

MEETING MINUTES OF 6/15/2026

Posted: June 11, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.

Notice of Public Meeting

Washington Parish Council
Regular Meeting
Washington Parish Courthouse
908 Washington Street, Franklinton, Louisiana 70438
Courtroom Three
Monday, June 15, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

AGENDA:

Item No. 1: Call to Order: Council Chairman McMasters called the meeting to order.

Item No. 2: Invocation: The invocation was led by Councilwoman Wagner.

Item No. 3: Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge was led by Councilman Branch.

Item No. 4: Roll call: Council Clerk, Jesse Applewhite called the roll. Present were Shawn Rice, Kim Wagner, Clark Harry, Steven Branch, Reginald McMasters, Carley King. Joe Culpepper was absent.

Item No. 5: Approval of Minutes: June 1, 2026, Regular Parish Council Meeting.

Council Chairman McMasters: Would anyone from the public like to come forward and speak before the Council votes to approve the minutes? *No one came forward.*

Councilwoman Wagner: As no one has come forward, I make a motion to approve the minutes for the June 1, 2026, Regular Council Meeting.

Councilman King: Second.

Council Chairman McMasters: I have a motion by Councilwoman Wagner and a second by Councilman King.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (6) Rice, Wagner, Harry, Branch, McMasters, King

NAYS: ()

ABSTAIN: ()

ABSENT: (1) Culpepper

Item No. 6: Sonnet Ireland: Washington Parish Library Systems.

Sonnet spoke about the recent passing of Ms. Bobby Jones who worked at the Washington Parish Library for 43 years.

President Ryan Seal gave recognition to Ms. Bobby Jones and the positive impacts she left on the community.

Sonnet spoke of recent events happening at the libraries in Washington Parish and gave some statistics on some of the resources the library offers, such as computer usage, wireless sessions, hotspot check outs, and e-audiobooks.

Item No. 7: Ashley Thomas and Tab Seals: Washington Parish Watermelon Festival.

Ashley Thomas, Director of the Washington Parish Watermelon Festival, spoke about the festival and the many activities and entertainment that are being planned.

Tab Seals who is the director of the Washington Parish Watermelon Festival Car Show described the many different types of vehicles that will be a part of the show this year. He announced that celebrity judges, Ryan Evans and Shannon Aikau with Counts Kustoms will be judging this year's entries. He invited everyone to come out and enjoy the festival on July 11, 2026.

Item No. 8: Ordinance No. 26-789: Introduce an Ordinance Establishing "No-Thru Truck Routes" on Certain Parish Roads as per Ordinance No. 13-577.

Councilman McMasters: This is an introduction only and will be discussed at the next regular meeting.

Item No. 9: Resolution No. 26-1499: Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the Acquisition of Surplus Property Through the Louisiana Property Assistance Agency Preference Buyers Program for Emergency Response and Public Safety Purposes.

Director of Homeland Security Bobbi Jo Breland: This Resolution is for surplus travel trailers that are available for the parish to purchase. It will be used for those first responders, public safety officials, and emergency operation center officials that must stay overnight at our EOC. At present, we do not have overnight bunking or shower facilities.

Council Chairman McMasters: Would anyone like to come forward and speak before the Council votes? *No one came forward.*

Councilman Rice: As no one has come forward, I make a motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-1499.

Councilman Branch: Second.

Council Chairman McMasters: I have a motion by Councilman Rice and a second by Councilman Branch.

Roll call of the vote as follows:

YEAS: (6) Rice, Wagner, Harry, Branch, McMasters, King

NAYS: ()

ABSTAIN: ()

ABSENT: (1) Culpepper

Item No. 10: Resolution No. 26-1500: Adopt a Resolution Selecting the Official Journal for Washington Parish Government for the Period of July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027.

Director of Finance/Personnel Lacy Buris: Each year we must adopt a resolution to select our Official Journal. We reached out for proposals and received one which was the Era Leader.

Council Chairman McMasters: Would anyone from the public like to come forward and speak before the Council votes? *No one came forward.*

Councilman Branch: As no one has come forward, I make a motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-1500.

Councilwoman Wagner: Second.

Council Chairman McMasters: I have a motion by Councilman Branch and a second by Councilwoman Wagner.

Roll call of the vote as follows:

YEAS: (6) Rice, Wagner, Harry, Branch, McMasters, King

NAYS: ()

ABSTAIN: ()

ABSENT: (1) Culpepper

Item No. 11: Resolution No. 26-1501: Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the Parish President to Execute a Contract with KTS Construction, LLC for the Angie Library Renovation Project.

