COLDWATER CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
Monday September 14, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

The governing body of the City of Coldwater met in regular session, with the following present: Mayor Paul Alvarez presiding, Council members Devon Duffield, Makenzie Dunn, Gary Haulmark, Leasa Huck, and Sam Oller. Public Works Director Charlie Austin, Lake Manager Don Dutton, Lake Staff Debbie Dutton and City Clerk Kristal Sherman.

Visitors: Bryan Miller, Katee Underwood and Jason Jump.

Mayor Alvarez called the regular council meeting to order, City Clerk, Kristal Sherman conducted roll call. Minutes from the August meeting were approved motion by Devon, seconded by Sam and all voted Yes.

Mayor Alvarez asked if anyone wanted to speak under public comment. Bryan Miller said he keeps asking for help with dogs that are allowed to run free off a leash. He said he walks his dogs every day and has dog interactions every two weeks, he said he has talked to the Sheriff's office and they tell him it's not their problem, it's a City problem. He said he doesn't want to be put in a position to hurt an animal, but it's gotten to the point he takes a lethal and non-lethal pistol with him when he walks. He told the council he is just asking to have the rules enforced and for the council to handle it instead of having to go to court.

Under Administration:

Mayor Alvarez presented the Photographing & Recording policy for approval. Gary said he would like to see the council livestream the meetings for the council to be accountable and transparent. Devon made a motion to accept the policy as written with the addendum to add livestreaming, seconded by Gary. Gary and Devon voted Yes; Sam, Makenzie and Leasa voted No. Motion Denied. After discussion, it was agreed livestreaming the meetings be tabled until the next meeting. Makenzie made a motion to adopt the Photographing & Recording policy as written, seconded by Devon and everyone voted Yes.

Mayor Alvarez presented Resolution No. 2026-4 which calls for hearing on November 9, 2026 for condemnation of Lots 7 and 8 in Block 56 in the Original Town of Coldwater. He said he believes this house should be condemned and if the resolution is passed it has to publish twice in the newspaper and notice given to the homeowner. Gary made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-4, seconded by Devon and everyone voted Yes.

Mayor Alvarez told the council the person that bought 2000 Prairie Parkway at Comanche Estates came into city hall and filled out a building permit for a fence, and then Charlie approved the building permit, neither Charlie nor Kristal realized the homeowner should have filled out a zoning variance for their fence and the fence has already been built. Paul had pictures of the fence and asked the council if they wanted to approve it. Devon made a motion to allow the fence to stay, seconded by Sam and everyone voted Yes.

Mayor Alvarez asked the council to go into executive session for non-elected personnel. Sam made a motion the council go into executive session for 15 minutes for non-elected personnel and include Pubic Works Director Charlie Austin, seconded by Devon and everyone voted Yes. After returning to open session, Sam made a motion to give Rodney Keith a 70 cent raise, bringing his hourly wage to $23.70, seconded by Devon and everyone voted Yes. Also, Chris Mills has been the code enforcement officer now for 90 days and his probationary period has expired. Sam made a motion to move Chris into the permanent code enforcement officer position, seconded by Devon and everyone voted Yes. The council agreed to discuss his pay at the next meeting.

Lake Manager Don Dutton told the council he feels there are people that do not want him to have the position. He said he likes the job and thinks he does a fairly decent job of it, but said he is going to leave the decision, whether he continues as lake manager in 2027, up to the council. Mayor Alvarez said he's not interested in having this conversation until the season is over and Don also said

he wasn't going to work over the winter time. The council agreed to table it to the November meeting.

Mayor Alvarez said there was some discussion at the last meeting about lake trash, he said there is more trash because of mowing with the tractor/bush hog and not being able to pick it up in the tractor instead of the mower. Don said he mowed with the grasshopper mower today in the estates and there was trash coming from the dumpsters since the wind was blowing and there's no lids. They eliminated 2 trash cans in the swimming area and replaced them with a dumpster that has a lid and thinks that has helped that situation.

Gary said he asked for lake land usage to be on the agenda. He would like to open the land south of the lake the City currently leases to let people hike, fish, horseback ride, etc. The council discussed different ideas to do with the property and the fact the City would need to do some maintenance if people were allowed to use it. Gary made a motion to no longer lease the land and it be put on the agenda at the next meeting to use it for public use, seconded by Devon and the motion failed 2 to 3. The council agreed to put it on next months' agenda to discuss.

Mayor Alvarez said he has worked on City-owned land that we're paying taxes on and went through them with the council: the sewer lift station and a portion of the truck parking are 2 properties that are on the tax roll and shouldn't be; there is some common ground at the estates that shouldn't be on there as well and should cut the taxes in half. He also reported the City owns some ground by the county shop where they store equipment, the council all agreed to give it to the county; by the old water tower there is a small piece of property that got left in the City's name, the council agreed to ask Phillip Unruh if he wants it; the "old dump" on Washington Street that is leased, he asked the council if they wanted to continue leasing it, thought it might be a good place to store the City's rock piles. Gary made a motion to discontinue the lease on that property, and his motion died for lack of a second. Also asked the council about the property between the pharmacy and furniture store and after discussion, the council agreed to table that to the next meeting.

Mayor Alvarez told the council he would like to see the tree limb pickup happen again, said the past council agreed to do it only after a bad storm, he thinks it would be a good thing especially now that we're doing code enforcement and wanting to keep the City cleaned up. Public Works Director Charlie Austin said he is in favor of doing it annually as well. After discussion, the council agreed to move forward doing limb pickup annually and also if there is a bad storm that comes through.

