

**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF MISSION HILLS, KANSAS**

January 12, 2026

The City Council of the City of Mission Hills, Kansas held a meeting on January 12, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

PRESIDING: Mayor Andy Weed

PRESENT: Councilpersons Bill Bruning, Eden Thorne, Gregg Davidson, Dan Sullivan, & Caroline Moran

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Spencer Jones, Treasurer; Jennifer Lee, City Administrator; Meghan Woolbright, Assistant City Administrator; Jason Nickles, City Clerk; Judy Fang, Senior Financial Analyst; Jill Clifton, City Planner; Aaron Thomas, Assistant to the City Administrator; Anna Krstulic, City Attorney; Chief Eric McCullough, Prairie Village Police Department (PVPD); Captain Adam Taylor, Prairie Village Police Department (PVPD)

VISITORS: Nick Holmes, Mission Hills, KS; Abbey Eckberg, Confluence; PJ Novick, Confluence; Paul Lewis, Lathrop & Gage LLP; Tom Ruddy, Mission Hills, KS

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Weed calls the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

GREETINGS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mayor Weed greets visitors and notes that the meeting would be recorded for the purpose of meeting minutes.

SWEARING IN OF CITY TREASURER NICK HOLMES

Mayor Weed completes the Oaths of Office of City Treasurer Nick Holmes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS December 8, 2025

Councilperson Bruning moves to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2025 City Council meeting. Councilperson Thorne seconds. **Approved 5-0.**

PUBLIC SAFETY

A. Police Report

Chief McCullough states it was a quiet month overall and reports one residential burglary at a vacant home, explaining that long-vacant properties sometimes become targets and added the license plate reader and traffic camera technology identified a suspect vehicle and that investigation remains active. Chief McCullough states that scams continue to be on the rise, strongly cautioning residents to be very careful and explains that scammers are increasingly

using AI to mimic voices, spoof phone numbers, and impersonate agencies such as the Johnson County Sheriff's Office, and emphasizes that no legitimate agency will ever demand payment over the phone. Chief McCullough advises that residents should always feel comfortable calling back using a known, legitimate number to verify any suspicious request. Chief McCullough explains that some scams involve Bitcoin or cryptocurrency transactions and notes that while there are no suspects in the current case, efforts are underway to recover some of the funds. Chief McCullough stresses that speed is essential in reporting these scams, as prompt notification allows law enforcement to work with legitimate, American-based cryptocurrency companies to freeze funds before they can be moved and recovery is often impossible once funds are transferred to overseas cryptocurrency dealers. Chief McCullough states that Detective Warkentin serves as the department's in-house cryptocurrency expert and that officers are instructed to immediately contact investigations when a call involves Bitcoin or cryptocurrency due to the potential for significant financial loss. Chief McCullough urges residents not to wait to report scams, acknowledging that people may feel embarrassed, and emphasizes that quick reporting provides the best chance to recover funds and help victims.

Mayor Weed asks if the Overland Park gas station is tied to the domestic or international crypto to which Chief McCullough explains that most local Bitcoin ATMs are American-based and adds that stopping transactions and working with those companies provides the best chance of recovering funds. Chief McCullough notes that Bitcoin scams do not always involve ATMs and can also occur through transactions completed on personal computers. Chief McCullough explains that scammers often target older individuals who may have less familiarity with cryptocurrency and instruct them to go to specific locations or follow step-by-step directions to complete transactions. Chief McCullough describes common scam scenarios where victims believe they owe money or think they are helping a family member, such as a child allegedly arrested overseas, and states that these types of scams continue to occur. Councilperson Bruning asks whether the City needs to be more proactive in addressing fraud prevention and states concern that the community's population may need additional support to protect against these types of scams as the City has a large older population that may be vulnerable to this kind of fraud. Chief McCullough agrees that suspects often target older individuals who may have less technological knowledge and states that the department already puts out information and that the crime prevention detective regularly discusses these issues, but he is unsure how much more can be done. Chief McCullough suggests that additional awareness could be raised by having the Mayor highlight scam prevention alongside the 9 p.m. routine in a City newsletter as another way to help inform residents.

Mayor Weed states that the City will move forward with increasing outreach and references prior discussion about staff resources focused on fraud prevention. Chief McCullough explains that the crime prevention detective position is currently filled and that the detective has been in the role for approximately five to six months. Chief McCullough states that the detective is actively gathering information on current scam trends and regularly presents to homeowner associations, retirement communities, PTA meetings, and other groups whenever an audience is available. Chief McCullough adds that the department also has a detective who specializes in fraud-related investigations and emphasizes that the primary goal is public education to prevent residents from becoming victims, but notes that investigative expertise is also in place if scams do occur. Mayor Weed notes that this level of staffing support and specialization is a resource that had not historically been available to the City. Chief McCullough clarifies that the crime prevention detective position had been vacant in recent years due to staffing shortages but states that the department is now nearly fully staffed and the position is active and functioning.

Chief McCullough continues his report on a theft described as a porch pirate incident and notes that there was limited evidence, with no information obtained from license plate readers or traffic cameras, and that the suspect wore a mask in Ring camera footage. Chief McCullough states that officers responded quickly and located the suspect vehicle, but it fled before it could be stopped. Chief McCullough reports two traffic accidents for the month, one at 63rd and Wenonga Rd involving rear-end collision at the stop sign where the driver left the scene and cameras did not capture identifying information. Chief McCullough adds that the second accident involved a parked vehicle and likewise lacked camera footage. Chief McCullough concludes by stating that this completes the December report and asks if there are any questions, characterizing it as a pretty good month overall.

Mayor Weed states that he had lunch with Chief McCullough and discussed decreasing crime trends and attributes this to several primary factors. Mayor Weed explains that the City has invested wisely in technology and that license plate readers are producing strong results, and notes that the police drone program is expected to come online soon, asking about the anticipated timeline. Chief McCullough responds that the goal is by the end of the month, though the final date has not yet been confirmed, as the City is waiting on scheduling for setup and training. Chief McCullough notes that the vendor previously agreed to extend the contract to ensure a full operational year before billing resumes.

