

CITY OF WEST LAKE HILLS, TEXAS
MINUTES OF A CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Wednesday, December 3, 2025 at 12:00 PM

1. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Mayor Vaughan called the workshop to order at 12:03 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL PRESENT:

Mayor James Vaughan
Dana Harmon
Beth South
Darin Walker

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

City Administrator Trey Fletcher
City Secretary Terry Blanchard
Director of BDS Jennifer Bills
Chief of Police Scott Gerdes
City Attorney Charles E. Zech

2. Citizen Communications The City Council welcomes public comments at this point on any issue. If the issue is listed on the agenda, the speaker may choose to comment during the Public Comment period or when the specific agenda item is taken up by the Council later in the meeting. The Council cannot respond to or discuss matters not listed on the agenda. The Council may provide factual information, refer the item to a staff member, or request the item be added to a future meeting agenda. Speakers shall limit their comments to five (5) minutes each.

Councilmember Harmon provided opening comments and a brief history of the Firewise Committee. She recognized Alice London for her outstanding work with the committee.

3. Administration Receive an update/presentation from the Firewise Committee regarding top priorities, projects, and work ideas for the upcoming year.

Alice London introduced the Firewise Committee members in attendance. A presentation was given emphasizing four key areas of focus for the committee.

- **Community Outreach and Education**

- Yard sign and flyer was launched
- Neighbor-to-Neighbor networks initiated
- Recommendations
 - Assess effectiveness of existing efforts
 - Devise more education/outreach campaigns and materials
 - Create yard signs for homeowners who have adopted Firewise practices
 - Provide highly visible recognition for groups that undertake exemplary Firewise fixes

- **Evacuation Logistics**

- Reviewed report provided by Gordon Novak
- Discussed evacuation problems
- Limited number of major evacuation streets
- Limited access adds to wildfire danger
- Recommendations

- Clear evacuation route right-of-ways with regularly scheduled maintenance
- Coordinate with Fire Department and other entities to proactively manage vegetation overgrowth along evacuation routes
- Prioritize enforcement of city ordinances that require removal of dead vegetation on streets in the evacuation corridor
- Create clear instructions for evacuation and educate residents
- **Ways to Mitigate and Slow Fire Damage**
 - Ember-resistant mesh at chimneys, vents, and other structure openings
 - Approximately five feet of defensible space between building and any ignitable landscape
 - Reviewed Tom Keller's report for mitigation incentives
 - Recommendations
 - Pilot project to induce contiguous homeowners in the high-risk areas to "harden" their homes to slow wildfire advance
 - Citywide rebate offer to induce homeowners to adopt ember-resistant mesh and improve their defensible space
 - Utilize the experience of other counties that have had success with these incentive plans
- **Aligning and Enforcing Ordinances**
 - Reviewed limitations on enforcement efforts
 - Building codes, ZAPCO policies, and tree ordinances don't always align with Firewise goals
 - Recommendations
 - Focus enforcement on evacuation corridors
 - Encourage compliance by helping with brush removal, followed by stricter enforcement
 - Fast Track the enforcement process for homeowners in high-risk areas
 - Modify ordinances to allow homeowners to remove trees and vegetation within five-foot buffer zone
 - Review current ordinances to better align with Firewise goals

Q&A session was held for attendees. Reviewed recommendations for each category. Comments were provided by attendees.

4. Adjournment

Mayor Vaughan adjourned the meeting at 2:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


 JAMES VAUGHAN, MAYOR

ATTEST:


 Terry Blanchard, TRMC
 City Secretary

These minutes were approved on December 10, 2025.

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 WORKSHOP 12/03/2025

