

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FRIENDSWOOD
August 25, 2025**

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FRIENDSWOOD MET IN A SPECIAL MEETING ON MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025, AT 5:30 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, FRIENDSWOOD CITY HALL, LOCATED AT 910 S. FRIENDSWOOD DRIVE, FRIENDSWOOD, TEXAS, WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS PRESENT CONSTITUTING A QUORUM:

John Ellisor	Mayor Pro Tem
Sally Branson	Councilmember
Trish Hanks	Councilmember
Robert J. Griffon	Councilmember
Joe Matranga	Councilmember
Michael P. Ross	Councilmember
Mike Foreman	Mayor
Morad Kabiri	City Manager
Karen Horner	City Attorney
Raquel Martinez	City Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Foreman called the meeting to order with a quorum present at 5:30 P.M. All members were present.

2. INVOCATION

The invocation was led by Pastor Mike Cervantes of New Hope Church Friendswood.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – United States and State of Texas

Mayor Foreman led the Pledge of Allegiance of the United States and the Pledge to the State of Texas.

4. COUNCIL COMMENTS AND REPORTS

Mayor Foreman opened the comments sharing over his tour with Councilmember Matanga, of the Galveston County Central Elections Facility in Texas City, praising their meticulous ballot-counting process. Mayor Pro Tem Ellisor shared that a former Friendswood Volunteer Fire Department member approached him over the locked onsite defibrillators at city facilities. He passed the information to the City Manager and praised staff for quickly ensuring the onsite defibrillators are now easily accessible. Councilmember Branson thanked the Mayor and Councilmember Hanks for attending the Region 14 summer meeting at the Space Cowboys game. She additionally invited everyone to the Labor Day Ice Cream Social at the Historic Perry House from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Councilmember Matranga recognized Parks Employee Mitchell Blanchard for rescuing a fledgling bird out in the sun on a sidewalk at Lake Friendswood. He relayed Mr. Blanchard jumped in without knowing a council member was watching and commended his response. Councilmember Ross noted the most common concern he hears from residents is speeding in neighborhoods. He reminded citizens that 20 mph limits are designed to protect children, pets, and even fledgling birds. He urged everyone to slow down.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Foreman announced one citizen had signed up to provide a public comment before Council.

Mr. Don Johnson introduced himself as a Myrtlewood resident living across from the new detention basin project. He shared of his involvement to get the project moving to reduce flooding risk. He noted there were concerns about delays, but confirmed partners reached agreement and the project will continue.

6. WORK SESSION TOPICS

A. Receive an update concerning the 2025 State Legislative Session.

City Attorney Karen Horner opened the item with a presentation summarizing the outcomes of the 89th Regular Legislative Session and Special Sessions. Highlights were presented as follows:

Council's Legislative Priorities

Ms. Horner reminded Council of Resolution R2024-24, which set out Friendswood's legislative stance.

Support

- Support legislation that preserves local control, promotes the general interests of the City's residents, and enhances the City of Friendswood's ability to solve problems and improve the quality of life for its residents;
- Support legislation that allows the City of Friendswood to set its budget and levy its taxes in accordance with the needs of Friendswood's residents;
- Support state-funded and local-option funding choices for economic development purposes;
- Support legislation that increases street maintenance sales tax flexibility;
- Support legislation that allows alternate methods of publications of legal notices;
- Support legislation that protects the City and its citizens in emergency situations; and
- Support legislation that increases the competitive bidding threshold to account for increased costs to cities.

Oppose

- Oppose legislation that decreases the authority of home-rule cities;
- Oppose unfunded state mandates;
- Oppose legislation that preempts or erodes the authority of city government and its citizens or is detrimental to the City's ability to pursue citizen priorities or respond to local citizen concerns;
- Oppose legislation that changes the current property or sales tax systems as well as other income-producing structures in a manner that would cause the City of Friendswood to lose revenue or the ability to raise revenue;
- Oppose legislation that would further lower or expand the appraisal cap;
- Oppose legislation that would preempt or erode municipal franchise fee authority;
- Oppose preemptive legislation that either limits the scope of existing authority or that would weaken the City of Friendswood's ability to sustain the land use character of the City;
- Oppose legislation that would restrict the use of economic development tools available to local governments such as tax abatement, tax increment reinvestment zones and Chapter 380 agreements; and
- Oppose legislation that erodes municipal governmental/official immunity.