Chief McCullough explains that the December report also serves as an annual year-to-date comparison and states that many categories show notable decreases when reviewing annual percent changes. Chief McCullough notes that some increases appear due to the City's small size, where one or two incidents significantly affecting percentages. Chief McCullough adds that he is particularly encouraged by theft reductions, noting thefts from motor vehicles decreased from 24 to seven and auto theft dropped from 21 to one year over year, describing those decreases as substantial. Chief McCullough notes that Prairie Village also experienced decreases, though not to the same extent and he attributes these trends to technology investments and states that suspect interviews have confirmed awareness that Prairie Village and Mission Hills utilize license plate readers, traffic cameras, grapplers, and proactive enforcement. Chief McCullough explains that this awareness acts as a deterrent and leads offenders to avoid the area altogether. Mayor Weed references a Grapppler incident on Belinder Circle. Chief McCullough explains that the department posted clips on Facebook, noting that there were two recent Grapppler deployments, one in Prairie Village and one in Mission Hills. Chief McCullough describes the Grapppler as a net attached to the push bumper of a police vehicle, likening it to "Batman technology," which tangles the rear wheel of a suspect's vehicle to safely end pursuits approximately 99% of the time. Chief McCullough points out that some of the statistics showing increases, such as residence checks, unattended vehicle checks, open garage door checks, and traffic stops, reflect proactive crime prevention activity.

Mayor Weed explains that three primary factors contribute to the decline in crime. The first is the City's investment in technology. The second is Mayor Dickey's promotion of the 9 PM routine, which encourages residents to remain alert, lock their cars, avoid leaving key fobs inside vehicles, and not leave valuables in plain sight. The third factor is a fully staffed police department, which has increased officer visibility and activity. Chief McCullough clarifies that the department is technically down one officer, currently at 46 sworn personnel, but a new officer will start on the 21st, returning the department to full staffing at 47. Chief McCullough emphasizes that compared to previous years, when staffing was 34-35 officers, the current staffing significantly improves road coverage.

Chief McCullough provides an update on the World Cup, noting that while details about visiting teams are not finalized, the Kansas City Metro area is expected to see 650,000 to 800,000 additional visitors and he anticipates this will increase calls for service, traffic incidents, and public interactions, including potential interest in Mission Hills. Chief McCullough notes that safety and security resources will be heavily utilized but assures the Council that Mission Hills will maintain full services, with all staff required to remain on duty during the event. Chief McCullough emphasizes that the World Cup response will be a coordinated, metro-wide effort.

Mayor Weed acknowledges that this will be Captain Adam Taylor's last meeting with the Council, thanking him for his years of service, friendship, hard work, and dedication, and wishing him the best in his next endeavor. Chief McCullough notes that his retirement ceremony is scheduled for January 30th and states that everyone is invited to attend.

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Lee explains that the claims ordinance is a routine monthly item, and the presented time and material rates reflect the actual rates for 2026 from frequently used professionals such as surveyors, engineers, and the City architect. These rates do not obligate the City to use only these individuals but serve as an acknowledgment of their current rates. Ms. Lee notes that having these rates in place is important for emergencies, such as ice storms, because federal regulations like FEMA require existing contracts before calling a contractor for services such as tree removal. Additionally, adopting these rates provides price certainty for budgeting purposes. Ms. Lee mentions that more tree companies will be included in the February meeting once submissions are complete. Finally, banking resolutions are being updated to reflect the new Mayor and Treasurer, as these positions are always included along with City Administrator or Assistant City Administrator signatures on all banking resolutions, and they are available to answer questions regarding any of the items.

Councilperson Sullivan asks if the banking resolutions include a requirement for double signatures on transactions over a certain dollar amount. Ms. Lee responds that the current purchasing policy does not include this requirement but mentions that Mr. Thomas has drafted an updated purchasing policy, which is expected to be presented, possibly in February Council Meeting. Ms. Lee adds that the new policy does not currently address this, and notes that some cities have such a requirement. Ms. Lee clarifies that the City's check-signing practice functions as a "triple check," even though it is not explicitly enumerated in policy. Councilperson Sullivan notes that while the signature resolutions allow one signature from any of four authorized individuals, in practice multiple signatures are used. Ms. Lee explains that typically, two live signatures are obtained, usually their own and the City treasurer's, and the mayor's signature is stamped if necessary. Councilperson Bruning suggests considering requiring two original signatures on every check, and Ms. Lee responds that this could be difficult when bills need timely payment and officials are unavailable. Ms. Lee notes that their purchasing policy sets a \$15,000 spending limit, above which Council approval is required, and that exceptions could be incorporated into the updated policy. Ms. Lee explains that the City conducts an annual audit and that auditors require separation of duties wherever possible and that money received at the front desk is handled by someone different from the person who prepares the deposit, and Ms. Fang, who reconciles the bank statements, does not handle deposits. Ms. Woolbright signs off on reconciliations, ensuring multiple people are involved in financial processes. The City Treasurer reviews all processed invoices, though not every month, to provide additional oversight. Ms. Lee emphasizes that in a small environment, these measures create multiple points of review and

accountability, making it very difficult for any serious misuse to occur without collusion among multiple staff members.

Councilperson Sullivan moves to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilperson Thorne seconds.
Approved 5-0

A. Claims Ordinance No. 1696

B. 2026 Time & Material Rates

C. Update Banking Resolutions

FINANCIAL REPORT

A. December Financial Report

Mayor Weed asks Mr. Holmes to introduce himself noting that the introduction was intentionally held until the financial portion of the agenda. Mayor Weed notes that everyone has received and reviewed Mr. Holmes' resume and expresses excitement about his appointment. Mr. Holmes expresses enthusiasm and recognizes Mayor Dickey and previous City Treasurer Mr. Jones. Mr. Holmes shares he has lived in Mission Hills for nearly six and a half years, has two young children and grew up in Kansas City area. Mr. Holmes shares that he played basketball at Yale University with his twin brother who lives nearby, and they frequently get mistaken for each other while out in the community. Mr. Holmes states he graduated college in 2009 and began a career in financial services at a firm based out of Chicago. Mr. Holmes concludes by expressing excitement at being the City's new treasurer.

