

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL
WORK STUDY SESSION HELD BY
THE MOORE CITY COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 3, 2025 – 5:30 P.M.**

The City Council of the City of Moore met in the Upstairs Conference Room, 301 North Broadway, Moore, Oklahoma on November 3, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. with Mayor Mark Hamm presiding.

Adam Webb
Councilman, Ward I

Kathy Griffith
Councilwoman, Ward I

Melissa Hunt
Councilwoman, Ward II

Rob Clark
Councilman, Ward II

Sid Porter
Councilman, Ward III

Louie Williams
Councilman, Ward III

PRESENT: Griffith, Porter, Hunt, Williams, Webb, Clark, Hamm
ABSENT: None

Agenda Item Number 2 being:

DISCUSS FUNDING FOR CITY PROJECTS.

Mayor Hamm stated that he requested the Work Study Session because he felt it was important for the City Council to have an opportunity for a more detailed discussion regarding the proposal of a permanent one-cent sales tax for future projects.

Brooks Mitchell, City Manager, gave a presentation at the October 6, 2025 council meeting regarding the possibility of calling an election for February 2026 to consider a permanent one-cent sales tax anticipated to generate \$12 million a year in revenue. Mr. Mitchell stated that the allocation for the sales tax revenue would be 90% for capital projects resulting in \$10.8 million annually, and 10% for Public Safety resulting in \$1.2 million annually.

Mr. Mitchell stated that there has been some conversation regarding the stormwater pond at the wastewater treatment plant. If the tax proposal passes it could fund the project saving the citizens a \$1.40 increase to their water bill.

Mr. Mitchell noted that sales tax notes are easier to obtain and more flexible than General Obligation Bonds. The proposed one-cent sales tax would allow the City to build a cash reserve over the next few years for public safety and capital projects without the necessity to borrow the money. He stated that parameters could be placed on the use of the money since we must be cognizant of a possible economic downturn.

He stated that an item can be placed on the December 1, 2025 agenda to consider calling an election to place the question on the February 10, 2026 ballot.

Mayor Hamm stated that a trade-off for raising the sales tax would be lowering property taxes since we wouldn't have to utilize general obligation bonds as often. He stated that Council requested that the mills

not go over 16.5. His understanding is the mills were at 14.5. He asked how much approving a one-cent sales tax could realistically lower the mills. Councilman Williams stated that he was opposed to lowering the ad valorem taxes because it might allow the opportunity for another entity such as the schools or the county to obtain the difference, and then if it became necessary to raise the property taxes we would likely never get it back. He felt that the idea was good in theory.

Councilwoman Hunt stated that we have a self-imposed limit of 16.5 mills, and asked what if that limit amount is changed to 10 mills. She commented that during her tenure on the Council it was never necessary to go about 16.5 mills.

Mr. Mitchell stated that if the sales tax passed, we have that as a funding source and the flexibility it creates. All things remaining equal the way it was projected out if we don't do a sales tax and don't issue any more G.O. bonds over the next four years the mills will steadily decrease to 8.32 mills. He also felt that the City should keep some degree of a millage rate. So if we ask for a \$10 million G.O. bond for a city-wide arterial street maintenance plan. That could keep the millage rate where it needs to be, while the money can be issued over a period of time.

Councilman Webb asked specifically what projects the one-cent sales tax would fund. Mr. Mitchell felt that the first projects would be drainage projects for NE 20th and Lincoln and Ramblin Oaks, and the public safety facility. The initial design, renderings, and a tentative cost estimate would be available next spring. Councilman Williams asked if there was a cost estimate for the drainage projects. Mr. Mitchell indicated that the two drainage projects would cost around \$20 million. The public safety facility is estimated to cost between \$40 and \$50 million.

Councilman Webb asked if there were other project proposed for the future. Mr. Mitchell indicated that in the 2023 G.O. Bond issues there were several projects that had design money only. Construction funding was needed for the 27th Street project, the Eastern Avenue project from 12th to 27th, and Main Street. There are other projects that we have the engineering for that can be submitted to ACOG for funding, but we do not have the construction funds.

Councilman Webb felt that if the voters are told that the City would like to implement a one cent sales tax and the money would be used for a public safety building and to fix some drainage issues they might not be very receptive. Councilwoman Hunt said that we aren't going to use the General Obligation bonds to funds these things and your property taxes should go down and these things are a tradeoff. Councilman Webb felt that these projects are needed, but there should also be recreational projects that can benefit others. Mr. Mitchell indicated that the Parks Department projects already have funding through the ¼ cent sales tax and the hotel/motel tax. Councilman Webb feel that would difficult to convince the public that the tax is needed. Councilwoman Hunt stated that her calls are primarily regarding street repairs and sidewalks. Councilman Clark added that flooding is a problem too. Councilman Webb felt that the voters would be more willing to vote for the item if the projects had more universal appeal. He did not feel that the projects would not have enough appeal for the tax to pass. Councilwoman Hunt felt that more people would prefer to pay for projects by sales tax than property tax. Other people that come into the community and spend their tax dollars help to fund the projects too. And, not that she would encourage it, there is always the choice to shop outside of the City limits if they do not want to pay the extra tax.

Mr. Mitchell stated that when he became City Manager the police department had access to gun ranges and the fire department to burn towners. Now it has become much more problematic.

