THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERPERSONS
OF THE CITY OF WATERTOWN, WILSON COUNTY, TN

July 14, 2026

The Board of Mayor and Alderpersons of the City of Watertown, Wilson County, Tennessee met on July 14, 2026 at 6:00 P.M. at the Watertown Community Center.

Alderpersons Present: April Pearson, Caleb Barrett, Kyle Stacey, Laura Cromer, Steve Casey, Howell Roberts and Mayor Mike Jennings.

Mayor Jennings called meeting to order with welcoming everyone and led in prayer.

Motion made by Kyle Stacey and proper second by Howell Roberts to approve 06-16-26 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Kyle Stacey and proper second by Howell Roberts to approve 06-22-26 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

PARKS AND RECREATION REPORT
Jonathan Smith discussed the flooding issue at the concession stand that is causing water and mud going in the building. He is trying to figure out the best option to divert the water to go in different direction to keep away from the concession stand.

Jonathan has been talking with several people for opinions and prices for best solution and would like permission to pursue.

Motion made by Kyle Stacey and proper second by Laura Cromer to approve Jonathan Smith to pursue getting more bids to fix the drainage issue not to exceed $10000.00. Motion carried unanimously.

Jonathan will send Mayor Jennings any bids so can be sent out to Council for review.

The Purple Warriors Season will start on August 8th at 8:00 A.M. and have had 235 kids to sign up for the Fall League.

PUBLIC BUSINESS-COMMENTS
No Public Business or Comments

SEWER DEPARTMENT
Dale Smith was not present, council received report for review.

Dale had to order a new analytical balance, cost was just under $3000.00.

POLICE DEPARTMENT
Chief Henderlight stated there is a panel in the Fire Department that needs to be repaired, this is what operates the lights outside of the building .That part of the building is operated by key fobs and they don't have easy access when there is an issue with lights being on or off. The cost of replacement panel

is $1600.00. Chief stated the cost could be divided between the departments. The Fire Department has an electrician that will donate their time to install the panel.

Mayor Jennings will check with the County to see if they are able to help with the repair or reimburse the expense.

Motion made by Steve Casey and proper second by Kyle Stacey to approve request to purchase panel not to exceed $1,600.00. Motion carried unanimously.

Kyle Stacey stated they are still working on the repair for the emergency button at Police Department, they are having issues with finding a representative that can help.

Chief Henderlight stated Officer Joshua Hightower has resigned for other employment, he has completed his two year agreement.

Chief Henderlight stated the transmission has went out in one of the Tahoe's and should be repaired in the next few weeks and is covered under warranty.

FIRE REPORT
Chief Decker stated call volume has been up last few months.

Chief Decker would like to have an open house at Fire Department in September to bring the Community together for some feedback, discussions and to meet the citizens. Also in October to have a workshop with the Council to talk about the feedback from the citizens and data he has collected from the department. Things they are lacking, things they are doing well, programs and grants. Chief Decker would like to start building conversations for future plans.

Mayor Jennings suggested having before the Council Meeting in October, maybe an hour before meeting.

RAILROAD MUSUEM REPORT
Chris Ferarri stated they are going to fire up the Steam Engine on the 15th, takes 10-15 hours to get up to speed. The Railroad Administration will certify the next day and then schedules can be established. Based on discussions and comments Chris thinks probably the second half of next year we will seeing it pulling the train into town.

Chris stated a meeting was held with the Desperados to discuss event details and information to make sure everyone involved is on the same page.

Caleb Barrett asked about the Turntable status?

Mayor Jennings stated a pre-meeting was held to discuss updates to be prepared for regular meeting to be held on the 16th with the Federal Government. We are anticipating with the approval of all the plans, design work and the bidding process the project should be completed by June of 2028. We received notice last week from the Federal Government that we are approved for the final phase and next step is to get account set up in the Grant Solutions System.

Mayor Jennings stated when the construction starts the work will be done by specialized and certified contractors.

