Searcy City Council
Tuesday, June 9, 2026, 5:00 PM
Minutes

Mayor Mat Faulkner called to order the Searcy City Council regular meeting at 5:00pm. Colquitt Nash, retired Pulpit Minister, marriage and grief counselor, volunteer chaplain for Unity Health, and member of Downtown Church of Christ, gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was then led by Brian Fritts.

A public hearing had been advertised to be held at 5:00 PM on June 9, 2026, for the declaration of 1618 Brummett as a nuisance property in accordance with Chapter 9 of the Searcy Code of Ordinances. Mayor Faulkner opened the public hearing. With no one coming forward to speak, Mayor Faulkner closed the public hearing.

A public hearing had been advertised to be held at 5:00 PM on June 9, 2026, for the declaration of 1407 W Pleasure as a nuisance property in accordance with Chapter 9 of the Searcy Code of Ordinances. Mayor Faulkner opened the public hearing. With no one coming forward to speak, Mayor Faulkner closed the public hearing.

A public hearing had been advertised to be held at 5:00 PM on June 9, 2026, for the approval of liens to be certified to the White County Tax Collector against certain properties as a result of grass-cutting expenses and abatement of other nuisances. Mayor Faulkner opened the public hearing. With no one coming forward to speak, Mayor Faulkner closed the public hearing.

A public hearing had been advertised to be held at 5:00 PM on June 9, 2026, for the new bond issue of capital improvement bonds by Harding University and Harding Place. Mayor Faulkner opened the public hearing. With no one coming forward to speak, Mayor Faulkner closed the public hearing.

A public hearing had been advertised to be held at 5:00 PM on June 9, 2026, for the new bond issue of Refunding and Capital Improvement Revenue Bonds by Harding University and Harding Place. Mayor Faulkner opened the public hearing. With no one coming forward to speak, Mayor Faulkner closed the public hearing.

Mayor Faulkner called the City Council Meeting to order and Clerk Jason Nier called the roll with the following City Council members answering “here”: Tonia Hale, Dale Brewer, Mike

Chalenburg, Don Raney, Chris Howell, Brett Kirkman, Rodger Cargile, David Morris. Also present was City Attorney Will Moore.

Minutes from the May 12, 2026, Regular meeting and the May 21, 2026, Special meeting were presented for approval. A motion was made by Council Member David Morris to approve, and it was seconded by Council Member Rodger Cargile. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes — Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None.

Clerk/Treasurer Nier next presented the Treasurer's Report for the month of May, which consisted of all fund balances totaling $23.4M. The General Fund had a balance of $7.22M and the Street Fund had a balance of $1.30M. Operational expenses were $2.78M for all departments for May and $14.18M year to date. Revenues for the month were $3.6M, which brings excess revenues over expense to $152K year to date. The restricted project reserve account held $5.24M for committed projects with remaining balances of approximately $5.26M. The City's Emergency Reserves balance was $6.61M.

Item (1) was an update on the #MySearcy projects. Planning & Development Director Richard Stafford addressed the council and gave updates on all the projects under construction. He reported the dog park and Yancey Park were nearing completion. The sod at the dog park needs a few days to take root, but should be open soon and final touches to the courts and playground area at Yancey are nearing completion. Concerning bond projects, all projects are on time and on budget. Berryhill Park has had over 15,000 visitors since the reopening of the park last month. There are still a couple of punch list items to complete there, but they are currently being addressed. For South Main, the community center site is framed up with a roof, the aquatics center has the lazy river dug out as well as the main pool. The soccer complex has been fortunate to have the pipeline company cooperative to do their work, and we should have these open for the fall season. The contractors intend to start the construction of the three additional ball fields next month. It was announced that due to the commitment to build the additional fields, the Parks and Rec Department has been able to book a World Series tournament event for June 2027, with attendees coming to Searcy for at least a half of a week or more. At Little Red Riverpark, we have received our permit from the Corps of Engineers for the boat ramp project and are awaiting ARDOT approval. Substantial work has been completed on the trails as well. A slide presentation was given of the completed work and an awareness of the maintenance that will be required for these trails was highlighted. The Council was also reminded of the need to consider the Trail Manager position presented in the Parks & Rec staffing model earlier in the year as these trails are nearing completion as maintenance and planning for future events will be needed soon.

