

City of Edgerton, Kansas
Minutes of City Council Regular Session
March 12, 2026

A Regular Session of the City Council was held in the Edgerton City Hall, 404 E. Nelson, Edgerton, Kansas on March 12, 2026. The meeting convened at 7:17 PM with City Council Mayor Roberts presiding.

1. ROLL CALL

Donald Roberts	Present
Clay Longanecker	Present
Josh Lewis	Present
Deb Lebakken	Absent
Bill Malloy	Absent
Ron Conus	Present

With a quorum present, the meeting commenced.

Staff in attendance:

- City Administrator, Beth Linn
- City Attorney, Todd Luckman
- Assistant to the City Administrator, Kara Banks
- Assistant to the City Administrator, Trey Whitaker
- Assistant City Clerk, Alex Firth
- Public Works Director, Dan Merkh
- Finance Director, Karen Kindle
- Development Services Director, Zach Moore
- Public Works Foreman, Chase Forrester
- Construction Inspector, Todd Veeman
- Codes Enforcement Officer, Charlie Lydon

2. WELCOME. Mayor Roberts welcomed all in attendance.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. All present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consent Agenda (*Consent Agenda items will be acted upon by one motion unless a Council member requests an item be removed for discussion and separate action*)

4. Approve Minutes from February 26, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting

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Mayor Roberts stated staff requested to remove the minutes from the consent agenda. Ms. Linn stated that Councilmember Lebakken requested to change one word on page 4 of the minutes from "parental" to "maternity." A copy of the corrected page was distributed to Council.

Councilmember Lewis moved to approve, seconded by Councilmember Longanecker to approve item 4. The motion carried 3-0 by the following vote:

Yes: Longanecker, Lewis, Conus
Absent: Lebakken, Malloy

Regular Agenda

5. **Declaration.** Council members had nothing to declare.

6. **Public Comments.** There were no public comments made.

6.5 Mayor Roberts introduced a representative from Ecowaste Solutions. Stacy Montgomery announced that Ecowaste wants to provide up to \$1000 for the local carnival to the Elementary school and to donate a trash truck for an experience for the kids. She asks that the City reach out to her if they need anything.

Councilmember Longanecker questioned Ms. Montgomery if Ecowaste has the same number as Gardner Disposal did. Stacy answered that Ecowaste will carry on the same way that Gardner disposal did. Ecowaste Solutions is committed to better and more efficient experience involving new technology.

Mayor stated that the City asked Ms. Montgomery to Council today because we have had resident complaints. He stated there have been some issues during the transition and he knows that Ecowaste wants to do better and wants to provide the best service.

City Administrator, Beth Linn posed a concern about the lack of pick-up of trash and bulky item pick up. She also reiterated that per the contract that Edgerton has with Ecowaste that the hours of collection are limited to 7am to 6pm. Ms. Montgomery stated that they will honor that limitation. Ms. Linn also questioned Ms. Montgomery about a report that Yard Waste will be on Saturday instead of the trash day on Wednesday.

Ms. Montgomery answered that with the transition, Ecowaste Solutions changed software as well. Loading data from one software to the next there was some missing data, and the new software used Saturday as a placeholder for the missing data. The customer service agent that was not trained properly to know that Saturday was entered as a placeholder and told the customer the incorrect information. Ms. Montgomery assured council that yard waste pickup day is still on Wednesday and that is not changing.

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Ms. Linn highly encouraged Ecowaste to get information out and get in front of issues, because the City continued to receive calls.

Ms. Linn stated that she encouraged Eco Waste Solutions to get involved with the carnival. She believes it is important for the company to show the community members that Ecowaste is here for the community. Lastly, Ms. Linn requested that the level of communication with Ecowaste and the community increase. Ms. Montgomery stated that this is only her 7th day with the company.

Councilmember Lewis stated that he feels that this is a cross-training issue between the current contract that they have in other places and then what was acquired here. He stated it is important for customer service that Ecowaste recognize that there is a difference from community to community. Ms. Montgomery agreed.

