

**CITY OF FULTON COUNCIL MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2025**

The Council of the City of Fulton, Missouri, met in Regular Session on Tuesday, March 25, 2025, in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 18 E. 4th Street.

Present and presiding were: Deputy Mayor Lauren Nelson; Courtney L. Doyle, Director of Administration; Kathie Ratliff, City Clerk; and Bill Ladwig, Police Chief. The meeting was called to order by Deputy Mayor Nelson at 6:30 p.m. Roll call was noted by the Clerk, and members of the Council present were: Bill Hinchie, Mike West, Mary Rehklau, Jeff Stone, Lauren Nelson, and Bob Washington. Alan Combs and Brad Leather were absent.

Staff present were: Darrell Dunlap, Superintendent of Utilities; Sharlene McArtor, Parks & Recreation Superintendent; Sam Shults, Assistant Director of Administration; Todd Gray, Assistant Fire Chief; and Jeremy Polston, Audio/Video. Dustin Dougherty, Russ Sing, and Jordan Lewis were absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Rev. Bruce Williamson.

COMMENTS FROM VISITORS:

Jennifer Delashmutt (3405 County Road 328) spoke in support of the airport, sharing how visiting pilots boost the local economy through spending at restaurants and businesses. She suggested adding a QR code at the airport to track visitor spending and help demonstrate its economic impact.

The Sergent and the Davison Family—two homeschooling families residing in Fulton—spoke in support of allowing backyard hens within city limits, even on properties under one acre. Micah Sergeant gave a prepared statement outlining the many benefits of backyard chickens, including fresh eggs, sustainable living, and educational opportunities for children. He referenced successful ordinances from Columbia, Jefferson City, and Mexico, Missouri, as well as recent Missouri legislation (House Bill 262) that affirms the right to keep backyard chickens on smaller lots.

The families explained how this initiative began: after participating in a homeschool incubator project, one of the children asked if they could keep chickens. Upon learning that current city ordinance prohibited it, the children wanted to come and ask the council themselves. Several young children then came to the podium one by one, sharing heartfelt reasons for wanting to raise chickens—citing responsibility, the chance to care for animals, and the health benefits of fresh eggs. One young speaker told the council she wanted Fulton to offer the same opportunity as other cities. Another child described how chicken droppings help gardens and how the eggs are good for the body.

The presentation was thoughtful, respectful, and well-prepared. It was warmly received by council members, who thanked the families for attending and encouraged the children to stay involved in local government.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A public hearing was held to consider the request for rezoning of 720 State Highway O from R-2 Residential to C-2 Commercial. The hearing was called to order at 6:41 p.m. Deputy Mayor Nelson gave three calls in opposition and in favor, but there were no comments. The hearing was closed at 6:42 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion was made by Councilman West and Seconded by Councilman Hinchie to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried with six members of the Council voting in favor, two absent (Combs, Leuther).

Consent Agenda Items:

- a) City Council Meeting Minutes: March 11, 2025
- b) Appointment: Sylvia Strew to the Human Rights Commission (term expiring July 2026)
- c) Event approvals including:
 - Humane Society Dog Easter Egg Hunt – April 13
 - Fulton High School Promenade – April 26
 - Humane Society Dog Wash – June 14
 - Kingdom Pilots Pancake Breakfast & Fly-In – September 6
 - Dog Jog 5K – October 25

PRESENTATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE FEBRUARY DOA REPORT:

Motion was made by Councilman Hinchie and Seconded by Councilman Stone to approve the DOA Report as presented. Motion passed with six members of the Council voting in favor, two absent (Combs, Leuther).

PRESENTATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE FEBRUARY FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

Motion was made by Councilman Hinchie and Seconded by Councilman Stone to approve the February Financial Statement as presented. Motion passed with six members of the Council voting in favor, two absent (Combs, Leuther).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Motion was made by Councilman Stone and Seconded by Councilwoman Rehklau to reschedule the April council meetings:

- April 8 to April 14 at 7:00 p.m.
- April 22 to April 29 at 6:30 p.m.

Motion carried with six members of the Council voting in favor, two absent (Combs, Leuther).

COUNCIL CONCERNS:

Councilman Hinchie thanked those who came to speak, especially the children who participated in the backyard chicken discussion. He expressed appreciation for their involvement and remarked it was great to see young residents engaging with local government.

Councilman West reported that the Human Rights Commission has not met recently but welcomed the new member appointed earlier in the meeting. He shared that the Fair Housing Poster Contest is currently underway and open to kindergarten through fifth grade students. The deadline to submit entries is April 4 at 4:00 p.m. He also noted that a recent outreach event at the Housing Authority had no attendance, likely due to spring break.

Councilwoman Rehklaue stated there has not been a recent Public Safety Committee meeting but one is planned soon. She reported that the flag at Memorial Park appears to be worn and in need of replacement.

Councilman Stone shared that the Historic Preservation Commission met the previous Monday, although he was unable to attend due to illness. The next scheduled meeting is April 21. He noted that this Council meeting was his second-to-last as a council member after serving eight years. He encouraged the council to continue its work, particularly in supporting youth and environmental efforts. He added that someone would need to be appointed to the Historic Preservation Commission to fill his seat.

