Minutes of the Blythe City Council Meeting
April 14, 2026

The April 14, 2026, meeting of the Blythe City Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers by Mayor DeConinck. Also in attendance were Vice Mayor Rodriguez and Council Members Halby, Burton and Spraggins. Staff in attendance included: Interim City Manager and City Clerk Crecelius, City Attorney Roberto, City Treasurer and Finance Director Elms, Public Works Director Elegores, Chief Building Official Brown, Acting Police Chief Walnoha and Fire Chief Hasler.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor DeConinck.

The Invocation was led by Council Member Burton.

PROCLAMATION:

DMV/DONATE LIFE MONTH, APRIL 2026. Interim City Manager Crecelius shared stories received from Alicia Fletcher about her Grandfather John Freeman's Liver Transplant that gave him an additional 18 years of life, Jennifer Lambert who spoke about how her son Zachary's organ donation helped other children and Mallory Crecelius about her aunt Vicki's organ donation that saved seven people. City Clerk Crecelius read the Proclamation declaring April as DMV/Donate Life Month into the record.

CONSENT CALENDAR: *Items on the Consent Calendar are considered routine and will be enacted with one motion of the Council. If any item requires individual consideration, it will be removed from the consent calendar and acted upon separately.*

No public comment. Council Member Burton moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Council Member Spraggins with a unanimous aye vote.

2. Posting of the Agenda.

The agenda was posted on the bulletin boards on the outside of the public entrance to the Council Chamber and near the inside entrance of the Council Chamber and on the City's website on Friday, April 10, 2026.

3. Approval of the Warrant Register.

Recommendation: Approve **4/14/26,** warrants numbered 11466 through 11488 and 80791 through 80828 in the amount of $2,624,370.97; **4/14/26,** Utility Billing Refund warrants numbered 80829 through 80842 in the amount of $3,092.42 and **4/14/26,** warrants numbered 11489 through 11515 and 80843 through 80908 in the amount of $635,209.55.

4. Approval of the Payroll Register.

Recommendation: Approve **4/14/26,** warrants numbered 55664 through 55679 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 64719 through 64798 in the amount of $305,761.19; **4/14/26,** warrants numbered 55680 through 55681 in the amount of $11,910.94; **4/14/26,** warrants numbered 55682 through 55695 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 64799 through 64877 in the amount of $295,575.18; **4/14/2026,** warrant numbered 55696 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 64878 through 64879 in the amount of $10,362.09; **4/14/26,** warrants numbered 55697 through 55713 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 64880 through 64956 in the amount of $301,326.11 and **4/14/2026,** warrants numbered 55714 through 55725 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 64957 through 65050 in the amount of $92,383.24.

5. Minutes of the March 10, 2026 City Council Meeting.

Recommendation: Approve the Minutes of the March 10, 2026 Meeting.

6. **City of Blythe Permits Issued in the Month of March 2026.**
   Recommendation: Receive and file the monthly report.
7. **City of Blythe Fire Department Monthly Activity Report for March 2026.**
   Recommendation: Receive and file the monthly report.
8. **City of Blythe Police Department Monthly Activity Report for March 2026.**
   Recommendation: Receive and file the monthly report.
9. **Quality of Life Program Activity Report for March 2026.**
   Recommendation: Receive and file the monthly report.
10. **Investment Report for Third Quarter Fiscal Year 2025/26.**
    Recommendation: Receive and file the quarterly investment report.
11. **Support for AB 1855 (Gonzalez) and Distressed Hospital Loan Forgiveness for Palo Verde Healthcare District.**
    Recommendation: Retroactively approve the submission of letters of support for AB 1855 and loan forgiveness from the State's Distressed Hospital Loan Program which includes Palo Verde Healthcare District.
12. **Acceptance of Donation - Shuffleboard Table for the Joe Wine Recreation Center.**
    Recommendation: Accept the donation of a shuffleboard table from Antonio Barron for use at the Recreation Center and authorize the Interim City Manager to execute any documents necessary to memorialize the donation.
13. **Acceptance of Work and Notice of Completion - Facilities Painting Project.**
    Recommendation: Accept the work performed by Making It Happen Painting, Inc. for the Facilities Painting Project and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute and file the Notice of Completion and authorize the Interim City Manager to release retention payments and project bonds once appropriate.
14. **Measure A Capital Improvement Plan for Fiscal Years 2027 - 2031.**
    Recommendation: Adopt Blythe's Measure A Local Streets and Road five-year Capital Improvement Plan for FY 2027-2031; approve for submission the Project Status Report for FY 2025/26; authorize the City Manager to execute Blythe's Maintenance of Effort Certification Statement and authorize the Finance Director to make minor amendments as necessary to the annual CIP report per RCTC's procedures for fiscal year 2026-2027.
15. **General Plan Annual Progress Report for 2025.**
    Recommendation: Receive and file the General Plan Progress Report for 2025 and authorize staff to submit the report to the Governor's Office of Land Use and the Department of Housing and Community Development.
16. **First and Murphy Streets Rehabilitation Project Design.**
    Recommendation: Authorize the Interim City Manager to enter into an Agreement with The Holt Group for design of the First and Murphy Streets Rehabilitation project in an amount not to exceed $103,000, once reviewed and approved by the City Attorney.

