



120 North Essa Street, Lake Park, Georgia 31636
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City of Lake Park
Regular Council Meeting Minutes
March 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, Fire Chief Joey Perkins, 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 February 3, 2026, Regular Meeting. Council Member Arthur Keckley made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from the February 3, 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:

- Beth Lockhardt (703 Sandy Bottom Drive) – wanted to address the construction on Long Pond Road, which makes it difficult to walk without sidewalks in the neighborhood. In addition, the fencing on Heron Drive looks awful, and she is requesting who is responsible for keeping up the area.
- Carl Spano (805 Sand Crane Circle) – give history on the fencing areas of Heron Drive.
- Oscar Griffith (824 Sand Crane Circle) – Mr. Griffith expressed his disappointment that not one of the City Council members attended Mr. Ben Futch's funeral to represent the City of Lake Park.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS/DEPARTMENT HEADS:

Fire Department: Joey Perkins

- For the station, currently, the Air conditioning is not functional in all 3 fire trucks. City Council requested quotes to fix the issue.

Police Department: Chief Art Verdell

- Presented the activity report for February.

Maintenance/Public Works Department: Public Works Technician Jeff Patterson

- Presented the activity report for February.
- Public Works requested a delay on the quote for the light bar, based on the capital budget approval for the acquisition of a new vehicle.
- Updated the City Council on the receipt of bids for the cleanup at Broadway Street for the additional drainage.

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. The closing on the donation of this property has been completed. Administration is working on finalizing a project plan based on City Council input.
 - There are remaining committee vacancies. The Citizens' Advisory Committee (1) and the Board of Zoning and Appeals (2).

Financial Reports: City Clerk Lisa Johnson

- Presented the Financial report for January

Council Member Blake McMillan made a motion to accept the Financial Report for January. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

Unfinished Business

- Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to approve the FY2026 Capital Budgets. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.
- Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to approve the FY2025 Budget Amendments. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.
- Council Member Arthur Keckley made a motion to accept the bid of Reliable Construction to complete the maintenance/public works building. Council Member Busby Courson seconded the motion. Motion carried, 4-0.
- Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to proceed with the final application for the GEFA forgiveness loan for the Hurricane Relief Fund for the correction of flooding and drainage. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

New Business

- Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to approve the Alcohol License Application for Mr. Leonides Escalera, as it pertains to the Rodeo Restaurant. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.
- Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to approve the combination and subdivision request by Mr. Leonides Escalera as it pertains to 353 Lakes Blvd, Parcel Numbers: 0199 252D, 0199 255, and 0199 254. Council Member Busby Courson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.
- Information was presented on the costs to replace the flagpole at City Hall. The item was tabled pending additional research.
- City Attorney Drew Parrish-Bennett stated that with the acquisition of the new cemetery, the current cemetery ordinance only addresses the Lake Park Cemetery and will need to either be updated to include the new cemetery, or a new ordinance to address the administration of the new cemetery will need to be adopted. Ms. Parrish-Bennett will be presenting the new ordinance to the City Council for consideration.
- Council Member Zack Fletcher made a motion to approve the playground renovation. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0. Council entered Executive Session at 6:42 pm.

Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to re-enter regular session. Council Member Arthur Keckley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0. Council reconvened Regular Session at 7:08 pm.


Council Member Zach Fletcher addressed the current situation with the City of Lake Park Fire Department. The council is considering the possibility of dissolving the Volunteer Fire Department and contracting with Lowndes County for fire coverage when the new facility is built at 4875 S Hwy 41, Lake Park. The council addressed a combination of response times, additional services that would be available, and the presence of a dedicated firefighter vs. a volunteer who may be leaving their job to respond.

Mr. Bob Wilburs addressed the City Council with his response to the considerations of the Volunteer Fire Department. In addition, Mr. Wilbur expressed his concern that if the resultant contract did not utilize the current fire station or require Lowndes to man the current fire station, they would be doing a disservice to the citizens of Lake Park.

Council Member Zach Fletcher made a motion to allow City Clerk Lisa Johnson to start the effort in identifying the requirements, roles, and responsibilities, equipment requirements, and the process to contract with Lowndes County for fire services. Council Member Blake McMillan seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

Council Member Blake McMillan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Zach Fletcher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:32.

The next regular meeting will be held on April 7, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.



Jena Sandlin, Mayor



Lisa Johnson, City Clerk

4-7-26

Date

April 7, 2026

Date

Seal