

City of Whitwell
Board of Commission
August 13, 2026
6:00 pm

Meeting called to order by Mayor Sandra Crabtree.

Invocation was given by Vice-Mayor Mike Dillon.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner David Hudson.

Certification of the Sunshine Law was met.

Roll Call-As follows:

1. Mayor Sandra Crabtree- Present
2. Vice-Mayor Mike Dillon- Present
3. Commissioner Jim Nunley- Present
4. Commissioner David Hudson- Present
5. City Manager- Lonnie Cleek- Present
6. City Recorder-Carol Condra-Present
7. City Attorney Sarah Willis-Present

Approval of the Agenda- A motion to approve the agenda with the addition of Hamilton Auction under New Business Item #5 was made by Vice-Mayor Dillon, and this motion was seconded by Commissioner Hudson. All Commissioners voted yes. Motion carries.

Approval of the July 9, 2026 City Meeting- A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Dillon to approve the minutes from July 9, 2026, and this motion was seconded by Commissioner Hudson. All Commissioners voted yes. Motion carries.

New Business

1. Vacant Commissioners Seat-Vice-Mayor Dillon stated that he didn't think we should appoint anyone since the election was just a couple of months away. Commissioner Nunley stated that he thought we should appoint someone. Vice-Mayor Dillon made a motion not to appoint anyone and wait until the election, and this motion was seconded by Mayor Crabtree. Mayor Crabtree called for a Roll Call Vote it is as follows: Mayor Sandra Crabtree- no-not to appoint; Vice-Mayor Dillon -no-not to appoint; Commissioner Jim Nunley- yes-to appoint; and

Commissioner David Hudson- yes-to appoint. The voting was 2 no and 2 yes. The results ending in a tie vote. Vice-Mayor Dillon made a motion to remove the vacant seat from the agenda, and this motion was seconded by Mayor Crabtree. Mayor Crabtree requested a Roll Call Vote it is as follows: Mayor Sandra Crabtree yes; Vice-Mayor Mike Dillon yes; Commissioner Jim Nunley no; and Commissioner David Hudson yes. The voting was 3 yes and 1 no. The majority voted yes. Motion carries.

2. Zero Turn Mower (Engine or Purchase a New Mower?)-Mr. Cleek stated that the engine has blown up. This mower is 10 years old and used almost daily during mowing season. The mower is needed since it is a struggle to keep up the mowing as it is. The purchase of a new engine would be \$3,000 to \$4,000, and then there is a chance something else could happen due to the age of the mower. Also, John Deere would not be able to get the motor until sometime in September. He has not actually priced the needed item, but he stated that a new commercial mower would be in the price range of \$10, 000 to \$15,000. Commissioner Nunley stated that he thought we should purchase a new mower, and Vice-Mayor Dillon agrees. Commissioner Nunley stated that it did not have to be a John Deere, there are other good mowers. Mr. Cleek stated that we need to see what mowers are on state contract. There was a lot of discussion concerning where the funds would come from for this purchase? The city had hoped to have some additional funds from the loan set up for new vehicles. There were plans to use the remaining money for repairs to the building next to city hall, but this may take priority at this time. Also, Sandy commented that the purchase might come from the park funds since a mower is required to be used at the park. The mower is needed no matter where the funds come from. Vice-Mayor Dillon made a motion to purchase a new mower with a spending limit up to \$15,000, and this motion was seconded by Commissioner Hudson. All Commissioners voted yes. Motion carries.
3. Park Director (Sell Alcohol for Labor Day)-Sandy Tennille stated that she knew this would be a questionable item. She said that someone from the Labor Day Group had stated that people had brought alcoholic beverages into the park last year, and if it was sold, it would make money. The park has signs posted that say No Alcohol. There was a discussion concerning the liabilities. Attorney Sarah Willis advised against it, and stated we should stay with our established policy of No Alcohol. Commissioner Nunley made a motion not to sale alcohol on Labor Day, and this motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Dillon. All Commissioners voted yes. Motion carries.
4. Resolution to abolish Whitwell City Park Board- Mayor Crabtree read Resolution #280, and she stated that this would be to formally abolish the park board due to the lack of members and advice from the city attorney. The City of Whitwell will work under the director system for our park. A motion to accept Resolution #280 was made by Vice-Mayor Dillon, and this motion was seconded by Commissioner Hudson. All Commissioners voted yes. Motion carries.
5. Hamilton Auction- Mr. Cleek said that they had previously discussed plans for an auction of used equipment after our new vehicles are in place. He also stated that they had discussed the possibility of auctioning property. The properties being considered are: 1. Property near the high school football field, 2. Property at the Industrial Park, and 3. Old middle school on Main Street. He had invited Mr. George Hamilton with Hamilton Auction to look at the items, and then come to the meeting for questions from Commissioners. Mr. Hamilton explained that there are two types of auctions, and they are live auction and online auction. He would recommend the live auction with good advertisement and lots of pictures. The fee maybe paid

by the seller to the auction or you could do a buyer's premium of 10%. He explained that as the seller, the city reserves the right to refuse a bid on the properties. Mayor Crabtree made a motion to go with George Hamilton Auction and plan to have a live auction with selling the properties mentioned and surplus vehicles all on the same day with the buyer paying the premium fees, and the City of Whitwell having the right to refuse or accept the bid, and this motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Dillon. All Commissioners voted yes. Motion carries.

