

Council Proceedings for the City of Kennett, Missouri

December 2, 2025

6:30 p.m.

The City Council of the City of Kennett, Missouri met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall on Tuesday, December 2, 2025.

Those in attendance were Mayor Jake Crafton, Council Members Lisa Dry, Randy Carter, Mark Bryant, James Waynick, Harry Gaddis, Kevin Swain, Dennis Pelts, Steve Panousis, Jimmy French and Bob Young, City Administrator Steve Rasmussen, City Attorney Terry McVey, City Clerk Mandy Lewis, Finance Director Jan McElwraith, Chief of Police Kenny Wilson, Fire Chief Lance Davis, Code Enforcement Officer Victor Mode, Street Superintendent Gerald Moss and Rental Inspector Brian Hufford.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Crafton.

Pastor Mark Kailbourn gave the invocation.

Council Member Pelts led the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion to approve the council proceedings of the regular meeting of November 4, 2025, was made by Council Member Waynick, seconded by Council Member Young; motion passed.

A motion to approve the October 2025 Abstract of Accounts was made by Council Member Panousis, seconded by Council Member Carter; motion passed.

A motion to approve the October 2025 Statement of Revenue and Expenditures was made by Council Member Panousis, seconded by Council Member Carter; motion passed.

A motion to approve the October 2025 Kennett Board of Public Works Financials was made by Council Member Waynick, seconded by Council Member Gaddis; motion passed.

City Administrator's Report:

a. 2026 Municipal Election Information

City Administrator Rasmussen recognized City Clerk Lewis to inform the Council regarding the Municipal Election. She informs the Council that the Municipal Election will be held on April 7, 2026. Candidate filing opens on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, and closes on Tuesday, December 30, 2025. She also informs that City Hall is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm excluding holidays.

b. Update on Rental Properties

City Administrator Rasmussen recognized Code Enforcement Officer Victor Mode to update the Council regarding the inspections on rental properties. Code Enforcement Officer Mode informs there have been 368 inspections performed since January 1, 2025. He states that Mr. R. Cook is continuing to have properties inspected and passed per the agreement he made with the City Council.

c. Update on 411 Cedar Street

City Administrator Rasmussen recognized Code Enforcement Officer Victor Mode to update the Council regarding the property located at 411 Cedar Street. Code Enforcement Officer Mode states the property is approximately 95% complete. He informs that progress will continue to be monitored.

d. Salary Study/Job Descriptions

City Administrator Rasmussen informs the Council that work is continuing on the Salary Study and Job Descriptions. He states that both will be presented after the first of the year.

e. Stormwater Study

City Administrator Rasmussen informs the Council that Mr. Cochran with Water's Engineering was unable to be present at the meeting due to personal reasons. He further states that Mr. Cochran will provide a Stormwater Study, at no cost to the City, and it should be presented at the next City Council meeting.

f. Leaves & Grass

City Administrator Rasmussen recognized Street Superintendent Gerald Moss. Superintendent Moss informs the Council and public about the issues that can be caused when leaves and grass are raked and/or blown into the streets.

Kennett Chamber of Commerce Update:

Kennett Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Christian Johnson informs the Council and public about the Just a Small-Town Christmas events coming up. Mayor Crafton discussed the City departments that will be helping with the Just a Small-Town Christmas event. Chief of Police Wilson states additional officers will be on foot during the event. He states the Chamber received a Marketing Development Grant for the development of a new logo. He states the logo will be shared with the City Council in the near future.

Old Business:

a. Bids for KPD 2019 Ford Taurus

City Administrator Rasmussen recognized Chief of Police Wilson to present bids to the City Council. Chief Wilson states there were four bids received on the 2019 Ford Taurus. The bids were as follows: Danny Lacewell - \$751.61, Gene Lack - \$8,855.00, Emergency Remarketing - \$1,378.18, and Ringwood Motors Inc. - \$1,080.00. Chief of Police Wilson recommends the City Council approve the bid from Gene Lack in the amount of \$8,855.00.

A motion to accept the bid from Gene Lack in the amount of \$8,855.00 was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Pelts; motion passed.

b. Appointments to Park Board

A motion to approve Trey Bradford, Crystal Hrissikos and Darrell Watson to the Kennett Park Board was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Dry; Council Member Panousis abstained due to a family connection with one of the nominees; motion passed.

c. 60-day Provisional License

City Administrator Rasmussen recognized Code Enforcement Officer Mode to inform the Council of the requests. Code Enforcement Officer Mode states Mr. Cook has requested an extension of the 60-day Provisional License that was agreed upon with the City Council. Officer Mode informs that Mr. Cook is progressing in getting all of his properties inspected, however, he is beginning to reach the properties that will need considerable repairs so the number he completes may slow down.

