

Pocahontas City Council Meeting

Pocahontas City Hall
March 10, 2026 – 5:30 p.m.

Let the record show the city council meeting was called to order by Mayor Futrell, City Clerk/Treasurer Michelle Teel conducted a roll call.

Alderman Present:

Tim Scott, Danny Swann, Rob Olvey, Jamey Sullinger, Kerri King

Absent: Nathan Camp

Public Comments:

Mark Hunsaker addressed the Council regarding concerns about unequal enforcement of city and state regulations related to his towing and muffler business. He stated that he has complied with requirements such as securing vehicles, covering fencing, and limiting vehicle storage time, while alleging that a competitor is not being held to the same standards. Hunsaker also reported ongoing harassment and interference from the competitor and expressed frustration with delays and challenges in establishing his business, including delays in obtaining utilities and access to the rotation list. He requested fair and consistent enforcement of ordinances, particularly regarding derelict vehicles, and asked the city to address the situation.

Trey Steimel addressed the Council to acknowledge receipt of a resolution and to provide an update. He encouraged Council members to communicate with him before submitting resolutions to explore alternative solutions and collaboration opportunities, including working with the Municipal League and the Association of Counties. He explained that the resolution pertained to changes in the federal surplus program, noting that access to heavy equipment has declined due to shifts toward online liquidation platforms. He stated the state is exploring options to maintain some level of surplus resources and encouraged regional partnerships to pursue solutions. He offered continued availability for updates and discussion.

Approval of Financials & Minutes

King made a motion to approve the February 2026 financials and bond report. Rob Olvey seconded the motion. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried.

Olvey made a motion to approve the minutes of February 10 and February 18, 2026, City Council meetings, including the February 18 special-called meeting.

Sullinger seconded the motion. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried.

Reports and Presentations

Chamber Report – Ann Savage reported that the Chamber has completed a week of training and is transitioning to a new membership management platform, which will provide increased exposure and additional benefits for members, including website listings and a member portal for updates, event postings, and calendar access. She stated that the Chamber continues ongoing training to serve the community better and has added three new members: Larry's Pizza, Factory Connection (with a ribbon-cutting ceremony), and Randolph County Abstract. A membership drive is also underway, with new materials developed to highlight Chamber benefits and support for local businesses. Savage reported that student ambassadors visited the airport for a presentation and will visit Cox Farms next month. She noted the Chamber will be more active in the community and asked if there were any questions.

Department Head Reports

Aquatics Department Update: Tanner informed that the city will begin advertising for a new Aquatics Manager in the coming months. In the interim, operations will be supported by two assistant managers, Kyle Ford, and additional staff assistance as needed.

Shooting Range Event Update: Tanner reported that a combination shoot-and-turkey event will be held on the 22nd, beginning at 9:00 a.m. The event will include various shooting competitions and activities; details are available on the City's Facebook page and website. He noted increased participation in recent events and ongoing efforts to expand programming at the shooting range, including potential partnerships with local schools.

Pool Maintenance Update Tanner also reported that the pool heater has been repaired and is currently maintaining a temperature of 82 degrees.

Animal Shelter Update: Pratt reported on potential cost savings related to cleaning supplies and chemicals used at the animal shelter. He stated that the current annual cost is approximately \$3,246.50 and that he is exploring a new supplier offering expanded services, including a maintained chemical pump system. The estimated cost is approximately \$50 per week, or \$2,600 annually, with the possibility of additional government pricing at a lower rate. Mr. Pratt will follow up with additional pricing information.

Old Business

Ordinance 2026-06 (Aaron Street Closure) The Council considered an ordinance to vacate and close a portion of the east end of Aaron Street. It was noted that the area in question is a small block previously discussed and, upon closure, the property will revert to the adjacent landowner in accordance with state law, effectively squaring the property boundaries.

A motion was made by Olvey and seconded by King to place Ordinance 2026-06 on first reading. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried.

The ordinance, titled "An Ordinance Vacating and Closing that Part of the East End of Aaron Street, South of Lot 20 of Block Seven of the East Airport Second Addition to the City of Pocahontas, and for Other Purposes," was read.

A motion to suspend the rules and place the ordinance on second and third readings by title only was made by Olvey and seconded by Scott. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Olvey and seconded by Sullinger to adopt the Ordinance. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried. This is **Ordinance 2026-06.**

Ordinance 2026-07 (Annexation of 53 Acres) The Council considered Ordinance 2026-07, which will annex approximately 53 acres into the City of Pocahontas. It was noted that the property is contiguous to the city and, upon annexation, will be assigned to Ward One (1).

