

**MINUTES OF THE
LAWNDALE CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
August 17, 2026**

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Pullen-Miles called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at the City Council Chamber, 14717 Burin Avenue, Lawndale, California.

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Robert Pullen-Miles, Mayor Pro Tem Sirley Cuevas, Councilmember Bernadette Suarez, Councilmember Francisco M. Talavera, Councilmember Pat Kearney

Other Participants: Acting City Manager Lucho Rodriguez, City Attorney Gregory M. Murphy, City Clerk Erica Harbison, Assistant City Clerk Yvette Palomo, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Captain Michael Gomez, Community Services Director Jason Minter, Municipal Services Director Michael Reyes, Community Development Acting/Interim Director Jose Hernandez, Public Works Associate Engineer Nick Petrevski

B. CEREMONIALS (Flag Salute and Inspiration)

Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas led the flag salute. Pastor Dwight Dudley provided the inspiration.

C. PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

1. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Update

Captain Gomez summarized the recent law enforcement activities and invited the community to the Neighborhood Watch Meeting scheduled to be held on September 16, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Harold E. Hoffman Community Center.

D. PRESENTATIONS

2. Recognition of Commander Nicole N. Palomino

— Presentation of City plaque to Commander Nicole N. Palomino in recognition of her service to the City of Lawndale in the role of Captain, South Los Angeles Station

The City Council presented a City plaque to Commander Nicole N. Palomino in recognition of her service to the City of Lawndale in the role of Captain, South Los Angeles Station.

E. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS - ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA (Public Comments)

Caitlyn Coulter, Library Manager, announced the library's upcoming events.

Holly Osborne, Redondo Beach Resident, commented on measurements and housing within the right-of-way (ROW), planned projects at El Nido Park in Torrance, and public noticing.

Pam London, former Resident, participating remotely, commented on code enforcement, code violations, property records and permits, the standards applicable to elected officials, and expressed concerns regarding open code cases involving Councilmembers and their compliance with City codes.

Anonymous, participating remotely, made offensive comments.

Kent Oliver, Resident, submitted an electronic comment on objection to Closed Session Item K.17. Conference with Legal Counsel- Existing Litigation.

Holly Osborne, Redondo Beach Resident, submitted an electronic comment regarding the Redondo/Frontier Development at El Nido Park in Torrance.

F. COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL

Councilmember Kearney thanked everyone for attending tonight in person and remotely, thanked Library Manager Coulter for providing the library updates and thanked Redondo Beach Resident Osborne for providing the information on Redondo Beach.

Councilmember Talavera thanked everyone for attending tonight in person and remotely, thanked Library Manager Coulter for providing the library updates, thanked Redondo Beach Resident Osborne for providing the information on Redondo Beach, thanked former Resident London for her comments, commented on the code case at his home, asked City Attorney Murphy to provide background information on the existing litigation involving the City of Lawndale v. LA Investment, and requested an update regarding the water run off issue involving Bossa Nova Brazilian Cuisine.

City Attorney Murphy provided a report that the existing litigation case, City of Lawndale v. LA Investment, is active and that an appeal may be possible.

Acting City Manager Rodriguez and Municipal Services Director Reyes responded that staff and proper agencies have investigated the matter.

Councilmember Suarez thanked everyone for attending tonight in person and remotely, and requested staff review a complaint regarding residents being locked in Rudolph Park and the park closing before 8:00 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas thanked those attending the meeting in person and remotely.

Mayor Pullen-Miles thanked everyone for attending tonight in person and remotely, thanked Library Manager Coulter for providing the library updates and thanked Redondo Beach Resident Osborne for providing information about Metro projects.

G. CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilmember Suarez requested that staff explore car wash membership to reduce car wash costs for City vehicles.

A motion was made by Councilmember Kearney and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

3. Motion to read by title only and waive further reading of all ordinances listed on the Agenda

— Recommendation: that the City Council that the City Council read by title only and waive further reading of all ordinances listed on the agenda.

4. Accounts Payable Register

— Recommendation: Staff recommends that City Council adopts Resolution No. CC-2608-040 authorizing the payment of certain claims and demands in the amount of \$327,504.65.

5. Minutes of the Lawndale City Council Regular Meeting, August 3, 2026

— Recommendation: that the City Council approve the minutes.

6. Consideration of Claim for Damage against the City

— Recommendation: that the City Council reject the claim filed by Fiona McKeown and instruct staff to process the appropriate correspondence to the claimant.

7. Youth Advisory Committee Appointments for 2026-2028 Term

— Recommendation: that the City Council 1.) Approve the Mayor's appointments by directing staff to insert the appointees' names in Section 1 and 2 of Resolution No. CC-2608-041; and 2.) Adopt Resolution No. CC-2608-041 as amended.

