

City of Tekoa
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Monday – February 17, 2026 - 6 P.M.
Tekoa City Hall

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Schulz called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.
- II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE:** Mayor Schulz led in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. **ROLL CALL:**
- MAYOR SCHULZ:** Present.
CM DAN THOMAS: Present.
CM MARGIE JAEGER: Present.
CM PETE MARTIN: Present.
CM MIKE HALE: Present.
CM SHELLY AUSMUS: Absent.
CM DAVE TYSZ: Present.
CM REID SMITH: Present.
ATTY. HANSON: Absent.
- IV. **AGENDA MODIFICATIONS:** There were none.
- V. **February 2, 2026, COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:** CM Asmus moved to accept the February 2, 2026, Council Meeting Minutes. CM Martin seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- VI. **PUBLIC COMMENTS, PUBLIC HEARINGS AND CORRESPONDENCE:**
- A. **PUBLIC COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE:** Steve Haxton talked about his frustration over how wages Eliza Evans-Teague to train Browning were determined. He had further criticisms of the council.
- B. **COMMUNITY GROUP UPDATES:** CM Ausmus said the next Heart and Soul is postponed to next Wednesday at 5 p.m. at Trestle Coffee.
- VII. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**
- A. **UNION CONTRACT:** CM Martin reported invoices for their attorney are in the packet and shows how it has been spent. He said we have spent \$10,000 and will need another \$5,000 to get this done. CM Ausmus said it has been recommended councils need legal help. Attorney Eric Hansen had previously said he isn't well versed in union contracts and had encouraged the council to seek the help they needed. Ausmus brought up the costs of the original union contract, stating that it could have cost \$60,000, if not more, in new salary and benefits for the life of the contract. After discussion, CM Martin made a motion to authorize another \$5,000 for their attorney. CM Ausmus seconded the motion. Mayor Schulz asked each council member to say what they think about continuing with negotiations and paying \$5,000 more. After additional discussion, Mayor Schulz asked for the vote: CM Martin voted yes, CM Jaeger voted yes, CM Thomas voted yes, CM Hale voted present, CM Smith voted yes, CM Tysz voted yes, and CM Ausmus voted yes. The motion passed.

If additional funds are needed, the committee must come back to the full council to ask.

B. HARRASSMENT ORDINANCE: Atty. Hanson was not in attendance.

B. GOLF COURSE REMODEL: This will be added to the next agenda.

C. GOLF COURSE LEASE AGREEMENT: This will be added to the next agenda.

D. WATER METER PURCHASE OUT OF WATER RESERVES: Browning explained that we need a motion to purchase the water meters out of the reserves and need a motion to move the money to the water fund. CM Tysz made a motion to move the money for the meters out of the water reserve fund to the water fund. CM Hale seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

250th BIRTHDAY OF THE COUNTRY CELEBRATION (PLANNING COMMITTEE): This will be added to the next agenda.

E. SURPLUS ITEM RESOLUTION: This will be added to the next agenda.

F. PUBLIC COMMENT TIMES: PROCEDURES AND REMINDERS: CM Ausmus said if we are having two public comment times, we should encourage people to sign in and say if they want to speak at the beginning or the end because the policy says that they can only speak once. She addressed MRSC guidelines that council meetings are business meetings and that audience members shouldn't be called on outside of public comment times, except when the council or mayor asks for input from someone with expert knowledge on a topic being discussed.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. STEVEN THOMAS EXTEND VACATION: Browning let the council know Steven Thomas has 78.94 vacation hours left from 2025. CM Martin made a motion to allow Thomas to carry over 78.94 hours of vacation. CM Smith seconded the motion. CM Ausmus asked if he leaves will he get paid for all the vacation hours. Mayor Schulz said he would be paid. Motion passed unanimously.

B. STREET LEVY PAVING PROJECT COSTS: Steven Thomas contacted the contractor Motley and Motley that they used for a previous paving project to get a bid for paving. He said he has to measure the street to get a price for the paving. After he measures, he will get three bids to get the lowest price.

