

Town of Farmington
Regular Town Council Meeting
February 23rd, 2026 – 6:00 PM

Open Regular Town Council Meeting:

Farmington's February 23rd, 2026, Regular Town Council Meeting was called to order at 6:00pm

Roll Call:

Council members: Lavon Walser, Rudy Goossen, and Josh Gamez.

Visitors:

Mark & Liz Hellinger, Blanche Rhea, Brian & Diana Oliver, Jason Brausen, Adrian Green, and Brian Westgate

Citizen Comments:

Before Citizen comments started Council member Josh Gamez introduced himself as mayor pro-tem for the meeting since the old mayor, Blanche Rhea, resigned as of the end of January.

Jason Brausen submitted his letter of interest for Council Seat #5. Adrian stated that he would be submitting a letter of interest later at next month's meeting. Adrian wanted to sit in at a meeting before submitting a letter of interest. Adrian asked how much of a commitment it would be to join as a council member. Josh filled him in on monthly commitments that the council needs to be available for and how many hours a month it would include. Council member Lavon Walser asked Jason what he believed are some issues in town that need to be addressed. Jason stated that he thinks the water is an issue and the creeks in town flooding. Council member Rudy Goosen asked Jason what his approach to budgeting would be especially when revenues are limited. Jason stated that he would prioritize problems well. Council member Josh Gamez asked Jason if he was elected, what success would look like at the end of his first year on council. Jason stated that a smooth-running town would be success for him. All of council voted yes to appoint Jason as council seat #5. Jason was sworn in and came forward to join the meeting as council seat #5.

Brian Oliver asked for permission to do a training burn for the firefighters. The burn would be on Gunderson's property in town to get rid of an old trailer on the property. Also, will need to get EPA approval but wanted council approval first to see if it is even a possibility. The property is within town limits. Council member Jason Brausen asked if Brian knew what type of asbestos the trailer had in it. Brian did not know but said that it was all mainly in the roof. Council had no further questions and approved of the burn pending EPA approval.

Approval of the Consent Agenda:

- Check Register from January 13th through February 23rd, 2026, \$36,375.25 including claims of \$25,441.56 and payroll of \$10,933.69.
- Minutes from January 12th, 2026, Regular Town Council Meeting.
- January 2026 Treasurer's Report.

Lavon Walser **MOVED** to approve January 12th, 2026, Regular Town Council meeting consent agenda. Rudy Goossen **seconded the motion, and the motion was carried unanimously.**

Old Business:

Clerk/Treasurer Jamie Erickson presented the new building plans and building permit for the Leonard's. They changed their building plan from building a garage with an apartment inside to building a garage and having a manufactured home put on the property instead. The building permit showed a price of \$3,000 for either a wood deck or a concrete slab. Council questioned the pricing for the deck thinking it did not sound like an accurate dollar amount to build or pour a deck. Brian Oliver looked up a quote for pricing of either deck option and said that \$3,000 was actually an accurate pricing assumption. Council approved of this and had no further questions. Jason Bruasen **MOVED** to approve the Leonard's building permit so that they can move forward. Lavon Walser **seconded the motion, and the motion was carried unanimously.**

Water/sewer rates – Council member Josh did some research and found that there is no legal limit for price increases on water/and sewer rates. The only guidelines to follow are for shut-off rules. Shuts off cannot happen if there is an extreme weather warning, if it will affect the tenant's health, or if a landlord requests it for no accurate reason. The water fund for the town is looking good so Lavon

and Jason both stated that just the monthly sewer rate should be raised 6%. Rudy agreed with Lavon and Jason. Jason Bruasen **MOVED** to raise the sewer rate by 6% starting April 1st. Lavon Walser **seconded the motion, and the motion was carried unanimously.**

New Business:

AC/Heater unit for Community Center – The Library grant to get a new ac/heater unit is complete. Ackerman will be doing the install. The library’s maintenance person is currently getting everything set up and making sure paperwork is complete to do get the install scheduled. He did not see a huge hurry to get it installed because he did not believe that Ackerman needed to be installing the unit in the snow. Ackerman will need access to the inside of the building to complete the install.

Maintenance Comments:

Council member Lavon stated that some new traffic signs have been installed. 15mph signs and park signs for the playground have been installed.

The plow was put on the pickup and tested on Main Street. Everything is working good on it and on the pickup.

Council Comments:

Clerk/Treasurer Comments:

Reminder that Jamie will not be at the March meeting. The meeting will be voice recorded by Council member Lavon and then Jamie will still type up and provide the minutes for the meeting afterwards like normal.

RMSA has new member standards. Everything that used to be advised for claims and insurance coverage purposes is now mandatory. Mainly in making sure that all council members have taken and completed the correct courses and keep up with them over the years. Clerk/Treasurer Jamie will be checking in with all the council members to make sure that everyone is up to RMSA standards.

Mayor’s Comments:

- Council member and mayor pro-tem Josh gave his letter of intent for the mayor position to council. Josh was hoping council would be able to vote on this at the meeting. Council member Rudy asked Josh when a time was that he had to make a difficult decision and did he handle it. Josh stated that He looks and weighs all of the facts presented and makes a decision that way and also leans on colleague’s opinions. Council member Lavon asked Josh how he plans to communicate with fellow council members and the community to achieve positive results. Josh stated that he will be open and honest and that he will listen to everyone’s input and do the right thing for the town. Council member Jason asked Josh what he plans to achieve as mayor. Josh stated that he would like to get more police presence in town from Whitman County. Josh left the meeting so that council could discuss it and make a decision. Lavon and Rudy had no problem with Josh becoming the mayor. Jason agreed with Lavon and Rudy. Josh returned to the meeting and Council let him know that he was voted in as the new mayor. Rudy Goossen **MOVED** to appoint Josh Gamez as the new mayor. Jason Bruasen **seconded the motion, and the motion was carried unanimously.** Josh Gamez was sworn in as mayor for the Town of Farmington.
- Mayor Gamez gave an update about the town attorney – Bishop Law Office. Eric Bishop was deployed for active duty with no notice. Because of this our legal help may be limited for the near future. Stephen Bishop will be filling in on an as needed basis but not sure how available he will be to us.
- A draft ordinance was provided for council to look over for the no parking signs in town. At the March meeting a final ordinance will be provided for council to vote on to put into place for the town.

Jason Brausen **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. Lavon Walser **seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.** The meeting was adjourned at 6:54 pm.

Mayor Josh Gamez

Attest: _____
Jamie Erickson, Clerk-Treasurer

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