Mayor stated that the City had met with Eco Waste Solutions before Ms. Montgomery was brought on with the company and he feels that they are committed. He encouraged residents to reach out if there are any issues. Ms. Linn stated that if you call the Gardner Disposal number and someone is busy at the location that it will roll over to a call center that will answer.

Councilmember Lewis stated a social media push may be needed to let everyone know that nothing is changing and that there is just a transition period. Ms. Montgomery agreed.

Mayor said that he feels it is on a positive upswing. Change is difficult. Councilmember Lewis stated communication is key.

Ms. Montgomery thanked council for their time.

7. Presentation of Report on Fire Protection Services Governance Options by Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI)

Assistant to the City Administrator, Trey Whitaker, introduced Jeff Grote with ESCI to give a presentation on the fire protection services governance options.

Jeffrey Grote of Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) presented findings from a study commissioned by the City of Edgerton regarding fire protection services governance options. He explained that the study was initiated following the 2025 consolidation of fire services, which became effective in January 2026. The primary concern prompting the study was the shift in governance from more local oversight from the fire board to oversight by the Board of County Commissioners.

Mr. Grote thanked the Mayor, City Council, City Administrator Beth Linn and staff, Fire District personnel, Fire Chief Morley, and county representatives for their participation and openness during the study process. He stated that the concern was not primarily operational fire service

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performance, but rather the governance structure above the fire chief level, including how decisions regarding funding and oversight are made.

He outlined four governance options considered in the report:

- Retain Current Services

ESCI identified benefits including service stability, shared fire protection costs across the district population, a strong ISO rating, no current staffing concerns, and high public approval. Concerns include Edgerton being part of a larger response area, reduced local voice in decision-making, and shared district responsibilities that may not directly align with Edgerton's needs.

- Detach from the Fire District and Contract Back for Service

Under this option, Edgerton could legally detach from the district and then negotiate a contract for continued fire protection services. Mr. Grote stated this could preserve service continuity while allowing the city greater influence through contract terms rather than advisory board participation. He noted drawbacks including less flexibility once a contract is established, responsibility for the city to collect fire service taxes, required tax roll adjustments, and the uncertainty of the formal detachment process. He also noted the possibility that if Edgerton were detached, the fire district might choose not to contract back.

- Establish an Edgerton Fire Department

Mr. Grote explained this option would provide the city full control over its fire organization and governance. However, he cautioned that it would likely require expansion of city government operations and would probably increase costs depending on the staffing and service model selected. Liability would also rest with the city if it established and operated its own department.

- Contract with Another Fire Department

Mr. Grote stated this option was also considered, though fewer details were discussed in the transcript. He noted liability under a contract model would generally remain with the contracted provider rather than the city.

During discussion, liability was addressed. It was clarified that if Edgerton established its own fire department, liability would belong to the city. Under the other options, liability would generally remain with the existing district or whichever agency contracted to provide service.

Mr. Grote also commented that lower-cost service models, such as volunteer-based departments, may reduce costs but could also result in changes to service delivery.

ESCI recommended that the City take an evaluative approach and allow the current governance structure additional time to develop. Mr. Grote encouraged the City to engage with the advisory board, consider community polling to gauge public sentiment, and seek independent legal counsel if further action is considered. He also noted that if the City were to explore forming its

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own department, major equipment needs, including a ladder truck, should be included in cost estimates.

Councilmember Conus referenced page 55 of the report and asked about historical issues during the early days of the intermodal area, specifically regarding a ladder truck. He asked whether a ladder truck was included in the cost estimate for Option Three (establishing a city fire department).

Mr. Grote responded that ESCI did not include that level of detail in the estimates. He stated the intent was to keep the analysis high-level so that once a model is selected, more detailed planning and cost analysis could be conducted.

