

**Commission Meeting**

**11:00 a.m.**

**February 18, 2026**

The Governing Body of the City of Emporia, Kansas, met in Regular Session, Wednesday, February 18, 2026, with Mayor Smith presiding and Commissioners Duncan, Harter, Ogle and Steinkuhler present. Also present were City Manager Cocking, Deputy City Manager Detter, Assistant City Manager Wash, City Clerk Sull and City Attorney Montgomery.

Mayor Smith read a proclamation declaring the month of February as "Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month" by the Association for Career and Technical Education and supported by Flint Hills Technical College. The CTE programming offers students the opportunity to gain the academic, technical and employability skills necessary for career readiness. Leaders from business and industry nationwide report increasing challenges related to addressing the skills gap and connecting qualified professionals with careers in critical and growing CTE-related fields, such as advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, energy, healthcare, information technology and transportation. CTE programs with FHTC prepare students for rewarding careers by offering programs of study that lead to industry-recognized credentials. She urged all citizens in this community to become familiar with the services and benefits offered by Flint Hills Technical College and to support and participate in these CTE programs to enhance their individual skills and productivity.

Mayor Smith then presented the proclamation.

**CITY COMMISSION  
(Public Comment)**

This is the time for the public to make comments.

***The public is invited to make comments at this time. Please limit comments to two (2) minutes each. Please state your name and address prior to making comments.*** No comments were made at this time.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
(Gazette Building Development, LLC)  
(CDBG Commercial Rehabilitation Project)  
(Grant No. 23-CR-004 – Commercial Rehabilitation Project)  
(Public Hearing)**

Deputy City Manager Deter was recognized and addressed the Governing Body. He stated the Department of Commerce Small Cities CDBG program requires a public hearing on the close out of projects receiving CDBG funding. The Gazette Building at 517 Merchant Street has completed the CDBG portion of the project. The proposed scope of work consisted of sprinkler system, roofing, ADA restrooms, service lines and fire/domestic, fire alarm, clean and repair masonry wall, ADA elevator and shaft, repoint/rebuild brick masonry, remove/replace windows, and miscellaneous appurtenances related to constructions activities. The project received \$248,000 in CDBG Funds with \$261,901 local match funds from the owner of the building at 517 Merchant Street. The City of Emporia had no contributed funds to the project. Staff recommend conducting a public hearing on the close out of CDBG Commercial Rehabilitation project at 517 Merchant Street. The hearing will allow for public comment on the project.

Mayor Smith then declared the public hearing open.

As no one in attendance wished to address the Governing Body, Mayor Smith then declared the public hearing closed.

**CITY COMMISSION  
(Board Appointment)**

It was moved by Commissioner Ogle, seconded by Mayor Smith, that Brian Potter be appointed to the Flint Hills Technical Board of Trustees to fill an unexpired term ending June 30, 2028. The vote follows: Commissioner Ogle, aye; Mayor Smith, aye; Commissioner Duncan, aye; Commissioner Harter, aye; and Commissioner Steinkuhler, aye.

**ENGINEERING**  
**(U.S. Department of Transportation)**  
**(Fiscal Year 2023 Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program)**  
**(Agreement with Federal Highway Administration)**

Jim Ubert, City Engineer, was recognized and addressed the Governing Body. He stated the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) established the Safe Streets and Road for All (SS4A) competitive grant program with \$5 billion in appropriated funds from 2022 to 2026. The City of Emporia submitted the SS4A application and was approved during FY2023 for \$300,000; FHWA share of \$240,000; KDOT share of \$45,000; and City of Emporia share of \$15,000. In the summer of 2024, the City Engineering Department was funded \$45,000 by KDOT. There is an agreement in place with KDOT for \$45,000 reimbursement. In the fall of 2025, City Engineering Department was notified by FHWA Topeka staff about the FHWA SS4A agreement. The FHWA SS4A agreement is to fund a Transportation Safety Study throughout the City of Emporia. Staff recommend approval of the FHWA SS4A Project Agreement in the amount of \$300,000 with the cost shares as indicated and authorized the mayor to sign the agreement.

Commissioner Harter made a motion to approve the FHWA SS4A Project Agreement in the amount of \$300,000 with the cost shares as indicated above and authorize the City Manager to sign the agreement. Commissioner Steinkuhler seconded the motion. The vote follows: Commissioner Harter, aye; Commissioner Steinkuhler, aye; Commissioner Duncan, aye; Commissioner Ogle, aye; and Mayor Smith, aye.

