



Mayor Ernie Penn

City Attorney Jay Moore

City Clerk Kelly Penn

City Council Member Sherry Mathews
Ward 1 Position 1

Council Member Keith Lipford
Ward 2 Position 1

Council Member Brenda Cunningham
Ward 3 Position 1

Council Member Diane Bryant
Ward 4 Position 1

Council Member Hunter Carnahan
Ward 1 Position 2

Council Member Bobby Morgan
Ward 2 Position 2

Council Member Linda Bell
Ward 3 Position 2

Council Member Kara Gardenhire
Ward 4 Position 2

A meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on February 9, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Farmington City Hall, located at 354 West Main Street, Farmington Arkansas. Mayor Penn called the meeting to order.

PRESENT: Council Members Diane Bryant, Keith Lipford, Brenda Cunningham, Sherry Mathews, Hunter Carnahan, Linda Bell, Bobby Morgan, Kara Gardenhire, Mayor Ernie Penn, City Attorney Jay Moore, Clerk Kelly Penn, City Business Manager Melissa McCarville, Press and Audience Members.

Pledge of Allegiance

Comments from Citizens –

Pat Lassiter – The senior center is in need of a new van and is seeking donations in the amount of \$25,000.

Norm Toring – The Planning Commission and City Council needs to have a work session together. There were 3 new homes going in on Clyde Carnes Road and the driveways do not have drainage culverts.

Diane Bryant - She is running for Washington County Justice of the Peace.

Approval of the January 12th, 2026, City Council Meeting Minutes

On the motion of Council Member Bryant and a second by Council Member Carnahan and by the consent of all Council Members present after a roll call vote, the minutes were approved as presented by a vote of 8-0.

Financial Reports

Mayor Penn presented the financial reports to the City Council. Monthly city sales tax increased 4.72% compared to 2025. Monthly state/county sales tax decreased 2.26% compared to 2025.

City Business Manager McCarville reported an error in the reporting of City Business Licenses income in November and December of 2025. While preparing the amended budget she realized the amounts were unusually high. \$21,000 in November and \$36,000 in December. Upon review, they were invoices for 2026 incorrectly credited in 2025 and there were some duplicate entries. The cause of the error was unclear; a software issue or human error was unable to be determined. The duplicate entries have been eliminated, and the revenue will be correctly reported for 2026. A former Legislative Auditor was consulted, and she advised the issue be formally reported to the council and included in the official minutes to be provided to Legislative Audit.

Entertain a motion to read all Ordinances and Resolutions by title only.

On the motion of Council Member Cunningham and a second by Council Member Mathews, and by the consent of all Council Members present after a roll call vote, the motion to read all Ordinances and Resolutions by title only was approved 8-0.

Proclamations, Special Announcements, Committee/Commission Appointments - None

Committee Reports – No committee reports were submitted.

Items to be removed from the City of Farmington – Police Department

On the motion of Council Member Carnahan and a second by Council Member Morgan and by the consent of all Council Members present after a roll call vote, the motion to remove a Kenwood Radio Model VM5000 (Serial #X93009214030173) City Tag #1031 from inventory was approved 8-0.

Old Business – None

New Business

Resolution 2026-03 A Resolution providing for the adoption of the amended budget for the City of Farmington, Arkansas for the 12 months beginning January 1, 2025 and ending December 31, 2025; appropriating money for each item, and for other purposes.

On the motion of Council Member Bell and a second by Council Member Gardenhire and by the consent of all Council Members present after a roll call vote, the motion to approve Resolution 2026-03 was approved 8-0.

Resolution 2026-04 A Resolution waiving requirement for competitive bidding for the construction of sanitary sewer improvements in Farmington from 175 W. Cimmaron Place, Farmington, extending north 2,820 linear feet along the creek to the Farmington Branch.

On the motion of Council Member Carnahan and a second by Council Member Bryant and by the consent of all Council Members present after a roll call vote, the motion to approve Resolution 2026-04 was approved 8-0.

Amend the Professional Services Agreement for Creekside Trail.

On the motion of Council Member Carnahan and a second by Council Member Bell and by the consent of all Council Members present after a roll call vote, the motion to amend the Burns & McDonald Professional services agreement in the amended amount of \$32,755.00, to bring the lump sum total to \$164,355.00 was approved 8-0.