Council Member Spraggins asked to pull Item No. 8, The Blythe Police Department Monthly Activity Report for March.

No public comment. Council Member Halby moved approval of Consent Calendar Items 1-7 and 9-16. The motion was seconded by Council Member Burton with a unanimous aye vote.

City of Blythe Police Department Monthly Activity Report for March 2026. Council Member Spraggins asked (A) Chief Walnoha to read the activity report for March.

Council Member Spraggins asked why the report doesn't include the drive by shootings that continue to occur. She went on to say that the report is incomplete and does not list the number

of potential homicides, shootings or domestic violence incidents. It has no stats covering the huge increase in violent crimes over the last six months. The Police Department seems incapable of addressing it.

(A) Chief Walnoha stated there were no shootings or drive byes during the month of March.

Council Member Spraggins stated the report should not be accepted as it is incomplete.

(A) Chief Walnoha stated if you would like to add stats to the report, we can do that with direction.

Interim City Manager Crecelius stated this report has been presented in this format for many years. You can provide direction on the items you would like included in the report moving forward. If you would like the report moved from the Consent Calendar, the Council can direct staff on how to present the report. We are happy to take input and make those changes for the next Council Meeting.

Council Member Spraggins stated we should not accept this report as its incomplete.

Mayor DeConinck asked if we can accept what is presented now and provide additional information to staff. He asked if the shootings are listed in the report currently. It was reported they are not listed unless there is an arrest.

Vice Mayor Rodriguez stated he thinks what Council Member Spraggins is trying to address are things the public would have questions about. These would be violent or dangerous in nature such as residential burglaries and drive bys. I understand that this report has been standard for a while, but it is lacking information the public wants and it's best to stay on top of it and inform as best we can. If the information can be provided without jeopardizing the case.

Chief Walnoha stated whatever you would like to see reflected on the monthly stats we can do that.

Interim City Manager Crecelius stated I take it back, I do believe this report changed slightly when the CAD system was implemented. I think we have direction on what you would like to see in this report and we can look at the CAD System to see what stats we can provide. We can bring it back at the next meeting for discussion on which categories you want to add, and if there are categories that can be removed if nobody is interested in that information. Tonight's item is a receive and file. This is the report, so we recommend you receive and file this report, and we will come back to the next meeting with some options to make this report more suitable for your needs.

Mayor DeConinck asked Council Member Spraggins what she wanted.

Council Member Spraggins stated I don't want the report at all. It's incomplete.

Council Member Burton asked what makes it incomplete. If we haven't mandated that you put something in there, and this is the standard and we have a Study Session to modify it would that make it more suitable? Do we determine what is incomplete?

Interim City Manager Crecelius stated at some point staff was directed to put this report on the Consent Calendar. I don't know of any recent changes that have been made or directed to be made to this report, so as of now this is the report that has been given to Council for many years. So, per direction to staff, this is the complete report. However, Council can provide further direction to staff at any time. If there is additional information you want, we can do that moving forward.

Vice Mayor Rodriguez moved to table the item. The motion was seconded by Councilman Burton.

Mayor DeConnick asked Council Member Spraggins what she would like to include in the report.

Council Member Spraggins reported there are multiple things.

Mayor DeConinck asked her if she could elaborate.

Council Member Spraggins asked if a drive by was an attempted homicide. She asked about the 7 domestic violence incidents. I know we had a drive by in March. She asked for all of her remarks to be documented for the record in the minutes.

There was a unanimous aye vote on the motion to table the item.

PUBLIC HEARING: None

CONTINUED BUSINESS:

Palo Verde Hospital Ad Hoc Committee Update. Interim City Manager Crecelius reported no updates. She stated this is a standing item under Continued Business. Now that the County team is on site, and there are not a lot of updates to provide should we only report when there is an update?