Ms. Lee reviews the December financial report, noting that Ms. Fang highlighted key revenue and expense items in her cover sheet.

B. 2025 Preliminary Year-end Outlook

Ms. Lee provides a preliminary year-end outlook, reporting that property taxes, sales taxes, and franchise revenues are consistent with expectations, while building permit fees are slightly above projections, improving after previous months of lagging performance. Ms. Lee notes on the expenditure side, nothing unusual is noted, though some projects, such as mill and pave work, remain unfinished and will be completed within the year. Ms. Lee reports a preliminary year-end surplus of approximately \$2.39 million, though most of this is already allocated to contracted or programmed expenses. Ms. Lee notes a small unanticipated revenue overperformance of roughly \$400,000, half of which is reserved for auditor adjustments, leaving about \$200,000 remaining. Ms. Lee notes that final invoices are still being processed and some vendor submissions are pending, but the final numbers are not expected to change significantly. Ms. Lee concludes that the year is strong financially, attributing the positive outcome to a conservative approach of overestimating expenditures and underestimating revenues, with final numbers to be presented at the February meeting. Mayor Weed asks the Council if there are any questions for Ms. Lee to which there were none.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Repeat Nuisance Properties

Ms. Woolbright reports that the repeat nuisance property report has been updated to include 6510 Indian Lane and notes that there may be maintenance items to address this year, as the property has been vacant for an extended period, and the goal is to avoid creating an eyesore for neighboring residents. Ms. Woolbright acknowledges ongoing complications, including coordinating around the “no trespassing” signage on the front door of the property, but assures the Council that the property is being monitored. Ms. Woolbright confirms that other properties on the list have achieved six-month compliance and that no new properties have been added. Councilperson Sullivan raises concern about the HUD-managed property, noting that the report indicated the HUD manager confirmed certain actions would be completed but they were not. Ms. Woolbright explains that under the state nuisance process, issues like lawn maintenance must be noticed annually before further action can be taken. Ms. Woolbright acknowledges that HUD did act the first time in April 2025 but did not follow through after a courtesy notice. The issue stems from HUD using a third-party case manager in Oklahoma and a contracted landscaping company in Kansas City, resulting in poor communication. Councilperson Sullivan inquires about HUD’s disposition process and intentions for the property to which Ms. Krstulic states they have someone looking into who left the firm and she has a new person assigned to it but needs to touch base with them. Councilperson Sullivan asks from past attempts to look at it, is there a path that gets them through to a sale of the property to which Ms. Krstulic states she does not have an answer to that as there are liens owed that are more than the value of the property. Councilperson Bruning asks whether demolition is a possible option, noting that other nuisance properties were resolved this way. Ms. Krstulic explains that demolition would require following the established process, including passing a resolution, setting a public hearing, and notifying all stakeholders, including owners, lienholders, and banks, who may send a representative as they have previously. Councilperson Bruning suggests the Council might need to take a more active role as this issue feels frozen. Ms. Lee notes that a large federal lien and judgment may expire after ten years, and that they are approaching that timeframe, which could allow progress this year. Ms. Lee emphasizes ongoing attempts to contact HUD representatives in Oklahoma but acknowledges the process has felt slow and frustrating.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 2025 City Accomplishments

Ms. Lee explains that the annual summary is a comprehensive compilation of City activities over the past year, including adopted contracts and ordinances and Council priorities. Ms. Lee notes that the report is assembled by Mr. Nickles in coordination with staff and serves as part of City Administrator performance evaluation, typically reviewed in February for Council consideration in March. Ms. Lee emphasizes that the summary highlights daily operations and accomplishments that may not always be quantified and acknowledges the contributions of volunteers who support the City’s work. Ms. Lee describes the report as an overview that provides insight into the scope and impact of City operations. Ms. Lee notes that Mayor Weed suggested improving how the City shares its accomplishments and stories, potentially through the website or other means, and invites Council members to provide any ideas for how to do this effectively. Councilperson Thorne asks why the Crime & Public Safety Committee did not meet to which Ms. Lee explains that many items on the Committee’s agenda stem from Council requests, noting that Ms. Woolbright plans to convene the Committee in February to review 2025-year-end crime statistics and discussing programs from the Prairie Village Police

Department as well pick a new chair as the previous chair, Mr. McQuaid was appointed to the Planning Commission. Ms. Lee highlights initiatives like the former Village Video Co-op, now under a new name, which allows residents to register home security videos to aid investigations. Ms. Lee emphasizes that these programs are helping reduce crimes of opportunity and reflect positive efforts by the police department.

B. Resolution No. 2026-G: Design Guideline Revision re: Greenspace; New Design Guideline re: Flat Roofs

Ms. Clifton reports that the Planning Commission has forwarded proposed Design Guideline revisions concerning greenspace and homes with flat roofs. Regarding greenspace, one proposed change is to add a sentence indicating that the recommendation supports both the City's pastoral and garden character and water runoff management. The proposed change clarifies the definition of greenspace to include mulch areas under tree canopies, responding to feedback that such areas which were not previously be counted as greenspace because no vegetation grows there due to shade and tree roots. The Planning Commission determined that these mulched areas should be eligible as greenspace.

Councilperson Thorne asks for clarification about how greenspace is measured, specifically whether the circumference of the tree and the space around it is included. Ms. Clifton explains that greenspace is defined as live vegetation, and because areas under tree canopies often have only mulch due to shade and roots, those areas have not technically counted as greenspace. To simplify, the proposal is to allow the area under a tree canopy with organic mulch to be counted as greenspace, as long as it is not replaced with impervious surfaces like concrete or gravel used for patio seating. Councilperson Bruning adds that permeable surfaces like gravel would not count to which Ms. Clifton confirms. Councilperson Sullivan suggests clarifying that mulch should be organic since you can have rock, other non-organic matter, or even rubber mulch. Ms. Clifton agrees to add the term organic. Mayor Weed asks whether any of the documents address sidewalks in relation to greenspace, and Ms. Clifton clarifies that greenspace guidelines apply only to private property and do not include the City's right-of-way, where sidewalks are located. Councilperson Moran asks if sidewalks were added to someone's yard, would that reduce their greenspace to which Ms. Clifton states that the greenspace calculation excludes sidewalks or right-of-way areas, and emphasizes that adding sidewalks does not reduce the greenspace on a property.

