



**City of Lorena**  
107-A S. Frontage Road  
Lorena, Texas 76655  
(254) 857-4641 Fax (254) 857-4118

**NOTICE OF REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING**  
**LORENA CITY COUNCIL**  
**MONDAY, JULY 21, 2025 6:30 P.M.**  
**LORENA CITY HALL**  
**107-A S. FRONTAGE ROAD, LORENA TEXAS**

THE PUBLIC WILL BE ABLE TO JOIN THE MEETING BY VIDEOCONFERENCE  
AT THE FOLLOWING LINK <https://meet.goto.com/548438133>  
The City Council Meeting will be opened to the public.

Questions and comments on items listed on the agenda may be emailed no later than  
NOON on the day of the meeting to the City Secretary Monica Hendrix via email to [mhendrix@lorenatx.gov](mailto:mhendrix@lorenatx.gov)

**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order/Roll Call.**

Mayor Walizer called the regular council meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Council members present were Mayor Russell Walizer, Mayor Pro tem Kelly Yarbrough, Jason Blanek, Carla Pendergraft, Emily McKenzie and Adam Montemayor.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance.**

Mayor Walizer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Public Comments.**

*At this time any person with business before the Council not scheduled on the agenda may speak to the Council. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes, and this time is not transferable. Under the Texas Open Meetings Act, the Council is prohibited from discussing, responding, or acting on any comments or items that have not been properly posted on the agenda. This forum is limited to a total of 30 minutes.*

Khara Tiger, 3980 Old Lorena Road spoke and stated that prior to this meeting she was given vague information regarding our coffee cup that their family displays on private property. She is concerned about a Facebook comment posted by a local official. She would like the council to review the comments made and says that most comments were either false or misleading and also admitted that they held an official position here in the City of Lorena. Tiger says the comments were inappropriate and wanted to bring them to the council's attention. Tiger says they are working on two sign petitions in favor of the coffee cup sign to keep it where it stands.

**4. Approval of Minutes:**

**a. June 16, 2025 Regular Meeting**

Motion: Carla Pendergraft moved to approve the June 16th meeting minutes.

Second: Jason Blanek

For: Jason Blanek, Carla Pendergraft, Kelly Yarbrough, Emily McKenzie and Adam Montemayor.

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Against: None  
Motion carried 5-0

**5. Committee and Corporation Reports:**

**a. Lorena Planning and Zoning Commission**

Kevin Neal reported the P&Z met to hear the Conditional Use Permit and made the recommendation to move forward with the CUP with no parking restrictions.

**b. Lorena Economic Development Corporation**

Kelly Yarbrough reported that EDC met and approved their budget and completed the last portion of the Strategic Plan workshop. There will be no meeting in August.

**6. Public Hearing:** Mayor Walizer opened the public hearing at 6:38 p.m.

**Conduct a Public Hearing for a request from Hearth and Hue (Karen Morgan, applicant), for a Conditional Use Permit for a Short-Term Rental located within the Old Town zoning district at 101 E. Center Street, and being described as Lorena OT Lot A1 A2 A3, Block 5 Acres .0517, City of Lorena, McLennan County, Texas located on the Southeast Corner of Center Street and S. McBrayer Street.**

Karen Morgan 139 Humble Street, Lorena Texas spoke and thanked everyone for their time and consideration regarding the Conditional Use Permit. It has been her dream of opening an art school and she has heard from so many parents and community members who are excited about the potential of this creative space. Morgan wanted to express that she and her husband felt incredibly supported by the community and neighbors who have reached out with encouragement. Morgan also wanted to thank the Planning and Zoning Commission for their thoughtful review and recommendation to move forward with CUP.

City Manager Kevin Neal gave the staff report to the council and informed the council that Mrs. Morgan brought some very good information to the planning and zoning meeting the day of the meeting and that was the first opportunity that staff had to review that information. Since that meeting staff has gone back and reviewed the additional information and have amended our recommendations to the council. Staff is recommending approval of CUP with the provision that the applicant construct a standard residential driveway of all weather material as described in article 7 of the parking requirements of the Lorena zoning code to provide additional parking for the Conditional Use Permit. This recommendation is based on section 3.2.1 of the zoning code which states in granting any conditional use permit the city council may impose special conditions as necessary to ensure that the proposed use will conform to the requirements of the section. Neal says parking requirements are included in the list of conditions in this section of the code.

Karen Morgan spoke again and stated this is her first hearing of the new recommendation. During the last meeting she was told she could move forward with no parking requirements. Morgan did point out to the council that the property was platted prior to 1900 and should be exempt for the area and height regulations. Morgan also pointed out that her building has a zero-lot line parcel which means that she does not own or control any off-street parking.

Bruce Bowman spoke and says the lot behind the building which is about 25 feet belongs to him.

Allison Vrana spoke and asked why the staff report was changed. Vrana says that this is the second time that a staff report has been changed when Planning and Zoning has made a recommendation to the city council. Vrana asked to either send it back to P&Z or move forward with the P&Z recommendation. Vrana also said that there shouldn't even be a discussion about the parking due to section 6.13.3.

Linda Graves, 106 E. Center Street, spoke and says that her building is the same, that she only owns the building. Graves is in support of the Conditional Use Permit and excited to add new businesses to the Old Town area. Graves is excited to welcome Karen Morgan and her business.

**PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED:** The public hearing closed at 6:55 p.m.

**7. Discussion and possible action on the recommendation from the Lorena Planning and Zoning Commission on a request for a Conditional Use Permit for a Short-Term Rental located within the Old Town zoning district at 101 E. Center Street.**

City Manager Kevin Neal spoke and stated that staff got this one wrong, and that in light of what Mr. Bowman informed council tonight the staff is recommending moving forward with the Conditional Use Permit without stipulations for parking. After questions to Mrs. Morgan from the council and discussion about parking in the downtown area a motion was made to approve the recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission to approve the CUP with no parking restrictions.

Motion: Kelly Yarbrough moved to approve the CUP as presented by the Planning and Zoning.

Second: Emily McKenzie

For: Jason Blanek, Carla Pendergraft, Kelly Yarbrough, Emily McKenzie and Adam Montemayor.

Against: None

Motion carried 5-0

**8. Discussion and possible action appointing Michael Murphy to the Lorena Planning and Zoning Commission for a two-year term expiring June 2027.**

Michael Murphy was present and informed council he moved to Lorena two years ago to be closer to his kids. He spent 30 years in law enforcement and before that he did construction.

Motion: Jason Blanek moved to appoint Michael Murphy to the P&Z for a two-year term expiring in June 2027.

Second: Emily McKenzie

For: Jason Blanek, Carla Pendergraft, Kelly Yarbrough, Emily McKenzie and Adam Montemayor.

Against: None

Motion carried 5-0

**9. Presentation of quarterly Cash and Investments and Budget reports as of June 30, 2025.**

City Manager Kevin Neal presented the reports in Finance Officer Linda Klump's absence. Klump to a tumble and broke her finger and will be out recovering a few days.

Neal offered to answer any questions the council may have on the budget reports or quarterly cash and investments report. Emily McKenzie pointed out that it is nice to see the TIRZ is not in the negative and funding itself.

**10. Discussion and possible action authorizing the City Manager to purchase a new security system at Lorena City Hall from Extraco Technologies.**

Kevin Neal informed council the City Hall security camera system is outdated and limited (by the server capacity) in storage. Extraco Technology has provided two quotes to update the camera system with a web hosted service for 3 and 5-year options. Both quotes would provide an expanded coverage area for security over the current system. The difference in the quotes would be the difference in a 3 versus 5-year license. The 3-year purchase cost would be \$45,455 and the 5-year purchase cost would be \$52,855.

The City's Municipal Court operates in the City Hall including the front reception area for day-to-day customer service, a designated office for the Court Judge, and the use of Council chambers for court proceedings. Our Municipal Court collects citation payments which include a portion for Court Security. The City has a Court Security Fund Balance of approximately \$80,700 and has collected approximately \$6,200 so far in FY 2025. Court Security Fund could be utilized to pay a portion of the cost of the system (based on the court's utilization of City Hall) with the remainder to be funded by the Utility Fund (based on the use of the remaining portion of City Hall). City Staff recommends the purchase of a 5-year license for a City Hall camera security system at the cost of \$52,855 to be funded

66.7% by Court Security Fund (\$35,255), 22.2% by the Utility Fund (\$11,733) and 11.1% by the Sanitation Fund (\$5,867). Emily McKenzie had questions about the billing and Kevin Neal answered her questions. Neal says this is an unbudgeted item but will be in the audited version of the budget, almost like a budget amendment. Kelly Yarbrough questioned if the city was dipping into savings to make the purchase and Neal says no that these are funds that are available for use. Emily McKenzie questioned why the purchase is divided three ways and Neal explained.

Motion: Emily McKenzie moved to authorize the City Manager to purchase a new security system at Lorena City Hall from Extraco Technologies.

Second: Adam Montemayor

For: Jason Blanek, Carla Pendergraft, Kelly Yarbrough, Emily McKenzie and Adam Montemayor.

Against: None

Motion carried 5-0

**11. Discussion and possible action to authorize the City Manager to submit a membership application to the Central Texas Water Alliance.**

Motion: Kelly Yarbrough moved to authorize the membership application to the Central Texas Water Alliance.

Second: Carla Pendergraft.

For: Jason Blanek, Carla Pendergraft, Kelly Yarbrough, Emily McKenzie and Adam Montemayor.

Against: None

Motion carried 5-0

**12. Police Department Report**

**a. Activity report / calls for service.**

Police Chief Scott Holt gave the report.

**13. City Manager Report.**

**a. H.B. 1522 as it relates to the Texas Open Meetings Act.**

Kevin Neal informed council that this new bill will require the posting of agendas to be 3 business days prior to any open meeting.

**14. Future Agenda Items.**

Called meeting for tax rate and budget workshop on August 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

Carla Pendergraft would like to have a hotel tax ordinance on a future agenda.

Jason Blanek would like to have a workshop with City Council, Planning and Zoning and Economic Development Commissions

**15. Adjourn**

Due to no further business the meeting adjourned 7:54 p.m.

These minutes were approved on this 18<sup>th</sup> day of August 2025.

Russel Walizer  
Russel Walizer, Mayor

ATTEST:

Monica Hendrix  
Monica Hendrix, City Secretary