Council provided direction to keep this item on the Agenda as a standing item.

No public comment The item was received and filed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Professional Services Agreement for Enterprise Resource Planning Consulting Services with Berry, Dunn, McNeil & Parker, LLC. Finance Director Elms stated the City's current financial software will be unsupported as of March 2027. The Development Services Department software cannot be updated due to compatibility issues. The two systems have served the City for more than twenty years. Due to the critical need of an ERP system, staff released a Request for Proposal for the expertise and services of a consultant to achieve the successful selection and deployment of a new system. Funding was approved in the FY 2026/27

budget. The solicitation requested proposals to provide services assisting with four major tasks: project management, needs assessment, procurement assistance and project implementation. The City received seventeen proposals. Four failed to meet minimum requirements and were not considered. An evaluation committee was formed, and the remaining 13 proposals were independently evaluated and scored. In person interviews were conducted with the five highest ranking firms. BerryDunn received the highest rank due to their approach, proven methodology and relevant experience. They have a strong track record with California municipalities, successful project delivery and experience with the transition of legacy Eden users. Therefore, staff recommends awarding the contract for ERP Consulting Servies to BerryDunn. If approved, staff recommends a two-phase agreement. The first phase will include project management, needs assessment and procurement assistance for a fixed fee of $134,750. Phase II will include implementation support on a time and materials basis in an amount not to exceed $300,000.

Council Member Halby asked about the providers BerryDunn will be working with and if they charge a monthly fee. David with Berry Dunn stated not necessarily. Typically, software has a one-time cost with an annual maintenance agreement.

Council Member Halby asked about the providers they partner with. David stated we do not partner with software companies. We do an independent selection. Some of those we see include Tyler Technologies, Oracle Net Suites, and larger municipalities are going to Oracle Fusion.

Council Member Halby asked about travel time. Finance Director Elms stated it will be hybrid approach.

Council Member Halby asked if the scope of work includes migration, every part of the conversion process. David with BerryDunn stated there are two parts. The first is everything to get you under contract with a software vendor which is done by fixed fee. Then we have time and materials for implementation services. We want your people to be part of it, but that is where our experience comes in. Implementations are very different. If there is more software firm involvement there will be less of our involvement during implementation.

Councilman Halby would like to see utility billing online, the whole shebang.

Mayor DeConinck pointed out that BerryDunn worked with CVAG on a successful implementation.

Public comment. A member of the public asked if the cost for Blythe, a smaller city, would be the same as a larger one. It was reported that the project is scalable.

Vice Mayor Rodriguez moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Halby with a unanimous aye vote.

Fiscal Year 2025/26 Mid-Year Financial Report and Budget Adjustments. Finance Director Elms presented the Mid-year Budget review, primarily focused on the City's General Fund using the first six months of activity. Revenues are at 31%, which tend to trend lower at mid-year due to timing of receipts. Revenue is anticipated to end the year at 6% below budget

estimates due to tax revenue and lower than expected permit fees. Sales tax in general is the top contributor to the shortfall. Salex tax is projected to be down by 10% for the fiscal year. Expenditures are at 55% at mid-year. Operating expenditures by department are closely monitored and is expected to end the year under budget by approximately 5%. Staff recommended amendments to the budget to align the budget with actual performance. The proposed amendments are included as attachment A of Resolution No. 2026-004.

Councilman Halby asked about the Golf Course Fund.

Vice Mayor Rodriguez asked about Pension Liabilities.

No public comment. Vice Mayor Rodriguez moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Burton with a unanimous aye vote.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-004. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING THE OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET AND APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED BUDGET AMENDMENTS.

Desert Rodeo Sponsorship. Council Member Spraggins stated the purpose of this is to put the City of Blythe on the map and advertise our planned event next year. Bringing a rodeo to Blythe brings exposure and business to the community. We should take every opportunity to showcase our City. The Desert Rodeo is April 24-26th. They recently came out and met with our Fair Manager and the Mayor. I am asking to sponsor the Desert Rodeo. The banner will say see you in Blythe in 2027. We used to have rodeos, and we can bring it back. The Fair Manager is on board the Mayor thinks its great. The fair board already approved it. I am asking for $5,000.

Fire Chief Hasler speaking on behalf of the Fair Board stated at the last Fair Board meeting the Board discussed Desert Rodeo having an event in Blythe. It's in preliminary stages.

Council asked various questions about the Blythe Rodeo.

