



City Council Meeting

Regular Session Minutes
December 8, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Liberty, Missouri was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall on December 8, 2025 with Mayor Greg Canuteson presiding. Mayor Canuteson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The invocation was given by Council Member Pozel, who then led the pledge of allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

Council Members Present: Harold Phillips and Shelton Ponder, Ward I
Kelley Wrenn Pozel, Ward II
Kevin Graham and Jeff Watt, Ward III
Gene Gentrup and Michael Hagan, Ward IV

Council Members Absent: Adam Travis, Ward II

Staff Present: Curt Wenson, City Administrator
Sara Cooke, Assistant City Administrator
Vicki McClure, Finance Director
Andy Noll, Utilities Director
BJ Staab, Parks and Recreation Director
Jim Martin, Police Chief
Katherine Sharp, Planning and Development Director
Sherri McIntyre, Public Works Director
Sarah Ranes, Deputy City Clerk

Public Present: Kellie Houx, Courier Tribune
8 members of the public

IV. PROCLAMATIONS

V. APPROVE MINUTES AND SUMMARIES

VI. MEETING SCHEDULE

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Boards and Commissions Appointment/Reappointments
 - 1. Historic District Review Commission
 - a. Reappoint John Carr to a term expiring 7/1/2030
 - 2. Liberty Preservation and Development Commission
 - a. Reappoint Meredith Klamm to a term expiring 9/1/2028

- b. Reappoint Ralph Brant Jr. to a term expiring 9/1/2028
- 3. Public Safety Sales Tax Oversight Committee
 - a. Appoint Bob Saunders to a term expiring 8/31/2028
 - b. Reappoint Jamiel Yameen to a term expiring 8/31/2028
 - c. Reappoint Bill Moberly to a term expiring 8/31/2028

Council Member Hagan moved to approve the appointments. Council Member Phillips seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

IX. ORDINANCES, CONTRACTS AND RESOLUTIONS

- A. Ordinance acknowledging vendor payments for the period of November 14, 2025 to November 28, 2025

Document No. 10046 was read.

Action: Council Member Phillips moved to approve the vendor payments. Council Member Pozel seconded the motion.

Roll Call

Vote: Motion passed 7-0-0

Yes: Council Members Phillips, Ponder, Pozel, Graham, Watt, Gentrup and Hagan

No: None

Abstain: None

Approved by the Chair and inscribed in Ordinance No. 12209.

- B. Ordinance amending the official zoning map of the City of Liberty, Missouri by rezoning 7.04 acres from R-1A, "Suburban Residential District" to PD, "Planned Development District" for a 49-unit townhome development at the southwest corner of N. Church Road and Camille Street (P&Z Case 25-58R&PDP) (Second Reading) **(to be further postponed to December 15, 2025)**

Action: Council Member Hagan requested to postpone consideration of the ordinance to the December 15, 2026 Special Regular Session. Council Member Graham seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

- C. Ordinance authorizing a First Amendment to the Liberty Judicial Services Agreement with Doug Wilson

The first amendment to the Liberty Judicial Services Agreement addresses the compensation amount for the City's current Municipal Judge, Doug Wilson. Since he began, Judge Wilson has streamlined processes and expectations within municipal court services. He has regularly dedicated his time and resources, ensuring a positive experience for those exposed to the City's municipal court.

Judge Wilson's current yearly salary as the City of Liberty's Municipal Judge is \$21,450.00. Beginning January 1, 2026, the City would like to increase this salary to

\$26,000.00 per year at the current number of dockets; and if additional dockets are added, his salary would increase to \$30,000.00 per year. This increase is reflected within the 2026 budget request.

Document No. 10047 was read.

Action: Council Member Phillips moved to waive the rules and consider the ordinance on first reading. Council Member Pozel seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

Action: Council Member Graham moved to approve the ordinance. Council Member Hagan seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed 7-0-0

Yes: Council Members Phillips, Ponder, Pozel, Graham, Watt, Gentrup and Hagan

No: None

Abstain: None

Approved by the Chair and inscribed in Ordinance No. 12210.

