Minutes of the Blythe City Council Meeting
August 11, 2026

The August 11, 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, Finance Director and City Treasurer 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.

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION:
City Attorney Roberto stated there was no reportable action.

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.*

1. **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, August 7, 2026.
2. **Approval of the Warrant Register.**
   Recommendation: Approve **8/11/26,** Utility Billing Refund warrants numbered 81228 through 81241; in the amount of $2,310.99; **8/11/26,** warrants numbered 11586 through 11600 in the amount of $6,654,018.32; **8/11/26,** warrants numbered 11601 through 11614 and 81285 through 81307 in the amount of $389,525.26; **8/11/26,** warrants numbered 11615 through 11618 and 81308 through 81332 in the amount of $108,943.91 and **8/11/26,** warrants numbered 11619 through 11623 and 81333 through 81344 in the amount of $166,025.18.
3. **Approval of the Payroll Register.**
   Recommendation: Approve **8/14/26,** warrants numbered 55867 through 55881 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 65873 through 65949 in the amount of $292,500.24; **8/11/26,** warrant numbered 55882 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 65950 through 65951 in the amount of $3,249.84; **8/11/26,** warrant numbered 55883 and Direct Deposit warrant 65952 in the amount of $13,301.38; **8/11/2026,** warrants numbered 55884 through 55897 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 65953 through 66027 in the amount of $291,350.70 and **8/11/26,** warrants numbered 55898 through 55909 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 66028 through 66118 in the amount of $96,789.13.
4. **Minutes of the July 14, 2026 Special City Council Meeting.**
   Recommendation: Approve the Minutes of the July 14, 2026 Councill Meeting.
5. **City of Blythe Permits Issued in the Month of July 2026.**
   Recommendation: Receive the monthly report.
6. **City of Blythe Fire Department Monthly Activity Report for July 2026.**
   Recommendation: Receive the monthly report.
7. **City of Blythe Police Department Monthly Incident and Activity Report for July 2026.**
   Recommendation: Receive the monthly report.

8. **Acceptance of Community Enhancement Collaborative Grant Award for a Blythe Christmas.**
   Recommendation: Authorize the Interim City Manager to execute any and all grant related documents, including an agreement between the City and the Community Enhancement Collaborative once reviewed and approved by the City Attorney, for the acceptance of a grant in the amount of $110,000 for the purchase of Christmas decorations.
9. **Acceptance of Work - Barnard/Lovekin Storm Lift #11 Rehabilitation Project.**
   Recommendation: Accept the work performed by AZCA Drilling & Pump, Inc. for the Barnard/Lovekin Strom Lift #11 Rehabilitation Project and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute and file the Notice of Completion for the project and authorize the Interim City Manager to release project bonds once applicable.
10. **Adoption of Resolution Authorizing Acceptance of CHP Cannabis Tax Fund Grant.**
    Recommendation: Adopt the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-027. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA, AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDS FROM THE DEPARTMENT F CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL CANNABIS TAX FUND GRANT PROGRAM AND AUTHORIZING THE INTERIM CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE ALL GRANT DOCUMENTS.

11. **Adoption of Ordinance No. 946-26 Prohibiting the Sale and Distribution of Kratom Products in the City of Blythe.**
    Recommendation: Adopt Ordinance No. 946-26:

ORDINANCE NO. 946-26. AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA, ADDING A NEW CHAPTER 9.96 PROHIBITION ON SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF KRATOM PRODUCTS) TO ARTICLE IX (MISCELLANEOUS) OF TITLE 9 (PUBLIC PEACE, MORALS AND WELFARE) OF THE BLYTHE MUNICIPAL CODE AND FINDING THE ORDINANCE IS EXEMPT FROM ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15061(b)(3) (COMMON SENSE EXEMPTION).

Public comment:

Sharon Lee made comments on natural leaf Kratom and urged Council to consider it.

City Clerk Crecelius stated other comments were received related to the Kratom Ordinance that will be made part of the record.

Mayor DeConinck thanked the Lazenby's for their work on the Christmas Decoration grant.

