GRAHAM CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION
SEPTEMBER 3, 2026

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT
Mayor: Alex Heartfield
Councilmember Place 1: Sarah Lundgren
Mayor Pro-Tem/Place 2: Jeff Dickinson
Councilmember Place 3: Jack Little
Councilmember Place 4: Brendan Weatherman

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT
None

STAFF PRESENT
Eric Garretty, City Manager
Marci Bueno, City Secretary/Finance Director
B.J. Cook, Code Enforcement Officer
Brent Bullock, Chief of Police
Chris Denney, IT Director
David Aleshire, Assistant Fire Chief
DeAnna Bullock, Library Director
Kyle Ford, Police Lieutenant
Melinda Brown, Assistant City Manager, GEIC/GIA Executive Director
Mike Watts, Animal Control Officer
Randall Dawson, Director of Public Works

1. CALL TO ORDER
Mayor Alex Heartfield called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. NOTICE OF POSTING: NOTICE OF THIS REGULAR CALLED MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAHAM TEXAS WAS DULY POSTED AT A PLACE READILY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC AT LEAST THREE BUSINESS DAYS PRIOR TO THE DATE AND TIME OF THIS MEETING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TEXAS OPEN MEETINGS ACT.

3. OPENING PRAYER FOLLOWED BY U.S. PLEDGE AND TEXAS PLEDGE
Gary Elrod led the invocation followed by the U.S. Pledge and Texas Pledge.

4. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS PRESENT
Mayor: Alex Heartfield
Councilmember Place 1: Sarah Lundgren
Mayor Pro-Tem/Place 2: Jeff Dickinson
Councilmember Place 3: Jack Little
Councilmember Place 4: Brendan Weatherman

5. PUBLIC FORUM
Mitzi Morrison stated the importance of having age-appropriate books in the public library for the youth.
City Manager Eric Garretty stated that there will be no bonfire for the Graham High School Football Homecoming Week due to the dry and windy conditions.

6. REPORTS
Individual Department Heads were omitted for the first meeting of the month.
City Manager Eric Garretty provided reports on the Lake Graham Water Level, Key Dates and Upcoming Events, Boards Update, Project Status Report, and Update on Christopher Rice vs. City of Graham lawsuit

7. CONSENT AGENDA.
Following a motion made by Brendan Weatherman and seconded by Sarah Lundgren, the following Consent Agenda was approved unanimously 5 – 0.

a. Approve the Minutes of the Public Hearing and Special Called Meeting held on **August 13, 2026**; and

b. Approve the Minutes of the Regular Called Meeting held on **August 20, 2026**; and

c. Authorize the City Manager to approve a Special Use Permit for certain City-owned property located in the vicinity of the Young County Arena for the 2026 GISD Homecoming Parade and Bonfire on Monday, **September 21, 2026**; and further, authorize the closure of Fourth Street from Rodeo Drive to the Hwy 380 bypass, during the hours of 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in support of same.

d. Approve a request from Jessica McClanahan, on behalf of the First Baptist Church of Graham, for the closure of the northern segment of the 600 block of Third Street on Wednesday, **September 23, 2026**, during the hours of 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., in support of the annual "See You At the Pole" youth rally; and

e. Authorize the Graham Chapter of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) to provide a presentation to the City Council at the Thursday, **October 1, 2026**, Regular Called City Council meeting, per a request from FFA Advisor Courtney Trammel; and

f. Authorize the City Manager to approve a request from Heather Allen, on behalf of the Humane Society of Young County, for the use of the southern half of the Square on Saturday, **November 14, 2026**, during the hours of 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., in support of the "Paws and Pumpkins" fundraising event.

8. **CONSIDER AND ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO CONCLUDE AN INDIVIDUAL PROJECT ORDER WITH "KIMLEY-HORN", INCORPORATED (FORT WORTH, TEXAS), IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED ONE HUNDRED SEVEN THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS AND NO CENTS ($107,500.00), IN SUPPORT OF DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES RELATED TO THE "RECLAIMED WATER STORAGE AND FILL STATION" CAPITAL PROJECT.**
Motion made by Jack Little and seconded by Brendan Weatherman to authorize the City Manager to conclude an Individual Project Order with "Kimley-Horn", Incorporated (Fort Worth, Texas), in an amount not to exceed one hundred seven thousand five hundred dollars and no cents ($107,500.00), in support of design and engineering services related to the "Reclaimed Water Storage and Fill Station" capital project. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