Item (2) was a presentation of funding options through a bond using franchise fees as a source to pay for a new Police Department headquarters. Mr. Stafford presented a handout provided by Paul Phillips with Crews & Associates showing estimated levels of bond amounts available with repayment terms based upon the City's historical collection of franchise fees from utility companies. The idea of utilizing franchise fees to structure a bond to pay for a new Police Department had been discussed as an option and the council asked to see this tool at the previous council meeting. The chart showed options from extremely conservative to more aggressive amounts. Mr. Stafford felt the next step should be to advertise an RFQ for a construction management firm to work with the architect to see how to properly identify the best option for site location, funding, and the best estimate of costs before deciding on a bond amount. Mr. Raney asked Mr. Stafford to clarify his statement about identifying the "site location." Mr. Stafford confirmed this would be part of the process. Mr. Raney said he thought the council had already decided to pursue the W&W Ford location for this project. Mr. Stafford asked if that decision had been made. Mr. Raney stated a formal decision had not been made, but it had been kicked around, and he was unsure why there was hesitation in not going ahead and trying to purchase this property and then having the expertise of a construction firm do the work required from the RFQ. Mr. Stafford said he didn't know if that had ever been publicly discussed, but there were concerns about the cost of the property at $4.4 million. Mr. Raney agreed about the cost.

Mr. Stafford stated he knew a construction manager could help get a proper appraisal for market value, so the best decision could be made. Mr. Raney asked if there were any thoughts within planning to build the department at the current sanitation location on Beebe-Capps. Stafford stated this was not clear, but it could be the more economical location because of the price of the W&W Ford property. The cost estimates are very close between the two. Because of this, a construction management firm is needed to help firm up cost estimate numbers, so a better decision could be made. Mr. Stafford stated without better numbers it would be hard to make a good decision. Estimates now are simply too vague. Mr. Raney stated there would be more expense to do it at the sanitation location due to the cost of the move of the Sanitation Department. He wasn't sure there was a big difference between the two. Mr. Cargile asked for clarification of the current cost estimates. He noted that in both locations the cost of construction is essentially a wash with the cost to move the sanitation department as the key factor. Mr. Stafford stated the remodeling costs for the W&W Ford property are less than new construction costs for a building at the Beebe-Capps location. Using property we own brings a new building into play even with the cost of moving the Sanitation Department included. All costs need to be studied and confirmed, so the best decision can be made. The Mayor asked Mr. Stafford if the goal was to engage a construction manager to do the due diligence with the City's team to provide the council with the best data possible to make a decision for a new Police Department. He confirmed he wanted to provide a good assessment with firmer numbers of the costs for the council, so the best decision could be made.

Mrs. Hale stated it would require less time to do a remodel versus a new construction project and urged the council to consider the current conditions the officers are housed in with the existing Police facility. Mr. Kirkman asked if moving Sanitation would entail purchasing another piece of property. Stafford stated the original intent was to house Sanitation and Streets at the Eastline Road property, but there are some concerns about flooding onsite and also the size of the property being sufficient to house both departments. There also are problems with the height of the shop areas for lifting trucks for repair and having proper clearance. Mr. Raney stated he thought, because of the recycling needs, the public needed the Sanitation Department to remain at Beebe-Capps, and we had moved on to pursuing the W&W Ford location and renovating it. He didn't see the need to hire people to compare sites. Mr. Stafford stated this was the first time this had been discussed publicly. He personally was concerned about the asking price of the property, and he knew others shared this concern, so he wanted to give the council the best numbers for consideration and comparison of all possible options before a rushed decision was made. Mrs. Hale asked if the council could look into negotiating the price for the W&W Ford property. Mr. Stafford stated this was his point in laying out the next step as to having someone provide a market value for consideration. The City should know this regardless of what the sellers are asking for.

Mr. Brewer asked if there were any other properties besides these two that are possibilities for the new Police Department. Stafford confirmed that some "out of the box" thinking had been discussed in using the East Precinct property where the current Police shop is located. The acreage is there for a multi-level facility, but beyond this third option, no other locations have been researched. Mr. Kirkman asked the Mayor if there had been any input from the Police Chief on how he felt about the locations. The Chief was asked his opinion and he agreed, as long as the Department is centrally located and not in the extreme east or west, any of these locations would be sufficient. Mr. Raney stated he felt there would be more money spent on a Sanitation move, and with the flooding concerns at Eastline Road, he did not want to spend any money on the Beebe-Capps location for the Police Department. Mr. Stafford stated that until we know more cost factors, we are currently only using construction estimates based upon square footage cost for something totally new vs. square footage costs for renovations with some new construction. Mr. Raney said he understood this, and he appreciated the thoroughness involved in planning, but he felt with the franchise fee bond available, we should be able to purchase the W&W Ford building and be paying for it while the design and additional planning were being finalized.