Ms. Clifton presents the second proposed Design Guideline change, which introduces a new recommendation for homes where the majority of the roof is flat. Ms. Clifton explains that while the City's height limit for homes is 35 feet, a flat-roof home built close to that limit results in the entire eave height reaching approximately 34 to 35 feet, allowing windows at that same height. Ms. Clifton contrasts this with traditional two-story homes, where only the roof peak reaches the maximum height and the sloped roof reduces overall mass and visual impact. Mayor Weed asks whether these are typically two-story homes, and Ms. Clifton confirms they are, describing them as box-like structures. Visual examples are shared to illustrate how flat roofs place windows very high on the structure, creating concerns about scale and privacy.

Councilperson Moran asks how the proposed 25-foot height recommendation was determined. Ms. Clifton explains that staff initially proposed 30 feet after consulting with the City architect, but the Planning Commission requested input from the City's Professional Review Panel of architects. That panel recommended a lower limit of 25 feet, so the height aligns more closely with typical two-story eave heights. Councilperson Thorne asks whether there has been an actual case prompting this discussion, and Ms. Clifton explains that a house

currently under construction raised concerns, including roof decks and multiple second-story decks that created privacy and looming issues for neighbors. Some changes were made, such as raising the second-story safety ledge for privacy, but the situation highlighted gaps in existing guidance. Ms. Clifton notes that contemporary homes are becoming more common, and the intent is to get ahead of future proposals.

Mayor Weed asks whether solar panels factor into the discussion, and Ms. Clifton responds that while panels can be installed on flat roofs, they are generally less effective without proper tilt, though they are still allowed. Councilperson Brunings asks about how the 25-foot height would be measured, clarifying whether it applies to the very top of the roof. Ms. Clifton confirms that the 25 feet refers to the highest point of the roof, consistent with how the current 35-foot limit is measured. Councilperson Bruning asks about chimneys, skylights, railings, and roof decks, with concerns raised about potential loopholes allowing additional height. Councilperson Thorne asks if railings are included in the 25-ft limit to which Ms. Clifton states she does not know. Councilperson Sullivan notes that the 25-foot measurement would be taken from average existing grade and suggests starting with that standard and evaluating future cases as they come before the Architectural Review Board. Councilperson Bruning continues questioning how chimneys and other roof elements could extend above the roofline, and Councilperson Sullivan explains standard chimney clearance requirements, noting that chimneys may extend above the roof depending on proximity to obstructions. Ms. Clifton adds that historically some homes in the City have very tall chimneys, though this is less typical of contemporary design. Councilperson Bruning asks whether focusing specifically on flat-roof homes could still allow very tall chimneys, and Ms. Clifton responds that such features are not typical of contemporary architecture and would likely raise concerns with the Professional Review Panel. Councilperson Bruning asks whether the Architectural Review Board supports the 25-foot recommendation, and Ms. Clifton explains that Design Guidelines are recommendations rather than zoning regulations, giving the ARB discretion when reviewing projects. Projects may meet zoning regulations while deviating from Design Guidelines if justified, without requiring Board of Zoning Appeals approval. Ms. Lee adds that the ARB has been supportive of this change, as it helps them manage unusual cases where current rules offer little guidance.

Councilperson Thorne moves to approve Resolution No. 2026-G: Design Guideline Revision re: Greenspace; New Design Guideline re: Flat Roofs. Councilperson Davidson seconds. **Approved 5-0**

C. Ordinance No. 1697: Comprehensive Plan

Ms. Eckberg thanks the Council for the opportunity to present and provides a brief overview of the comprehensive plan process, summarizing the input received and the steps taken to reach the final stage. The process followed a four-phase approach beginning with data collection on Mission Hills' demographics and physical characteristics and establishing a steering committee of residents to guide plan development. Phase two included reviewing the 2023 resident survey and hosting a public visioning workshop at the Mission Hills Country Club. Phase three involved draft chapter writing and evaluation with input from the steering committee, leading to the current phase four, which includes the Planning Commission public hearing in mid-December and the final plan adoption before the Council. Ms. Eckberg notes the process began in January 2025 and emphasizes that timely participation from the steering committee and City staff allowed the plan to be completed within a 12-month timeline.

Ms. Eckberg highlights the steering committee's six meetings, which provided insight into data, resident input, and draft recommendations. The public visioning workshop in March 2025 drew approximately 50 attendees, exceeding typical consultant expectations, and included a presentation on the comprehensive plan, live polling questions, a mapping activity, and dot voting boards to gather feedback. Residents identified top changes in the community over the last five years, including community events, connectivity, trees and landscaping, safety and security, and aesthetic investments. Mobility was a significant topic, with discussions focused on balancing pedestrian and bicycle connectivity with preservation of the tree canopy.

Ms. Eckberg explains that feedback from the steering committee, staff, and Planning Commission informed draft recommendations, noting that dot voting included green dots for liked items and red dots for elements deemed unsuitable. Residents expressed strong support for neighborhood-scale parks, pedestrian-scale lighting, and safer pedestrian crossings. Phase two feedback emphasized three key themes: community identity, safety, and quality of life, which in addition to the 2023 resident survey were used to guide the plan's recommendations. Phase three included an open house on September 25, which drew 70 participants and featured chapter summary boards, consultant and staff availability for questions, and implementation boards to gather input on prioritizing future recommendations. The process concluded with a joint workshop with the Planning Commission and City Council to review the plan page by page, gather additional input, and refine language in specific strategies to ensure alignment with community desires. Ms. Eckberg concludes the presentation, noting the minor word edits made to strategies 5.1.2 and 8.1.2 and invites questions or comments from the Council and guests.