9. **CONSIDER AND ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO CONCLUDE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT, WITH "PARKHILL", INCORPORATED (FORT WORTH, TEXAS), IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED ONE HUNDRED NINETY-ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND NO CENTS ($191,000.00), IN SUPPORT OF DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES RELATED TO THE REHABILITATION OF THE WATERLINE AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE WHICH SUPPORTS THE HEXCEL WATER STORAGE TANK.**
Motion made by Brendan Weatherman and seconded by Sarah Lundgren to authorize the City Manager to conclude a Professional Services Agreement, with "Parkhill", Incorporated (Fort Worth, Texas), in an amount not to exceed one hundred ninety-one thousand dollars and no cents ($191,000.00), in support of design and engineering services related to the rehabilitation of the waterline and associated infrastructure which supports the Hexcel Water Storage Tank. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

10. **CONSIDER AND ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO CONCLUDE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT, WITH "FREESE AND NICHOLS", INCORPORATED (FORT WORTH, TEXAS), IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED TWO MILLION FOUR HUNDRED SEVENTY FOUR THOUSAND DOLLARS AND NO CENTS ($2,474,000.00), IN SUPPORT OF DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES RELATED TO THE "WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT REHABILITATION - PHASE 1" CAPITAL PROJECT.**
Motion made by Jack Little and seconded by Sarah Lundgren to authorize the City Manager to conclude a Professional Services Agreement, with "Freese and Nichols", Incorporated (Fort Worth, Texas), in an amount not to exceed two million four hundred seventy four thousand dollars and no cents ($2,474,000.00), in support of design and engineering services related to the "Wastewater Treatment Plant Rehabilitation - Phase 1" capital project. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

11. **CONSIDER AND ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ADVERTISE A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR "PRIVATIZATION OF MUNICIPAL TRANSFER STATION OPERATIONS" WITH SUCH ADVERTISEMENT RELATED TO A PROPOSAL FROM CITY STAFF TO CONTRACT WITH A COMMERCIAL VENDOR FOR OPERATION OF THE CITY'S "CONVENIENCE STATION."**

Motion made by Jeff Dickinson and seconded by Brendan Weatherman to authorize the City Manager to advertise a Request for Proposals for "Privatization of Municipal Transfer Station Operations" with such advertisement related to a proposal from City staff to contract with a commercial vendor for operation of the City's "Convenience Station." Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

12. **CONSIDER AND ACT TO APPROVE ON SECOND READING, ORDINANCE NO. 1225, WHICH PROPOSES A MAXIMUM AD VALOREM TAX RATE (ALSO KNOWN AS A "PROPERTY TAX RATE") OF SEVENTY-SEVEN CENTS ($0.77) PER $100 OF ASSESSED VALUATION, WHICH IS AN INCREASE FROM THE CURRENT PROPERTY TAX RATE OF ELEVEN POINT FIFTY-NINE PERCENT (11.59%); PROVIDING FOR A CERTAIN GENERAL MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION COMPONENT OF THE PROPERTY TAX RATE; PROVIDING FOR A CERTAIN INTEREST AND SINKING FUND COMPONENT OF THE PROPERTY TAX RATE; AND FURTHER PROVIDING THAT SAID PROPOSED, MAXIMUM PROPERTY TAX RATE IS IN SUPPORT OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 ANNUAL BUDGET; AND FURTHER STILL PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE UPON FINAL ADOPTION (THIS IS A RECORDED VOTE, BY COUNCILMEMBER).**
Motion made by Brendan Weatherman and seconded by Sarah Lundgren to approve on SECOND READING, **Ordinance No. 1225**, which proposes a maximum Ad Valorem Tax Rate (also known as a "Property Tax Rate") of **seventy-seven cents ($0.77) per $100 of assessed valuation**, which is an increase from the current Property Tax Rate of eleven point fifty-nine percent (11.59%); providing for a certain General Maintenance and Operation component of the Property Tax Rate; providing for a certain Interest and Sinking Fund component of the Property Tax Rate; and further providing that said proposed, maximum Property Tax Rate is in support of the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Annual Budget; and further still providing for an effective date upon final adoption (this is a recorded vote, by Councilmember). Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

13. **CONSIDER AND ACT TO AMEND THE PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 ANNUAL BUDGET.**
The following Amendments were made to Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Proposed Annual Budget:
Motion made by Jack Little and seconded by Sarah Lundgren to raise the cost-of-living adjustment from 2.5% to 3.5% for all employees in the General Fund, Water Fund, and Sewer Fund. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