Mr. Howell asked Mr. Cargile what the purchase price would be for the W&W Ford property. He stated all we know is the asking price, which is $4.4 million. He then asked how long it had been on the market, which he stated was approximately one year. Mr. Cargile said he was sure the owners would entertain an offer, but he did not know what their reaction would be. He had the same opinion as the others. This was a lot of money, but his reasons for desiring it had not changed. He thinks it's worth more to the City than anyone else due to the fact we own the park next door that was upgraded as a part of the bond project, to have the potential to extend Benton Street to Davis at Moore Street, and the bike trail will be tunneled under Race Street in the corner of the parking area here. He stated there are many positives, but it does have a hefty sticker price. Mr. Howell asked what the cost would be to seek quotes at both locations for comparison. Mr. Stafford estimated potentially up to six figures in price due to the pre-construction planning needed. After an RFQ is advertised and a firm selected, this could be negotiated and could vary greatly.

The Mayor summarized the discussion by emphasizing the key points of consideration for each location and Mr. Kirkman asked if it would be reasonable to move forward with Mr. Cargile to confirm a price for the W&W Ford property. Mr. Cargile said the Council would need to vote to authorize him, and or the Mayor, to do this. Attorney Moore wanted them to be clear on whether the council wanted to engage Mr. Cargile professionally, or if, in his position as a Council member, he represents the Council because those two scenarios are different. Mr. Kirkman said, based on past transactions, Mr. Cargile had not charged the City commission in these types of situations, but he does this professionally, and doing it free as a Council member is the expectation. Mr. Kirkman felt we needed good representation and until we knew some better numbers he didn't feel comfortable deciding. Mr. Howell echoed the concern of not knowing better construction costs and, until we knew this information, how could we know what could be afforded? Mr. Cargile said there are estimates. Mr. Morris agreed with Mr. Howell in wanting to know the best estimates of costs to renovate the building before deciding. Mr. Cargile again stated there are estimates for remodeling from Barry Hoffman, and there were estimates on new construction at Beebe-Capps. The unknown costs are for demolition, site preparation, and moving of the Sanitation Department from Beebe-Capps. Mr. Kirkman said he was ready to get the Police Station moved, and they deserve a better facility as soon as possible. Mrs. Hale asked if a motion to authorize the Mayor and Mr. Cargile is needed to negotiate with the seller and move this forward. Attorney Moore concurred.

Prior to the motion, Mr. Howell asked again about the need to know costs because he had never heard numbers. Mr. Stafford stated that preliminary estimates show the cost to renovate the building and then make a new addition at the W&W Ford location was approximately $8M with the cost of the property taking the project estimate to approximately $12M. At Beebe-Capps, the estimate for a new building was thought to be approximately $12M, that has since been altered and potentially changed to reduce this amount. Mr. Cargile asked the Chief about those changes to help understand the comparisons concerning shop usage and the offices for the DTF unit. These were explained.

A motion was made by Council Member Tonia Hale to authorize the Mayor and Council Member Rodger Cargile to negotiate with the sellers and bring back a price to the Council for consideration, and it was seconded by Council Member Don Raney. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None.

The Mayor wanted to make sure to highlight as a last point of consideration for this discussion to point out the bond option using franchise fees would not commit all of these fees. It would only involve committing approximately half with the remaining amounts in the general fund.

Item (3) was a temporary use agreement for the Pyeatt building. A motion was made by Council Member Don Raney to Approve, and it was seconded by Council Member Tonia Hale. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None.

Item (4) was waiving the required boundary street improvements for the Park Avenue rezone project. A motion was made by Council Member Tonia Hale to Approve, and it was seconded by Council Member Don Raney. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None.

Item (5) was setting a public hearing for the application for a private club permit by MiMis Mexican Kitchen for July 14, 2026. A motion was made by Council Member Don Raney to Approve, and it was seconded by Council Member Tonia Hale. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None.

Item (6) was the approving of funds to complete the Legion Hut project and grant — $245,000. A motion was made by Council Member Tonia Hale to Approve, and it was seconded by Council Member Rodger Cargile. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None.

Item (7) was the Fire Department's request for $89,776.14 from the Act 833 Fund to replace the Engine 2 motor, repair the Station 3 Bay Door, and to purchase KNOX Boxes for the Department. These items were included in the budget ordinance, which was voted on later in the agenda.