Mr. Lewis states that he aligns with the position of preserving the tree canopy over adding sidewalks and notes that he has communicated his reasoning previously. Mr. Lewis explains that following the Planning Commission meeting, he has spoken with clients and other residents and reports that there is a strong anti-sidewalk sentiment within the community. Mr. Lewis emphasizes that while the comprehensive plan identifies possible sidewalk routes, the City Council should be aware that moving any recommendations on sidewalks to implementation would likely face significant opposition. Mr. Lewis concludes by thanking the Council and staff for their work on the comprehensive plan.

Councilperson Bruning asks if Mr. Lewis has any thoughts on the process moving forward and whether it better represents all sides of the issues, and if the process worked for him and his clients. Mr. Lewis responds that the process did work, but notes that it is hard because it is still so hypothetical, explaining that the plan shows where sidewalks could be, but nothing is set. Mr. Lewis states that if the Council and staff send letters to any neighbors who would actually be impacted by sidewalk installation, he believes that is when many of the "NIMBYs" come out. Mr. Lewis says that while people are generally in favor of sidewalks and would love to improve mobility in the City, if the sidewalk would require tearing up a resident's yard for the sidewalk, they would not be as supportive of it. Mr. Lewis explains that when the issue moves from being a recommendation in the comprehensive plan to actual implementation, such as the City installing sidewalks along 68th or 69th Street, it could become more contentious than it is currently. Mr. Lewis notes that residents who voiced opinions during the plan's consideration were generally supportive of sidewalks, but he believes that during the implementation stage, many will express opposition.

Councilperson Moran asks Mr. Lewis if he is against sidewalks in all of Mission Hills or if there are specific areas to which Mr. Lewis responds that the concern may be more about his clients and other residents he has spoken with, focusing on the character of the neighborhood. Mr. Lewis explains that Mission Hills is known for lacking sidewalks and residents value protecting

the tree canopy. Mr. Lewis notes that for him personally, 68th Street is the more important area, and for his clients, flooding concerns along Indian Creek also play a role so it is both. Mr. Lewis acknowledges that there are some high-traffic areas where sidewalks could improve safety and that adding them makes sense in those locations. However, Mr. Lewis emphasizes that Mission Hills is primarily a residential City and such areas are limited. Mr. Lewis references 63rd Street, noting that residents reacted strongly to recent sidewalk installation there, with many assuming it was part of the comprehensive plan rather than a separate City Council action, which caused confusion and concern.

Councilperson Davidson asks if one of Mr. Lewis's main concerns remains the driveway of his client along Indian Lane, which was visited a few months ago. Mr. Lewis confirms that this is indeed a primary concern for his client, describing it as a "no-go" area. Mr. Lewis explains that the issue stems from flooding and the potential impact on the client's yard, noting that there is limited right-of-way between Indian Lane and the bottom of the driveway. Mr. Lewis emphasizes that installing sidewalks in this area would significantly affect the client's existing flooding concerns. Councilperson Davidson states that the discussion had previously considered a solution that would not be a hard surface, but rather something that blends with the terrain, potentially winding around existing features to avoid cutting down trees and minimizing impact. Councilperson Davidson suggests that the path could even extend into the street near the driveway before curving back in and notes that this may not be the place to dive too deeply into details but emphasizes that he wanted to make sure that this remains one of Mr. Lewis's main concerns to which Mr. Lewis confirms.

Mayor Weed references a letter from Mr. Lewis sent a few months ago and their previous meeting on the topic, noting that Mr. Lewis has mentioned multiple times that Mission Hills is known as a City without sidewalks and observes that at one point Mr. Lewis implied that sidewalks were not part of the original design guidelines for the community. Mr. Lewis explains that, based on previous comprehensive plans and the City Beautiful movement, Mission Hills has historically prioritized promoting greenspace. Mr. Lewis notes that while some sidewalks have been installed recently, the City is generally known for having few sidewalks and abundant greenspace. Mr. Lewis emphasizes that protecting greenspace and the tree canopy has been a consistent priority for Mission Hills across multiple Councils and comprehensive plans, and he states that installing additional sidewalks would conflict with these longstanding priorities.

Mayor Weed respectfully disagrees, noting that while previous Councils may have supported greenspace, they may not have effectively promoted the will of the citizens. Mayor Weed emphasizes that public input shows there is significant citizen interest in sidewalks. Mayor Weed acknowledges that there are also residents who oppose them but states that, as a 30-year resident, he has never perceived an unwritten mandate against installing sidewalks in the City.

Mr. Lewis clarifies that he is not saying sidewalks should not be considered but emphasizes that the issue is highly divided. Mr. Lewis notes that while some residents support sidewalks in the abstract, many others prioritize protecting the tree canopy. Mr. Lewis stresses that the City Council should understand that even though the comprehensive plan includes recommendations, implementing sidewalks could be contentious and generate strong reactions, as it has for him and his clients. Mr. Lewis advises that the Council should be prepared for two significant factions if they move forward with implementation.

Councilperson Moran adds that response would depend on where the sidewalks are planned to go. Councilperson Thorne notes that safety and tree canopy have always been considered. Mr. Lewis adds that even considering that, the near-term recommendations for sidewalks on 68th and 69th Street present practical challenges and notes that driving along those

streets shows there is little space for sidewalks without removing a significant number of trees. Mr. Lewis states that on his own street, he counted 105 trees that could be affected, emphasizing that installing sidewalks would be a major undertaking with substantial concrete additions and would likely generate strong feelings both in support of and against the project. Councilperson Moran comments that the suggested sidewalk locations in the comprehensive plan may have caused worry and notes that while these are only recommendations, residents may be upset by their placement and emphasizes the need to focus on a broader, long-term goal.

Mr. Lewis states that he has had to explain to several residents that the proposed sidewalks are just recommendations and that any installation would require a separate City Council process during the implementation stage. Mr. Lewis emphasizes that his main point is that the implementation stage will be challenging and that the City Council should approach it thoughtfully. Councilperson Moran agrees that the implementation should be well considered and notes that the resident survey indicates strong support for sidewalks. Councilperson Moran emphasizes the importance of ensuring any sidewalk plans are the right fit for the City and expresses concern about placing them on 68th and 69th Street, suggesting that residents may need to be informed but does not know if the City is there yet.