CIVICS PLANNING COMMITTEE
Laura Cromer stated she wanted to update everyone with the Event Dates for the rest of the year. September 19th will be the Train Robbery and already has been discussed the closure for hour and half for the shootout on the square. September 26th will be the Founder's Day which has been approved with rolling closures for the 5k race. October 3rd is the Mile Long Yard Sale and has been approved to be down Central Avenue all the way to Pearl Street. December 3rd will be having the Wassail Walk and tree lighting. December 5th will be the Christmas Parade.

Laura stated the Desperados have asked if the bleachers could be moved to the square for Train Robbery, in the past having worked out great. They have asked if the doors can be unlocked at the Old City Hall on the Friday morning before event to get their props and supplies out from storage. Also if they can use the five inner parking spots at the gazebo area for set up and then move their vehicles to other parking spaces. On Saturday they would like to use the other five parking spaces across the street, this would be after the bank and flower shop is closed at noon. This would allow them to have the whole section of those ten parking spaces. It's the same setup they have used in the past but wasn't officially approved.

Mayor Jennings asked if the businesses was aware of this and if they are what are their thoughts?

Mayor Jennings suggested not voting on the five extra parking spots tonight and after getting feedback from the businesses and citizens can discuss more at the next meeting.

Steve Casey suggested they could park in the gravel lot at the Church and come thru the back alley to the square.

Laura asked if horses could be permitted for the Desperados to have during their event as long as they clean up after the horses. This would be for future events since they have to have specific trained horses that can handle the gunfire noise.

Mayor Jennings stated horses are allowed to participate in the parades, he stated can put on the Agenda for the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS
Mayor Jennings stated Budget Report looks normal for this time of the year.

Mayor Jennings presented Ordinance #2026-05 for Budget Amendments for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 on first reading by making additional appropriations and line-item transfers.

Motion made by Steve Casey and proper second by Kyle Stacey to accept Budget Amendments for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 on First Reading. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Jennings stated he is frustrated with the Sewer Project not being completed by June 30th and with the project not being completed the street paving process cannot begin. Mayor Jennings will get in touch with Steve Jones to find out what needs to be done to get this project completed.

Mayor Jennings stated the burn pile has been open on Wednesdays from 1:00 to 4:00 and has been working out well. He has been asked by a gentleman that has a tree trimming project if arrangements can be made to have open at a different time frame. Mayor Jennings stated if any residents need open to call and arrangements can be made.

Mayor Jennings stated the fees for music videos were increased last month to $3000.00 and additional $1500.00 for 48 hour or less late notification on first reading.

Motion made by Kyle Stacey and proper second by Steve Casey to approve on second reading the music video fee increase on second reading. Motion carried unanimously.

Laura Cromer asked Chief Henderlight if he has received any concerns or complaints on the increase. Chief Henderlight stated he hasn't at this time. Laura stated that she had heard a few comments from the music industry that we're competing with Nashville prices. That they were afraid the smaller video industry will not be able to afford. Chief Henderlight will keep everyone updated if he gets any complaints on the fee amount and fee increase can be re-considered at that time.

Mayor Jennings stated he was not ready to appoint a Railroad Authority Member or a Historic Preservation Member at this time.

Mayor Jennings stated the County has completed reappraisals and he was given a number in May for the certified tax rate so he could prepare a budget. Mayor Jennings was told the number may adjust some by June 1st, he received a request to sign a form for the certified tax rate change. The certified tax rate changed from $0.3417 to $0.3802. Mayor Jennings first signed the form but needs an explanation before he agrees of why the numbers changed so much, he still hasn't received an answer.

Mayor Jennings stated we need to approve a Certified Tax Rate on first reading with the comment that we have to do.

Motion made by Kyle Stacey and proper second by Steve Casey to pass on first reading Ordinance #2026-06. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Jennings stated when the Coffee Shop opened they put a couple of cones out where the steps are in front of their building. Mayor Jennings received several calls with complaints that they can't protect their own parking place. Chief Henderlight went and talked with them and Mayor Jennings attended their opening and was told it wasn't their intentions to cause any issues, that section is the only way for people to enter from the parking lot to the sidewalk is to use those steps.