D. Ordinance approving a Services Agreement with Historic Downtown Liberty, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$40,000.00

Historic Downtown Liberty, Inc. (HDLI) a 501c3 non-profit organization, was formed in November 2005 in response to recommendations outlined in the Liberty Downtown Master Plan. HDLI follows the National Main Street approach to downtown revitalization, established by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, a proven model based on a four-point approach: Organization, Promotion Design and Economic Vitality. This agreement may be terminated at any time by written, mutual agreement of all parties. The term of the agreement is through December 2026 and may be renewed thereafter with the City Council's approval.

Annual contract renewal between Historic Downtown Liberty, Inc. (HDLI) and the City of Liberty for January 2026 – December 2026. As in previous years, the agreement for service with HDLI includes the following:

- Implementation of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Four Point Approach to Downtown Revitalization.
- Provide unified advocacy and support for the downtown commercial area.
- Continue a consistent promotion and advertising program for the downtown area.
- Encourage and promote historically appropriate design strategies for the overall aesthetic appearance of the downtown commercial area.
- Strengthen the existing economic assets of the downtown area while diversifying its economic base, including recruiting new businesses and strengthening the management capabilities of individual merchants.
- Management of the downtown Farmer's Market on Saturdays from May through October.
- Coordinate tourism efforts through the Liberty Tourism Committee and Transient Guest Tax (TGT) funds.

For these services, the City agrees to compensate HDLI in the amount of \$40,000.00 annually, with \$30,000.00 from the TGT Funds to be allocated to base services and \$10,000.00 from the General Fund to be allocated to staff salaries, to be paid monthly in twelve equal amounts. HDLI shall spend said funds in accordance with its 2026 budget, as submitted to the City. Additionally, the City will provide the HDLI Executive Director with health, dental and life insurance choices consistent with those offered to City employees. The estimated cost is approximately \$10,996.00 for these benefits for 2026 from the General Fund.

Document No. 10048 was read.

Action: Council Member Pozel moved to waive the rules and consider the ordinance on first reading. Council Member Graham seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

Action: Council Member Phillips moved to approve the ordinance. Council Member Pozel seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed 7-0-0

Yes: Council Members Phillips, Ponder, Pozel, Graham, Watt, Gentrup and Hagan

No: None

Abstain: None

Approved by the Chair and inscribed in Ordinance No. 12211.

E. Ordinance authorizing the Pro-Tempore Prosecuting Attorney Services Agreement

The City of Liberty is responsible for providing prosecuting attorney services for cases brought to Municipal Court. Due to occasional calendar issues and conflicts of interest with certain parties, the Prosecuting Attorney needs to recuse himself and, therefore, the need for the Pro-Tempore Prosecuting Attorney arises. The costs of providing these services are included yearly within the annual budget.

The City of Liberty's current Pro-Tempore Prosecuting Attorney announced her retirement from said duties effective December 31, 2025.

Document No. 10049 was read.

Action: Council Member Hagan moved to waive the rules and consider the ordinance on first reading. Council Member Graham seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

Action: Council Member Graham moved to approve the ordinance. Council Member Hagan seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed 7-0-0

Yes: Council Members Phillips, Ponder, Pozel, Graham, Watt, Gentrup and Hagan
No: None
Abstain: None
Approved by the Chair and inscribed in Ordinance No. 12212.

F. Ordinance approving a Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Members of the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 50 and the City of Liberty, Missouri

The City and the FOP Lodge 50 have been under contract since 2013. Staff and Lodge 50 began negotiations in June 2025 at the request of Lodge 50. Most language in the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) is standard language and aligns with current city policies, current departmental procedures and current CBA language. Departmental procedures, methods and standards will continue to be monitored through a joint labor/management committee. Items that have a financial impact on the City were negotiated in detail and prioritized. The proposed CBA requires a three-year commitment to stated language and policies within the document.

Document No. 10050 was read.