Sonnet Ireland with the Washington Parish Library Systems: In 2017, the Washington Parish Library Board of Directors wanted to build a library in Angie. We purchased what was previously Boyd Soda Shop in December of 2022 and would like to renovate for the purpose of the new library.

Council Chairman McMasters: Would anyone from the public like to come forward and speak before the Council votes? *No one came forward.*

Councilwoman Wagner: As no one has come forward, I make a motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-1501.

Councilman Branch: Second.

Council Chairman McMasters: I have a motion by Councilwoman Wagner and a second by Councilman Branch.

Roll call of the vote as follows:

YEAS: (6) Rice, Wagner, Harry, Branch, McMasters, King

NAYS: ()

ABSTAIN: ()

ABSENT: (1) Culpepper

Item No. 12: Resolution No. 26-1502: Adopt a Resolution to Appoint Abigail Kemp to the Washington Parish Library Board of Control.

Council Chairman McMasters: This Resolution was approved to be brought before the full Council at the Personnel Committee meeting on June 1, 2026. Would anyone from the public like to come forward and speak before the Council votes? *No one came forward.*

Councilman Branch: As no one has come forward, I make a motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-1502.

Councilwoman Wagner: Second.

Council Chairman McMasters: I have a motion by Councilman Branch and a second by Councilwoman Wagner.

Roll call of the vote as follows:

YEAS: (6) Rice, Wagner, Harry, Branch, McMasters, King

NAYS: ()

ABSTAIN: ()

ABSENT: (1) Culpepper

Item No. 13: Resolution No. 26-1503: Adopt a Resolution Appointing Members to Serve on the 22nd Judicial District Children and Youth Planning Board Representing Washington Parish.

Council Chairman McMasters: This Resolution was approved to be brought before the full Council at the Personnel Committee meeting on June 1, 2026.

President Seal read the names of the recommended appointed members. These were David Merlin Duke, William Arata, Anne Buckalew-Culpepper, and Leslie Susan Pittman.

Council Chairman McMasters: Would anyone from the public like to come forward and speak before the Council votes? *No one came forward.*

Councilwoman Wagner: As no one has come forward, I make a motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-1503.

Councilman King: Second.

Council Chairman McMasters: I have a motion by Councilwoman Wagner and a second by Councilman King.

Roll call of the vote as follows:

YEAS: (6) Rice, Wagner, Harry, Branch, McMasters, King

NAYS: ()

ABSTAIN: ()

ABSENT: (1) Culpepper

Item No. 14: Resolution No. 26-1504: Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the Parish President to Execute an Engagement Letter with Taylor Porter.

Parish Attorney Matt Garver: This is an authorization to allow the Parish President to engage the law firm of Taylor Porter to do a review of our solar ordinance. Weve had some questions about doing some updates. There are some issues that maybe weren't considered the first go around like disposing of batteries. We are looking to create a maximum of acreage or number of projects in the parish. Taylor Porter was originally engaged some years ago when the ordinance was originally created. They have an environmental section within their firm that provides useful advice. This allows us to engage them on an hourly rate basis to make recommendations.

Council Chairman McMasters: Would anyone from the public like to come forward and speak before the Council votes?

D'Ann Davis: How would this change affect the projects already in motion?

Matt Garver expressed that these questions should be able to be answered once the recommendation from the law firm is received.

Council Chairman McMasters: Would anyone else from the public like to come forward and speak before the Council votes? *No one came forward.*

Councilman King: As no one has come forward, I make a motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-1504.

Councilman Harry: Second.

Council Chairman McMasters: I have a motion by Councilman King and a second by Councilman Harry.

Roll call of the vote as follows:

YEAS: (6) Rice, Wagner, Harry, Branch, McMasters, King

NAYS: ()

ABSTAIN: ()

ABSENT: (1) Culpepper

Council Chairman McMasters: At this time, I ask for a motion to amend the agenda to add Item No. 14a., Resolution No. 26-1505. Would anyone from the public like to come forward before the Council votes to amend the agenda? *No one came forward.*

Councilwoman Wagner: As no one has come forward, I make a motion to amend the agenda to add Item No. 14a.

Councilman King: Second.

Council Chairman McMasters: I have a motion by Councilwoman Wagner and a second by Councilman King.

Roll call of the vote as follows:

YEAS: (6) Rice, Wagner, Harry, Branch, McMasters, King

NAYS: ()

ABSTAIN: ()

ABSENT: (1) Culpepper

Item No. 14a: Resolution No. 26-1505: Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the Parish President to Execute Documents Related to FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Project DR-4577-0016-LA.