A motion was made by Olvey and seconded by Scott to place Ordinance 2026-07 on first reading. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried.

The ordinance, titled "An Ordinance Accepting the Annexation of Certain Territory to the City of Pocahontas, Approving the Schedule of Services to be Extended to Said Area, and Assigning Such to Ward One," was read.

A motion was made by Scott and seconded by Sullinger to suspend the rules and place the ordinance on second and third readings by title only. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Olvey and seconded by Swann to adopt the Ordinance. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried. This is **Ordinance 2026-07.**

Annexation Discussion – Road Maintenance Considerations

The Council discussed the County Judge's direction regarding future annexations. It was noted that when annexing property, the City may also assume responsibility for adjacent county roads, particularly if both sides of a roadway are included in the annexation.

Council members clarified that if annexation borders only one side of a road, maintenance may not be required; however, this should be considered on a case-by-case basis. It was emphasized that road maintenance could become an additional municipal service obligation alongside utilities and other services in future annexations.

It was further noted that the current annexation area includes a state highway along its southern boundary, limiting the immediate impact.

Ordinance 2026-08 (Grease Trap Regulations) The Council considered Ordinance 2026-08 regarding the regulation and enforcement of grease traps. It was explained that the State requires the ordinance as part of wastewater system compliance and inspections. The ordinance provides enforcement authority and establishes guidelines to prevent grease buildup in sewer lines, which can cause blockages, increased maintenance, and additional costs.

A motion was made by Olvey and seconded by King to place Ordinance 2026-08 on first reading, with noted technical corrections. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried.

The ordinance, titled "An Ordinance Adding Sections 10.08.15 through 10.08.18 to Chapter 10.08 of the City of Pocahontas Code of Ordinances for the Regulation and Enforcement of Grease Traps, providing for an Emergency Clause, and for Other Purposes," was read.

A motion was made by Olvey and seconded by Scott to suspend the rules and place the ordinance on second and third readings by title only. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Olvey and seconded by Swann to adopt Ordinance 2026-08. A roll call vote was taken, with all members present voting "Yes." Motion carried.

A motion to approve the emergency clause was made by King and seconded by Olvey. A roll call vote was taken, with all members present voting "Yes." Motion carried. This is **Ordinance 2026-08.**

Telecommunications Ordinance (Tabled) Dunham presented proposed amendments to the City's telecommunications ordinance, including revisions discussed at the previous meeting. Updates included prohibiting telecommunications towers in C-1 zones, adding application and permit fees, requiring the removal of unused towers after a specified period, and addressing co-location requirements for multiple providers.

Following the discussion, it was noted that additional time was needed for Council members to review the proposed changes.

A motion to table the ordinance until the April Council meeting was made by Swann and seconded by Olvey. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried. **Tabled to April.**

Discussion - International Maintenance Code: Mayor Futrell opened a discussion regarding the International Maintenance Code, noting concerns over misinformation on social media and emphasizing that adoption of the code is not new to Arkansas. He clarified that the city is not attempting to rename or overreach, and invited Council members to ask questions.

Dunham provided context, noting that the code is primarily designed for larger cities but offers useful habitability standards. He acknowledged concerns regarding specific sections, including:

- **Section 105.3 (Right of Entry)** – Potential conflicts with Fourth Amendment rights, emphasizing that consent is required or legal remedies must be followed.
- **Section 109.2.1 (Authority to Disconnect Utilities)** – Noting that the Council rejected prior proposed ordinances on this topic.

Dunham noted that most provisions in the International Maintenance Code already align with the city's adopted codes (e.g., plumbing, mechanical, building codes) and that adopting a compacted version could simplify enforcement while retaining protections.

Council members discussed implementation, including rental inspection requirements and the potential to require landlords to hold a city license, similar to business licenses. It was clarified that the process could be limited to certain properties to avoid undue burden.

A committee was proposed to review and refine the code for Pocahontas, consisting of three Council members: **Jamie Sullinger, Danny Swann, and Nathan Camp**. The committee will review the code, propose amendments, and present its recommendations to the Council for approval.

No formal motion regarding adoption was made at this time; the discussion clarified concerns, reviewed key provisions, and established the review committee.

Discussion – Aquatic Center Credit Card Program: Mayor Futrell noted that last month, Sarah had discussed implementing a new credit card program for the Aquatic Center, but no formal resolution had yet been finalized.

Michelle Teel explained that the paperwork exists, but with Sarah leaving, access and account setup are still in progress. She noted that additional information is needed to complete the Twilio process agreement, which connects the various apps required for the program. While the full system is not yet in use, the Aquatic Center continues to accept credit cards through the current method.