Mayor Alvarez said he would like to see the City maintenance guys change their uniforms, he said he doesn't like the Cintas shirts, they have holes in them and they try to patch them, they don't stay, they get 2 jackets and they're pretty thin. He would like to go locally through Danny Bruckner and get their shirts and jackets, but the down side is they would have to launder the clothes themselves. It would save the City some money to do it this way, plus they would look better. After discussion, the council asked Paul to check more into the cost difference and bring it back to the next meeting, they thought it was worth looking into.

City Clerk Kristal Sherman handed out a letter to the Mayor and Council announcing her retirement as of April 30, 2027.

Mayor Alvarez asked the council to go into executive session for non-elected personnel. Leasa made the motion the council go into executive session for 15 minutes for non-elected personnel, seconded by Devon and everyone voted Yes. After returning to open session, Sam made a motion to give Charlie Austin a $1.00 an hour raise from $25.00 to $26.00 an hour, seconded by Gary and everyone voted Yes. They also said to get an ad in the paper and Facebook for a new city clerk.

Mayor Alvarez proposed to no longer offer the insurance benefit of the City paying for an employees' spouse or children on the City's insurance policy, it would just be single, employee coverage. After discussion Gary made the motion to eliminate the current health care benefit that covers employee's spouse or children and cover just the employee, also will grandfather in the two

employees that are currently taking this benefit for as long as they are employed, the motion was seconded by Makenzie and everyone voted Yes.

Public Works Director Charlie Austin gave his report on the different departments: 1. Water: he reported the KDHE Water inspection on 9/17 includes facilities and records, will have water tower inspection with Viking Industrial on 9/16; the State would like the water line relocated for the State Highway Project by December, he said he received a bid from KAT Construction for $17,314.00 to do the job. 2. Sewer: Hickman Environmental Services will be conducting annual maintenance and inspection within the next few weeks. 3. Streets: He reported Vance Brothers will be here 9/11 and 9/14 for annual chip sealing the streets; also received stop signs and all way stop banners that were ordered; and with moisture will grade all dirt streets 4. Equipment: the water truck is in the shop with an electrical wiring problem. 5. Lake: has been spot mowing the lake as needed due to lack of moisture; received aquatic herbicide to begin treating reed overgrowth at the lake, will spray what they can reach and burn in December, then spray again in the fall as reeds are coming back. 6. Parks: in the process of edging curbs at pool park and other listed tasks, had to pull off to prepare for street chip seal and KDHE inspection; Jacob is following daily checklist; also there is a dead tree at the park, need to get a lift and do some tree trimming this winter, the council mentioned checking into a bucket truck that may be in an area auction soon. 7. Code Enforcement: 110 W. 1st property is cleaned up; City will need to pick up limbs at 308 N. Central for non-compliance; trimmed trees around fire hydrant at 201 N. Leavenworth; sending ongoing mowing letters; Chris will be moving on to Main Street on 9/15. Pool: beginning to drain the pool, will winterize and take down canopies later this month.

Bills in the amount of $148,346.14 were presented for payment. Leasa made a motion to pay the bills as presented, seconded by Devon and all voted Yes.

Unfinished Business: Chicken permit applications were presented from Bernardo Salas at 201 S. Topeka for 5 chickens, Conrad & Saige Gerstner at 412 N. Leavenworth for chickens, and Sarah Woodrum at 505 N. Boston for 7 chickens. Devon made a motion to approve all 3 chicken permits, seconded by Gary and everyone voted Yes. The traffic sign changes that Mayor Alvarez proposed at the August meeting were discussed and after discussion, Gary made the motion to make the following changes to traffic signs: 1. Main Street: Main St. & Washington Ave – replace yield signs with stop signs; Main St. & New York Ave. – add a 4-way crosswalk. 2. Pool Intersection: replace two yield signs on First St. at Frisco Ave with a 4-way stop. 3. Medical Clinic: add yield signs to First St. & Third St., where they intersect Washington Ave. 4. Courthouse: replace both yield signs on Second St. & New York Ave with stop signs. 5. School Area: Philadelphia Ave. & Walnut St. – replace both stop signs with yield signs; Philadelphia Ave. & Maple St. – add two yield signs on Maple St at Philadelphia Ave.; Philadelphia Ave. & Cleveland St. – add a yield sign for northbound traffic on Philadelphia Ave. at Cleveland St.; Boston Ave. & Walnut St. – adding two stop signs to Boston Ave. at Walnut St. creating a 4-way stop intersection; Boston Ave. & Maple St. – adding two stop signs to Boston Ave. at Maple St., creating a 4-way stop intersection; Baltimore Ave. & Maple St. – Add a stop sign on Baltimore Ave. at Maple St. 6. 4th Street: replace yield sign on Frisco Ave. at 4th St. with stop sign. 7. Third St. & Chicago Ave.: replace stop sign on Chicago Ave. at Third St. with yield sign. 8. Cottonwood St. & Frisco Ave.: remove both yield signs. Gary asked that wording in City Code 9-2.8 (a) be changed from "tires" to "waste tires" because of business reasons, after discussion Makenzie made a motion to change the wording in City Code 9-2.8 (a) be changed from "tires" to "waste tires", seconded by Gary and the motion passed 3-2 with Sam & Devon voting No. Gary also asked the council to reassess the schedule of code enforcement, he said he would like to see the property across from the courthouse be the next to be cleaned up after Chris is through with Main Street.

With no other business presented, Gary made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m., seconded by Devon and all voted Yes.