Bobbi Jo: This is funding allocated to Washington Parish to design and construct a dual-use hurricane safe room that will help protect the emergency center operation employees, first responders, public safety officials that are called to duty during emergency events. We plan to start in January 2027.

Council Chairman McMasters: Would anyone from the public like to come forward and speak before the Council votes? *No one came forward.*

Councilwoman Wagner: As no one has come forward, I make a motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-1505.

Councilman King: Second.

Council Chairman McMasters: I have a motion by Councilwoman Wagner and a second by Councilman King.

Roll call of the vote as follows:

YEAS: (6) Rice, Wagner, Harry, Branch, McMasters, King

NAYS: ()

ABSTAIN: ()

ABSENT: (1) Culpepper

Item No. 15: Public Participation:

Sheriff Jason Smith gave an update on the jail and the issue of overcrowding. He spoke of the summer camp designed for the kids in Washington Parish that is being held this month. Smith also informed that they will now recognize the first Certified Emergency Telecommunicators program to allow students in Washington Parish high school students to be able to take the course and obtain their certification.

Director of Washington Parish Economic Development D'Ann Davis gave some updates on the recent events which include establishing a 501c3 arm of the Economic Development Foundation to help us apply for grants. She explained that she has reached out to Washington Parish, Town of Franklinton, and City of Bogalusa looking for the top five critical infrastructure challenges for their specific municipalities and divisions.

John Seal with the Fire Protection Board of Directors, District 1 spoke about the concerns the board has with the proposed solar projects.

Councilman McMasters: Would anyone else like to come forward and speak before the Council votes to close public participation? *No one came forward.*

Councilman King: As no one has come forward, I make a motion to close public participation.

Councilman Branch: Second.

Council Chairman McMasters: I have a motion by Councilman King and a second by Councilman Branch.

Roll call of the vote as follows:

YEAS: (6) Rice, Wagner, Harry, Branch, McMasters, King

NAYS: ()

ABSTAIN: ()

ABSENT: (1) Culpepper

Item No. 16: President's Report:

Director of Finance/Personnel Lacy Buris: I gave each of you a financial report through the end of May for our Major Funds. As of May, we were 42% through the year. Our revenues were 37.69% of budget, and our expenses were only 28.9% of budget. At the end of May we had a fund balance of \$20,127,303, and of that, \$1.4 million was in our general fund, which is unrestricted and the rest is dedicated funds.

Director of Public Works Alex Sumrall: I have a report from the Permit Office. From January 2026 until current, there have been 965 permits issued including electrical, plumbing, and 53 of those were for new constructions. Kelvin Brown's crew picked up 167 bags of trash on 20 roads and installed 25 signs on 19 roads. We are also continuing to contract our in-house and overlay projects throughout the parish.

Parish President Ryan Seal thanked Councilman Branch for cooking lunch for the staff recently. He also reminded everyone that early voting has started and election day is June 27, 2026. Seal also spoke about Dairy Day. He invited everyone to come out on July 1, 2026, to the Liberty Tree Dedication at the Veterans Memorial Park. He also reminded everyone that Washington Parish Government will be closed on June 19, 2026, in honor of the Juneteenth holiday as well as July 3, 2026, in honor of Independence Day. Choctaw Landfill will be closed on July 4, 2026.

Item No. 17: Council Discussion:

The Council thanked everyone for attending the meeting. They also reminded everyone to go vote.

Item No. 18: Adjourn:

Council Chairman McMasters: May I have a motion to adjourn?

Councilman King: I make a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Councilwoman Wagner: Second.

Council Chairman McMasters: I have a motion by Councilman King and a second by Councilwoman Wagner.

Roll call of the vote as follows:

YEAS: (6) Rice, Wagner, Harry, Branch, McMasters, King

NAYS: ()

ABSTAIN: ()

ABSENT: (1) Culpepper

Council Chairman McMasters: Meeting adjourned.

Reginald McMasters, Chairman
Washington Parish Council

Jesse Applewhite, Clerk
Washington Parish Council

Order of Voting

Joe Culpepper	Stevem Branch
Shawn Rice	Reginald McMasters
Kim Wagner	Carley King
Clark Harry	

The next meeting will be held July 13, 2026.

In accordance with the American Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance, please contact Jesse Applewhite, Clerk to the Council, at 985.839.7825, describing the assistance that is necessary.

(All Ordinances, Resolutions, and attachments in their entirety are available at the office of the Clerk to the Council at 909 Pearl Street, Franklinton, Louisiana or at 985.839.7825, or wpgov.org.)

****This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.****