**CITY COMMISSION**  
**(Intent to Issue General Obligation Bonds – Series 2026)**  
**(Street Sweeper)**  
**(Resolution Number 3788)**

Brian Silcott, Public Works Director, was recognized and addressed the Governing Body. The 2025 adopted CIP Budget includes funds for the replacement purchase of the 2014 Street Sweeper. That purchase was deferred to coincide with the Series 2026 general obligation bond issuance that is planned for this year. The 2014 sweeper is experiencing increased downtime and maintenance costs due to its age. The average useful life of street sweepers is 7 to 10 years, and they have a 5-year depreciation schedule. Currently, the city has two Elgin Whirlwind model street sweepers to maintain

more than 175 miles of paved streets in the city. The scheduled replacement purchase is an Elgin Whirlwind, the same model as the 2014 unit that will be replaced. Staff recommend that the 2014 unit be used as a spare sweeper when needed. The estimated cost of the street sweeper is \$400,000. This proposed resolution authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds for public improvements providing for the payment of the costs of the street sweeper. Staff recommend approval of Resolution Number 3788 authorizing the use of general obligation bonds to finance the acquisition of an Elgin Whirlwind street sweeper.

Following further discussion, Commissioner Duncan made a motion to approve Resolution Number 3788 authorizing the use of general obligation bonds to finance the acquisition of an Elgin Whirlwind street sweeper. Commissioner Harter seconded the motion. The vote follows: Commissioner Duncan, aye; Commissioner Harter, aye; Commissioner Ogle, aye; Commissioner Steinkuhler, aye; and Mayor Smith, aye.

**CITY COMMISSION  
 CITY MANAGER'S REPORT  
 (Financials & Building Permits)**

This is the time for the City Manager to make comments and reports to the public. **The following is general information for the month of January 2026 for the community:**

1. Monthly Local Retail Sales Tax Receipts Update

	2025	2026	<b>Increase of \$26,093.82</b> for the month, and Overall increase of 4.78% from year 2024.
	\$ 545,853.98	\$ 571,947.80	
<b>YTD</b>	<b>\$ 545,853.98</b>	<b>\$ 571,947.80</b>	

2. City Share from County Tax

	2025	2026	<b>Increase of \$26,281.68</b> for the month, and Overall increase of 8.71% from year 2024.
	\$ 275,567.25	\$ 301,848.93	
<b>YTD</b>	<b>\$ 275,567.25</b>	<b>\$ 301,848.93</b>	

**Building Permits issued from 1/1/2026 to 1/31/2026 for new construction, remodeling/repairs and demolition.**

Total number of building permits issued through Code Services:	18
Total valuations associated with those building permits:	\$ 519,336.74
Total number of dollars collected for Building Permit Fees:	\$ 2,095.00

Construct – Single-family dwellings	0
Demo – Single-family dwellings	1
<b>Flint Hills Mall CID for January 2026</b>	<b>\$ 16,487.05</b>
<b>YTD</b>	<b>\$ 16,487.05</b>
<b>Pavilions CID for January 2026</b>	<b>\$ 19,030.10</b>
<b>CID #2</b>	<b>\$ 19,030.10</b>
<b>YTD</b>	<b>\$ 38,060.20</b>
<b>Fairview Hotel CID for January 2026</b>	<b>\$ 6,948.09</b>
<b>YTD</b>	<b>\$ 6,948.09</b>
<b>West Plaza CID for January 2026</b>	<b>\$ 6,509.73</b>
<b>YTD</b>	<b>\$ 6,509.73</b>

### Consent Agenda

It was moved by Commissioner Harter seconded by Commissioner Steinkuhler that the Consent Agenda listed below be ratified as a whole:

- a. Commission Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on February 4, 2026.
- b. Ordinance Number 26-02 Establishing a Common Consumption Area.

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A COMMON CONSUMPTION AREA AND AUTHORIZING THE POSSESSION AND CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR AND CEREAL MALT BEVERAGE WITHIN THE COMMON CONSUMPTION AREA BOUNDARIES, AMENDING SECTION 4-5 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF EMPORIA, KANSAS, to which the City Clerk assigned Ordinance Number 26-02, was presented to the Governing Body for their consideration.

