

The Common Council of the City of Knoxville met in regular session at the Knoxville City Hall on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 5:00 P.M. CST with the following members present: Mayor Dennis Estok, Cheryl Runkle, Council Members Jeff Berg, Sherry Cowen, Don Kring, Bill Gustafson. Jaime Gruszczynski was late.

There were no amendments to the agenda.

RE: APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES 12/9/25

Copies of the previous meeting's minutes were mailed to the Council prior to the meeting for their review. Sherry Cowen made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Bill Gustafson and was passed by a vote of Four (4) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: ELECTION OF THE 2026 COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEM

Mayor Estok opened the floor for nominations, Don Kring nominated Jeff Berg for the 2026 Council President Pro Tem. With no further nominations Mayor Estok closed the floor.

The nomination passed with Four (4) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS 2026

Mayor Estok opened the floor. The Redevelopment Commission needs 2 appointments. Jeff Berg opted out of his appointment, he nominated Mary Perren and Tony Spicer for a 1-year term on the Commission. Bill Gustafson made a motion accepting the nominations. The motion was seconded by Jeff Berg and passed by a vote of Four (4) ayes and No (0) nays.

The Plan Commission needs 3 appointments. Sherry Cowen opted out of her appointment with no nomination for a replacement. Jeff Berg opted out of his appointment, and he nominated AJ Carlson for the Plan Commission. Don Kring nominated Bill Gustafson for the Plan Commission, and Jamie Gruszczynski will retain her appointment. With no further nominations the floor closed and passed by a vote of Five (5) ayes and No (0) nays in favor of the appointments.

For the Starke County Solid Waste appointment, Bill Gustafson will retain his appointment.

RE: MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS

2026 MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS
YEARLY APPOINTMENTS:

CITY ATTORNEY – JUSTIN SCHRAMM

POLICE CHIEF – CHAD DULIN

DEPUTY CHIEF (PD) – PENDING

STREET DEPT. – JEFF BORG

WATER SUPT. – TIM LINDEWALD

WASTEWATER SUPT. – JASON CLEMONS

DIRECTOR OF RECREATION – DENNIS FORNELLI

PARK SUPERINTENDENT NOMINATION – VACANT

FIRE CHIEF – KENNY PFOST

DIRECTOR OF BUILDING AND CODE COMPLIANCE – LONNIE BOLEY

PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR NOMINATION – LONNIE BOLEY

STARKE COUNTY BEVERAGE BOARD – BILL GUSTAFSON

KIRPC – VACANT

KNOX REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MARCIA HAYES

MARSHA BOGGS – RESIGNED (VACANT)

MIKE ESTOK

BOARD OF WORKS

STEVE DODGE

JIM COLLINS

FOUR YEAR TERMS:

PLAN COMMISSION

NONE

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

NONE

PARK BOARD

LORA ESTOK TERM ENDING 12/31/26 – RESIGNED AND VACANT

NATHAN BRADLEY TERM ENDING 12/31/25 – REAPPOINTED TERM ENDING 12/31/29

RE: DISCUSSION OF MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council person Don Kring spoke to the Council about changing to one meeting month and if a second meeting is needed then a special one can be held. The scheduled meeting could be held on the 4th Tuesday of each month, and an ordinance is needed to amend the current schedule. No motion was taken at this time.

RE: RATIFY BZA'S DISCUSSION OF BILLBOARD HEARING

The BZA denied the variance request for a billboard on South Heaton Street, the size is too large. The discussion was brought before the Council for notification. Jeff Berg made a motion agreeing with the BZA's denial of the size and placement of the billboard. The motion was seconded by Bill Gustafson and passed by a vote of Five (5) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: IHEDA CROWD GRANTING

The Knox Middle School PTO Outdoor Project Fundraiser will be raising \$50,000.00 by donations to be granted the same amount in 60 days to complete their project. A short discussion was held; Sherry Cowen made a motion to donate \$1,500.00 to the KMS PTO October Project Fundraiser. The motion was seconded by Don Kring and passed by a vote of Five (5) ayes and No (0) nays.

RE: CLERK TREASURER'S REPORT

Clerk-Treasurer Cyndi Kidder passed out to the Council and the Mayor, the new year Nepotism Policy and the Contracting Policy paperwork for their review and signatures. She reminded the Council to sign both sets of vouchers.

RE: MAYOR'S REPORT

1. February 21st is the Annual Daddy Daughter Dance. We can always use help. 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM.
2. The CCMG bid opening is Jan 28th, at the Board of Works Meeting.
3. Don't forget to get your 2026 dog tags. Protect your pet and yourself.

RE: COUNCIL ITEMS

Bill Gustafson asked about the City recognizing Myles McLaughlin for his title of Indiana's Mr. Football 2025. A short discussion was held.

RE: VOUCHERS AND ALLOWANCES

The following properly filed vouchers (See Voucher #38867 -#38933, and #38934 - #39626) were presented and approved.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time the meeting upon motion was duly adjourned

Dennis Estok, Mayor

Attest: _____
Cyndi Kidder, Clerk-Treasurer