The Mayor commented on the referenced building fire, stating that the issue at that time involved a fire truck breaking down on a hill. He noted that while the concern about equipment is valid, that specific incident was more of an isolated equipment issue rather than indicative of a broader infrastructure need.

Mr. Grote asked for clarification regarding infrastructure considerations.

The Mayor stated that while no one wants to be in a situation without adequate equipment, he believes the fire service could still respond effectively, though he would not recommend operating without appropriate equipment.

Chief Morley clarified that during the Kubota fire incident, the ladder truck functioned properly during operations. He explained that difficulty occurred only after the fire was mitigated, when bringing the ladder truck back down.

He further provided a recent example from earlier in the week involving a lightning strike at a warehouse in Edgerton, where ladder trucks were successfully used to provide quick roof access.

Councilmember Conus referenced page 61 and asked about the recommendation of 16 staff members, confirming whether they would be full-time and what salary assumptions were used in the estimate.

Mr. Grote confirmed that the 16 positions referenced represent an initial staffing level and are full-time. He stated that salary estimates were based on U.S. Department of Labor statistics for the Kansas City metropolitan area, including both Kansas and Missouri, and confirmed that employee benefits were included in the calculations.

The Mayor asked if there were additional questions and then thanked Mr. Grote and ESCI for their work. He acknowledged interest from firefighters and staff regarding the outcome of the study.

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The Mayor stated that his professional perspective aligns with ESCI's recommendation to move forward with the current structure while continuing to evaluate performance. He noted that if issues arise, the City retains the ability to explore other options.

He added that if the City were to consider establishing its own fire department, additional detailed study would be necessary. He also noted that any decision to move in that direction would need to be communicated early for budget planning purposes.

Councilmember Longanecker expressed support for retaining the current service model and evaluating performance over time. He stated that the City has received strong service and expressed concern that contracting services could reduce control and create uncertainty if a provider chose to discontinue service. He stated that the current arrangement appears to be the best option at this time.

Mr. Grote emphasized that all governance options remain available and do not expire, allowing the City flexibility to reconsider options in the future.

Councilmember Lewis stated that understanding the options provides reassurance. He noted that if service levels decline or the City's voice is not effectively represented on the advisory board, the City retains the ability to reconsider its position. He expressed confidence that the current system will continue to function effectively and that having options provides a level of control.

The Mayor expressed concern regarding long-term governance, particularly the role of the County Board of Commissioners and potential future inclusion of additional districts, such as District 3.

He noted concerns about financial impacts related to economic development, including tax abatements especially in regards to the Panasonic project if further consolidation happens, and how costs may be distributed across a larger district. He stated that future revenue growth may not reduce the mill levy as it might be under a smaller or more localized structure.

He emphasized that while he does not believe there is negative intent, decision-making at the county level is focused on county-wide interests rather than those of a single district.

The Mayor also referenced a recent article discussing challenges in recruiting volunteer firefighters. Drawing from his own 18 years of volunteer experience, he acknowledged the value of volunteer service but noted that service levels in the current district have improved with full-time staffing.

Councilmember Conus asked how the recommended 16 staff members translate into daily staffing levels, noting that Edgerton averages approximately one call per day.

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Mr. Grote explained that the 16 staff equate to approximately three personnel on duty at any given time, representing one engine company operating 24/7.

Chief Morley provided detailed context regarding staffing and operational needs. He explained that an effective fire response requires approximately 16 firefighters to arrive within 12 minutes to manage a residential fire and complete all necessary tasks.

He noted that the current fire district relies on mutual aid agreements with neighboring departments to meet these staffing levels and cannot always achieve this independently.

He described typical response requirements, including multiple apparatus, battalion chiefs, and ambulances for both fire and medical emergencies. He emphasized that mutual aid is reciprocal and requires all participating agencies to contribute resources.

Chief Morley also discussed challenges with volunteer staffing, noting that recruitment and retention are difficult, particularly due to training requirements and certification demands for EMS services. He stated that modern emergency response increasingly relies on full-time, highly trained personnel.

