost that seems to be prevalent. Admin.

Clark believes that the improvements scheduled for the upcoming year will be accomplished, therefore helping to offset the cost in the future.

Admin. Clark mentioned that there are other capital projects that will need to begin that are not included in the budget, i.e. further pole replacements, etc.

The proposed budget was out on display and given to the Board by the May 1, 2025, deadline, and a public hearing is scheduled for Monday, June 16th. Should there be no public comments, the Board can choose to vote on the budget that day. However, should there be concerns from citizens, the Board will also plan to meet on Monday, June 23rd for approval.

Budget Amendment #6 – Electric Capital Project Closure

Clerk Owens shared with the Board Budget Amendment Number six, which will be used to close the Electric Capital Project.

MOTION: Comm. Joyner made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #6; seconded by Comm. Ford. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Admin. Clark mentioned that there is a portion of funds that was not received in the budget was additional revenue through the Pole Attachment Fees. The pole inventory that was placed in the project, the cost is shared between each of the users and the revenue did not come in. However, it will be used in the next fiscal year's budget.

Budget Change – Fund 10, 30 & 35

Clerk Owens shared with the Board needed modifications that were needed for the FY25 Budget. This requires no action from the Board but does require that the information be given to the Board at the next regular meeting. Changes will be reflected on any Budget to Actual reports dated 5/29/25 and to follow.

Application for Voluntary Annexation – Little Rock OFWB Church.

Clerk Owens presented to the Board an application for voluntary annexation from Little Rock Original Free Will Baptist Church. Clerk Owens requested that the Board allow her to investigate the sufficiency of ownership for said annexation.

MOTION: Comm. Joyner made a motion to allow Clerk Owens the ability to investigate the sufficiency of ownership of Little Rock Original Free Will Baptist Church for voluntary annexation; seconded by Comm. J. Johnson. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mayor Creech questioned why the Town is annexing the church property. Comm. Ford stated that the Church is requesting annexation. He continued to mention that there were advantages of the church to annex, including lighting.

10. Town Administrator's Report

Admin. Clark had nothing further to report.

Comm. Ford mentioned that the Administrative Committee met with a candidate who is interested in, and who the Committee is interested in bringing her in for an interview for the Town Administrator position. The date of June 23rd at 6 pm was scheduled for the Board to interview Elizabeth Krige.

11. Adjournment

Mayor Creech adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:45 pm, June 9, 2025, upon motion of Board.

MOTION: Motion was made to adjourn by Comm. J. Johnson; seconded by Comm. Ford. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted: Dena Owens, Town Clerk