Item (8) was the Planning & Development Department request for $1,400.00 from the General Fund to purchase a GIS license which is required for Kimley Horn to set up an online map for the City of Searcy as a part of the SS4A action plan grant. This item was also added to the budget ordinance voted on later in the agenda.

Item (9) was a resolution approving the issuance of capital improvement revenue bonds by Harding University & Harding Place. A motion was made by Council Member David Morris to Approve, and it was seconded by Council Member Dale Brewer. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - Council Member Mike Chalenburg. **Resolution 2026-33**

Item (10) was a resolution approving the issuance of Refunding and Capital Improvement Revenue Bonds by Harding University and Harding Place. A motion was made by Council Member Dale Brewer to Approve, and it was seconded by Council Member Don Raney. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - Council Member Mike Chalenburg. **Resolution 2026-34**

Item (11) was a resolution declaring 1816 E Brummett a nuisance property. A motion was made by Council Member Don Raney to Approve, and it was seconded by Council Member Mike Chalenburg. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None. **Resolution 2026-35**

Item (12) was a resolution declaring 1407 W Pleasure a nuisance property. A motion was made by Council Member Don Raney to Approve, and it was seconded by Council Member Mike Chalenburg. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None. **Resolution 2026-36**

Item (13) was a resolution for liens to be certified to the WHITE COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR against certain properties in the CITY OF SEARCY, ARKANSAS, as a result of grass-cutting expenses and abatement of other nuisances. A motion was made by Council Member David Morris to Approve, and it was seconded by Council Member Dale Brewer. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None. **Resolution 2026-37**

Item (14) was an ordinance to rezone 103 S. Greer from R3 to PUD. A motion was made by Council Member David Morris to Suspend the rules and read by title only, and it was seconded by Council Member Don Raney. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council

Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None.

Attorney Moore then read the ordinance by title only. A motion was made by Council Member Don Raney to Adopt the Ordinance, and it was seconded by Council Member Mike Chalenburg. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None.

Attorney Moore then read the emergency clause. A motion was made by Council Member Dale Brewer to Adopt the emergency clause, and it was seconded by Council Member Tonia Hale. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None. **Ordinance 2026-22**

Item (15) was an ordinance to rezone Hwy 367 and off-ramp of I-57 from UT to C4. A motion was made by Council Member David Morris to suspend the rules and read by title only, and it was seconded by Council Member Don Raney. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None.

Attorney Moore then read the ordinance by title only. A motion was made by Council Member Tonia Hale to Adopt the Ordinance, and it was seconded by Council Member Mike Chalenburg. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None.

Attorney Moore then read the emergency clause. A motion was made by Council Member Dale Brewer to Adopt the emergency clause, and it was seconded by Council Member Mike Chalenburg. The motion with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None. **Ordinance 2026-23**

Item (16) was an ordinance adjusting the 2026 budget. A motion was made by Council Member Dale Brewer to suspend the rules and read by title only, and it was seconded by

Council Member Don Raney. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None.

Attorney Moore then read the ordinance by title only. A motion was made by Council Member Mike Chalenburg to Adopt the Ordinance, and it was seconded by Council Member Dale Brewer. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None.

Attorney Moore then read the emergency clause. A motion was made by Council Member David Morris to Adopt the emergency clause, and it was seconded by Council Member Tonia Hale. The motion Passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Chris Howell, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris, No - None, Abstain - None. **Ordinance 2026-24**

Mr. Kirkman asked for clarification of the usage of the RMT software because he was unable to attend the agenda meeting. The Mayor explained this was discussed during the agenda meeting and decided not to renew the service at expiration.

Mrs. Hale asked the Council to enter into executive session regarding a personnel issue. Mr. Raney seconded the request. The motion passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris. No - Council Member Chris Howell.

Before recessing, Code Officer Ken Shoemaker reported the Coast to Coast property on Race Avenue had been sold in a private sale earlier in the day. The Mayor then recessed into executive session.

After the executive session, the Mayor reported no action had been taken on the personnel matter and asked for a motion to exit the executive session. Mrs. Hale made a motion to exit, which was seconded by Mr. Chalenburg. The motion passed with the following votes: Yes - Council Member Tonia Hale, Council Member Dale Brewer, Council Member Mike Chalenburg, Council Member Don Raney, Council Member Brett Kirkman, Council Member Rodger Cargile, Council Member David Morris. No - None.

With there being no further business or discussion, Mayor Faulkner adjourned the meeting.

Minutes Approved:

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Mayor of Searcy

Attest:

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City Clerk

Seal