

Murphysboro City Council Meeting
July 28, 2026

The Murphysboro, Illinois, City Council met in regular session, pursuant to its ordinances, on the 28th day of July, 2026. Mayor Stephens called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and lead the council in prayer. Following the invocation, Mayor Stephens led the council in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Deputy City Clerk Sandra M. Ripley was directed to call the roll. The roll was called with the following:

Present: Barb Hughes (6:02 p.m.), Jance Curry-Witzman, Rick Runge, Mike Austin, Angela Jackson, John Erbes, Gary McComb, Len Novara, Don Gladden

Absent: W.J. Pittman

The council then reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the July 14, 2026, council meeting, as presented. All aldermen received a copy of the minutes, for their review, prior to the meeting.

Motion by Alderman McComb Second by Alderman Curry-Witzman

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION REPORTS

Mayor Stephens opened discussion for Budget & Finance related items.

Old Business: Nothing at this time.

New Business:

The application for Downtown TIF Building Improvement Program submitted by Small Town Scoop was reviewed and considered. This is for the replacement of their HVAC systems. The TIF fund would reimburse a maximum of \$8,000.

Motion: To approve the Downtown TIF Building Improvement Program application from Small Town Scoop with reimbursement of \$8,000.00

Motion by Alderman Gladden Second by Alderman Runge

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Consideration of Accounts Payable Registers.

Motion: To approve the accounts payable registers #413 and #414. All aldermen received a copy of the registers for their review, prior to the meeting.

Motion by Alderman Hughes

Second by Alderman Gladden

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Presentation of Financial Reports by Scott Evans, Budget Officer: The Schedule of State Income Tax Receipts Vouchered and the Comparison of Budgeted vs Actual Payroll reports were presented and discussed.

The application for TIF #2 was submitted by 17th Street/Faye/Mike Mills Memorial Park was reviewed and considered. This application is for all of the renovations recently completed at the 17th Street businesses and is the traditional style application with a 15 year 75% reimbursement of the TIF portion of their tax bills.

Motion: To approve the application for TIF #2 funds from 17th Street/Faye/Mike Mills Memorial Park with a 15 year reimbursement plan at 75% of the TIF portion.

Motion by Alderman Gladden

Second by Alderman Runge

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Public comment: None.

Alderman Austin opened discussion for Building & Grounds related items.

Old Business:

Alderman Austin advised the council that Alderman McComb has a potential buyer for 435 North 14th Street. Alderman McComb stated that he spoke with the owner of El Jalisco and they would like to purchase the vacant lot south of the concrete lot at the southwest corner of 14th & Poplar Street. Alderman McComb was directed to negotiate with the potential buyer.

New Business:

Consideration of Gravestone Repairs at City Cemetery. Included in packets was the cost estimate for repairs to approximately 55 gravestones at the City Cemetery. The estimate was in the amount of \$7,439 which includes labor, lodging, materials, meals and mileage for RIP, Ltd to perform the repairs.

Motion: To approve the proposal for gravestone repairs at City Cemetery not to exceed \$8,500.00

Motion by Alderman Gladden

Second by Alderman Hughes

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Alderman Austin further advised the council that the City purchased 25 GAR plaques to replace broken ones in the City Cemetery.

Public comment: None

Alderman Curry-Witzman opened discussion for Community Relations Committee related items.

Old Business: Nothing at this time.

New Business: Nothing at this time.

Public comment: None

Alderman Gladden opened discussion for Public Improvement related items.

Old business: Nothing at this time.

New business:

Consideration of Parking Improvements at 330 North Street. Rae Hanna advised that she has the property at 330 North Street listed for sale. She has a potential buyer, Rend Lake Dental, that would like to cut the curb along North Street and place parking in front of the building. There was much discussion regarding utilities, easements, ADA compliance and drainage in that area. Mayor Stephens indicated that he was in favor of the potential buyers proceeding with the curb cut permit, but to proceed with caution when dealing with the water flow and elevation of the parking spaces.

Motion: To approve the request for a curb cut at 330 North Street to allow for off-street parking with caution given to drainage and elevations.

Motion by Alderman McComb

Second by Alderman Austin

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Public comment: None

Alderman McComb opened discussion for Public Works related items.

Old business: Nothing at this time.