The vote follows: Commissioner Harter, aye; Commissioner Steinkuhler, aye; Commissioner Duncan, aye; Commissioner Ogle, aye; and Mayor Smith, aye.

### CITY COMMISSION (City Manager's Report)

This is an opportunity for the City Manager to present information to the public that may not be reported in other news accounts or City activities or to highlight accomplishments of the organization.

At the time this Agenda was prepared, the following items were in the works:

## **TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR MARCH 4, 2026, MEETING.**

- Authorize Resolution for General Obligation Bonds Series 2026.
- **Study Session:**
  - Discuss Downtown TEAP Study.
  - Discuss Evergy Franchise Agreement.
  - Discuss Water Treatment Plant Master Plan.

### **CITY COMMISSION (Governing Body Comment)**

This is the time for the Mayor and City Commissioners to make comments and reports to the public. No comments were made at this time.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Harter made a motion to recess into Executive Session for 25 minutes, inviting pertinent city staff to discuss confidential data of a third party relating to economic development. The justification for the executive session is provided by K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(4) to protect financial affairs and trade secrets of a third party. The open meeting will resume in this room at approximately 11:45 a.m. Commissioner Ogle seconded the motion. The vote follows: Commissioner Harter, aye; Commissioner Ogle, aye; Commissioner Duncan, aye; Commissioner Steinkuhler, aye; and Mayor Smith, aye.

Upon reconvening the meeting in Regular Session at 11:45 a.m., this same date, in the City Commission Meeting Room, Mayor Smith stated they had discussed confidential data of a third party relating to economic development and no action was taken.

Mayor Smith made a motion to recess the meeting until 12:00 p.m. at the Evora Wheeler Conference Room. Commissioner Harter seconded the motion. The vote follows: Mayor Smith, aye; Commissioner Harter, aye; Commissioner Duncan, aye; Commissioner Ogle, aye; and Commissioner Steinkuhler, aye.

**CITY/COUNTY  
JOINT MEETING  
EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Ogle made a motion to recess into Executive Session for 25 minutes, inviting pertinent city and county staff to discuss confidential data of a third party relating to economic development. The justification for the executive session is provided by K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(4) to protect financial affairs and trade secrets of a third party. The open meeting will resume in this room at approximately 1:15 p.m. Commissioner Duncan seconded the motion. The vote follows: Commissioner Ogle, aye; Commissioner Duncan, aye; Commissioner Harter, aye; Commissioner Steinkuhler, aye; and Mayor Smith, aye.

Upon reconvening the meeting in the City/County Joint Meeting at 1:15 p.m., this same date, in the Evora Wheeler Conference Room, Commissioner Harter made a motion to continue the executive session discussion for the reason stated previously with all the same pertinent city and county staff and resuming the open meeting at approximately 1:30 p.m. Commissioner Steinkuhler seconded the motion. The vote follows: Commissioner Harter, aye; Commissioner Steinkuhler, aye; Commissioner Duncan, aye; Commissioner Ogle, aye; and Mayor Smith, aye.

Upon reconvening the meeting in the City/County Joint Meeting at 1:30 p.m., this same date, in the Evora Wheeler Conference Room, Commissioner Duncan made a motion to continue the executive session discussion for the reason stated previously with all the same pertinent city and county staff and resuming the open meeting at approximately 1:45 p.m. Commissioner Steinkuhler seconded the motion. The vote follows: Commissioner Duncan, aye; Commissioner Steinkuhler, aye; Commissioner Harter, aye; Commissioner Ogle, aye; and Mayor Smith, aye.

Upon reconvening the meeting in the City/County Joint Meeting at 1:45 p.m., this same date, in the Evora Wheeler Conference Room, Mayor Smith stated they had discussed confidential information of a third party relating to economic development and no action was taken.

Commissioner Ogle then made a motion to adjourn for a special gathering to tour the new Fire Station. Mayor Smith seconded the motion. The vote follows: Commissioner Ogle, aye; Mayor Smith, aye; Commissioner Duncan, aye; Commissioner Harter, aye; and Commissioner Steinkuhler, aye.

ATTEST: Kerry Sull  
Kerry Sull, City Clerk



Becky Smith  
Becky Smith, Mayor