

STATE OF TEXAS }

January 13, 2026

COUNTY OF ORANGE }

**BE IT REMEMBERED THAT** a Regular Meeting of the Orange City Council of the City of Orange, Orange County, Texas, was held in the City Council Chambers (Orange Public Library Auditorium) on Tuesday, January 13, 2026.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Larry Spears Jr.	Mayor
Brad Childs	Mayor Pro-Tem
Matt Chandler	Council Member
Terrie T. Salter	Council Member
Mary McKenna	Council Member
George Mortimer	Council Member
Paul Burch	Council Member

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Michael Kunst	City Manager
Jay Trahan	Assistant City Manager, Director of Economic Development
Patricia Anderson	City Secretary
Jennifer Pool	Deputy City Secretary
Cheryl Zeto	Director of Finance
Lane Martin	Chief of Police
John Bilbo	Fire Chief
Kelvin Knauf	Director of Planning and C o m m u n i t y Development
Adam Jack	Director of Public Works
Brenna Manasco	Library Director
Divon Williams	Deputy Director of CVB/Assistant to the City Manager
Alison Clary	Communication and Marketing Coordinator
Rita Monson	Grants Planner
Madison Floyd	Deputy Director of Public Works
Amy Williams	Public Works Secretary
Payton Smith	Deputy Fire Chief
Kristen Ross	Visitor Services and Events Manager
Mike Zeto	CIS Manager
Jake Travis	I T Technician
Isaac Henry	Police Baliff
Guy Goodson	City Attorney

**STAFF MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

Mayor Spears called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Mayor Pro-Tem Childs led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

**MOTION FINDING THAT THE ADVANCE POSTING AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS OF ARTICLE 8.1200 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF ORANGE, TEXAS HAVE BEEN MET IN RELATION TO ALL MINUTES AND PENDING ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS ON THIS AGENDA AND THAT THE READING OF SUCH ITEMS BE CONFINED TO THE CAPTIONS AS ARE AGREED UPON BY THE ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS.**

Council Member Burch moved to approve the motion. Second to the motion was made by Council Member Chandler which carried with the following vote:

**COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING AYE:** Mayor Spears, Mayor Pro-Tem Childs, Council Member Chandler, Council Member Salter, Council Member McKenna, Council Member Mortimer and Council Member Burch

**COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING NO:** None

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

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Wesley Bushnell, Entergy - Project Manager for the new Gunstream Road Laydown Yard, and Jim Malain, Customer Manager for Entergy advised they are here to address questions and concerns from citizens regarding the temporary Laydown Yard, which is adjacent to their substation property.

Mr. Bushnell made the following comments regarding the Laydown Yard:

- \* Mission is to limit or eliminate outages - Laydown Yard helps with efficiency
- \* Working with neighbors to address their concerns:
  - \* Fencing - cosmetic look
  - \* Dust accumulation - road base improved
  - \* Damage to Gunstream - working with City to ensure plans align to improve
  - \* Appropriate drainage - will ensure this is addressed
  - \* Intersection of Tulane and Gunstream - working on remedies with City Staff

### **CITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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Ms. Clary invited everyone to "Mardi Gras on the Sabine", Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup>. She advised of the following schedule of events:

- \* 2:00 pm: Gates Open
- \* 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm: Kid Activities
- \* 2:00 pm – 10:00 pm: Food Vendors, Free State Cellars Winery, and Beer Booth
- \* 3:00 pm: Second Line March with the Krewe de Kids Parade
- \* 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm: Big Fun Brass Band

- \* 6:00 pm: Greater Orange Area Chamber of Commerce Krewe of Krewes Parade  
Live Entertainment following the Krewe of Krewes Parade
- \* 7:00 pm: Opener – The Four Horses
- \* 8:30 pm: Headliner – Wayne Toups

Mayor Spears thanked Mr. Bushnell for his presentation. He also advised him of the Community Room at the Neighborhood Facility Building in case they needed a place to meet with citizens to address any concerns or questions they may have.

## **PRESENTATION**

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### **PRESENTATION BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) OF THE ORANGE COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT REGARDING PROPERTY APPRAISALS.**

Mr. Kunst introduced Scott Overton, Chief Appraiser of the Orange County Appraisal District.

Mr. Overton made the following comments regarding the process from start to when the property values are mailed out in July:

- \* Shared a brief overview of the different stages to the appraisal process
  - \* August through February - "Discovery Phase" (appraisers are in the field and staff is collecting information from sales data, deed transactions and questionnaires)
  - \* January and February - run sales ratios to determine values from year to year
  - \* March - work on preliminary values
  - \* April - preliminary appraisal role is submitted to all entities for budgetary purposes
  - \* May through July - citizens may appeal values for adjustments
  - \* July 25<sup>th</sup> - Certify tax rolls and submit to Tax Assessor

Mr. Overton advised of the following:

- \* Tax code charges them to be at 100% of Market Value on January 1<sup>st</sup>.
- \* Defined Market Value per Section 1.04, Subsection 7
- \* Audited by the State of Texas every year
- \* Two types of Audits (alternated): Maps Audit and Property Value Study
- \* Required to be (above or below) 5% margin of error of 100 of market value and look at sales closely
- \* if out of compliance, schools can lose state funding
- \* explained the Homestead Cap
- \* City of Orange offers the following:
  - \* 20% Homestead exemption
  - \* \$20,000 (additional) Over 65 and disabled
  - \* Over 65 and disabled can "Freeze" taxes
- \* Discussed two new exemptions added by the legislature: Disaster Exemption and House Fire Exemption

Mayor Spears advised the high prices of homes are what is driving the market. Mr. Overton agreed.

