



Willows City Council Regular Meeting Action Minutes

July 28, 2026
Willows City Hall
Closed Session: 5:00 PM
Open Session: 6:00 PM

City Council
Evan Hutson, Mayor
Richard Thomas, Vice Mayor
Gary Hansen, Council Member
Lorri Pride, Council Member
Vacant, Council Member

City Manager
Marti Brown

City Clerk
Karleen Price

201 North Lassen Street
Willows, CA 95988
(530) 934-7041

1. **CALL TO ORDER – 5:01 PM**
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **ROLL CALL**

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Hutson, Vice Mayor Thomas, Councilmember Hansen

Councilmembers Absent: Councilmember Pride

4. **CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**
5. **CLOSED SESSION – 5:06 PM**

Public Comment

Public Comment #1: Marlena Sparkman

Public Comment #2: Michelle Knight

- a. **Conference With Legal Counsel - Existing Litigation (54956.9(d)(1))**

Name of Case: City of Willows v. County of Glenn, et al., Glenn County Superior Court Case No. 26CV00193

6. **RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION – 6:00 PM**
7. **CEREMONIAL**

- a. **Proclamation:** Purple Heart Day - received by Carol Lemenager, Jesse Orendorff, and Tom Kelly
- b. **Proclamation:** National Wellness Month – received by Dr. Billy Throm
- c. **Proclamation:** National Disc Golf Day – received by Dr. Billy Throm

8. **PRESENTATION**

- a. **Pioneer Community Energy - October 2027 Service Launch**

Action: Received a presentation by Lisa Rhoades of Pioneer Community Energy regarding the October 2027 service launch.

9. **PUBLIC COMMENT & CONSENT CALENDAR FORUM**

Public Comments

Public Comment #1: Gabe Heckett

a. **Register Approval**

Action: Approved general checking, payroll, and direct deposit check registers.

b. **Minutes Approval**

Action: Approved the minutes of the June 29, 2026, Special City Council Meeting, July 6, 2026, Special City Council Meeting, and July 14, 2026, City Council Meeting.

c. **Rice Lease Agreement on City-Owned Property**

Action: Approved the Second Amendment to the Rice Farming Lease Agreement with Qaiser N. Ahmad, extending the lease term through November 30, 2027, with the option to extend the agreement for one additional one-year term through November 30, 2028, upon the mutual written agreement of both parties, and authorize the City Manager to execute the amendment.

d. **Employee Wellness Initiative Policy**

Action: Adopted Resolution 33-2026 approving the Employee Wellness Initiative Policy to promote employee well-being, morale, and workplace engagement.

e. **Update: Conflict of Interest Code**

Action: Adopted Resolution 34-2026 amending the City of Willows Conflict-of-Interest Code.

f. **Delayed Caltrans Project - Willows CAPM Project EA: 03-0J510**

Action: Adopted Resolution 35-2026 requesting that Caltrans reconsider the delayed Willows CAPM Project EA: 03-0J510 and restore the project to an earlier construction timeline, or alternatively advance the most critical safety, accessibility, drainage, and traffic operation improvements as soon as feasible.

g. **Jensen Park, Softball Fields - Electrical Panel Upgrades**

Action: Approved award of contract to Tice and Bolinger Electrical in the amount of \$15,800 and authorize the City Manager to execute an agreement to upgrade the electrical panel at the Jensen Park softball fields (east and west).

Motion to approve the consent calendar as presented.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Hansen/Vice Mayor Thomas

Yes: Mayor Hutson, Vice Mayor Thomas, Councilmember Hansen

No: None

Absent: Councilmember Pride

10. PUBLIC HEARING

a. **Public Hearing: Weed Abatement Special Assessment & Cost of Abatement**

Public Hearing Open: 6:33 PM, Closed 6:34 PM

Motion to adopt Resolution 36-2026 confirming the cost of abatements as amended and declaring them a special assessment.

Moved/Seconded: Vice Mayor Thomas/Councilmember Hansen
Yes: Mayor Hutson, Vice Mayor Thomas, Councilmember Hansen
No: None
Absent: Councilmember Pride

11. DISCUSSION & ACTION CALENDAR

a. Utility Billing Module – Tyler Technologies

Public Comments:

Public Comment #1: Michelle Knight
Public Comment #2: Keith Corum
Public Comment #3: Tavis Beynon
Public Comment #4: Joyce Ksander