Action: Council Member Watt moved to waive the rules and consider the ordinance on first reading. Council Member Phillips seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

Action: Council Member Hagan moved to approve the ordinance. Council Member Phillips seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed 7-0-0

Yes: Council Members Phillips, Ponder, Pozel, Graham, Watt, Gentrup and Hagan
No: None
Abstain: None
Approved by the Chair and inscribed in Ordinance No. 12213.

G. 2026 ANNUAL BUDGETS

State law 67.010, 67.020 and 67.030 requires the City to annually adopt a budget prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year. Failure to adopt a new budget requires a default of the current year's budget. The only expenditures that would be automatically approved would be 2025 levels for staffing, maintenance cost levels for commodities and funding for prior contractual arrangements.

Desiring to have enhanced elected official oversight on fiscal matters, the Mayor and Council established the Council Budget Committee in May 2009. Continuing the partnership with City staff, work on the 2026 budget commenced in the fall with Administration and Finance issuing directions and forms to the departments. Over the last few months, the City's Management Team has been working through the budget process. The coordinated work with the Budget Committee was undertaken over numerous meetings and involved substantial hours of review. Liberty's elected officials

were actively engaged in the 2026 budget development and offered substantial guidance to staff.

1. Ordinance adopting the annual Park and Parks Sales Tax Budgets for the City of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri for the Fiscal Year 2026

Document No. 10051 was read.

Action: Council Member Hagan moved to waive the rules and consider the ordinance on first reading. Council Member Phillips seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

Action: Council Member Watt moved to approve the ordinance. Council Member Hagan seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed 7-0-0

Yes: Council Members Phillips, Ponder, Pozel, Graham, Watt, Gentrup and Hagan

No: None

Abstain: None

Approved by the Chair and inscribed in Ordinance No. 12214.

2. Ordinance adopting the annual budget for the City of Liberty, Clay County, Missouri for the Fiscal Year 2026

Document No. 10052 was read.

Action: Council Member Phillips moved to waive the rules and consider the ordinance on first reading. Council Member Pozel seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

Action: Council Member Gentrup moved to approve the ordinance. Council Member Hagan seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed 7-0-0

Yes: Council Members Phillips, Ponder, Pozel, Graham, Watt, Gentrup and Hagan

No: None

Abstain: None

Approved by the Chair and inscribed in Ordinance No. 12215.

H. Resolution approving the 2026 – 2030 Street Capital Improvement Plan for the City of Liberty, Missouri

The 2026 – 2030 CIP represents the accumulation of prior planning, project prioritization by the City Council, efforts by Public Works staff to maximize Federal, State and other local funding resources and has been reviewed by the Budget Committee and City staff.

The CIP contemplates a spending of approximately \$53.5 million on street infrastructure improvements, equipment purchases, maintenance projects, public building improvements and associated debt service expense.

Projects to be accomplished by the Transportation, Capital and Economic Development Sales Funds are:

- \$15.94M – Street Restoration/General Transportation Improvements/Street Maintenance Supplies
- \$2.14M – Public Works Equipment – Building Maintenance/Misc. Expenses
- \$0.97M – Signal Light Maintenance
- \$3.07M – Storm Water Improvements
- \$2.85M – Bridge Replacement Projects
- \$1.40M – Sidewalk Program
- \$1.60M – Capital Engineer/Street Maintenance Workers
- \$0.33M – Transportation Enhancement Projects/City Landscaping Funds
- \$0.85M – GEST Transportation (\$170K annual commitment)
- \$0.06M – Transfer Out – To Parks for City Landscaping Funds
- \$16.25M – Debt Service/Loan Costs
- \$3.03M – Transfers Out General Fund
- \$5.06M – Transfer Out to Economic Development Sales Tax Fund

Action: Council Member Hagan moved to approve the resolution. Council Member Phillips seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion passed 7-0-0

Yes: Council Members Phillips, Ponder, Pozel, Graham, Watt, Gentrup and Hagan

No: None

Abstain: None

Inscribed in Resolution No. 3513.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

XI. CITIZENS’ PARTICIPATION – none.

XII. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS FROM CITY ADMINISTRATOR

XIII. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS FROM MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Greg Canuteson, Mayor

Attest:

Deputy City Clerk