TML Legislative Program Successes

Ms. Horner noted that the Texas Municipal League (TML) considered and supported the following six resolutions submitted by the City, which resolutions became part of the TML legislative program:

1. **(PASSED) Emergency generators (facilities constructed after September 1, 2026)**
2. (DID NOT PASS) Street maintenance sales tax
3. (DID NOT PASS) Speed limits in residential districts
4. (DID NOT PASS) Advisory committee's personal information
5. **(PASSED) Notice for zoning map amendments**
6. (DID NOT PASS) Relocation assistance Ms. Horner framed this as a legislative win for Friendswood, showing the city's influence reaching beyond local government.

Council Resolutions Against Specific Bills

Ms. Horner recalled Council passing Resolutions R2025-15 and R2025-19 and how they measured against specific bills:

- **Opposing S.B. 2722 / H.B. 5177:** Regarding the allocation of toll road revenue to the City of Houston.
- **Opposition to H.B. 3818:** Regarding deferring compliance with requirement to reduce the amount of groundwater being pumped for a period of 5 years.
- **Opposition to H.B. 1643:** Regarding the removal of a large portion of Harris County from groundwater/subsidence regulations.

First Special Session (began July 21) and Second Special Session (began August 15)

Ms. Horner highlighted key issues debated in the special sessions as follows:

LAND USE	• H.B. 24 – Zoning Process Changes • H.B. 2025 – Plats & Tax Receipts • H.B. 2464 – Home-Based Businesses • H.B. 2559 – Development Moratoria • H.B. 2844 – Mobile Food Vendor Regulation • H.B. 4163 – Agricultural Operations Mowing ROW • H.B. 4506 – Electronic Zoning Change Notice • S.B. 15 – Single-Family Residential • S.B. 783 – Building Material Exceptions • S.B. 785 – Manufactured Homes • S.B. 1035 – Protection of Agricultural Operations • S.B. 1106 – Posting SAP and PID Information • S.B. 1252 & S.B. 1202 – Residential Energy Backup Systems • S.B. 1883 – Impact Fees • S.B. 1948 – Agricultural Facility Preemption • S.B. 2835 – Single Stairway Regulations • H.B. 4753 – Certificate of Occupancy Substitute • S.B. 541 – Cottage Food Production • S.B. 599 – Regulation of Child-Care Facilities
PUBLIC SAFETY/EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	• H.B. 33 – Uvalde Strong • H.B. 1261 – Disposition of Abandoned Property • H.B. 3595 – Assisted Living Facilities • H.B. 5238 – Disrupting a Meeting • S.B. 1261 – Passing Animal Control Vehicle

	• H.B. 3425 – Disclosure of Public Servant Info
PROPERTY TAX	• H.B. 9 & H.J.R. 1 – Personal Property Tax • H.B. 30 – Property Taxes After a Disaster • S.B. 1453 – Debt Service Tax Rate Calculation
OPEN GOVERNMENT	• H.B. 1522 – Open Meetings Notice • H.B. 3112 – Exception for Cyber Security for Critical Infrastructure • H.B. 4214 – Annual Notification to AG for PIA • H.B. 1893 – License Plate Numbers • H.B. 4219 – Failure to Respond to a PIR • S.B. 765 – Fraud Detection Information • H.B. 4310 – Special Right of Access • S.B. 1062 – Digital Newspapers • S.B. 2145 – TIRZ Telecommunication Meeting
WATER/SEWER	• H.B. 685 – Municipal Rate Discrimination • H.B. 5057 – Exclusive Contracts for Solid Waste
ELECTIONS	• H.B. 506 – Ballot Propositions and Petitions • S.B. 1025 – Tax Elections • H.B. 640 – City Secretary's Office Hours • H.B. 2253 – Cancellation of Bond Election
PERSONNEL	• H.B. 331 – Disease Presumption • H.B. 762 & S.B. 2237 – Severance Pay • H.B. 3161 – TMRS Retirement • H.B. 4144 – Supplemental Income Benefits
PURCHASING/FINANCE	• H.B. 223 – Lobbying Procurement • S.B. 1173 – Competitive Bidding Threshold • H.B. 103 – Bonds and Tax Database • H.B. 3526 – Bond Obligations Database • H.B. 1950 – Municipal Court Fees • H.B. 149 & S.B. 1964 – Artificial Intelligence • H.B. 3512 – Artificial Intelligence Training • H.B. 3005 – City Construction Contracts • H.B. 1922 – Construction Liability Claims • S.B. 687 – Land Surveyor Indemnity • H.B. 3611 – Civil Penalty for Unauthorized Signs
MUNICIPAL COURT	• S.B. 296 – Motorcycle Safety Course Dismissals • S.B. 304 – Code Enforcement • S.B. 1537 – Municipal Court Interpreters
EXPENDITURE LIMITS/TAX RATE	• H.B. 73 – Expenditure Limit (Left Pending in Committee) • H.B. 46 – Expenditure Limit (Left Pending in Committee) • H.B. 17 – Truth-in-Taxation (Placed on Major State Calendar) • S.B. 10 – Voter Approval Rate (Placed on Major State Calendar)