C. BROWN VARIANCE FOR LIVING IN TRAILER: Mrs. Brown brought information to the office about the manufactured home they are buying. CM Tysz said he would like them to go month by month. CM Hale said he has a problem with this, he doesn't want to extend it. CM Martin made a motion to not allow the variance and need to move the trailer in 30 days. CM Ausmus seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

D. UTILIZATION OF COMMUNITY CENTER: This will be added to the next agenda.

E. ANN GROOT VARIANCE FOR HOUSE – 10 FEET FROM PROPERTY LINE: CM Ausmus said she doesn't have a problem with moving ahead since she has a plan. CM Hale made a motion to allow a 10-foot variance. CM Martin seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- F. APPROVE LGIP RESOLUTION 26-2 AND ADD BROWNING TO AUTHORIZATION FORM:** Browning presented the resolution to the council to approve the LGIP and to add her to the authorization form. CM Tysz made a motion to approve the LGIP Resolution 26-2. CM Hale seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. CM Martin made a motion to add Browning to the authorization form for the LGIP. CM Ausmus seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- G. CEMETERY MAINTENANCE WAGE:** Mayor Schulz said the cemetery maintenance employees make \$18.00 an hour and they use their own equipment. He is asking the council to raise their wage. CM Martin asked if they are considered employees that would be part of the union. It was explained they are part-time and would not be part of the union. The council would like more information and asked to put it on the next agenda.
- H. LINE ITEM IN BUDGET FOR NEGOTIATIONS:** Browning told the council that another line item was added to the budget for the negotiations.
- I. WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT PROJECT LIST:** Steven Thomas gave the council a list of items that need to be fixed or replaced at the sewer plant. He went over the list with the council. CM Ausmus told Steven how much she appreciated the tour and all the work he does at the sewer plant. There was discussion.
- J. ADJUST BUDGET FOR AIRPORT LIGHT INSTALLATION:** CM Hale said he would like to get a permit and got a few bids, with American Electric the lowest at around \$11,000. He said there are two grants and a loan reimbursement to be put in the airport budget. He will bring information to the council.
- K. NIKKI JENSEN PAY RAISE:** Mayor Schulz said when Nikki Jensen was hired they would bump her wage \$1.50 an hour after 90 days if she is doing a good job. CM Ausmus made a motion to increase Nikki Jensen's wage from \$23.50 to \$25.00 an hour. CM Martin seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. CM Ausmus stated the council only recently learned Nikki had been offered the raise after 90 days. It was discussed that there is inconsistency over how "range of pay" has been implemented.
- L. WIFIBER OFFER FOR OLD CITY SHOP:** Wifiber presented an offer to purchase the old city shop. The mayor would like to get Eric Hanson here and go into executive session so they can get legal advice on this matter. CM Ausmus asked if the Old City Hall is still being advertised. Mayor Schulz said it is not, but would like Eric Hanson to advise them on how to proceed.
- M. WSDOT AIRPORT GRANT:** CM Hale presented the WSDOT Airport Grant that will update the land planning and the plans for the airport. The old plan is over 20 years old. Tim Ike will be at the next meeting. We did not get our grant last year from WSDOT, so we have enough in our budget for the matching money. He will get information for electricity and water on the other side of the airport. He talked about the different aspects.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS:

- A. **MAYOR'S REPORT:** Mayor Schulz talked about Jeff Latkowski's progress, he is off for 90 days, but he would like to start the process to get a replacement. There was discussion, and CM Ausmus said it is up to the Mayor. He will talk to the attorney about it.
 - B. **STAFF REPORT:** Browning went over the check register. Steven Thomas said he got a quote for barricades. After the discussion, CM Hale made a motion for Thomas to purchase the barricades and signs. CM Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
 - C. **COUNCIL REPORTS & COMMENTS:** CM Martin talked about the authority for going into executive session. CM Smith went to the Fire Department meeting and said Donavon Chase is planning to be at the March 2 meeting. CM Ausmus said the park board would like to thank everyone for passing the levy. She also said they are looking for a pool manager and lifeguards.
 - D. **PUBLIC COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE:** Brad Chandler talked about the CPI and CPL and told the council information about increases for different laborers.
- X. **APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS AND CLAIMS:** The council asked about the \$800 bill to Zip Recruiter for hiring of recent clerk position. Browning said there is another bill for \$500 as well. Discussion that this was too expensive and did not produce qualified candidates. Suggested that the city advertise in the Gazette, locally at businesses, and through AWC publications.

CM Ausmus moved to approve EFT payroll and check numbers 18336-18354 in the amount of \$73,245.04. CM Hale seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- XIV. **ADJOURNMENT:** CM Hale made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. CM Thomas seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVED:

Roy Schulz - Mayor

ATTEST:

Kynda Browning - Clerk/Treasurer