A motion to approve an extension, with the same conditions, to the 60-Provisional License with Mr. Cook beginning December 3, 2025, was made by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member Gaddis; motion passed.

Code Enforcement Officer Mode informs the Council that Mr. Cunningham has requested a 60-day Provisional License be issued with the same provisions as Mr. Cook's. Officer Mode states Mr. Cunningham currently has 62 properties needing to be inspected.

A motion to approve a 60-Provisional License with Mr. Cunningham beginning December 3, 2025, was made by Council Member Waynick, seconded by Council Member Bryant; motion passed.

d. Update on Grants

Finance Director McElwrath updates the Council on multiple grants she is working on.

New Business:

a. Resolution 2025-9

City Administrator Rasmussen recognizes Chief of Police Wilson to discuss Resolution 2025-9. Chief of Police Wilson states there is a state statute that allows for the towing of vehicles after an accident, when the driver does not have proof of insurance. His recommendation is for the Council to approve the enforcement of this statute along with a policy of towing vehicles after a traffic stop, when the driver does not have proof of insurance. Chief of Police Wilson states information will be distributed to the public prior to the implementation on January 1, 2026.

A motion to approve Resolution 2025-9 was made by Council Member Pelts, seconded by Council Member Swain; motion passed.

b. Resolution 2025-10

Finance Director McElwrath reminds the Council that the Senior Citizen Tax Account was overpaid for several years. Regular payments have been made from the Senior Citizen Tax Account into the Stormwater Tax Account due to this overpayment. It is her recommendation that a final payment of \$115,530.30 be made from the Senior Citizen Tax Account to the Stormwater Tax Account.

A motion to approve Resolution 2025-10 was made by Council Member Panousis, seconded by Council Member Young; motion passed with a no vote from Council Member Swain.

c. Request for Release of Special Tax Bill

City Administrator Rasmussen informs the Council that a Request for Release of Special Tax Bills filed on 1926 Dixie Roadway, Kennett, MO has been received. Council Member Carter states Special Tax Bills have been released in the past with the property owner paying for the filing fee. City Administrator Rasmussen states releasing the Special Tax Bills could encourage people to purchase properties and clean them up. After additional discussion, a motion was made.

A motion to approve the Request for Release of the Special Tax Bills for 1926 Dixie Roadway, Kennett, MO was made by Council Member Carter, seconded by Council Member Waynick. Vote: Yes – Council Member Waynick, Council Member Swain, Council Member Panousis. No – Council Member Dry, Council Member Carter, Council Member Bryant, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Pelts, Council Member French and Council Member Young. Motion fails.

d. MoDOT- Kennett Square Signal/Intersection

Mayor Crafton informs the Council that MoDOT is requesting assistance from the City of Kennett for a project regarding the Kennett Square. He states that this project would cost the City of Kennett \$38,710.82, according to MoDOT.

A motion to approve the participation in the project and that the amount of \$38,710.82 be paid out of the Transportation Tax was made by Council Member Carter, seconded by Council Member Pelets; motion passed.

e. Bid Award for Two Demolitions

Mayor Crafton informs the Council that bids were received for the demolition of properties at 411 Michael Street, Kennett, MO and 902 S. Anthony Street, Kennett, MO. He states the bids were for labor only as the tonnage will be disposed of at the KBPW Transfer Station. Mayor Crafton read the bids as follows: C&M Marco Parr - \$5,900.00, Jack of All Trades - \$5,600.00, Joey Duncan - \$8,750.00, and MMR Excavating - \$10,420.00.

A motion to accept the bid from Jack of All Trades in the amount of \$5,600.00 was made by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member Dry; motion passed.

Comments from the Council:

Council Member Young inquired about Kennett Board of Public Works picking up large items such as furniture. Kennett Board of Public Works Chief Executive Officer Jamie Chidister informs KBPW is working on getting this service in place but are having a staffing issue. He states it will be an option in the near future.

Council Member Dry thanks City Clerk Lewis for setting up and maintaining the City of Kennett Facebook Group.

Discussion and an agreement regarding canceling the December 16, 2025, City Council meeting. The next Council Meeting will be January 6, 2026.

Public Comments:

Arlease Green with the Small Business Administration addresses the Council regarding programs that are available to businesses in the area that sustained damages due to the storms which occurred March 30 through April 8, 2025. She encourages businesses to reach out to the Small Business Administration at 800-659-2955.

Rev. Dinah Tatman passes a letter to all Council Members, the City Administrator, and the City Clerk and asked that it be entered into the minutes. The three-page letter is attached hereto. Rev. Tatman reads a proposed resolution to the Council. (A copy of the resolution was not provided and is not attached.) Rev. Tatman states that City, Light, Gas & Water has disconnected residents illegally. Kennett Board of Public Works Chief Executive Officer Chitester addressed the Council regarding Rev. Tatman's statements and assures the Council that the Kennett Board of Public Works is following regulations for municipally owned utilities.