He further explained that while Edgerton may average one call per day within city limits, fire crews also respond to calls outside the city as part of the district's broader service area. He highlighted specialized equipment and centralized resources that support advanced life-saving efforts. Chief Morley stated that the district provides comprehensive services, including training, liability coverage, and coordination across multiple communities. He expressed pride in the organization and appreciation for the opportunity to work with ESCI.

The Mayor reiterated that while 16 firefighters may sound significant, it represents the minimum staffing needed to provide continuous 24/7 service.

Councilmember Conus stated that his questions had been answered.

The Mayor acknowledged ongoing concerns regarding governance but stated that these issues can be addressed over time and may evolve with future elections. He expressed hope that the discussion provides useful information for future decision-making.

Chief Morley reiterated his appreciation for working with ESCI and noted that the district values the data and analysis provided. He indicated interest in continuing to work with ESCI on future initiatives.

Business Requiring Action

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8. CONSIDER OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS WATER SERVICE APPLICATION

Mr. Dan Merkh, Public works Director, presented the item. He stated the applicants live along 200th Road in Wellsville, outside of the corporate city limits. The City has received their application and consent to annex the property, both of which are required to be approved by the Governing Body. If approved, the applicants are responsible for the cost of installing the water line to connect to the City's main, which borders the north side of the property.

The Mayor initiated discussion by asking whether the City requires a warranty period for construction work, specifically related to utility installations. He noted that this may not have been addressed previously and questioned whether such a requirement should apply. He clarified that while private installations typically do not fall under City responsibility, the City ultimately owns the infrastructure being installed. He stated that he has observed many fire hydrant installations and noted that issues are uncommon but suggested considering protections for the City.

The Mayor acknowledged that the current agenda item pertains to water meters, not fire hydrants, but stated that the same general concern applies. He explained that the City would own the line up to the meter, as well as the meter pit and meter itself.

Mr. Merkh stated that he was unsure whether a warranty requirement currently exists and indicated that he would need to conduct research to provide a definitive answer. He noted that, historically, contractors may provide warranties directly to homeowners when the homeowner is responsible for the cost, but additional clarification would be needed for City-owned infrastructure.

He clarified that the current item under discussion relates only to the water meter and that a separate discussion regarding fire hydrants would be brought back at a later date. Mr. Merkh added that there would be no boring into existing water lines for this installation and estimated that costs associated with this work would be in the low four-digit range.

He further stated that while the discussion is not necessarily focused on risk mitigation, costs for services outside city limits are significantly higher than those within city limits. He indicated that he could research and provide additional information on this topic. Mr. Merkh provided specific fee information from the application, stating that the water connection charge is \$7,500 and the system development fee is \$4,300.

Councilmember Longanecker clarified that the discussion was focused on a potential warranty for the line extending from the main.

Mr. Luckman asked about the potential cost of implementing a warranty or related requirement.

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He expressed concern that a warranty alone may not be sufficient protection, noting that property ownership can change over time, which could complicate enforcement. He suggested that a more secure approach might include requiring a financial assurance mechanism such as a deposit, letter of credit, or bond that would remain accessible if issues arise in the future. Mr. Luckman also noted that since the City would ultimately own the system up to the meter, long-term responsibility may rest with the City regardless of initial installation arrangements.

The Mayor acknowledged the discussion regarding ownership and risk, noting that once installed, the infrastructure becomes part of the City system. He reiterated that potential repair costs are likely manageable and that the City has historically accepted this level of risk. He concluded that the current policy may be appropriate at this time but agreed that additional review could be beneficial.

Council consensus indicated interest in maintaining the current approach for the time being while exploring the potential for additional protections, such as warranties or financial assurances, in the future.