H. ADMINISTRATION

8. Community Development Block Grant ADA Sidewalks Award of Contract

— Recommendation: that the City Council 1) Award the construction contract to Hardy & Harper, Inc., in the amount of \$63,000.00 for the CDBG Project No. 602748-25 Various Locations ADA Sidewalks & Access Ramps Project; 2) Approve the construction Contingency of \$15,750.00 for CDBG Project No. 602748-25 Various Locations ADA Sidewalks & Access Ramps Project; 3) Approve the CDBG Consultant costs of \$15,000.00 for Administrative and Labor Compliance costs; 4) Authorize the City Manager to file a Notice of Project Completion with the Los Angeles County following the completion of the project; and 5) Find that this project is exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Section 15301 (c), maintenance or repair of existing streets involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination are categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

Public Works Associate Engineer Petrevski presented the staff report.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas and seconded by Councilmember Kearney to award the construction contract to Hardy & Harper, Inc., in the amount of \$63,000.00 for the CDBG Project No. 602748-25 Various Locations ADA Sidewalks & Access Ramps Project, approve the construction contingency of \$15,750.00 for CDBG Project No. 602748-25 Various Locations ADA Sidewalks & Access Ramps Project, approve the CDBG Consultant costs of \$15,000.00 for Administrative and

Labor Compliance costs, authorize the City Manager to file a Notice of Project Completion with the Los Angeles County following the completion of the project, and find that this project is exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Section 15301 (c), maintenance or repair of existing streets involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination are categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

9. Memorandum of Agreement for Administration and Cost Sharing for Implementing the Coordinated Integrated Monitoring Programs and Enhanced Watershed Management Program for the Dominguez Channel Watershed

— Recommendation: that the City Council authorize the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement for the period of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029, between the cities of Los Angeles, Carson, El Segundo, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Lawndale, Lomita, the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, the County of Los Angeles, and the South Bay Cities Council of Governments for a total of \$84,944 for Administration and Cost Sharing for Implementing the Coordinated Integrated Monitoring Program (CIMP) and Watershed Management Program (WMP) and the Dominguez Channel Watershed Management Area.

Public Works Associate Engineer Petrevski presented the staff report.

Discussion ensued regarding the water agreement, including current fees, the existing contract, and fluctuations in annual costs as testing requirements vary each year and result in different costs.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas and seconded by Councilmember Talavera to authorize the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement for the period of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029, between the cities of Los Angeles, Carson, El Segundo, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Lawndale, Lomita, the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, the County of Los Angeles, and the South Bay Cities Council of Governments for a total of \$84,944 for Administration and Cost Sharing for Implementing the Coordinated Integrated Monitoring Program (CIMP) and Watershed Management Program (WMP) and the Dominguez Channel Watershed Management Area. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

10. Human Resources Interim Services

— Recommendation: that the City Council approve the Professional Services Agreement with MV Cheng & Associates for professional human resources consulting services in the amount of \$49,500.

Acting City Manager Rodriguez presented the staff report.

Discussion ensued regarding the agreement, the possibility of establishing a standalone Human Resources Manager position in the future, and introduced Cathy Thompson of MV Cheng and Associates as the City's Human Resources consultant.

A motion was made by Councilmember Kearney and seconded by Councilmember Talavera to approve the Professional Services Agreement with MV Cheng & Associates for professional human resources consulting services in the amount of \$49,500. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

11. American Rescue Plan Act Funds Use Update and Reallocation

— Staff recommends the reallocation of \$80,000 from the Buy Local Program and \$179,202 from the Hawthorne Boulevard Street Improvement Project to the Youth Teen/Development Center Project for a total of \$259,202 to be expended by December 31, 2026. This reallocation would leave a remaining balance of \$7,250 for the Buy Local Program, which would be available through December 31st 2026, or until funds are depleted, whichever occurs first.

Consulting Finance Director Fortune presented the staff report.

Discussion ensued regarding reposting the rebate program on the City's website and providing an update on the Youth Development Center project at the next Council meeting.

Mayor Pullen-Miles opened public comments.

Pam London, former Resident, participating remotely, commented on employee retention and expressed concerns regarding funding for the Teen Center, including the need to prevent issues experienced with the previous center.

Mayor Pullen-Miles closed public comments.

A motion was made by Councilmember Suarez and seconded by Councilmember Kearney to reallocate \$80,000 from the Buy Local Program and \$179,202 from the Hawthorne Boulevard Street Improvement Project to the Youth Teen/Development Center Project for a total of \$259,202 to be expended by December 31, 2026. This reallocation would leave a remaining balance of \$7,250 for the Buy Local Program, which would be available through December 31st 2026, or until funds are depleted, whichever occurs first. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

12. Contract for Kenneling and Animal Care Services

— Recommendation: that the City Council approve the contract with Lovejoy Foundation for Kenneling and Animal Care Services for the City of Lawndale.

Municipal Services Director Reyes presented the staff report.