Mayor Weed states that this discussion is just the start of the conversation and acknowledges that the issue will not go away and acknowledges Mr. Lewis' initial warning. Mr. Lewis clarifies that he is not trying to threaten or warn the Council but wants to emphasize that the sidewalk issue generates strong feelings both for and against. Mr. Lewis states that as long as the City Council is prepared to manage those strong opinions and make clear recommendations or firm plans for sidewalk locations. Mr. Lewis notes that the residents he has spoken with who oppose sidewalks are very strongly against them and stresses that the Council should be aware of this sentiment and emphasizes that the Council, as the public government, can make its own decisions, but should keep in mind that this is generating strong feelings.

Councilperson Bruning responds that this is one of the most divisive issues he has seen on the Council in some time and adds that the process has been important in providing full community engagement, ensuring no one was excluded from discussion. Councilperson Bruning emphasizes that the process did work. Mr. Lewis agrees that the process did work, but notes a point, which he attributes to what Councilperson Moran said, that while the process may have worked, there were some people who were not necessarily staying on top of the process. Mr. Lewis clarifies that these residents are not necessarily aware that at this point it is a recommendation and that the plan was looking at potential routes. Mr. Lewis emphasizes that a number of residents probably thought that if the comprehensive plan is passed, the sidewalks are going in. Mr. Lewis stresses that this is certainly not the case and that there would be other City Council functions where all the issues could be discussed, but that misunderstanding was part of the issue on the anti-sidewalk side.

Mayor Weed thanks Mr. Lewis for attending and commends him for conducting himself respectfully and representing his point of view well. Mr. Lewis expresses appreciation for the opportunity to share his perspective and thanks the Council. Mayor Weed asks if there are any other comments from the audience or the Council to which there are none.

Councilperson Thorne moves to approve Ordinance No. 1697: Comprehensive Plan.
Councilperson Sullivan seconds. **Approved 5-0**

D. Ordinance No. 1698: Zoning Regulation Revision re: Sport Court Setbacks

Ms. Clifton reports that at the April 25, 2025, meeting the Council approved a six-month moratorium on accepting and processing building permit applications for pickleball courts located within 500 feet of residential properties, which was later extended to April 13, 2026. The moratorium arose from residents' concerns about a proposed pickleball court on Cherokee Lane. City Council sent this issue to the Planning Commission who reviewed existing sport courts, decibel levels, and noise mitigation techniques used in other cities, and also heard from several residents about concerns regarding pickleball noise. Based on their review, the Planning Commission is forwarding a proposed change, creating a 250-foot setback for sport courts over 800 square feet in area. This setback was based on a study by the Noise Pollution Clearinghouse and the Environmental Protection Agency, which found that pickleball noise is reduced to 60 decibels at 250 feet, aligning with the City's sport court noise limit from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Ms. Clifton notes that of the estimated 28 sport courts in the City, only five currently meet the existing setback requirements, and none would meet the proposed setback. Ms. Clifton states it does not appear that any property in the City would be able to have a sport court over 800 square feet in area with the proposed setback. Ms. Clifton also mentions that the minutes of the Planning Commission meeting were included in the packet which covered all the discussion, showing what the Planning Commission wrestled with and some of the ideas they had talked about and realized probably would not be the best idea. Ms. Clifton notes good discussions back and forth with different ideas, and they had good input from neighbors.

Councilperson Bruning asks if there has been any pushback on the City's existing mini sport courts as he recalls that about 20 years ago the discussion was more focused on basketball courts and asks whether there are complaints about other types of activities and noise, or if pickleball is generating all the current concern and attention. Ms. Clifton responds that recently the complaints have been just about pickleball and explains that 15 years ago, concerns were more about lights on courts for nighttime play and sound systems blaring music. Now, when someone proposes a sport court, they must specify whether they will have lights and the lumens of those lights and whether they will have a sound system. She notes that both lighting and noise are now regulated through the City's ordinances.

Mayor Weed asks about a page in the packet listing mitigation techniques used by other cities and whether any of those techniques have been incorporated. Ms. Clifton responds that while some were reviewed, many are difficult to regulate, noting that most other cities regulate commercial properties because they do not have residential properties with enough space for backyard pickleball courts like Mission Hills does. For example, requiring silent paddles is easier on commercial properties but not practical for private residences unless neighbors are observing. Ms. Clifton adds that the Planning Commission discussed acoustic fencing, such as what the Mission Hills Country Club installed, which is effective at reducing noise, but the Commission did not support it because it is not aesthetically attractive.

Mayor Weed thanks Ms. Clifton and asks if there are any additional comments from the Council or audience. Mr. Cole begins by thanking the City Council for implementing the moratorium, which allowed time to study the issue and also thanks City staff and the Planning Commission for providing evidence and real-world facts regarding this recent trend where a small hollow plastic ball and solid paddles are creating significant noise. Mr. Cole acknowledges that staff has made the process easier, noting it is still difficult to conflict with neighbors. Mr. Cole explains that some neighbors, including himself and others closest to the proposed court, have spoken with other neighbors on their street who prefer not to get involved, leaving him to handle the issue. Mr. Cole hopes that if the Council approves the ordinance as written, it will

prevent other residents from experiencing similar stress, conflicts with neighbors, concerns about quality of life, or potential property value impacts. Mr. Cole emphasizes that he has provided a lot of comments and input into the process and expresses gratitude to the Council and staff for taking the time to address the matter. Mayor Weed states that regardless of which side, the Council appreciates that he has represented his position as a gentleman and a good neighbor with the best intentions and expresses hope that civil conversations about difficult issues can continue.