Councilmember Longanecker moved to approve, seconded by Councilmember Conus to approve Item 8. The motion carried 3-0 by the following vote:

Yes: Longanecker, Lewis, Conus

Absent: Lebakken, Malloy

9. CONSIDER ORDINANCE NO. 2192 AMENDING ARTICLE 12 – SIGNS - OF THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE (UDC) OF THE CITY OF EDGERTON, KANSAS AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT THEREWITH

Mr. Zach Moore, Development Services Director presented item 9 to council. He stated while the City is currently undergoing an overall rewrite to the UDC, this proposed update is intended to address existing sign regulations, with the holistic rewrite portion of Article 12 coming later. He stated the most notable updates with this proposal are in regard to Monument Signs in the commercial districts and updating regulations for signs in the I-G (General Industrial) and I-H (Heavy Industry) Districts to align with the existing sign regulations of the L-P (Logistics Park) District. A full summary of the updates included with this proposal is provided in the Planning Commission memo which is included in this packet.

He stated a draft of the new proposed regulations was presented to the Planning Commission at their February 10, 2026 meeting, where a public hearing was held with no public comment. The Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the new draft sign regulations with a 4-0 vote.

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The Mayor presented a question submitted by Councilmember Lebakken, asking whether the proposed ordinance would affect existing businesses or only apply when businesses remodel or fully replace their signage. He further clarified the question, asking whether businesses currently located along Highway 56 would be required to comply immediately, or only upon renovation or remodeling of their signs.

Mr. Moore confirmed that the ordinance would not affect existing businesses unless changes are made. He explained that compliance would only be required if a business remodels or replaces its signage. He noted that under previous allowances, signage along Highway 56 could be as large as 200 square feet, and that the proposed ordinance would significantly reduce that allowable size moving forward.

Mr. Moore outlined additional proposed updates to the sign code, including:

- Updating monument sign standards in the IG (Industrial General) and IH (Industrial Heavy) districts to align with those currently permitted in the LP (Logistics Park) district.
- Requiring external directional signs to be constructed on a solid base.
- Removing the allowance for home occupation signs (e.g., a resident placing a sign in their yard for a home-based business such as a CPA).
- Updating enforcement language in the LP district so that enforcement responsibilities would fall under the designated official or department rather than solely the building official.

The Mayor reiterated the question to confirm that existing businesses along Highway 56 would not be required to comply unless they choose to renovate or remodel their signage.

Mr. Moore confirmed that if a business makes changes, they cannot deviate further from compliance and must follow the updated code requirements.

Mr. Luckman noted that existing signage would be considered a legal nonconforming use, meaning it can remain as-is but cannot be expanded or significantly altered beyond its current state. He added that determining how much modification is allowed under nonconforming status can be complex and may vary depending on the extent of the changes.

Mr. Moore provided an example, stating that if an existing business (such as Dollar General) were to vacate a building, a new business could occupy the space and continue using the existing sign structure at its current size.

The Mayor clarified that if a business were to fully renovate or replace the sign, it would then be required to meet the new monument sign standards under the proposed ordinance.

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Mr. Moore added that routine maintenance of existing signage would still be allowed. However, if the sign is abandoned, no longer used, or significantly altered, the legal nonconforming status would be lost, and the sign would then need to comply with current code requirements.

Councilmember Lewis moved to approve, seconded by Councilmember Longanecker to approve Item 8. The motion carried 3-0 by the following vote:

Yes: Longanecker, Lewis, Conus
Absent: Lebakken, Malloy

10. Report by the City Administrator

- UDC Article 5

Mr. Zach Moore passed out copies of revisions to Article 5 of the UDC. He explained that as part of preparation for a future comprehensive code update, a review of existing district regulations identified opportunities to improve the IG (Industrial General) and IH (Industrial Heavy) districts.

He noted that the LP (Logistics Park) district standards have been functioning effectively, particularly regarding design guidelines and development standards. Based on this, staff proposed aligning the IG and IH district regulations more closely with the LP district.