Councilwoman Nelson spoke about the NAACP Candidate Forum held the night before and thanked the organization for hosting a well-run and well-attended event. She commended Reverend Jackson for moderating and expressed pride in participating alongside other council and school board candidates. She encouraged residents to vote in the April 8 election, emphasizing the importance of local representation.

Councilman Washington shared that the Fulton Park Board met on February 13 and reported a 15% increase in memberships. He also stated that residents in the Crestwood area have expressed concerns about traffic and parking. He assured them that the city is actively exploring possible solutions, including improvements to curbs and sidewalks.

Councilmen Leuther and Combs were absent.

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 3575: IMGA Agreement Authorization

A Resolution of the City of Fulton, Missouri, authorizing the Mayor to execute all necessary documents in relation to a long-term agreement with Interstate Municipal Gas Agency (IMGA) to secure natural gas supplies.

Superintendent of Utilities Darrell Dunlap shared that this agreement would allow the city to secure discounted natural gas through IMGA. He explained that while previous attempts at similar agreements hadn't been viable since 2008, current conditions made this opportunity possible. The agreement includes a 30-year term, capped at 70% of the city's natural gas usage. The discount is achieved through a financial prepay mechanism that municipalities can access—typically not available to private companies.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Rehklaue and Seconded by Councilman West to adopt Resolution 3575.

Motion passed with six members of the Council voting in favor, two absent (Combs and Leuther).

Resolution 3576: Visu-Sewer Contract

A Resolution of the City of Fulton, Missouri, authorizing the Mayor to sign all necessary documents in relation to a contract with Visu-Sewer of Missouri, LLC for sewer evaluation and rehabilitation services in the amount of, and not to exceed, \$300,000 and establishing an effective date.

Motion was made by Councilman Washington and Seconded by Councilman Hinchie to adopt Resolution 3576. Motion passed with six members of the Council voting in favor, two absent (Combs and Leuther).

ORDINANCES PRESENTED FOR FIRST READING:

Bill No. 1746: Rezoning – 720 State Highway O

An Ordinance reclassifying a tract of land located at 720 State Highway O in Fulton, Missouri from its current zoning designation R2 Residential to C2 Commercial under the zoning code and establishing an effective date.

A public hearing was held with no public comments submitted either in favor or opposition. Planning and Zoning recommended the change, and the council voted to move the ordinance forward.

Motion was made by Councilman West and Seconded by Councilman Stone to advance Bill No. 1746 to second reading at the next council meeting. Motion carried with six members in favor, two absent (Combs, Leuther).

ORDINANCES PRESENTED FOR SECOND READING:

Bill No. 1744: Schedule of Fees and Charges – Parks & Recreation

An Ordinance amending the 2025 Schedule of Fees and Charges for the City of Fulton's Parks and Recreation Department and establishing an effective date.

Motion was made by Councilman Stone and Seconded by Councilman West to move Bill No. 1744 to third reading. Motion carried with six members in favor, two absent (Combs, Leuther).

Motion was then made by Councilman Stone and Seconded by Councilman West to place Bill No. 1744 for final passage.

Roll Call Vote:

Combs – Absent	Rehklau – Yes
Hinchie – Yes	Stone– Yes
Leuther – Absent	Washington – Yes
Nelson – Yes	West – Yes

Bill No. 1744 having received the affirmative vote of six members of the Council was declared passed by the President of the Council.

Bill No. 1745: Schedule of Fees and Charges – Airport

An Ordinance amending the 2025 Schedule of Fees and Charges for the City of Fulton's Airport and establishing an effective date.

The ordinance creates a 10% increase on hangar rental fees. The council held extended discussion before final passage, acknowledging that while the increase is necessary to address rising costs, long-term planning is critical.

Motion was made by Councilman Hinchie and Seconded by Councilman West to move Bill No. 1745 to third reading. Motion carried with six members in favor, two absent (Combs, Leuther).

Motion was then made by Councilman Hinchie and Seconded by Councilwoman Rehkla to approve Bill No. 1745 for final passage.

Roll Call Vote:

Combs – Absent	Rehkla – Yes
Hinchie – Yes	Stone– Yes
Leuther – Absent	Washington – Yes
Nelson – Yes	West – Yes

Bill No. 1745 having received the affirmative vote of six members of the Council was declared passed by the President of the Council.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

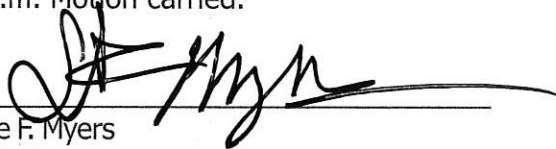
The next City Council meeting will be April 14, 2025.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion was made by Councilman Hinchie and Seconded by Councilwoman Rehkla to enter Executive Session at 7:24 p.m. for legal matters and personnel discussions. Motion carried with six members of the Council voting in favor, two absent (Combs, Leuther).

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Motion was made by Councilman West and Seconded by Councilman Washington to exit Executive Session and adjourn at 8:21 p.m. Motion carried.



Steve F. Myers
Mayor



Kathie Ratliff
City Clerk