Councilperson Moran asks about existing sport courts, noting that if they need maintenance and a permit would they have to go before the ARB and BZA. Ms. Clifton explains that up to 25% of a court can be repaired without a permit but more than 25% is a replacement that requires approval from the ARB and BZA for a variance. Councilperson Moran asks if that process will be difficult to which Ms. Clifton responds that it is hard to predict, but it could be challenging since the court can most likely not be moved but the alternative would be removing the court entirely. Councilperson Moran seeks clarification on the 25% rule and Ms. Clifton notes that the Planning Commission is reviewing the definition of “repair” versus “replacement” because it is currently confusing but confirms basic maintenance like fixing cracks or resealing is fine but installing new concrete triggers the 25% threshold. Councilperson Moran references the current 28 sport courts, asking how many would comply. Ms. Clifton clarifies that five courts meet the existing regulations and the new ordinance would make those five noncompliant.

Councilperson Bruning asks whether, as major repairs will inevitably be needed on the 28 existing sport courts, if the City might begin to winnow them out by requiring compliance during replacements. Ms. Clifton responds that this would fall to the BZA to potentially deny replacements if it does not meet requirements. Ms. Lee notes it might be difficult to prove the five conditions needed to get a variance. Councilperson Bruning suggested that as major repairs go forward on the 28 courts, there may be a winnowing. Ms. Lee agreed that could occur depending on what the BZA rules. Ms. Clifton adds that looking at some of the existing courts some are only two feet off the property line.

Councilperson Bruning notes that the topic of using this as a way to begin exiting sport courts has not been formally addressed and acknowledges that it has been an ongoing issue. Mayor Weed responds that it is not an intentional strategy but rather an unintended consequence of previous decisions. Mayor Weed provides an analogy to tennis court resurfacing, explaining that resurfacing typically involves a thin coat of material and can easily include changes in color or lines, which could lead to a court being converted for pickleball use. Ms. Clifton adds that currently, people could mark pickleball lines on tennis courts with colored tape. Mayor Weed inquires whether there is a formal process for this, and Ms. Clifton clarifies that no process exists because playing pickleball is permitted, and an issue will arise only if neighbors complain to the police about noise, prompting a decibel measurement. Mayor Weed thanks Mr. Cole for handling a difficult situation. Mr. Cole expresses appreciation as a fairly new resident noting that preserving the lot and environment was a reason for moving to the City and that these efforts support that.

Councilperson Davidson moves to approve Ordinance No. 1698: Zoning Regulation Revision re: Sport Court Setbacks. Councilperson Bruning seconds. **Approved 5-0**

E. Resolution No. 2026-H: Kansas City Regional Resource Sharing Agreement (RSA)

Ms. Lee explains the Mid-America Regional Council regional resource-sharing agreement is not about normal mutual aid like police, fire, or EMS, but instead about sharing resources such as public works, tree crews, and building inspectors in the event of an emergency. Ms. Lee gives

the example of a large tornado hitting neighboring communities like Kansas City, Missouri, or Prairie Village while missing Mission Hills, this agreement allows the City to share resources to help evaluate trees or determine whether buildings are inhabitable. Ms. Lee notes Kansas has a statute not allowing assistance across state lines and explains that the accompanying home-rule resolution drafted by Ms. Krstulic allows staff to help for a few days if another City is in dire need. Ms. Lee emphasizes the intent is to be a good neighbor because Mission Hills would need the same help if something happened locally, calling the item largely perfunctory but welcoming questions or concerns.

Councilperson Thorne asks if this is the first time it has been done formally for the City. Ms. Lee confirms, explaining MARC developed the agreement in the last couple of years and that it is resurfacing now because Johnson County recently signed on. Ms. Lee adds that nearly 30 cities have already participated and MARC is re-asking remaining cities to join. Mayor Weed asks if there are any further comments or questions to which there are none.

Councilperson Bruning moves to approve Resolution No. 2026-H: Kansas City Regional Resource Sharing Agreement (RSA). Councilperson Thorne seconds. **Approved 5-0**

REPORTS OF CITY STAFF

A. City Clerk

Mr. Nickles reviews the calendar, noting there are not many events scheduled for the first few months but mentions the Joint HOAs meeting at the Country Club will be occurring later this month. Mr. Nickles adds that additional events will be added as Community Engagement calendar is finalized. Ms. Lee provides a correction to the calendar, explaining they were originally told the Joint Homes Association meeting was January 22, which is reflected on the calendar, but the invitation later showed it was moved. The correct date is Wednesday, January 21. Ms. Lee apologizes for the confusion and notes the meeting will be at the Kansas City Country Club, with registration around 5:45 p.m., individual meetings at 6:00 p.m., and Mayor Weed and the police chief speaking from 7:00 to 7:30 p.m. Councilperson Thorne asks whether PD's new crime prevention officer will be in attendance. Mayor Weed notes the time constraints, emphasizing there are many important topics and only 30 minutes available. Councilperson Thorne suggests even five minutes would be valuable, especially given the recent gas station incident. Mayor Weed agrees and says he will talk to Chief McCullough.

Councilperson Bruning agrees and raises concern about recurring issues, particularly how residents should recognize or beware of phone scams, suggesting the situation could be explained to residents. Councilperson Thorne adds that the crime prevention officer likely has good pointers from speaking with people regularly. Mayor Weed says he will talk to Chief about having the crime prevention officer provide an overview, emphasizing making residents aware that there is a resource. Ms. Lee suggests sharing information through newsletters, the website, and other communication channels so residents know how to access help. Ms. Lee adds the crime prevention officer can conduct home security audits, offering suggestions such as lighting, locks, and other preventative measures. Mayor Weed suggests a broader push following her

recent announcement, possibly with Chief mentioning a specific incident and encouraging residents to contact the officer for crime prevention assistance.

B. City Administrator

Ms. Lee explains that the City will be sending a Citywide letter regarding the rental registration program to explain the prohibition on rentals under 60 days and how the program will work. Ms. Lee adds that a postcard will also be sent to all residents because the Belinder Stormwater project, from the Belinder Circle south to the City limit, will be very impactful. The City is working to obtain better scheduling information from the utilities so that details can be included on the postcard. Ms. Lee states that the Council will receive bids for the project at the March 9 meeting and award the contract, at which point the contractor, schedule, and sequencing will be known. Ms. Lee emphasizes the Belinder project is the City's major project for the year and notes that residents should pay attention if they want to avoid frustration. Councilperson Moran comments that this will be a significant issue for school drop-off on Belinder School. Ms. Lee agrees and states that they are hopeful the worst impact will occur during the summer when school is not in session. Ms. Lee explains that once sequencing and contractor plans are better understood, the City can communicate a clearer schedule and encourage residents to sign up for notifications, such as day-to-day updates on whether walking routes are available. Councilperson Moran also mentions thinking about bus routes and notes that the school district will reach out. Ms. Lee states that the City has worked with the district before on impactful projects using paper notices and that coordination has generally gone well, adding that staff are trying to stay ahead of the issue.