The proposed update primarily consists of incorporating LP district standards into the IG and IH districts, while still allowing for the more intensive uses permitted in those districts.

The Mayor acknowledged the internal effort required to complete the review and updates, noting that it represents a significant workload for staff. He expressed appreciation for the work completed and commented that the proposed changes appear straightforward.

- Annual Review of Water Emergency and Water Conservation Plans

Mr. Dan Merkh, reported that the City Council originally approved the Water Conservation Plan and Water Emergency Plan in September 2020. The City is required to review both plans annually, and any revisions must be approved by the City Council and submitted to the State of Kansas for review and acceptance. No changes are recommended to the Water Emergency Plan for this review cycle.

The Water Conservation Plan requires a minor update to reflect current water usage data from the newest Kansas Department of Agriculture's Municipal Water Use Report.

Staff stated that verification of the Council's annual review will be submitted to the Kansas Water Office.

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- STORMWATER & STREETS Dedicated Sales Tax Update

Mr. Whitaker provided an update regarding the Stormwater and Streets special dedicated sales tax. He reported that the election was held on March 3, 2026. Unofficial results were received on election day, followed by certified official results on March 10.

Election results were as follows:

Yes: 98 votes

No: 89 votes

Total Votes Cast: 187

Voter Turnout: Approximately 17% of the 1,050 registered voters

Projected revenue from the approved sales tax is estimated at approximately \$700,000 annually, totaling \$7 million over a 10-year period.

Mr. Whitaker noted sales tax collection is anticipated to begin in October. The City expects to receive its first distribution in December 2026 or January 2027.

Mr. Luckman stated that there is another resolution that needs to be passed, but it is just a formality.

11. Report by the Mayor

He wished Beth Linn a happy birthday and pointed out that staff had decorated her office to celebrate.

12. Future Meeting Reminders:

Mayor reminded the Council of the future meetings for the Council and Planning Commission, as well as the events scheduled at The Greenspace.

- March 16-20: Edgerton Spring Break Activities
- March 24: Toddler Gym Jam
- March 26: City Council Meeting

13. CONSIDER RECESSING INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO THE ATTORNEY/CLIENT EXCEPTION TO INCLUDE CITY ATTORNEY, CITY

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ADMINISTRATOR, DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR, AND CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER FOR THE PURPOSES OF ATTORNEY/CLIENT COMMUNICATION (K.S.A. 75- 4319(B)(2))

Mayor Roberts requested motion to recess into executive session for discussions related to Attorney/Client Communication. The justification for such executive session is for a consultation with the City Attorney, which is deemed privileged in an attorney-client relationship (K.S.A. 75-4319B(2)). Present in the executive session will be the Governing Body and the following staff members: City Administrator, Beth Linn, Development Services Director, Zach Moore, Code Enforcement Officer, Charlie Lydon, and City Attorney, Todd Luckman.

The executive session will start at 8:38 PM and last 15 minutes to reconvene at 8:53pm. The open meeting will resume in the Council Chambers.

Councilmember Longnecker moved to recess into executive session pursuant to K.S.A 75-4319(B)(2) for the purpose which is deemed privileged in an attorney-client relationship. Councilmember Lewis seconded the motion.

The meeting recessed into executive session at 8:38 PM, 3-0.

At 8:53 PM, Councilmember Longanecker moved to return to open session with no action being taken. Seconded by Councilmember Lewis. Motion passed unanimously and the open session resumed at 8:53 PM.

At 8:54 PM, Councilmember Longnecker made a motion to recess back into executive session for an additional 10 minutes and Councilmember Conus seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 3-0.

Councilmember Lewis moved to return to open session with no action being taken. Councilmember Conus seconded the motion. Open session resumed at 9:04 PM, 3-0.

14. Adjourn

Councilmember Lewis moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilmember Conus. The motion carried 9:05 by the following vote:

Yes:

Absent:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.
Submitted by Alex Firth, Assistant City Clerk.

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