Mayor Jennings stated need to figure out a way to fix and not cause a drainage issue, to leave that area open or leave an open area somewhere else on the square. This needs to be wheelchair accessible. Mayor Jennings stated he wants to discuss with Jim Kidwell about ADA requirements and look at options to resolve.

After much discussion of ideas it was decided to bring back recommendations to next meeting.

The next meeting will be August 18th at 6:00 P.M.

Mayor Jennings stated the Zoning Ordinance requires a 30 foot set back everywhere unless a variance is requested and approved, according to how your property is zoned establishes the minimum building setbacks such as side and rear setbacks. Some people may request a variance due to the shape of their lots and would be approved by a case by case situation.

Steve Casey-No Comments

Howell Roberts stated he noticed that during the parade and even the yard sales people are trying to drive down Main Street interfering with the Parade. Howell would like to have police to be on both ends of the Parade to keep cars from driving thru or with the parade or going both ways on Main Street.

Chief Henderlight stated he had three officers in the front and two officers in the rear of parade this year.

Mayor Jennings stated the Police Department did a job of managing traffic, for the future may look at blocking off the side streets during the timeframe of parade, maybe 30 minutes before the parade starts and open as soon as parade is over.

Chief Decker would like to address the Council on list of surplus property that was on the Fire Report. The items will probably end up being less than $500.00, he would like permission to get items sold.

Motion made by Kyle Stacey and proper second by Steve Casey to declare items as Surplus Property and list on govdeals. Motion carried unanimously.

Howell Roberts asked Mayor Jennings to check on grant that would help residents that need to replace water lines that have copper lines.

Motion made by Steve Casey and proper second by Laura Cromer to adjourn meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Michael R. Jennings, Mayor

April Lamberson, City Recorder

Mayor Jennings stated the July 4th Parade and Fireworks was a great event and appreciated everyone that organized, participated and watched.

Janice Stone commented online that Commerce Avenue is still bad and at some places two cars cannot pass at the same time, one car has to stop. Cars keep getting in yards and have not finished the dirt on edges of street.

COUNCIL MEMBERS
April Pearson- No Comments

Caleb Barrett-No Comments

Kyle Stacey- No Comments

Laura Cromer asked the status on codes, she has had some complaints.

Mayor Jennings stated that arrangements have been made with the County but no action has been taken at this time. He asked for Laura to send the addresses to him and will send to the County.

Laura asked about the potentially of street paving and concerned when the guys are constantly having water leaks that tear up the pavement when leaks are being repaired? If we don't get the water lines fixed before the paving this will become an issue.

Mayor Jennings stated there is no way we can replace all the water lines, if the leak is in the street we are responsible to fix. Leak from the meter to the street is the City's responsibility and a leak from meter to customer's house is the customer's responsibility.

Laura asked if the boxes that were supposed to be replaced at water plant has been completed.

Mayor Jennings stated to his knowledge that part of project has been completed.

Laura stated a new water valve had been installed on Grand Avenue where there were multiple cut offs. There was a situation and no way to cut the water off and had to repair it under pressure and valve was added to fix that issue. She had a call asking why is the water being limited at the street to 22 PSI when the federal guideline says the minimum is 20 PSI and their standard is 35 to 45? Also she was asked why Fire Hydrants have so much water pressure out in front of their house but they no water pressure in their house.

Mayor Jennings stated that he can ask J.C. York to come to next meeting to answer any questions or concerns.

Chief Decker stated the Fire Hydrants are not all based on pressure, it's based on volume also. There is a lot of variances in the pressure depending on where you are in town. Some have put out 60 PSI but there are some that barely have 20 to 25 PSI. With the low water pressure at houses could be a lot of factors such as issues in the line, roots, blockages, issue at their meter, and elevation of houses.

Laura was asked how the lots in town are being split? They were told that it had to be 30 feet off the road, but some of the houses that are behind them are right on the road.