Council Member Spraggins stated there will be a code for Blythe residents.

Vice Mayor Rodriguez thanked Council Member Spraggins for initiating this.

Council Member Halby said my concern is that the deal has not been signed and we are going to go around and advertise something that is not in stone, yet. I am a little concerned about that. What if the numbers don't make sense at the Fair?

Vice Mayor Rodriguez asked Chief Hasler how he felt about it.

Chief Hasler stated the Fair is a state faculty. We need a proposal from them that is then approved by the State and then voted on by the Fair Board. It's hard to speculate currently as we don't have a signed contract or anything concrete from them. $5,000 is not a cheap investment, but it's an investment that will help Blythe. I can't tell you it's an absolute go.

Mayor DeConinck asked if this is the first time we have done this.

Interim City Manager Crecelius stated we have sponsored other events, but I am not aware of the City sponsoring anything outside of Blythe. There is always the gift of public funds issue. There must be a public benefit, or it's considered a gift of public funds. That is why the City Attorney suggested that there is an agreement that outlines why they will do and part of that is advertising the Blythe Rodeo. Now we have a nexus to economic development in Blythe as having a rodeo here would be huge. It would attract people who will rent hotel rooms, shop at the grocery store and eat at our restaurants. Yes, we will probably have to start small, but this could develop into a really big thing for Blythe. There are other city sponsors, but they will directly benefit from it as its in their area. They can create that nexus whereas we are 90+ miles away.

Mayor DeConinck asked if a $1,500 donation could do the same thing as the $5,000 donation.

Council Member Spraggins stated no, we need to show up. You only get one small banner for $1,500. Other cities have sponsored $50,000, $75,000 and $25,000. This is a small amount for a big return. You don't know if you don't try.

Mayor DeConinck stated in the past individuals have stepped up and taken care of it.

Public comment. Angie McCaslin stated I think this is a good idea. We need something in this town. Our fair used to be huge. We had parades. This would be good for all ages.

Vice Mayor Rodriguez moved approval of the $5,000 sponsorship. The motion was seconded by Council Member Burton with aye votes from DeConinck, Rodriguez, Burton and Spraggins and a no vote from Halby.

Council Member Halby said I voted no, only because the deal isn't signed. I want the rodeo, but I can't in good conscience spend $5,000 on something that we don't know is going to happen. I can't gamble with the City's money.

Mayor DeConinck said I am thinking the same way. I hope it all works out.

ORAL REPORTS:
Interim City Manager Crecelius reported on activities at the Rec Cetner during April and May and provided an update on the implementation of SB 707.

MEMBER COMMENT:
Vice Mayor Rodriguez thanked everyone who attended the Outlook Conference. If you have the chance, please show up next year. He thanked Prime Leaf for helping Harmony Kitchen with their electric bill.

Mayor DeConinck thanked Superintendent Smith for bringing the high school students to the Outlook Conference and everyone involved. He announced the Fire Department Spaghetti Dinner and the Lions Club Pancake breakfast occurring this weekend.

Council Member Spraggins announced the CWA Farmer's Ball this Saturday and the Chad Bianco meet and greet on Friday.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
Sabrina Pineda stated my daughter, son-in-law, sister and granddaughter were involved in a drive by shooting. Four shots were fired and each time the bullet hit the car. They identified the drivers and provided names. The police told the family to get the camera footage because nobody would talk to the police. I have three videos of the car. We were told there was no evidence, they did not see the person shoot or the gun, so it was thrown out by the DA. My granddaughter is afraid to ride in the car now and of loud noises. Something needs to be done.

John Paul Wherli stated infrastructure is important to me and it has been failing. He discussed dig alerts and the City's failure to call them in. Public Works should be reporting to the City Council every month as the Police Department does to paint a picture of the current situation.

Billy Gistani stated he is part of the ownership group that took over the local dealerships. He asked about feather flags to make the lots look livelier while we wait on inventory. We received a letter from the City asking that we take the feathers down. We hope the City will reconsider that decision.

Chris Peters stated you have a hard job and have to make hard calls. Chief, I have seen a huge difference in your officers. I don't see them at Starbucks drinking tea every night like they were. I see them roving more so my hat's off to you. If we are going to nail the dealerships, we need to take the cotton trailers off Hobsonway. I am the community liaison for Little League. I have an issue with the maintenance of the Todd Field restroom. Children use these restrooms.

ADJOURN: The City Council meeting was adjourned at 7:43pm.

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Joseph DeConinck, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Mallory Crecelius, City Clerk