Old Business

1. Jasper Sewer Bills (Review in June)- Attorney Willis said that she spoke with the Town of Jasper's attorney, and he stated that they were having issues with the company that is installing the new system. The Commissioners agreed to revisit this in September.
2. Streetlights (Tracy Steele) Requested Croy to start. Mr. Cleek spoke with the engineer, and the study is completed. Croy is having an issue submitting the report due to people being moved around.
3. City Shop (Electric & Plumbing Repair Quote) Last quote turned in- Table until October.
4. Library (Consider City Operated)-Mayor Crabtree said that she has not heard any additional information, but the next meeting will be September 17th at 5:30.
5. Veterans Park Paving- Table until other construction is complete.

City Manager's Report-given by Lonnie Cleek

1. Mowing (Zero & Tractor)-The mowing continues daily.
2. Branches and Trash-This has been a constant.
3. Working with County Election (Early Voting) 207 Early Voted at City Hall-People realized that anyone could early vote at our location. We had 207 people to vote at our facility.
4. LPRG Local Parks and Recreation Grant (Contract Signed & almost Ready for Bids) (Survey Started)- Expected to start at any time.
5. Still Meeting with City Attorney (Possible Resolved Sewer Billing)-previously discussed under Old Business
6. Working on Bank Loan (Purchases Made) Equipment and Stripping to begin-We should finalize and sign anytime.
7. Quotes for building, wiring and plumbing-The work is on hold until funding is available.
8. Interviews conducted for Police Chief (Hired Ric Engle)- Mr. Ric Engle has been hired as the new chief, and he was introduced at the meeting.
9. Croy to begin study for streetlights (Waiting on Study) (Started but not complete) (Spoke to Harry on both projects to see where we are)-previously discussed under Old Business
10. Contacted Auctioneer to begin Surplus Property and Vehicle Sale-This was introduced in our New Business
11. Met with EMA Director, Reviewing Hazard Mitigation Plan-I met with Mr. Steve Lamb to review the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

City Recorder's Report given by Carol Condra

Mrs. Condra stated that Mr. Brad Harris, MTAS Financial Advisor met with her on August 5th to assist in the verification of information for closing the 2025/2026 year. He was pleased with everything that balanced. They discussed any item that might be questioned. He was satisfied with the explanation and back-up. She is now waiting for the auditors to set a date.

Departmental Reports

1. Police Department given by Chief Engle- Chief Ric Engle introduced himself, and stated that he had wanted to be the Police Chief of Whitwell for some time. He gave a little history of himself. The police stats for July, 2026 are as follows: 79 Calls for service, 2 Crashes, 14 Community Assists, 18 Stops, 9 Citations, 5 Warrant Services and 3 Arrest. He said there would be other categories added next month
2. Fire Department given by Chief Davis-The monthly report for July, 2026 is as follows: total calls 13, average response time 7 minutes, average manpower response 7, total hours on scene 18, in-house training was 4 hours. He stated that July was actually a slow month.
3. Library Report- given by Cathy Black- This is for the month of July, 2026. Total Circulation 1,150, READS Online 511, Computer Users 37, Wireless Users 254, New Cards Issued 17, People Count 349, Reference Transactions 12, Inter Library Loan (loaned) 41, Inter Library Loan (borrowed) 3, Programs & Events Sponsored by the library 8, Number reached at programs inside the library 44, Events not sponsored by the library 7, Number reached at programs outside the library 203, Overall total of library patrons with unexpired library cards 683. She discussed the events and programs that they have been doing. Vice-Mayor Dillon mentioned how much he had enjoyed the virtual reality that was brought in previously. Mrs. Black said that she had recently gained more information about that program (Travel Trunks), and would try to start getting it on a regular basis. She also stated that if anyone didn't know, she was working as temporary county library director, and she has split time between offices. She said that Whitwell Library was well staffed and running orderly.
4. Senior Citizens Report-given by Sandy Tennille-The report for the month of July is as follows: served 436 meals, added 4 new people to the Home Delivered route, still looking for a van, needing donated items for the Bingo Bucks Auction, they raised \$620 from the salad luncheon to pay toward trip to the Dolly's Stampede, making a float for Labor Day.
5. Saddle Club-No report given.

Committee/Board/Commission Reports

1. Parks and Recreation-given by Sandy Tennille-She said that she has set up a Wi-Fi contract for 3 years which saved the city a set-up fee. The Park Report is as follows: Labor Day plans are pretty final, but she still needs volunteers, needing donated prizes for Labor Day Bingo, they

received the new Gator as well as a new drag for the ball fields, teams are still scheduling to utilize the fields, plans to purchase 8 more red trash cans, the bathrooms have been updated with a pump to help with flushing, city workers have pressure washed the playground equipment and plans to add more mulch soon, CDBG grant funding application is in process, but most of the grants ask for proof of "in-kind" money that we do not have.

2. Planning Commission Board- The next meeting will be August 25, 2026 at 4:00 pm.
3. Neighborhood Nuisance Board /Ladies about RV's cited to court (have until next court date to comply). Judge extended date, some cleanup and more info-Mr. Cleek stated that the RV campers that the ladies own were sent to court, but are not moving any faster. Judge Raines has extended their time due to they showed pictures that they were cleaning up. Mr. Cleek wants to meet with Judge Raines, and he said that clean- up is great, but still a zoning problem. The property on Spring Street: The family member does not plan to clean up, and he will let the house go back to the mortgage company due to the debt being larger than the house is worth. Mr. Cleek is trying to get the name of the mortgage company so he can contact them. The campers off of Main Street are still in violation of zoning. Mr. Cleek will deliver a second letter to them. The trailer on Michigan is still a problem.

Legal- Not currently

Community Comments-Not currently

Announcements-. The city workshop will be August 27th at 5:00 pm, and the next city meeting will be September 10th at 6:00 pm.

Adjournment- A motion to adjourn was made by Vice-Mayor Dillon, and this motion was seconded by Commissioner Hudson. All Commissioners voted yes. Motion carries.

Mayor

City Recorder