



120 North Essa Street, Lake Park, Georgia 31636  
City Hall 229-559-7470  
Fax 229-559-7499

City of Lake Park  
Regular Council Meeting Minutes  
February 3, 2026  
6:00 pm

**Members present** were Mayor Jena Sandlin, Council Member Busby Courson, Council Member Zach Fletcher, Council Member Arthur Keckley, and Council Member Blake McMillan

**Staff Present:** City Clerk Lisa Johnson, Deputy Clerk Laura Levesque, Chief Artavious Verdell, Public Works Technician Jeff Patterson, and Municipal Clerk Amber Taylor

**Others Present:** City Attorney Drew Parrish-Bennett

Mayor Jena Sandlin called the meeting to order.

Mayor Jena Sandlin gave the invocation.

Mayor Jena Sandlin led the pledge.

Mayor Jena Sandlin requested a review of the meeting minutes for the January 6, 2026, Regular Meeting. Council Member Busby Courson made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from the January 6, 2026, Regular Meeting. Council Member Zach Fletcher seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

Mayor Jena Sandlin opened the forum for questions from the community.

**CITIZENS' CONCERNS:**

- Susan Keckley (4-H Club Road) – citizen wanted to express appreciation to the council for moving forward with the Historical Cemetery acquisition and acknowledged the improved condition of the property.

**REPORTS OF OFFICERS/DEPARTMENT HEADS:**

**Fire Department:** Not present

**Police Department:** Chief Art Verdell

- Presented the activity report for December.
- Chief Verdell updated the City Council on the status of new personnel and that the department is fully staffed.

- Chief Verdell wanted to express his appreciation for the support of the City Council for his Chief School training.

**Maintenance/Public Works Department:** Public Works Technician Jeff Patterson

- Presented the activity report for December.
- The Public Works department has submitted quotes to replace the tires on the Dodge Ram 1500, as they are currently bald. The funding would come from the Public Works Budget

Council Member Arthur Keckley made a motion to purchase the tires from Fussell Tire Service for \$722.41. Council Member Blake McMillan seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

**Administration:** City Clerk Lisa Johnson

- Presented the Administration report.
  - “Island” Annexation has been turned over to the City Attorney to commence processing. The County Manager has been contacted and informed. SGRC has been contacted to assist with this operation.
  - The Old Lake Park Cemetery. Administration is currently working with the Church to acquire information to be directed to the City Attorney. The Church has located a portion of the documents, but they are still in discovery for the remaining information.
  - Policy review and updates are ongoing. The Personnel Policy has been given to the City Attorney for review. Additional policies are under review before submission to the City Council.
  - Both the Court Clerk and Chief Verdell have completed TAC training.
  - There are remaining committee vacancies. The Citizen’s Advisory Committee (1), Planning Commission (1), and Board of Zoning and Appeals (2). There is a nomination that will be presented this evening.
  - Homestead Exemption Procedures. The City Clerk is researching whether an annual resolution is required to continue to opt out. Three public meetings would be required, if it is necessary.
  - Capital Budgets will be provided to the City Council this evening. The public hearing is scheduled for February 19, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.
  - Budget Amendments will be provided to the City Council this evening. The public hearing is scheduled for February 19, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

**Financial Reports:** City Clerk Lisa Johnson

- Presented the Financial report for December.

Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to accept the Financial Report for December. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

## **Unfinished Business**

- Antique Cemetery. The City Attorney is awaiting organizational documents from the Church to proceed with the process. The title search has returned favorably.

## **New Business**

- Proclamation for Ms. Barbara Slocumb. Council Member Arthur Keckley made a motion to accept the proclamation for Ms. Barbara Slocumb. Council Member Zach Fletcher seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.
- A nomination and application have been received for Mr. Brian Touchton to join the Greater Lowndes Planning Commission as well as to serve on the Board of Zoning and Appeals. Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to appoint Mr. Touchton to both boards. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.
- A citizen complaint has been received for an oak tree located at 600 Lakes Avenue. The tree was damaged during Hurricane Helene, but it has been further eroding and is now leaning dangerously toward a home. Four cost estimates have been received and submitted to the City Council. Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion that if all administrative paperwork is received from Case Tree Services, then the City of Lake Park would contract with Case Tree Services to remove the tree and stump. If the proper paperwork is not received, then Bennett Tree Service will be contracted. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.
- Council Member Zach Fletcher requested that work sessions be scheduled for the City Council calendar going forward, with the meetings scheduled one week prior to the City Council Regular Meetings.
- Council Members discussed the possibility of establishing warming stations. Based on the requirements to establish the stations, it was suggested to work with a non-profit organization that may be interested in meeting those requirements. At this time, the Council Members have elected not to pursue the topic further.

Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss Real Estate and Minutes Review. Council Member Blake McMillan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0. Council entered Executive Session at 6:47 pm.

Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to reenter regular session. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0. Council reconvened Regular Session at 7:03 pm.

Council Member Arthur Keckley made a motion to post the Public Works Supervisor position. Council Member Zach Fletcher seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

After discussion with Public Works Technician Jeff Patterson, Council Member Arthur Keckley made a motion to appoint Mr. Jeff Patterson as the interim Public Works Supervisor, with financial considerations, until the position could be filled permanently. Council Member Busby Courson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

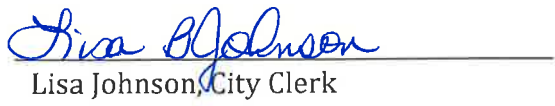
Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to approve the Executive Session meeting minutes for the January 6, 2026, Executive Session. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

Council Members discussed the current needs for the Volunteer Fire Department and the upcoming changes to the requirements for turnout gear. More research and information are needed in this regard. City Clerk Johnson will contact the relevant agencies to gather information.

Council Member Arthur Keckley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Zach Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

The next regular meeting will be held on March 3, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

  
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Jena Sandlin, Mayor

  
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Lisa Johnson, City Clerk

3-3-26  
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Date

March 3, 2026  
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Date

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