New business:

Consideration of IDOT Agreement for IL 127/Old 13 Closure, Lighting, Sidewalks and ADA project. Mayor Stephens indicated that he spoke with IDOT Engineer Bill Porter regarding the project. They are going to be improving the area from South 5th Street to Old Brick Road on Old Route 13. They are requesting to completely shut down both lanes while resurfacing. The project will be completed faster without having to make lane changes. There is a stipulation in the agreement that the Old Route 13 repairs will not begin until the bridge repairs on New Route 13 are complete.

Motion: To approve the agreement with Illinois Department of Transportation for road closure, lighting, sidewalk and ADA improvements on IL 127/Old Route 13.

Motion by Alderman Gladden

Second by Alderman Novara

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Consideration of Resolution for City Portion of the IDOT agreement. The resolution outlines that the City's portion of the project expenses will be paid with motor fuel tax funds. The estimated cost is \$3,473, however, the resolution is in the amount of \$5,000 to allow for any change orders.

Motion: To approve the Resolution for use of Motor Fuel Funds on the IL Rt 127/Old 13 IDOT agreement.

Motion by Alderman Gladden

Second by Alderman Runge

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote. All were in favor.

Motion Carried

Public comment: none

Alderman Erbes opened discussion for Public Safety related items.

Old business: Nothing at this time.

New business:

Discussion regarding parking in the 2100 Block of Edith Street. Mayor Stephens indicated that he received a complaint from a resident in that block stating that the parking spaces on the North side of the 2100 Block of Edith Street had been reduced. Apparently staff from the School District painted parking spaces along the north side, adding additional handicap parking, but reducing regular parking. Not sure what needs to happen. Our ordinance currently calls for no parking on either side of the 2100 Block of Edith Street. Should we amend the ordinance to how it is painted or amend the parking to add more spaces. A resident on that street was in attendance at the meeting and indicated that the school district has placed a dumpster on the street which is also causing parking issues. After additional discussion, it was agreed that Dr. Evers or other representative from the School District would be invited to attend the next meeting to discuss the matter further.

Consideration of Ordinance amending Chapter 3 "Animals" by adding Section 3-2-21 Prohibiting Feeding of Wild Animals. Mayor Stephens advised that he had received a complaint about raccoons with distemper like actions and being aggressive towards a child. He further indicated that upon some research he discovered that there is a resident that feeds about 30-40 raccoons by hand. Currently there is nothing in our ordinances that prohibits feeding wild animals. The council discussed how the ordinance affects the feeding of birds and squirrels as well as the unintentional feeding of wild animals.

Motion: To approve the Ordinance amending Chapter 3 “Animals” by adding Section 3-2-21 Prohibiting Feeding of Wild Animals.

Motion by Alderman Gladden

Second by Alderman Runge

Mayor Stephens called for a voice vote.

Alderman Erbes and Alderman McComb voted No. All others were in favor.

Motion Carried

Public comment: none

Alderman Hughes opened discussion for Personnel related items.

Old business: Nothing at this time.

New business: Nothing at this time.

Public comment: none

MAYOR’S REPORT

Nothing at this time.

ALDERMEN ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS
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Barb Hughes Nothing

Jance Curry-Witzman Nothing

Rick Runge Closed on the property at 1524 Walnut Street today.

Mike Austin Thanked everyone for their attendance at the public meeting to discuss the Safe Routes to School sidewalk project.

Angela Jackson Nothing

W. J. Pittman Absent

John Erbes Thanked Alderman Austin for facilitating the SRTS meeting

Gary McComb Advised that he was contacted by a resident in his ward about a property owner draining their swimming pool in the McCord/Clay area. The water drained and flooded their neighbors. Asked if there was an ordinance against this. Alderman McComb also requested our Part-Time Code Officer to work when Charlie is on vacation.

Len Novara Nothing

Don Gladden Nothing

DEPARTMENT HEAD ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS

Richard Blake Nothing

Sandra Ripley Nothing

Scott Evans Auditors have finalized the audit. Will be presenting soon.

Steve McBride Nothing

Jamie Ellermeyer Nothing

Brian Manwaring Nothing

Harold Sheffer Advised that bids will be received for the Oak Street Brick Replacement Project on August 11th at 10:00 a.m.

Tim Lee Advised that the mixer installation for the red water tower will be on the accounts payable soon. It is estimated to be about \$18,000

Charlie Eisert Absent

Pat Gladson Nothing

Darrin Mills Nothing

With no further business, Mayor Stephens adjourned the meeting at 6:57 p.m.