Swann motioned to table further action, seconded by Olvey, on the credit card resolution until the April council meeting to allow staff time to finalize details. All in favor voted “Aye,” with none opposed. Motion carried. **Tabled to April.**

New Business

Zoning Ordinance 2026-09: Mayor Futrell introduced Ordinance 2026-09, relating to the zoning classification of a specific land area associated with Joshua Bettis and Bettis Bluff Investments LLC.

Dunham explained that a public hearing was held following last month’s council meeting, with no opposition present. The Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously approved the rezoning from industrial to **R3 (Residential 3)**. He clarified that Trammell Drive, which runs along the west side of the property, was dedicated to the city, and the developer has agreed to be responsible for paving the street before construction.

Dunham further explained the layout: the north side of Trammell Drive retains **R2** zoning for two lots, while the east and west sides have been rezoned **R3** for future development, including apartments and single-family homes. A portion of Aaron Street was vacated at the property owner's request to prevent it from extending into the development.

Olvey asked about the cost and process for updating zoning maps. Dunham confirmed that all historical planning, zoning, conditional uses, and replats since 2016 are being digitized and sent to Garver to update the official zoning map. Once completed, the interactive maps will be accessible online for staff, council, and public reference.

Teel noted the need to obtain a quote from Garver before beginning work.

A Motion was made by Olvey and seconded by King to place Ordinance 2026-09 on first reading. All in favor, motion carried. *"An Ordinance 2026-09 amends Ordinance 2016-03 to reclassify specific land in Pocahontas from **Industrial-A (IA)** to **R3**, declaring an emergency for preservation of public peace, health, safety, and welfare"* was read.

A motion was made by Olvey and seconded by Swann to suspend the rules and place the ordinance on second and third readings by title only. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried.

A motion was made by King and seconded by Sullinger to adopt the Ordinance. All in favor voted "Aye," with none opposed. Motion carried.

A motion to approve the emergency clause was made by Olvey and seconded by King. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor. A roll call vote was taken, and the results were as follows: Tim Scott – Yes, Danny Swann – Yes, Rob Olvey – Yes, Jamie Sullinger – Yes, Kerri King – Yes. **Nathan Camp was absent.** This is **Ordinance 2026-09.**

Scribers Note:

City Attorney Grider noted a typographical correction made by Dunham: the zoning designation should be **Industrial-A (IA)**, not AI. This will be corrected in the official records.

Mayor Futrell concluded new business, noting no further items for discussion.

Mayor Comments:

Arkansas Municipal League Summer Meeting – June 17–19. The mayor encouraged council members and other city officials to attend, noting that the meetings are informative. Charlotte will coordinate reservations for those attending.

1. **NRCS Visit to Baltz Lake** – Mayor and staff met with NRCS representatives, including Bobby Meyer, to review water management improvements. The constant-flow tower is functioning as designed, and recent high-water levels triggered overflow for the first time, confirming proper operation. Cleanup and shoreline restoration have created the appearance of lower water levels, but measurements confirm consistent volume.
2. **Property Sale Inquiry** – A citizen expressed interest in purchasing the city-owned property on Mar Street (former Rock building site). The mayor has discussed with council members and asked for input on potential next steps.

3. **Jansen Drive Road Maintenance** – The road is partially in city limits and partially in the county. The mayor requested council approval to ask Judge Wicker and the Quorum Court to dedicate the entire road to the city, allowing the city to maintain and pave it this summer.
4. **Spring Cleanup** – Scheduled for March 23–27. The city will pick up designated items at no charge, but residents must report large items (e.g., refrigerators, mattresses) to City Hall. The cost for landfill disposal will be billed to residents as needed.
5. **Water and Sewer Bond Report** – A note from First National Bank of Commerce regarding annual reporting on the refunded bonds was included in the council packet. Questions can be directed to Michelle Teel.
6. **Winebaugh Competition Towing Property Cleanup** – Mayor and Kevin Dunham noted ongoing civil matters regarding the cleanup of towing and salvage properties. Progress is being made, with crews working regularly, and the property owner is addressing state regulations regarding storage and operations.
7. **FOIA Jump Drive Costs** – For transparency, the council was informed that FOIA requests requiring a city-provided jump drive will cost \$15 each, reflecting the city's current purchase cost. Residents may provide their own drives to avoid the fee.

Mayor Futrell asked if there were any additional questions or comments from the council; none were raised.

Motion to adjourn made by Swann, seconded by Olvey, approved by voice vote; meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by:



Michelle Teel
City Clerk/Treasurer,



Keith Futrell
Mayor

