

February 2, 2026

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LEWISTON, IDAHO, met for a Work Session in the Second Floor Event Space of the City Library at 411 D Street. Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

I. CALL TO ORDER

COUNCILORS PRESENT: Mayor Dan Johnson; Council President Jim Kleeburg; Councilor Kasee Forsmann; Councilor Jessica Klein; Councilor Bryan Moree; Councilor John Spickelmire; Councilor Matt Wright.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Nez Perce County Commission Chair Joe Gish led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. CITIZENS COMMENTS

Debra Irrgang, a resident of Lewiston, spoke in support of adding prayer to Council meetings.

Bruce Matteson, a resident of Lewiston, spoke in support of adding prayer to Council meetings.

John Houser, a resident of Lewiston, spoke in support of adding prayer to Council meetings.

IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Please note that identifying an item as an "Action Item" does not require the City Council to vote on that item.

A. VACANT RETAIL PROPERTIES: Discussion about vacant retail properties in the City of Lewiston, as requested by Councilor Spickelmire at the December 22, 2025 City Council meeting - Action Item (Councilor Spickelmire)

Councilor Spickelmire explained that he requested the item be added as a discussion topic as a response to receiving public comments regarding vacant retail buildings. Council members discussed the need to better understand the causes of vacancies, citing factors such as corporate decisions, online shopping, and limited market demand.

Nez Perce County Assessor Dan Anderson said that vacant properties remain on the tax rolls, and noted some sites may have lease or sale restrictions. County Clerk Patty Weeks added that certain large retail properties previously reviewed for a courthouse were limited by deed or patent restrictions.

Commissioners Joe Gish and Hanna Liedkie discussed economic conditions, job growth, and the importance of coordination among the City, County, Chamber,

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Clearwater Economic Development Association (CEDA), and Valley Vision. Emphasis was placed on clarity, consistency, and customer service in helping businesses navigate processes, and the idea of developer input or a task force was mentioned.

Chamber CEO Mark Losh identified common challenges including parking, infrastructure, and housing, and referenced prior roundtable efforts that improved communication. Clearwater Economic Development Association Director Dodd Snodgrass noted retail trends are closely tied to population and workforce.

Jennifer Grinage, a Lewiston resident, shared her experience as a business tenant, explaining that while licensing and inspections went well, building code issues involving the landlord ultimately forced her to relocate. She asked whether additional tools might help business owners in similar situations.

Councilor Spickelmire thanked attendees and expressed interest in the creation of a roundtable.

- B. PRAYER AT CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS:** Continued discussion from the December 1, 2026 City Council Work Session on opening City Council meetings with an invocation (prayer) - Action Item (Councilor Klein)

Councilor Klein introduced discussion regarding adding an invocation to Council meetings, noting a preference for a brief, standard prayer similar to the City of Kamiah. She noted implementation would require an ordinance change, suggested placing the invocation after the Pledge of Allegiance, and requested time to consult with the City Attorney.

Council members discussed options including clergy or citizen volunteers, a rotating invocation, or a moment of silence to allow individual prayer or reflection and asked questions about content, public participation, inclusivity, and potential impacts on Council business.

Councilor Wright moved to allow the question of prayer for the council to be researched by the City's Legal Department for more than an hour. Councilor Klein seconded, and the motion passed 5-1 with Council President Kleeburg opposed.

- C. TOWN HALL MEETINGS:** Discussion on having town hall meetings in the City of Lewiston, as requested by Councilor Forsmann at the November 24, 2025 City Council meeting - Action Item (Councilor Forsmann)

Councilor Forsmann explained that she wanted some input from other Councilors regarding holding more town hall meetings, as a way to be more

involved with citizens in a less restrictive setting. She noted that there was one town hall meeting held when she was first on Council, which received a lot of positive feedback, but there has not been another one since. She note town Hall meetings could have different times and locations to allow more people opportunities to speak with Council in a less restrictive setting.

City Attorney Tengono cautioned Council that the Idaho Open Meeting Law requirements would still need to be followed, such as requiring an agenda, action items identified, as well as an ADA-accessible location. After further discussion, Councilor Forsmann indicated she would work with the City Clerk's office when requesting a Town Hall meeting.

D. RECOMMENDATION TO MODIFY OUT OF AREA AMBULANCE TRANSPORT

FEES: Considering a recommendation from the Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board to make amendments to the Lewiston Fire Department's fee schedule for out of area ambulance transports - Action Item (Fire Chief Rightmier)

In continuation from discussion at the December 22, 2026 City Council meeting, Fire Chief Rightmier provided a document that responded to several questions from Councilor Spickelmire related to the costs of providing out-of-area transports. Councilors discussed ambulance operations, including long-distance transports, fee structures, and the balance between emergency services and nonemergency transports. Concerns included ensuring the City's EMS does not compete with private providers, clarifying payment responsibilities, addressing potential ambulance breakdowns, and aligning city ordinances with operational practices.

Councilor Wright moved to direct staff to bring to the next regular Council meeting draft language for out-of-area transports that removes the names of city destinations in City Code and instead makes it based on a 14-hour limitation. Councilor Forsmann seconded, and the motion passed 6-0.

V. UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS

- A. CITY COUNCILOR COMMENTS:** Comments shall not be related to an item currently before the City Council or an item that may come before the City Council in the foreseeable future, and shall be limited to comments, not discussion.

Councilor Forsmann expressed appreciation that Councilors are bringing topics forward to meetings for discussion and that they continue to do so.

B. CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS LIAISON UPDATES

Councilor Wright shared updates regarding a few of his assigned Boards and Commissions.

C. MAYOR COMMENTS

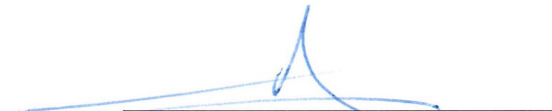
Mayor Johnson noted he attended the Association of Idaho Cities meetings in Boise and was able to visit with legislators about issues that are important to the City of Lewiston, as well as other Idaho cities.

D. AGENDA TOPICS: - Action Item

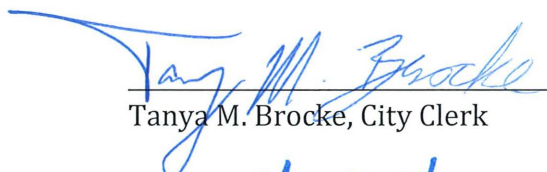
Councilor Spickelmire moved to add an airport ownership discussion to the March 2nd Work Session, and to direct staff to provide the city's ownership costs for the last four (4) years, and the Fiscal Year 2026 lease costs associated with the airport. Councilor Forsmann seconded, and the motion passed 6-0.

VI. ADJOURNMENT - Action Item

There being no further business to come before the Lewiston City Council, Councilor Forsmann moved and Council President Kleeburg seconded, respectively, to adjourn the February 2, 2026 City Council Work Session. The motion carried 6-0 and the meeting adjourned at 5:41 p.m.



Daniel G. Johnson, Mayor



Tanya M. Brocke, City Clerk

Approved

FEB 23 2026