State of the City Address – Mayor Penn

Citizens of Farmington and City Council Members: It is my honor tonight to present the 2026 State of the City Address. I would like to begin by thanking our city employees for their dedication and commitment to making Farmington a better place to live. It takes a team effort every day to provide the services that our citizens require, both now and in the future. I am pleased to report that our city is financially sound, and we have maintained excellent cash reserves. We have always budgeted conservatively, and our City Sales tax and County sales tax continue to increase each year. Based upon our 2025 budget numbers, our City Sales tax received was 15.2% higher than budgeted and our County/State sales tax received was 13.4% higher than budgeted. This increase has allowed our city to have funds to support expansion of our city services, add new employees and for Capital Improvement projects to start and be completed without interruption, without incurring massive debt or over taxing our citizens with additional bond issues. Our city was approved for several grants from government agencies that allowed us to complete major projects in 2025. Some of the projects that were completed in 2025:

- The \$15 million dollar Hwy 170 project that increased the safety for our residents who travel this road every day as well as the students and parents who travel to our schools
- Angus Lane widening and overlay project
- Broyles Street curb ramps, new crosswalks, signage and striping to improve safety on this road
- Repair to the Fitness Center (previously old city hall building)
- Re-surface the Tennis Courts in Creekside Park

The following projects will be completed or started in 2026:

- Double Springs Bridge replacement/repairs---\$6.5 million funding will be provided by Dept of Hud, Federal appropriations by Congressman Steve Womack
- Sewer Line Expansion from 12" to 18" by a joint venture with Riverwood Homes, D R Horton homes and City of Farmington
- Senior Center remodel with \$396,292 grant money CDBG funds
- Creekside Park Trail Project \$900,000 from ARDOT/Federal Transportation funding and Walton Family providing \$450,000 for lights and landscaping

- 2026 State Street Aid funding of \$400,000 for 3 streets needing improvement
- Impact Fee Study
- Implement our new Strategic Planning actions

Our city continues to experience growth in the residential and commercial areas. Growth can be challenging at times, but it can also bring new opportunities for our city and provide additional employment opportunities for our residents. In 2025, our city issued 268 new residential permits. The residential permits consisted of 262 single family homes with a value of \$110,674,000 and 6 Duplex permits with a value of \$2,656,000. Our city population from the 2020 Census was 7,584, in 2023 that increased to 9,761. In 2025, our population increased to 10,525 residents.

Farmington continues to be an extremely attractive place for families to locate and send their children to school. Our outstanding school district and its facilities continue to be one of the most attractive features of our community, as evident by our student population of 3,100 children. With the commitment from our City Council, it is imperative that we work together and implement our new strategic plan for the future growth of our city. In 2005, our city leaders with input from the public put together a 20-year strategic growth plan for the City of Farmington. I am proud to report that we completed that plan. This year we will set in motion a new 30-year plan with input from city leaders, council members, planning commissioners and most importantly the citizens of Farmington. I look forward to everyone's input as we chart the growth for the future generations that will call Farmington home. In closing, I would like to thank the council for serving the citizens of Farmington. It is not always an easy job and sometimes we do not agree with each other, but our job is to make the best decision for the city and the people we represent. Thank you to our Planning Commissioners, who have worked tirelessly in the past few years to update our zoning requirements to keep up with the growth and demands our City has experienced. I have served the city of Farmington for 28 years, 24 as your Mayor and 4 on the city council, and I have been honored to do so, but this will be my last state of the city address, I will not be running for reelection. It is time for some new fresh progressive points of view to guide our city in the future. I would encourage our citizens and especially our young people to get involved and run for office. Being able to run unopposed over the years as some of us have is a good thing, because it makes you feel the citizens are satisfied with the job we are doing. But at the same time I worry that in today's current climate of cancel culture and keyboard warriors, many people are simply unwilling to run for public office. I encourage our citizens to be involved and take interest in shaping their city, it is time for the next generation of leaders to take ownership. In closing, I would like to thank the council for serving the citizens of Farmington. It is not always an easy job and sometimes we do not agree with each other, but our job is to make the best decision for the city and the people we represent. Thank you to our Planning Commissioners, who have worked tirelessly in the past few years to update our zoning requirements to keep up with the growth and demands our City has experienced. I have received a lot of blessings working here at the city of Farmington. I have had a lot of great people to work with. I have a very special person that I work with, and it's been a blessing for her to be in my life. My wife Kelly has served alongside me for 20 years and had dedicated a lot of time and endured some pain and struggles with me serving as Mayor. I just wanted to recognize her for all the great things she does for the city. I could not have done this without her support. Thank you.

Motion to Adjourn

There being no further business coming before the council, the meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm by a motion from Council Member Carnahan and a second by Council Member Bryant until the next regularly scheduled meeting to be held Monday, March 9th, 2026, in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 354 West Main Street, Farmington, Arkansas.

Approved: Ernie Penn, Mayor 

Attest: Kelly Penn, City Clerk 