A motion to go into Closed Session for Real Estate per RSMO 610.021(2) and Legal per RSMO 610.021(1) was made by Council Member Waynick, seconded by Council Member Bryant. Vote: Yes - Council Members Lisa Dry, Randy Carter, Mark Bryant, James Waynick, Harry Gaddis, Kevin Swain, Dennis Pelets, Steve Panousis, Jimmy French and Bob Young. No - None.

A motion to go into Open Session was made by Council Member Pelets, seconded by Council Member Swain Vote: Yes - Council Members Lisa Dry, Randy Carter, Mark Bryant, James Waynick, Harry Gaddis, Kevin Swain, Dennis Pelets, Steve Panousis, Jimmy French and Bob Young. No – None.

Being no further business a motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Pelts, seconded by Council Member Swain;
motion passed.

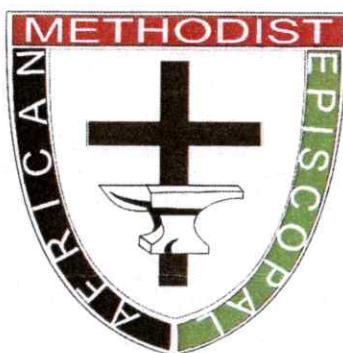
Mandy Lewis
Mandy Lewis
City Clerk

Jake Crafton
Jake Crafton
Mayor

Reverend Francine Brookins, Esq., Presiding Bishop

Reverend Edmund E. Lowe Sr., Presiding Elder

St. Louis Gateway District



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church

Reverend Dinah L. Tatman, Pastor

324 W. Commercial

Kennett, Missouri 63857

December 2, 2025

Kennett City Council

200 Cedar Street

Kennett, MO 63857

RE: FORMAL REQUEST FOR MUNICIPAL OVERSIGHT AND POLICY REFORM

To the Mayor & Members of the Kennett City Council:

Mayor: Jake Crafton, Mayor Pro Tem: Dennis Pelts, Council Members: Lisa Dry, Randy Carter, Mark Bryant, James Waynick, Harry Gaddis, Kevin Swan, Steve Panousis, Jimmy French, Bob Young.

I am writing to call attention to the unlawful utility disconnections affecting tenants throughout Kennett. Multiple residents have had water, electricity, gas, and sewer services terminated due to landlord delinquency, despite tenants' attempts to pay.

This practice violates:

- Missouri Statute §441.233
- Federal constitutional protections
- Federal case law prohibiting the punishment of tenants for landlord debt.

MISSOURI STATE LAW — § 441.233

Missouri Revised Statutes § 441.233 prohibits “diminishing essential services” to force or pressure a tenant from their home. This includes the termination of:

- Water
- Electricity
- Gas
- Sewer
- Any essential utility required for habitability

A municipal utility that disconnects a tenant’s utilities despite the tenant being willing, ready, and attempting to maintain service is participating in what Missouri law defines as an unlawful eviction.

FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTIONS:

Because Kennett Light, Gas & Water is a municipally owned utility, its actions are governed by the U.S. Constitution and federal due process standards.

1. Procedural Due Process — Fourteenth Amendment

A public utility cannot terminate service without proper notice and an opportunity for the affected tenant to dispute the action.

(Memphis Light, Gas & Water v. Craft)

2. Substantive Due Process — Fourteenth Amendment

Government entities cannot take actions that are arbitrary, harmful, or that endanger health and safety.

3. Equal Protection Clause

Tenants cannot be punished, deprived of essential services, or displaced because of someone else’s debt.

4. Federal Case Law

Courts have ruled repeatedly that utilities may not terminate or deny service to tenants for a landlord’s unpaid bill, including **Davis v. Weir** and **Koger v. Guarino**.

The Council has a duty to ensure municipal departments operate within the law. I am requesting:

1. Immediate review of Kennett Light, Gas & Water policies
2. Immediate cessation of all utility disconnections caused by landlord delinquency.
3. Written confirmation that tenants will be allowed to establish and maintain service regardless of the landlord's unpaid balance.
4. An end to tenant disconnections caused by landlord delinquency
5. Written tenant-protection policies enacted by ordinance
6. Independent oversight of utility practices

These issues directly impact health, safety, and civil rights.

Respectfully,



Pastor Dinah L. Tatman

Email: pastordinaht@gmail.com

Church Email: stjohnamekennett324@gmail.com

Cc: City Administrator: Steve Rasmussen

City Clerk & Custodian of Records Mandy Lewis