

## CITY OF FORT SCOTT CITY COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes of February 3, 2026

Regular Meeting

A meeting of the Fort Scott City Commission was held in the City Commission Meeting Room at City Hall, 123 S. Main Street, Fort Scott, Kansas. *The meeting was streamed live on YouTube.*

The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM. Roll call was taken. Commissioners Matthew Wells, Tracy Dancer, Tim Van Hoecke, Julie Buchta and Mayor Kathryn Salsbury were present.

**In Attendance** - Brad Matkin/*City Manager*, Bob Farmer/*City Attorney*, Lisa Lewis/*City Clerk*, Lisa Dillon/*Housing & Neighborhood Revitalization Coordinator*, Jason Dickman/*Earles Engineering & Inspections LLC*, Michael Hoyt, Kevin Allen, Bill Peterson and Tom Eastwood.

SALSURY led the Pledge of Allegiance and BUCHTA said a prayer asking God for guidance for the City, the Citizens, our Government and City officials.

### Approval of Agenda

**MOTION:** VAN HOECKE moved to approve the amended agenda. The addition of Item A/Unfinished Business – Status update of Alleged Unsafe and Dangerous Structure at 602 S. Barbee; and removal of Item B/New Business/Action Items – Consideration of changes to Ordinance No. 3793. WELLS seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

### Consent Agenda

- Approval of Appropriation Ordinance 1401-A – Expense Approval Report – Payment Dates of January 15, 2026 – January 27, 2026 - \$420,842.25
- Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of January 20, 2026

**MOTION:** DANCER moved to approve the agenda as presented. BUCHTA seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

### Public Comment

**Lisa Dillon** requested that the City Commission hold a Special Meeting on February 13, 2026, at 12:00PM regarding an application for a CDBG grant for a Housing Rehabilitation Program. It will be held as a Public Hearing.

**Kevin Allen** addressed the Commission regarding his concerns for the idle trains that continuously block thru traffic on tracks and for them to consider extending the relief on bills in the event of a water leak for rural water customers. Currently it was only extended to City water customers.

**Appearances****Stephen Mitchell** – IT Update

- Dispatch move is complete
- Inventory is 98% complete, all equipment tagged, audit annually
- Water Plant is next priority
- Working on 1 yr., 3 yr., and 5 yr. upgrade schedule

**Unfinished Business****Status update of Alleged Unsafe and Dangerous Structure at 602 S. Barbee**

KRUGER stated that the process had been halted because there was interest expressed to purchase and repair the home. The potential buyer is no longer interested and the home is no longer for sale. It will go back into the demolition process. Initially there was extension granted for the public hearing.

**New Business****Public Hearings:****Consideration of RESOLUTION NO. 9-2026 RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE REPAIR OR  
REMOVAL OF AN ALLEGED UNSAFE AND DANGEROUS STRUCTURE AT 310 N.  
CLEVELAND**

**MOTION:** WELLS moved to open the public hearing. VAN HOECKE seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

KRUGER stated he had nothing new to report on this property.

PETERSON (owner of 310 N. Cleveland) stated they have been working on it but stopped due to the cold weather. He gave a description of what he knew was wrong with the home. He requested that they not tear it down. He stated that he currently lives in the house without water and electric or heat. There are no utilities to the house. Taxes are up to date. The home is paid off.

KRUGER was asked why the house is considered unsafe and dangerous. He stated that it is on the list because repair letters were sent, it is in partial disrepair and there is an abandonment clause. He clarified for WELLS that it needs roof repair (front and back), carport/garage repaired, major damage on the backside of the house and utilities would have to be restored, and address the abandonment issue in order for it to come off of the list.

PETERSON stated the utilities have not been on in quite a while and he stayed overnight at the house (2) nights ago. When he is not staying at the house, he is staying at the (Super 8) motel. He will need a while to address all issues required.

KRUGER added that this is the first discussion he has had with PETERSON because he did not respond to letters sent about the issues going back (1) year.

ALLEN stated PETERSON has lived in the house for a long time.

VAN HOECKE asked if PETERSON had a building permit for the work he is doing on the house. PETERSON responded "No, but that's no problem. We can get that".

**MOTION:** VAN HOECKE moved to close the public hearing. DANCER seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

**MOTION:** VAN HOECKE moved to provide the individual with (6) months with the following conditions: obtain a building permit for work being done, do what you can to get water turned back on, Officer Kruger provide the gentleman with a defined list of the discrepancy items and report back to the Commission with a status after (6) months, and that PETERSON stays in contact with Officer Kruger. BUCHTA seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

**B. Consideration of RESOLUTION NO. 10-2026 A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE REPAIR OR REMOVAL OF AN ALLEGED UNSAFE AND DANGEROUS STRUCTURE AT 601 S. LITTLE**

**MOTION:** WELLS moved to open the public hearing. VAN HOECKE seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

KRUGER stated that the house has been deemed a safety hazard so time is of the essence for the demolition.

EASTWOOD stated that his mother owns the home. They are aware of the home. His sister and other homeless people have been allowed to live at the home. There was a fire at the house within the past year. His sister lived in a tent outside of the house after the fire. He raised \$250.00 to get kerosene for her. Currently he lives in Oklahoma and he had the land signed over to him. He brought a car trailer down for his sister to live in until he can find a solution for someone who is homeless in Fort Scott. He stated that he can tear down the house quickly. He said that he has land in Fulton as well and is helping more family in Fulton too. He is asking for time and stated he will clean up this yard. He is trying to find a way to relocate her.

KRUGER confirmed that the house was in a fire, uninhabitable, and behind in taxes by (6) years.

EASTWOOD stated he was going to knock down the house and build a building on top of it in its place.