Council Member Burton moved approval of the Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Rodriguez with a unanimous aye vote.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Request for Conditional Use Permit (CUP 2607-001) to Operate a Sales Office for new Utility Sheds with On-Site Storage for Display Purposes at 1354 E. Hobsonway (Sunset Sheds of California). Interim City Manager Crecelius stated The applicant, Watkins Enterprises, LLC, is requesting a conditional use permit to operate a sales office for new prefabricated utility sheds with on-site storage for display purposes for Sunset Sheds of California at 1354 E. Hobsonway. Sunset Sheds of California intends to offer new prefabricated sheds for sale, with manufacturing occurring off site. The site consists of four parcels and is designated by the General Plan for General Commercial land use. Most recently, the site was in use as a septic pumping service business, which had heavy equipment and construction related equipment stored on site. Nearby uses include a commercial cannabis cultivation facility, various

retail and professional services and auto repair shops. Sunset Sheds of California intends to install an approximately 392-square-foot pre-manufactured building for use as a sales office and store and display approximately ten model sheds in various sizes and characteristics on site. Chapter 17 of the Blythe Municipal Code classifies, designates and regulates the use of buildings, structures and land in the City. Section 17.08.010 outlines the use types permitted in each zone. Pursuant to Section 17.08.030, other use types which are similar to and not more obnoxious or detrimental to the health, safety or general welfare of the community than the use types permitted in any zone may be allowed in such zone by resolution of the City Council. Staff believes the sale and storage of prefabricated sheds is similar to construction sales and services use. Although the proposed use is not for construction materials, it will operate in the same manner. Staff recommends that the City Council classify the sales and storage of prefabricated sheds use as a use similar to construction sales and services. Pursuant to Section 17.68.070 of the Blythe Municipal Code, before Council approves a conditional use permit, the Council is required to make the following findings: that the proposed location of the conditional use is in accord with the objectives of this title and the purpose of the zone in which the site is located. Staff is recommending that the City Council classify the sales and storage of prefabricated sheds use as a use similar to construction sales and services. Construction sales and services are permitted in the General Commercial Zone with a conditional use permit. Therefore, the proposed use is in accord with the objectives of Title 17 and the purpose of the zone in which the site is located. That the proposed location in which the conditional use and the conditions under which it would be operated or maintained will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, or materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity. The Project Site is located in a commercial area of the City with multiple uses and similar business types in the vicinity . The proposed sales and storage of prefabricated sheds use is expected to include a sales office and store and display approximately ten model sheds in various sizes and characteristics. Once ordered by a customer, the sheds will be fabricated off site and shipped directly to the customer for installation. As such, the use is expected to be quiet in nature with no increase in traffic, noise, or pollution than would be created by similar uses permitted in the General Commercial Zone. Additionally, the site has not been occupied for approximately seven (7) months. Approving the proposed use at this site would provide for the maintenance of the site and enhance this area of East Hobsonway. Finally, the Conditions of Approval ensure that the use will be operated in a manner that is not detrimental to public health, safety or welfare, or materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity. Therefore, the proposed location in which the conditional use and the conditions under which it would be operated or maintained will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, or materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity. The Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15302 (Replacement or Reconstruction) of the CEQA Guidelines. The Project is also categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures) of the CEQA Guidelines. The Project is also exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense Exemption) of the CEQA Guidelines. Pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3), where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. The Project would not be subject to any of the exceptions to the exemptions under Section 15300.2 of CEQA. Notice of the public hearing regarding the proposed CUP was published in the Palo Verde Times and sent to surrounding property owners on July 29, 2026. No comments were

received regarding the proposed CUP as of the publishing of this staff report. It is recommended, subsequent to the public hearing, the City Council adopt Resolution No. 2026-026.

Public comment:

Leslie Jessop-Watkins of Watkins Enterprises, LLC is excited for this project. When we started talking about the sale of these types of products in our community, I think it goes hand in hand with the ideals that we have with regard to offering different types of businesses in our community and having clean looking businesses and protecting local sales tax. This will be the premier outfit in California if approved. We think this is a perfect fit for our town, for east Blythe and for this site. She thanked staff for their assistance.

Kurt Giebler of Sunset Sheds of Arizona stated we hold four Arizona locations. Our main office is in Quartzsite. We run several millions of dollars through that location. We are also the largest American steel dealer in Arizona. Blythe is the largest population near Quartzsite, but I couldn't go in business here because Graceland told me we will never be in California. I have fought this for a long time as I also have a location in Fort Mojave. We had to make a few changes to the nail patter to meet California requirements. We are a rent to own company. In California you can't rent to own, so it has to be leased to own. It has taken us three years to get this done. We are very involved in our communities. We are huge sponsors.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-026. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA, CLASSIFYING THE SALES AND STORAGE OF PREFABRICATED SHEDS USE AS A USE SIMILAR TO CONSTRUCTION SALES AND SERVICES, APPROVING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 2607-001 TO ALLOW THE OPERATION OF SUCH USE AT 1354 E. HOBSONWAY (APNS: 854-040-016, 854-040-018, 854-040-019 AND 854-040-020), AND MAKING THE DETERMINATION THAT THE PROJECT IS EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 15302 (REPLACEMENT OR RECONSTRUCTION), 15303 (NEW CONSTRUCTION OR CONVERSION OF SMALL STRUCTURES) AND 15061(b)(3) (COMMON SENSE EXEMPTION) OF THE CEQA GUIDELINES.