Councilman Webb felt that the Council would be in favor of the proposal; however, he felt that if the average voter wasn't excited it might fail and it would be a long time before the issue could be reconsidered. The mayor previously suggested artificial turf for the ballfields which would interest a certain demographic and beautification would interest another demographic. It would get the voters out to vote because of their interest. He did not feel there would be time to adequately explain why there is a

need for a public safety center before an election in February. Councilman Webb stated that seniors are typically the voters that turn out on election day, and they are generally not in support of a tax increase. Councilwoman Hunt commented that the one-cent sales tax would not be restricted forever for to the two projects.

Councilman Clark stated that educating the public would just be as difficult in a short period of time regardless of the projects to be funded by the additional sales tax. Mr. Mitchell advised that there is flexibility in defining and funding capital projects. Councilman Webb felt if a small portion of the funds were dedicated to something with mass appeal it could pass, and he did want it to pass. Councilman Clark stated that the school district does something similar by including multiple items on bond issues such as athletic fields and technology or building upkeep and heating and air. Although he was opposed to adding other capital projects, he had a hard time thinking that we wouldn't reach a lot of people with public safety. Councilman Webb commented that the average voter would be opposed to raising the sales tax and felt it will be way higher comparatively. Councilwoman Hunt stated that it would add a \$1.00 to every \$100 dollars spent.

Mayor Hamm asked if a town hall meeting could be scheduled to discuss some of the items to be funded using the proposed sales tax monies. Councilman Webb felt that a specific project should be listed that would interest more people such as a pickleball court. He suggested designating an amount such as \$750,000 for a pickleball court along with the \$50 million proposed for drainage and a public safety center. He felt that by doing that it would increase the chances of it passing by making it more appealing to a broader voter base. Councilwoman Hunt pointed out that the retired community would not care about pickleball.

Councilman Webb felt it comes down to confidence level on the passage of the vote. He felt his confidence was low while Councilwoman's Hunt was relatively high. He said he would support it regardless.

Mayor Hamm asked for comments from staff. Sue Wood, Parks and Recreation Director, stated that she was in Oklahoma City and one of the issues they proposed was a program called the Sting of Pearl's that failed because there was no financial planning. She suggested having a Moore CARES project or naming it something which could include anything and utilize a smaller portion of the penny sales tax.

Dennis Bothell, Public Works Director, advised that he tracks all of the calls that come in and the majority are street repairs call with the remainder being drainage calls.

Councilman Porter felt that proposing a penny sales tax was a great idea; however, he did not feel that the use of the tax should be set because the tax is a permanent tax and needs change. He instead felt that examples of what the tax could be used for was a better approach. His opinion of the sales tax rate is that it changes and most people aren't going to drive to another city to save a small amount of money in taxes. He did believe it was a one-time shot.

Councilwoman Hunt felt that it was important for the voters to know that by utilizing sales tax the millage rate will go down. She felt it would show a give and take situation. Councilman Williams agreed but felt the City should be careful about setting the cap on the millage rate.

Mayor Hamm asked for comments from Representative Jason Blair who was in attendance at the meeting. Representative Blair suggested not capping the millage rate. He knew it was self-imposed and started when Mayor Lewis commented that he didn't want to exceed 16.5 mills.

Councilman Webb felt that individuals not affected by the flooding would not be in favor of the tax and would look to see if it benefited them in some way. Councilwoman Hunt stated that the benefit to the citizens would be better trained police and fire personnel to protect the City. She asked if data was

available on the percentage of sales tax collected from our residents. Deidre Ebrey, Assistant City Manager/Economic Development Director, advised that it isn't completely scientific but if you look at the geographic around the general retail or trade area within the City there are 17 million visits (frequency) in a year with only 27% of those visits coming from within the 73160 zip code. Not every visit results in purchases. The total number of visitors (people) coming to 73160 is \$1.8 million visitors with only 3.2% from 73160. Councilman Williams requested demographics regarding who votes in each precinct during a normal election cycle.

Ms. Ebrey then presented an example of a survey to obtain citizen input regarding the proposed one-cent sales tax. Bullet points will include information such as the estimated revenue generated by the one-cent increase and the percentage of sales tax paid by residents outside of the city limits. The questionnaire will be placed on the City's website and in the City newsletter. Questions asked are:

- Do you believe the property taxes have gotten too high?
- Would you support a permanent one-cent sales tax increase for capital projects and public safety with a moratorium on future G.O. Bond elections?

Ms. Ebrey indicated that capital projects are defined as streets, drainage, sewer upgrades, and public facilities. Councilwoman Hunt felt that "moratorium" should be defined. Brooks Mitchell, City Manager, stated that we do not want to indicate that we would eliminate GO bond elections entirely; but still assure the citizens that we have no plans to do so in the near future, such as within the next five years or so. Councilman Williams suggested a three to five year period. Ms. Ebrey indicated that responses to the questionnaire will go to the Economic Development department where the responses will be placed in a spreadsheet and forwarded to the City Council each week. Councilman Williams asked what the click rate was for the City's website in a day. Ms. Ebrey estimated around 750 to 800 per day with a length of stay of around three minutes. Mayor Hamm felt that if the data does not support a successful election, the issue can be postponed.

Fire Chief Marlar stated that they are very appreciative of the Council for their support of public safety.

Agenda Item Number 3 being:

ADJOURNMENT

Councilwoman Hunt moved to adjourn the special meeting, second by Councilman Webb.

Ayes: Griffith, Porter, Hunt, Williams, Webb, Clark, Hamm
Nays: None

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

TRANSCRIBED BY:

RHONDA BAXTER, Executive Assistant

FOR:

ADAM WEBB, MPWA Secretary

These minutes passed and approved as noted this ____ day of _____, 2025.

ATTEST:

VANESSA KEMP, City Clerk