Ms. Horner relayed the Senate passed nearly everything, but the House did not. She explained a new session started the same day with about 22 items. Most items do not affect the city, but she will keep Council updated on any changes.

7. MUNICIPAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26

A. Conduct a public hearing regarding the Proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Municipal Budget for the City of Friendswood.

At 5:58 P.M., Mayor Foreman opened the public hearing and asked staff to summarize the subject matter.

Finance Director Rhonda Boskas presented a high-level overview of the proposed FY 2025–26 budget and highlighted changes since the August 4, 2025, presentation, focusing first on the General Fund. The proposed tax rate was reduced from \$0.526746 to \$0.514172, which is about 1.3¢ above the no-new-revenue rate. General Fund revenues were projected at \$45.9 million. Property tax revenue decreased by \$718,000 due to the lower rate, while sales tax revenue increased by \$248,000 after reviewing June’s allocation. The City would also use \$500,000 of unassigned fund balance for deferred maintenance.

Expenditures in the General Fund increased by \$30,000 for a social media post boost. Total proposed revenues across all funds were \$116.8 million. Ms. Boskas compared the proposed tax rate to the no-new-revenue and voter-approval rates and provided an example: a \$460,000 home would see about \$48 more annually, or \$3.99 monthly. She also listed funded “forces at work” totaling \$490,000 and reviewed funded decision packages of \$2.8 million. Total expenditures across all funds were also \$116.8 million.

Ms. Boskas then moved to the Water and Sewer Fund with projected revenues of \$23.5 million, primarily from utility fees. Proposed expenses in this fund were also \$23.5 million. She listed \$2.4 million in funded “forces at work” and noted funded decision packages totaling \$398,000.

Councilmember Matranga remarked that although the presentation moved quickly, Council had thoroughly reviewed the budget through workshops and individual meetings. Councilmember Ross asked about the \$30,000 for social media post boost. Staff explained it was a decision package to improve public communication, especially during emergencies. Not all funds might be spent to avoid oversaturation. Ms. Boskas ended the presentation on the note that Council could adopt the budget that evening or wait until the September 8, 2025, meeting when the tax rate hearing and adoption would also be held.

Mayor Foreman announced no citizen had signed up to speak on the item.

At 6:08 P.M., Mayor Foreman closed the public hearing.

B. Discuss and take action concerning the City of Friendswood's Proposed FY2025-26 Municipal Budget.

City Manager Morad Kabiri introduced the item noting that Council could vote on the budget that evening. However, he explained the tax rate could not be adopted until September 8, after the public hearing. Mr. Kabiri relayed he was comfortable moving forward since little feedback from Council had been received but emphasized that both votes were important.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ellisor and seconded by Councilmember Branson to adopt the proposed budget for FY2025-2026, as revised and presented including revenue projections of \$116,810,629 and expenditure appropriations totaling \$116,810,629. However, discussion ensued prior to the vote.

Councilmember Griffon thanked Finance Director Rhonda Bloskas and staff for working with Council on the budget. He had suggested recognizing more sales tax revenue and reducing ad valorem taxes for residents. He praised staff for looking into it and lowering the rate. He acknowledged it is harder to rely on projected sales taxes than property taxes, but thanked staff for taking that step. Councilmember Matranga explained for the audience that the original budget was higher, as noted. He said staff and Council worked together, sharpening pencils and finding opportunities like sales tax adjustments. He praised the result of keeping the tax rate the same as the current cycle. He thanked everyone involved, saying the effort is well appreciated by Friendswood residents.