Mr. Kunst advised he would like to know if the market value is only judged based on Orange County data. Mr. Overton advised that is correct, only data within the boundaries of Orange County is used for their calculations.

Council Member Salter advised she would like more information about the appeal window, referenced on the notice mailed from OCAD. Mr. Overton advised the notice states the appeal window is 30 days from the date the notices are mailed or May 15<sup>th</sup>, whichever is later. He advised a citizen may come in to their office, meet with a staff member and adjustments may be made until the rolls are certified in July. Mr. Overton advised, if a protest is not filed by May 15<sup>th</sup>, the citizen can not present their case to the appraisal review board.

Mayor Pro-Tem Childs advised there was a post on Facebook and a citizen advised they would like to know how commercial development might affect private property value and does the appraisal district take that into account when evaluating property values. Mr. Overton advised that it depends on the market and if people are moving into the area and they are paying more for the homes, then it will drive the market. He advised, however, if it is just growth of the industry, and there is not residential growth, then it will not affect it, as there is no direct correlation.

Mayor Spears asked Mr. Overton if he had any recommendations he would like to give someone. Mr. Overton advised he recommends to visit their website, review your statement, verify the homestead is listed on the property and to complete the homestead property letter that they mail every five years. He advised if they do not receive the information requested, they must remove the homestead on the property.

Council Member Salter advised she would like to know how the appraisal district looks at the market value and is it valued across the board or for different areas and neighborhoods within the City. Mr. Overton advised of the following break down of ratio of studies:

- \* Countywide
- \* School district (individually)
- \* Increased sales activity in subdivisions or areas
- \* Subdivision or area of increased activity
- \* Adjustments may be made (lower or higher)

Council Member Mortimer advised the OCAD website is user friendly.

Mr. Overton advised starting on August 7<sup>th</sup>, it is a requirement to have information regarding tax rate hearings and meetings. He advised an individual can get an estimate of their taxes.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING TO ALLOW CITIZENS TO COMMENT ON THE 2026 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN (YEAR 3 OF THE 5-YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN) FOR THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDS.

The public hearing began at 9:46 a.m.

Ms. Monson advised this is a required public hearing for anyone who might have questions.

There were no citizen comments.

The public hearing ended at 9:47 a.m.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

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NOVEMBER 4, 2025 PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 18, 2025 SPECIAL CALL ORANGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION MEETING MINUTES

DECEMBER 9, 2025 SPECIAL CALL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Council Member Mortimer moved to approve the foregoing three items on the Consent Agenda in one motion. Second to the motion was made by Council Member Burch which carried with the following vote:

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING AYE: Mayor Spears, Mayor Pro-Tem Childs, Council Member Chandler, Council Member Salter, Council Member McKenna, Council Member Mortimer and Council Member Burch

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING NO: None

### **RESOLUTIONS**

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RESOLUTION AWARDDING A CONTRACT TO DANIELS BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION, INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF FOUR HUNDRED TWENTY-SIX THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED FORTY-NINE AND 00/100 (\$426,149) DOLLARS FOR THE CITY HALL HVAC CONTROLS PROJECT.

Mayor Pro-Tem Childs moved to approve the resolution. Second to the motion was made by Council Member Burch which carried with the following vote:

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING AYE: Mayor Spears, Mayor Pro-Tem Childs, Council Member Chandler, Council Member Salter, Council Member McKenna, Council Member Mortimer and Council Member Burch

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING NO: None

A copy of this resolution is being made a part of these minutes as Resolution Number 2026-01.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE CHANGE ORDER NO. 2 WITH BDS CONSTRUCTORS, LLC DBA MK CONSTRUCTORS FOR BID #2025-20 SUNSET ADDITION WATER AND SEWER PROJECT.

Council Member Mortimer moved to approve the resolution. Second to the motion was made by Council Member Chandler which carried with the following vote:

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING AYE: Mayor Spears, Mayor Pro-Tem Childs, Council Member Chandler, Council Member Salter, Council Member McKenna, Council Member Mortimer and Council Member Burch

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING NO: None

A copy of this resolution is being made a part of these minutes as Resolution Number 2026-02.