Discussion ensued regarding the storage and disposal of deceased animals, including the purchase of a freezer, associated costs, budget allocation, labeling and weighing animals, and alternative disposal options.

Mayor Pullen-Miles opened public comments.

Anonymous, participating remotely, made offensive comments.

Mayor Pullen-Miles closed public comments.

In response to Councilmember Suarez's question, City Attorney Murphy stated that staff could look into identifying the remote participant's IP address and explained that action may be taken when comments consist solely of vulgar language and do not address a matter within the Council's jurisdiction.

A motion was made by Councilmember Suarez and seconded by Councilmember Kearney to approve the contract with Lovejoy Foundation for Kenneling and Animal Care Services for the City of Lawndale and purchase a scale. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

13. Service Agreement with Lightbox for Geographic Information Services (GIS) System

— Recommendation: that the City Council approve the 2026-2027 Order Form with Lightbox Vision for geographic information system services for a one year term in the amount of \$20,982.70.

Community Development Acting/Interim Director Hernandez presented the staff report.

A motion was made by Councilmember Kearney and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas to approve the 2026-2027 Order Form with Lightbox Vision for geographic information system services for a one year term in the amount of \$20,982.70. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

I. CITY MANAGER REPORT

Acting City Manager Rodriguez deferred his time to Community Services Director Minter.

Community Services Director Minter provided an update on the Lemonade Day program, including the upcoming information session, participant requirements, and introduced Gabriel Garcia, Recreation Supervisor, as the program contact at (310) 973-3076. Community Services Director Minter also provided an update on the Movie on the Lawn event scheduled for August 21, 2026, with activities beginning at 5:30 p.m. and the movie starting at 8:00 p.m.

J. ITEMS FROM CITY COUNCILMEMBERS

14. Discussion of Status of Investigative Report

— Recommendation: that the City Council discuss and determine whether to make the above-referenced report available in redacted form to the public.

City Attorney Murphy presented the staff report.

By City Council consensus, this item was tabled for a future meeting.

15. Report of Attendance at Meetings

Councilmember Kearney attended the City's National Night Out event, Quick Quack Car Wash Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony, a Liability Trust Fund Oversight Committee, and Launch Into Learning Fair.

Councilmember Talavera attended the City's National Night Out event, South Bay Summer Business Mixer & Expo, Senior Summertime Luncheon, Quick Quack Car Wash Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony, Launch Into Learning Fair, and wished all teachers, staff and students a successful school year.

Councilmember Suarez attended the City's National Night Out event and asked for the status of the possibility of bringing animal control services in-house.

Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas attended the City's National Night Out event and thanked staff for putting the event together.

Mayor Pullen-Miles attended the City's National Night Out event, Quick Quack Car Wash Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony, Launch Into Learning Fair, and Senior Summertime Luncheon.

K. CLOSED SESSION

16. Public Employee Appointment

— The City Council will conduct a closed session, pursuant to Government Code section 54957(b), regarding the appointment of a City Manager.

17. Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation

— The City Council will conduct a closed session, pursuant to Government Code section 54956.9(d) (1), to discuss existing litigation: Name of Case: City of Lawndale v. LA Investment, LLC (LA Superior Court Case No. 20TRCV00065).

City Attorney Murphy read the Closed Session items by title only.

The City Council convened into closed session at 7:39 p.m.

The City Council reconvened from closed session at 8:11 p.m.

City Attorney Murphy reported that agenda item K.16. Public Employee Appointment will be addressed under agenda item L.18. Approval of City Manager Employment Agreement and Appointment of New City Manager.

City Attorney Murphy reported that there was no reportable action taken for agenda item K.17. Conference with Legal Counsel- Existing Litigation.

L. ADMINISTRATION - Additional Business Item

18. Approval of City Manager Employment Agreement and Appointment of New City Manager

— Recommendation: Pending closed session discussion.

City Attorney Murphy presented the staff report.

Mayor Pullen-Miles opened public comments.

Randall Abram, Resident, congratulated the new City Manager and expressed concerns about the timing of the contract approval and the limited opportunity for public review and comment.

Anonymous, participating remotely, made offensive comments.

Pam London, former Resident, participating remotely, commented on the City Manager appointment, referencing past City Manager performance reviews, compensation, employee retention, the challenges facing the City, and congratulated the incoming City Manager and wished him success in his new position.

Mayor Pullen-Miles closed public comments.

Juan Arauz, incoming City Manager, introduced himself, shared that he has 20 years of municipal government experience, thanked the City Council for its confidence, and expressed his commitment to serving the City and community.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas and seconded by Councilmember Suarez to approve the proposed City Manager Employee Agreement between the City of Lawndale and Juan Arauz, and appoint Juan Arauz as the City Manager effective August 24, 2026. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

M. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Mayor Pullen-Miles adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m.



Robert Pullen-Miles, Mayor

ATTEST:



Erica Harbison, City Clerk

Approved: September 21, 2026