VAN HOECKE stated that it is dangerous and EASTWOOD agreed. VAN HOECKE said it is wide open and an attractive nuisance and poses risks. He recommended letting the City demolish the home.

KRUGER recommended that the City demolish structure. It will probably be on the next tax sale unless the taxes are paid.

EASTWOOD stated that he could put a couple of thousands on the taxes.

Discussion was had on the City's demolition costs versus EASTWOOD tearing it down.

HOYT stated that if the homeowner currently has a warranty deed, we would want to protect that as a Land Bank to take it as a donation so it could be sold quickly.

**MOTION:** VAN HOECKE moved to close the public hearing. DANCER seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

**MOTION:** VAN HOECKE moved to approve Resolution No. 10-2026 directing the removal of an unsafe and dangerous structure at 601 S. Little. BUCHTA seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

MATKIN clarified that location is not suitable for a homeless shelter and it has to be a home. SALSBURY stated that the law does not allow for a shelter to be in that proximity to an elementary school.

**Action Items:**

Status update of 18 S. HOLBROOK - Tabled from November 18, 2025

KRUGER stated he is bringing this item back to the Commission for their consideration.

WELLS stated that the Land Bank was going to purchase the property at the tax sale and they are still interested in purchasing it. He said there is very little wrong structurally. The Land Bank intends to purchase it through the tax sale and clear the deed.

KRUGER stated that there is no living deed holder and it didn't go through probate. VAN HOECKE expressed concern that if the Land Bank purchases it but does not fix it the unsafe and dangerous structure status remains unchanged. DILLON stated there is no timeframe because the tax sale has not been announced. Currently there are too many unknowns to establish a timeframe.

Discussion was had regarding the condition of the house.

**ACTION:** MATKIN was directed to bring this item back to the agenda in no more than (90) days. If nothing has changed, then bring the consideration to approve the resolution for removal.

DANCER clarified that the public hearings are for unsafe and dangerous structures, not appearance of a house.

Discussion was had on what is an unsafe and dangerous structure.

SALSBURY stated that she wanted the Commission to try something new Action Items. She would like the Commissioners to please keep comments to (2) to (3) minutes. The idea is to focus on providing staff with some clear directions, share thoughts, and have some research tasks for them so we can come back later and have a more informed and cohesive debate at a later time.

Approval to go out for bids for Cape Seal Project

MATKIN stated the proposal outlines specified rock composition and sizes with the help of Earles Engineering & Inspection LLC.

**MOTION:** WELLS moved to go out for bids for the Cape Seal project for 2026 according to the paperwork presented. BUCHTA seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

*FARMER left the meeting at 7:19PM and returned at 7:21PM*

Discussion - City lake properties

Commissioners provided individual input to the discussion leaning toward leasing the lots to those who wish to use City-owned property mainly for storage.

**ACTION:** BUCHTA will tour the lake lots with the Codes Department in the coming weeks to familiarize herself with the area and concerns.

*WELLS left the meeting at 7:26PM and returned at 7:27PM*

Discussion - Contractor Licensing

MATKIN requested that the Commission discuss and decide whether the City should move forward with this or drop it. The Commission revisited its prior approval of contractor licensing and discussed unresolved questions regarding criteria, testing, validation, and enforcement. Concerns were raised about administrative burden, city liability, insurance monitoring, and overall practicality. Commissioners requested research on other cities' standards, including reciprocal agreements and tiered systems, and asked staff to present implementation options, including whether a permitting-based approach may be more feasible.

*VAN HOECKE left the meeting at 7:38PM and returned at 7:40PM*

**ACTION:** City staff to collect information on how surrounding cities address licensing for comparison.

Discussion - Condition of Horton Street

DICKMAN shared plan excerpts identifying areas of bleeding or flushing asphalt that may reduce traction and recommended initiating a claim with the contractor to address these issues. It was noted that cracking and surface rubbing are likely related to the base

asphalt, which had been a budget-driven decision. As part of the remediation plan, the contractor should develop a work plan to correct the bleeding areas and may need to take core samples and conduct testing. The City Engineer will contact Heck and Wicker to begin the remediation process. Concerns were also raised about possible improper adhesion of the membrane during installation and whether it contributed to the issues; however, it was emphasized that a membrane will not correct deficiencies in a poor base.

**ACTION:** MATKIN and DICKMAN will work with Heck & Wicker on remediation plan to start warranty claim.

### **Reports and Comments**

#### **City Engineer:**

- Status on Wall Street Project
- Water grant – waiting on notification
- Davis Lift Station – starting February 16, 2026
- Railroad permit – will check status
- CCLIP Phase 4 – submit in March

**City Attorney:** No comment

**City Manager:** No comment

#### **Commissioner Van Hoecke:**

- Dragoon update – opening June 1st
- Relaunch of golf course website status – list tournaments

#### **Commissioner Wells:**

- Street sweeping signs
- Skubitz Plaza – tour with MATKIN
- KDOT Maintenance Agreement status
- Streets and snow removal

#### **Commissioner Buchta:**

- Streets and snow removal

#### **Commissioner Dancer:**

- Streets and snow removal

#### **Commissioner Salsbury:**

- Streets and snow removal
- Focus on time management

### **Executive Session**

**MOTION:** VAN HOECKE moved that the City Commission recess into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion pursuant to the preliminary discussion of the acquisition of real property exception in K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(6). The meeting will resume in the Commission Room at 8:35PM. In

the meeting will be the (5) City Commissioners, the City Manager and the City Attorney. DANCER seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

**MOTION:** VAN HOECKE moved to come out of Executive Session with no action. SALSBURY seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

**Adjourn**

**MOTION:** VAN HOECKE moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:36PM. DANCER seconded.

**FEBRUARY 3, 2026, MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:36PM.**

*Submitted by Lisa A. Lewis/City Clerk*