### **DISCUSSION/ACTION**

MOTION APPROVING ACTION TAKEN BY THE ORANGE EDC IN THE FORM OF A MOTION OF INTENT APPROVING AN EDC INCENTIVE WITH LAVA JAVA, LLC, 2402 16<sup>TH</sup> STREET, ORANGE, TEXAS 77630 FOR ELIGIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$25,000 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Mayor Pro-Tem Childs moved to approve the motion. Second to the motion was made by Council Member Salter which carried with the following vote:

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING AYE: Mayor Spears, Mayor Pro-Tem Childs, Council Member Chandler, Council Member Salter, Council Member McKenna, Council Member Mortimer and Council Member Burch

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING NO: None

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE HOMEOWNER'S APPRAISAL OF THE PROPERTY AT 2501 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET, ORANGE, TEXAS IN LIEU OF THE APPRAISAL THAT THE CITY COMMISSIONED FOR THE TDEM HMGP DR-4332-108 BUYOUT PROGRAM.

Council Member Burch moved to approve the motion. Second to the motion was made by Council Member Salter which carried with the following vote:

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING AYE: Mayor Spears, Mayor Pro-Tem Childs, Council Member Chandler, Council Member Salter, Council Member McKenna, Council Member Mortimer and Council Member Burch

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING NO: None

MOTION APPROVING THE RESIGNATION OF KRISTEN ROSS FROM THE CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU ADVISORY BOARD EFFECTIVE JANUARY 13, 2026.

Council Member Chandler moved to approve the motion. Second to the motion was made by Council Member Salter which carried with the following vote:

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING AYE: Mayor Spears, Mayor Pro-Tem Childs, Council Member Chandler, Council Member Salter, Council Member McKenna, Council Member Mortimer and Council Member Burch

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING NO: None

CONSIDER A MOTION APPOINTING \_\_\_\_\_ TO THE CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU ADVISORY BOARD FOR A TWO-YEAR TERM, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 13, 2026 - JANUARY 13, 2028.

Council Member Chandler moved to appoint Rusty Dollar to the Convention and Visitors Bureau Advisory Board. Second to the motion was made by Council Member Mortimer which carried with the following vote:

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING AYE: Mayor Spears, Mayor Pro-Tem Childs, Council Member Chandler, Council Member Salter, Council Member McKenna, Council Member Mortimer and Council Member Burch

COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTING NO: None

### **CITY MANAGER REPORT**

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Mr. Kunst advised Monday, January 19<sup>th</sup> is a City Holiday in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. He advised Octavia Guzman, Orange County Tax-Assessor-Collector will make a presentation at the January 27<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting regarding property tax rates. He invited the Council Members to stop by his office to discuss the budget, property values or tax rates.

### **CITY COUNCIL REPORT**

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Council Member McKenna wished everyone a "Happy New Year". She congratulated everyone who received an award at the Greater Orange Area Chamber of Commerce 2025 Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet: Ms. Clary received the Next Generation Spotlight Award, Ms. Monson received the Non-Profit Business of the Year Award and Mayor Pro-Tem Childs received the Citizen of the Year Award.

Mayor Pro-Tem Childs wished everyone a "Happy New Year". He advised Keith Longlois with the Orange Police Department retired and to thank him if you see him.

Council Member Mortimer wished everyone a "Happy New Year". He advised he is excited about this year. He thanked City Staff, Police Department and Fire Department.

Council Member Burch wished everyone a "Happy New Year". He referenced a post that was made on Social Media regarding property that people were using to dump garbage on and accused the City Council of not caring. He advised the property that was being referred to was private property, not City owned.



Council Member Chandler wished everyone a "Happy New Year". He advised a citizen reached out to him regarding the new app, Orange Texas 311, and that it worked great.

Council Member Salter thanked Council Member Burch for speaking out regarding the post that was made on Social Media. She advised that citizens have to help Council. She advised Council cares and must follow proper channels. She also asked everyone to be respectful.

Mayor Spears wished everyone a "Happy New Year". He thanked Mr. Bushnell, Mr. Malain, Mr. Overton and City Staff. He asked for a moment of silence for Jason Laughlin. He advised the Martin Luther King, Jr. March will be held on Monday.

#### **ADJOURN TO CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION**

12. a) Deliberation with City Attorney pursuant to Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code:
- (1) Deliberation regarding the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property as authorized by the Texas Government Code, Section 551.072 - regarding the donation of property in the vicinity of Border Street and Arkansas Street in Orange, Texas.
  - (2) Deliberation regarding prospective gifts as authorized by the Texas Government Code, Chapter 551.073 - regarding prospective gifts of land parcels R36061 and R36066 in Orange, Texas.

The Council met in a closed executive session at 10:09 a.m.

#### **RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

The Council reconvened in open session at 10:26 a.m.

TAKE ACTION AS NECESSARY REGARDING ITEMS 12 a (1) and 12 a (2).

No Action was taken.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

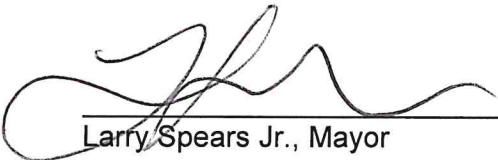
There being no further business before the Council, Council Member Chandler moved to adjourn the meeting. Second to the motion was made by Council Member Salter, which carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.



ATTEST:

  
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Patricia Anderson, City Secretary

  
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Larry Spears Jr., Mayor