CONTINUED BUSINESS:

Palo Verde Hospital Ad Hoc Committee Update. Interim City Manager Crecelius reported on the 180-day Scoop. The MSA is set to expire and the County and PVHD are working on an amendment to extend services through November 21, 2026, with options for additional extensions through February 19, 2027. The Clinic is currently closed while they look for a new medical provider. They issued a Press Release which the City shared on social media.

Vice Mayor Rodriguez said they do still provide a lot of service such as labs, x-rays, MRI's check with them first vs. going out of town.

Mayor DeConinck stated the building was painted and all they had to do was pay for the paint. Volunteers painted the building. They did a good job. They came from the other hospital and

have been doing a lot of work. All PVH had to do was buy the supplies. It's amazing what's been accomplished.

No public comment The item was received.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ordinance Adopting Amended Military Equipment Policy Pursuant to Assembly Bill 481. Acting Chief Walnoha stated AB 481 requires law enforcement agencies to obtain annual governing body approval on the funding, acquisition and use of equipment defined by the State as military equipment. The City has remained in compliance since the adoption of AB 481. The policy has been revised annually, with the latest policy adopted in June 2025. The annual Miliary Equipment Report was presented to Council on June 16, 2026. A public meeting was held on June 24, 2026. It is recommended Council introduce Ordinance No. 947-26 which renews the Military Use Policy and incorporates additional pieces of equipment into the policy.

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

ORDINANCE NO. 947-26. AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING AN AMENDED MILITARY EQUIPMENT POLICY AND FINDING THE ORDINANCE IS EXEMPT FROM ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15061(b)(3) (COMMON SENSE EXEMPTION)

ORAL REPORTS:

Interim City Manager Crecelius reported on an application submitted for an Extreme Heat Grant, provided an update on ELOP program sign-ups for TK-2nd graders and the fall sports sign ups at the Joe Wine Blythe Recreation Center.

MEMBER COMMENT:

Vice Mayor Rodriguez reported on the grand opening of Walgreens.

Mayor DeConinck wished the District the best of luck on the school year.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Cecilia Navarro addressed Council regarding the property located at 401 S. Third Street. She stated staff and the Police Department have spent a significant amount of time addressing issues at the property. She was unsure whether Council had authority to act but suggested that Development Services or Public Works may be able to assist. She noted that people light fireworks there year-round and that a fire on the Second Street side may have been caused by fireworks. She asked whether efforts could be made to require the owner to clean the property, stating that it is a fire hazard.

Debra Powels of 413 W. Hobsonway stated she feels ignored by the Government that is supposed to serve its people. Every year small businesses are asked to pay more, bills go up, fees go up and regulations increase. Yet many families and small business owners are struggling to afford the basics. I am treated like a corporation, and my business is listed as a department store. I don't have the resources of a department store. When I try to advertise my business with my flags or

canopy, I am told to spend more money on permits and engineers and compliances to put a cloth banner over my sign on the building. Others are allowed to do the same thing without consequence. Small Businesses are not the problem. I ask you to remember who pays these bills and the families who choose between expenses and a community where the people are oppressed and the residents feel they have no voice. I am asking for fairness, consistency and accountability. Put the citizens before bureaucracy.

Christopher Peters of 371 Tesoro Ln. stated with football and volleyball coming up I would like to again bring up the restrooms at Miller and Todd Parks. Locking these restrooms at 3pm is not going to work. I would like to see if you can do something about keeping the restrooms open until 8-10pm. We still have realtors with signs in City planters. They have been there and haven't been taken down. I agree with Ms. Powels that it should be fair.

Council Member Spraggins requested a future Study Session for sign regulations. The lager concern I am hearing is the cost of obtaining compliance for professional signage. I think it would be beneficial to review the current ordinance and hear from our business community.

Council Member Halby would like to take a look at different signs. There are signs that shouldn't have made the cut. We can do it one way or the other, but we have to be consistent. I am only down to do this if we do a tour.

City Clerk Crecelius cited Brown Act issues with a bus tour.

Council Member Halby stated its very important we take a ride and see it.

Mayor DeConinck stated some of this is for safety. I would like to see how we can get those restrooms open.

Council Member Burton thank staff for their open-door policy and always being available to us.

Mayor DeConinck asked about the Lovekin sinkhole.

ADJOURN: The City Council meeting was adjourned at 6:45pm.

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Joseph DeConinck, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Mallory Crecelius, City Clerk