14. **CONSIDER AND ACT TO APPROVE ON FIRST READING, RESOLUTION NO. 264 (AS AMENDED) WHICH APPROVES THE DRAFT "CITY OF GRAHAM STRATEGIC PLAN 2050".**
The following Amendments were made to the **City of Graham Strategic Plan 2050**:
Motion made by Alex Heartfield and seconded by Jeff Dickinson to change Strategic **Priority No. 3** from "Expand Economic Opportunity and Support Local Businesses" to "**Sustain and Improve our Public Safety Capabilities**". Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.
Motion made by Alex Heartfield and seconded by Jack Little to change Strategic **Priority No. 4** from "Identify Heritage Areas and Preserve the City's Small Town Character" to "**Sustain and Expand our Transportation Infrastructure**". Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.
Motion made by Alex Heartfield and seconded by Jack Little to change:
Strategic Priority No. 5 from "Sustain and Improve our Public Safety Capabilities" to "**Expand Economic Opportunity and Support Local Businesses**".
Strategic Priority No. 6 from "Sustain and Expand Park and Recreation Infrastructure" to "**Identify Heritage Areas and Preserve the City's Small Town**".
Strategic Priority No. 7 from "Sustain and Expand our Transportation Infrastructure" to "**Sustain and Expand Park and Recreation Infrastructure**".
Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.
In summary, the amended **City of Graham Strategic Plan 2050** should be as follows:
Strategic Priority No. 1 - Improve the Capability and Reliability of our Water, Wastewater and Stormwater infrastructure
Strategic Priority No. 2 - Strengthen Housing Stability and Improve Neighborhood Quality
Strategic Priority No. 3 - Sustain and Improve our Public Safety Capabilities
Strategic Priority No. 4 - Sustain and Expand our Transportation Infrastructure
Strategic Priority No. 5 - Expand Economic Opportunity and Support Local Businesses
Strategic Priority No. 6 - Identify Heritage Areas and Preserve the City's Small Town
Strategic Priority No. 7 - Sustain and Expand Park and Recreation Infrastructure

15. **CONSIDER AND ACT TO APPROVE ON FIRST AND FINAL READING, RESOLUTION NO. 265 WHICH DIRECTS THE YOUNG CENTRAL APPRAISAL DISTRICT TO REMOVE CERTAIN REAL AND BUSINESS PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX ACCOUNTS FROM THE TAX ROLL FOR THE CITY OF GRAHAM AS SAME WERE FOUND TO BE OUTSIDE THE TAXING JURISDICTION OF THE CITY, AND FURTHER DIRECTING THE CITY SECRETARY TO UPDATE THE OFFICIAL MAP OF THE CITY OF GRAHAM AND PROVIDE SUCH MAP TO THE YOUNG CENTRAL APPRAISAL DISTRICT, THE COUNTY CLERK OF YOUNG COUNTY, THE TEXAS OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER, AND APPROPRIATE UTILITY COMPANIES.**
Motion made by Brendan Weatherman and seconded by Jeff Dickinson to approve on FIRST AND FINAL READING, **Resolution No. 265** which directs the Young Central Appraisal District to remove certain real and business personal property tax accounts from the tax roll for the City of Graham as same were found to be outside the taxing jurisdiction of the City, and further directing the City Secretary to update the official map of the City of Graham and provide such map to the Young Central Appraisal District, the County Clerk of Young County, the Texas Office of the Comptroller, and appropriate utility companies. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

16. **DISCUSSION REGARDING TOPICS RELATED TO THE PLANNED SEPTEMBER 10, 2026, TOWN HALL EVENT.**
The following topics related to the planned September 10, 2026, Town Hall event are listed below:
    1. Data Center
    2. Lake Level and Water Restrictions
    3. New Fire Truck and Relationship to Tax Rate
    4. Sewer Plant Rehab and Relationship to Tax Rate
    5. Street Repair and Maintenance
    6. Tax Rate and Taxpayer Impact
    7. Budget-Review of Key Changes
    8. Legislative Issues Impacting the City
    9. On the Horizon
    10. Strategic Plan

17. **DISCUSSION REGARDING PROPOSED FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS.**
Future agenda items included discussion on age appropriate library books.

18. **RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION UNDER THE FOLLOWING PROVISIONS OF THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE:** Mayor Alex Heartfield recessed the Council into Executive Session at 9:48 a.m.

    a. **Sec. 551.087 – Deliberations Regarding Economic Development**

        1) Deliberate a proposed Letter of Intent from Headwaters Site Development, a Texas Limited Liability Company (Graham, Texas), related to Project Saltworks.

    b. **Section 551.074 Personnel Matters**

        1) Deliberate the interim evaluation of the City Manager.

19. **RECONVENE FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION AND TAKE SUCH ACTION AS MAY BE REQUIRED.** Mayor Alex Heartfield reconvened the Council from Executive Session at 11:42 a.m.

    Motion made by Sarah Lundgren and seconded by Brendan Weatherman to authorize the City Attorney to negotiate with the City Manager to prepare certain modifications to the Manager's current employment agreement. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

20. **ADJOURNMENT.**
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m. Motion made by Jack Little and seconded by Alex Heartfield.

R. Alex Heartfield, Mayor

Marci Bueno, City Secretary/Finance Director