Councilperson Bruning asks whether on-the-ground meetings will be held to which Ms. Lee explains that an open house was held previously during utility work, but turnout was limited to six or seven people. Ms. Lee says they may try to persuade the utilities to participate again, noting that the value is allowing residents to directly ask utilities what work will occur on their property. Councilperson Bruning asks whether Belinder School has been engaged, noting it had not occurred to him despite living in the area. Ms. Lee responds that the most disruptive stormwater work is hoped to occur during the summer, acknowledging that this timing is not ideal for Indian Hills Country Club, which prefers later work. Ms. Lee describes the project involving replacement of an old, corrugated metal stormwater pipe along the course near Belinder West and south of 69th Street, including work in the rear yards of several homes, noting that corrugated metal pipe is no longer commonly used.

Councilperson Bruning asks whether police have been engaged regarding child safety to which Ms. Lee responds that managing safety will be challenging and will require real-time management once utility schedules are known, including encouraging residents to use alternate routes. Ms. Lee reiterates that residents who want to avoid disruption should plan to go different ways during the summer, otherwise they will need to stay informed through updates.

C. Assistant City Administrator

Ms. Woolbright reports that City staff will be meeting with the CBIZ brokers to review available options and that new insurance options will be presented in February. Councilperson Bruning notes that there were concerns expressed about the CBIZ presentation last year and asks whether that issue is being addressed. Ms. Woolbright responds that a different team will be presenting and alludes to the possibility of looking at a different provider. Mayor Weed adds that CBIZ has indicated they are vacating that segment of the business. Ms. Lee concurs, stating that their

actions suggest they are not backfilling the government team and that staff's sense is that CBIZ is trying to exit that line of business.

D. City Planner

Ms. Clifton states she has nothing to add to her report. Mayor Weed observes that construction activity is down year-to-date and asks whether the Kansas City Country Club project is coming to an end and whether revenues were artificially elevated by that large project, and whether those revenues will begin to come back down or are reflected in the current numbers. Ms. Clifton responds that they are not entirely sure about that conclusion but acknowledges that the project was definitely a big boost, noting that the permit was pulled in 2024, not 2025, so it is not part of the current year's numbers. Ms. Clifton adds that there are probably four or five new houses anticipated this year, which should help offset some of the decline.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Weed states that they have spoken with each Councilmember on liaison roles and believes everyone is aware of their assignments for the coming year. Mayor Weed explains that ARB responsibilities will be with Councilperson Sullivan, Councilperson Bruning will remain involved with the Planning Commission, Councilperson Davidson will serve as the liaison for Crime and Safety, and Councilperson Thorne will handle the Park Board responsibilities. Mayor Weed thanks each individual for their willingness to serve. Mayor Weed notes that Councilperson Moran will lead Community Engagement and has also agreed to liaison to the BZA, highlighting that her prior experience before the BZA and familiarity with the process make her well suited for the role.

COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS

Councilperson Thorne reports that the Parks Board held a Zoom meeting regarding Eddy Island, where improvements were approved and are planned for implementation in the spring. The approved work includes new plant materials, lawn improvements, and drainage upgrades, with plans to finalize and vote on the project later in the year. Councilperson Thorne also reports that the ARB reviewed a project on Colonial Court at 59th and Oakwood location where the Fall Festival was held. The project was approved with new safety measures to be installed in front of the newer statuary. Councilperson Thorne explains that the proposal had been withdrawn at its initial ARB review and later returned with a reimagined design that addressed concerns. Mayor Weed confirms that the safety measures are intended to protect the statuary from vehicles.

Councilperson Moran states she has nothing to report but plans to meet with the Engagement Committee soon to finalize 2026 dates.

Councilperson Bruning notes that recent Planning Commission topics were reviewed during tonight's meeting with the Comprehensive Plan, flat roof, and greenspace. The ARB addressed bollards and resolved a situation at 2400 Tomahawk Road, where an existing terrace replacement

slightly exceeded the 65% threshold but was resolved demonstrating that the ARB can manage complex and difficult plots effectively.

MAYOR'S APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Weed nominates Leslie Mark to serve as the first Planning Commission alternate, noting he is seeking one more volunteer. Mayor Weed emphasizes that alternates often end up actively participating, so they should be willing to engage.

Councilperson Thorne moves to appoint Leslie Mark as an alternate on the Planning Commission. Councilperson Bruning seconds. **Approved 5-0**

MISSION HILLS INTERN SEND OFF

Mayor Weed then introduces Mr. Thomas, noting that it is his last night in front of Council, and invites him to share his current activities.

Mr. Thomas expresses heartfelt gratitude as his internship with the City, which began in July 2024 through KU's MPA fellowship, and reflects on the value of being given space and patience to learn, not just by doing tasks, but by observing and listening to staff, residents, and the Council. Mr. Thomas emphasizes the importance of continuing the intern program, highlighting its legacy of mentorship. Mr. Thomas acknowledges the wide-ranging experiences and responsibilities he's been allowed, and the tolerance for mistakes that fostered learning. Mr. Thomas praises the dedication of City staff, noting that everyone owns their work and takes responsibility in their roles, citing specific colleagues and their work ethic. Mr. Thomas expresses pride in moving to his next step but also sadness at leaving such a committed team. Mr. Thomas encourages continuing the internship pipeline across local universities, emphasizing the abundance of talent in graduate programs that need opportunities like this. Mr. Thomas concludes with gratitude and hope for ongoing connection.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

/s/ Jason Nickles