The vote for the motion on the table was as follows:

Ayes: Mayor Mike Foreman, Mayor Pro Tem John Ellisor, Councilmember Sally Branson, Councilmember Trish Hanks, Councilmember Robert J. Griffon, and Councilmember Joe Matranga

Nays: Councilmember Michael P. Ross

The item passed.

C. Consider ratifying the property tax increase reflected in the City of Friendswood's Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.

City Manager Morad Kabiri briefly relayed that the no new revenue rate is 50.112 cents. As this tax rate is above the no new revenue rate, that is why this action item is required for Council.

A motion was made by Councilmember Griffon and seconded by Councilmember Branson ratifying the property tax increase reflected in the City of Friendswood's Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. However, discussion ensued prior to the vote.

As Councilmember Ross ran on a no net revenue platform, he stated he could not in good conscience vote for a tax increase or revenue increase based on taxes. He said staff did a wonderful job reviewing possible cuts and addressing difficult "forces at work." He noted rising costs, like fire trucks, were his pet peeve. He looked forward to working with legislators and others to find ways to reduce costs next year. Mr. Kabiri noted such items cannot be funded in a single year's operating budget, and the city cannot refuse needed equipment. Furthermore, procurement is limited by the market. Mr. Kabiri relayed that while understood the concern, funding options are constrained.

The vote for the motion on the table was the following:

Ayes: Mayor Mike Foreman, Mayor Pro Tem John Ellisor, Councilmember Sally Branson, Councilmember Trish Hanks, Councilmember Robert J. Griffon, and Councilmember Joe Matranga

Nays: Councilmember Michael P. Ross

The item passed.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilmember Branson and seconded by Councilmember Matranga to approve Consent Agenda Items 8.A. through 8.L. The vote was the following:

Ayes: Mayor Mike Foreman, Mayor Pro Tem John Ellisor, Councilmember Sally Branson, Councilmember Trish Hanks, Councilmember Robert J. Griffon, Councilmember Joe Matranga, and Councilmember Michael P. Ross

Nays: None

The Consent Agenda passed unanimously.

- A. Consider a resolution approving an Agreement for Temporary Road Closure of state right-of-way with the State of Texas, through the Texas Department of Transportation, for the Friendswood High School Homecoming Parade on FM 518.**
- B. Consider approving Change Order No. 2 for the Utility Relocates at the Clear Creek Utility Bridge Project.**
- C. Consider authorizing the First Amendment to the Professional Services Agreement with HDR Engineering, Inc., for the Blackhawk Boulevard Reconstruction Phase II Repackage C Project.**
- D. Consider authorizing an Interlocal Agreement with Tarrant County for cooperative purchasing.**
- E. Consider authorizing an Interlocal Agreement with Galveston County Consolidated Drainage District for general emergency preparedness.**
- F. Consider ratifying and approving the purchase of a stock aerial ladder truck from Siddons Martin Emergency Group, LLC, through the Houston-Galveston Area Council, for the Friendswood Volunteer Fire Department, Inc., in lieu of the custom-order ladder fire truck previously approved by the City Council if the build of the stock aerial ladder truck commences first.**
- G. Consider authorizing an Urban Planning Services Agreement with Ardurra Group, Inc. (RFP No. 2025-07) to update the City of Friendswood Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance, and Grant Administration.**
- H. Consider approving the purchase of one (1) service vehicle for the Parks and Recreation Department from Grapevine Dodge Chrysler Jeep through the Texas Local Government Purchasing Cooperative (Buyboard).**
- I. Consider approving a Construction Contract with Construction Masters of Houston, Inc., for the Council Chamber Renovation Project through the Harris County Department of Education Choice Partners Cooperative Contract No. 24/018MR-03.**

- J. Consider approving a contract between the Friendswood Downtown Economic Development Corporation and Bay Area Signs and Electrical, LLC, for wayfinding and gateway signage related to the Downtown Improvement Plan.
- K. Consider approving the minutes of the City Council Special Meeting held on July 12, 2025.
- L. Consider approving the minutes of the City Council Special Meeting held on August 13, 2025.

9. ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business to discuss, Mayor Foreman adjourned the August 25, 2025, City Council Special Meeting at 6:18 P.M.

Attest:


Raquel Martinez, City Secretary




Mike Foreman, Mayor