Motion to continue funding the Tyler Technologies Sewer Utility Billing Module until a future Part-Time Utility Biller may be hired and implementation of the City's in-house sewer utility billing system may resume, at an estimated cost of \$38,566 for Fiscal Year 2026–27. Council further directed the Finance Director to evaluate the requirements and feasibility of maintaining commercial sewer utility billing in-house.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Hansen/Mayor Hutson
Yes: Mayor Hutson, Vice Mayor Thomas, Councilmember Hansen
No: None
Absent: Councilmember Pride

b. Library Board Structure & Appointments

Public Comments:

Public Comment #1: Maria Ehorn
Public Comment #2: Jesse Orendorff
Public Comment #3: Jim Bettencourt
Public Comment #4: Tom Kelly
Public Comment #5: Brian Ramos
Public Comment #6: Michelle Knight
Public Comment #7: Dan Gupton
Public Comment #8: Carol McCoy
Public Comment #9: Kristel Bettencourt
Public Comment #10: John Lowe
Public Comment #11: Susan Domenighini
Public Comment #12: Jesse Orendorff

Motion to retain the current Library Board of Trustees structure and the existing agreement with the City Council and direct staff to immediately begin recruiting to fill the three vacant positions on the Library Board of Trustees.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Hansen/Mayor Hutson
Yes: Mayor Hutson, Vice Mayor Thomas, Councilmember Hansen
No: None
Absent: Councilmember Pride

The meeting was recessed at 8:21 PM and reconvened at 8:38 PM.

c. **Neighborhood Watch Program**

Public Comments:

Public Comment #1: Michelle Knight
Public Comment #2: Marlana Sparkman
Public Comment #3: Kathleen Wiese
Public Comment #4: Greg Beatty
Public Comment #5: Marlana Sparkman
Public Comment #6: Sherry Brott
Public Comment #7: Resident
Public Comment #8: Maria Ehorn

This item was continued to the August 25, 2026 City Council Meeting.

d. **Private Security – City Facilities**

Public Comments:

Public Comment #1: Michelle Knight
Public Comment #2: Tom Kelly
Public Comment #3: Maria Ehorn
Public Comment #4: Jesse Orendorff
Public Comment #5: Karen Johnson
Public Comment #6: Eugenia Taylor

No motion was made; no action was taken.

e. **WMC Oversight Committee**

Motion to establish the Willows Municipal Code Oversight Committee to review the entire Willows Municipal Code and appoint Councilmember Pride and the future appointed Councilmember to the Committee.

Moved/Seconded: Councilmember Hansen/Mayor Hutson
Yes: Mayor Hutson, Vice Mayor Thomas, Councilmember Hansen
No: None
Absent: Councilmember Pride

12. **COMMENTS AND REPORTS**

a. **Council Correspondence**

b. City Council Comments & Reports

Councilmembers reported on various community events and meetings attended.

Mayor Hutson inquired whether there would be a way to more easily track the Library Trust funds. City Manager Marti Brown indicated that the Finance Director would explore Tyler System reporting options to develop more user-friendly reports for tracking the Library Trust funds.

c. City Manager's Report

City Manager Marti Brown announced that August 7, 2026, is the deadline to submit applications for appointment to the vacant City Council seat. Interviews are scheduled for a Special City Council Meeting on August 18, 2026, with the appointed Councilmember to be sworn in and seated at the August 25, 2026, City Council Meeting to serve the remainder of former Councilmember Matt Busby's term, which expires in November 2028.

City Manager Brown also announced that August 7, 2026, is the deadline for candidates to file nomination papers for the two City Council seats to be elected at the November 3, 2026, General Municipal Election. If an incumbent does not file, the nomination period for that office will be extended to August 12, 2026, for candidates other than the incumbent. The seats currently held by Vice Mayor Rick Thomas and Councilmember Lorri Pride are up for election.

Mayor Hutson encouraged all eligible residents to apply for the Council vacancy, file nomination papers for the upcoming City Council election, or both.

City Manager Brown announced that a law enforcement update will be issued by Friday, July 31, 2026.

13. CLOSED SESSION – 10:03 PM

Public Comments

Public Comment #1: Tami Allen

a. Conference With Legal Counsel - Existing Litigation (54956.9(d)(1))

Name of Case: City of Willows v. County of Glenn, et al., Glenn County Superior Court Case No. 26CV00193

Report Out: Direction was provided to the City Attorney.

b. Conference with Real Property Negotiators (§ 54956.8)

Property: 0 Sycamore Street, Willows CA 95988 / APN #003-113-006-000

Agency Negotiator: Marti Brown

Negotiating Parties: Ivan Alexis Ayala-Mendoza

Under Negotiation: Price and terms of payment

Report Out: Council reached agreement on the sale of the property for \$30,000.

14. ADJOURNMENT – 10:10 PM

Karleen Price, City Clerk