



CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

- [Lisa Anderson — Mayor](#)
- [Chris McDonald — Vice-Mayor](#)
- [Wayne Hall — Commissioner](#)
- [Carolyn Roberts — Commissioner](#)
- [Don Bufalini — Commissioner](#)

WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 19, 2026
6:00 PM

MINUTES

1. Call To Order

Call to order by Mayor Anderson at 6:04PM.

Staff present: Tom Daugherty, Rachel Jones, Keith Paisley, Breanna Bailey, Scott Hughes, Curtis Broadbent

Board present: Mayor Anderson, Vice Mayor McDonald, Commissioner Hall, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Bufalini

2. New Business

A. Economic Development Position

City Manager Tom Daugherty addressed previous budget discussions regarding the necessity of the economic development position. He noted that time was granted from the board to demonstrate the position's value and emphasized that his goal was to present this value for the record, not to engage in further debate. Mr. Daugherty suggested that if there were strong objections to the position, the matter could be resolved by calling for a vote during the regular meeting.

Mr. Daugherty reviewed highlights of recent involvement by the economic development position. While not fully responsible for all actions, the position contributed to various initiatives, including the sidewalk project, Cumberland-Hwy 100 intersection, TDOT Interstate Lighting Initiative grant, TDOT Transportation Planning Grant for a thoroughfare plan, and efforts to secure funding for transportation infrastructure, stormwater, and improvements at city facilities.

Mr. Daugherty noted the economic development position has been actively establishing and maintaining relationships with regional, state, and federal entities, including GNRC, TDOT, TDEC, and Williamson Inc, as well as fostering collaboration between the city, local businesses, and other influential partners through initiatives such as Town Coffee, Invest Fairview, and Lunch and Learn. Additional activities include seeking funding for city projects, developing a business inventory, and creating a property inventory. These efforts will continue as part of the position's ongoing goals and objectives.

Mr. Daugherty outlined two main goals for the economic development position to include:

- Promote Balanced and Responsible Growth
- Enhance Quality Of Life

Mr. Daugherty also outlined objectives for the economic development position to include:

- Implement 2040 Comprehensive Plan - Contract for a retail (and lodging) market analysis
- Implement 2040 Comprehensive Plan - Recruit light manufacturing businesses
- Implement 2040 Comprehensive Plan - Collaborate with Dickson County, the City of Dickson, and Williamson County in a joint economic development effort to establish a distribution / logistics hub and/or mixed-business park in the I-40 and/or I-840 locations
- Implement 2040 Comprehensive Plan - Facilitate meetings with State and County workforce development providers with local businesses to ensure that Fairview is included in all outreach efforts and that available programming is marketed to existing and prospective businesses
- Implement 2040 Comprehensive Plan - Create basic business retention and recruitment packages
- Schedule 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update
- Coordinate and deliver land and greenspace preservation opportunities to the community
- Contract for a Major Thoroughfare Plan
- Improvements to city parks -- Historical Village Project
- Improvements to city parks -- Veteran's Park Project
- Improvements to city parks -- Bowie Nature Park Project
- Improvements to city parks -- Plan development for new park in Bellhaven community
- Improve access to educational opportunities and strengthen workforce development
- Invest in Public Safety Initiatives -- Fire Station 32
- Invest in Public Safety Initiatives -- Judicial Center

Commissioner Roberts acknowledged that she understands Mr. Daugherty's purpose is to provide information for the record rather than engage in extended debate. Clarification was provided to Commissioner Roberts regarding the preparation of the summary. Mr. Daugherty stated the summary was primarily written by him with input from the economic development officer, city planner, and other staff as appropriate.

Mayor Anderson emphasized that the discussion should focus on the responsibilities and value of the economic development position rather than the individual occupying it. She noted that activities such as cultivating relationships, attending events, and engaging with potential businesses including medical providers are standard functions of the role, even if specific outcomes or disclosures are not immediately visible. Mayor Anderson stressed that these efforts are essential to advancing the city's economic opportunities.

Commissioner Bufalini questioned Mr. Daugherty's earlier statement indicating a lack of interest in debate, noting that his position serves at the pleasure of the Board. Discussion followed regarding the Board's authority, the role of debate during workshops, and the importance of asking questions in a public setting. Mr. Daugherty clarified that his intent was not to limit discussion but to avoid repetitive or unproductive exchanges, emphasizing that the highlighted materials demonstrated the position's value and that the ultimate decision rests with the Board. Commissioner Bufalini reiterated that questions and debate are appropriate during workshops, as this is the designated time for discussion since members cannot deliberate outside of public meetings.

Commissioner Roberts stated that the discussion concerns both the necessity of the economic development position and how it has been executed and overseen. She noted that several projects referenced as accomplishments began prior to the creation of the position and emphasized the importance of evaluating whether the role is needed and delivering measurable value. Commissioner Roberts raised concerns regarding the position's compensation, including the initial salary exceeding the posted range, subsequent increases, and additional benefits. She stated that taxpayers expect transparency and accountability regarding expenditures and return on investment. She further noted that no formal performance evaluation has been conducted despite prior requests. Commissioner Roberts emphasized that her questions are not personal but relate to fiscal responsibility, measurable outcomes, oversight, and the overall effectiveness of the position. She reiterated the need for clear performance standards and evaluation processes to determine whether the position is structured and executed in a manner that best serves the City.

Mayor Anderson stated that comparable cities within the county maintain economic development positions and that compensation ranges are typically benchmarked against regional standards. It was noted that the City's economic development salary falls on the lower end of comparable ranges. Mayor Anderson highlighted ongoing efforts related to a proposed standalone emergency department campus, stating that relationship-building, networking events, and regional meetings though sometimes requiring attendance fees are necessary to attract businesses and services to the community. She emphasized that other city staff do not have the capacity to cultivate these economic relationships and expressed the view that the position is necessary to meet community needs and

growth demands. Mayor Anderson noted the role is beneficial to the City and that its compensation is reasonable when compared to similar positions in the region.

Commissioner Roberts questioned why Mr. Daugherty drafted vision and strategy documents for the economic development position rather than the employee, particularly given the salary level. Mr. Daugherty stated that he believed it was appropriate for leadership to define expectations and goals rather than have the employee establish them independently. Commissioner Roberts referenced the adopted job description, noting duties such as collecting and analyzing economic data and identifying development challenges and opportunities. She expressed concern that the execution of the role does not fully align with the written job description and stated that individuals compensated at a higher rate should be expected to perform at an expert level with greater independence. Commissioner Roberts reiterated that her concerns relate to oversight, role clarity, performance expectations, and accountability rather than any individual personally.

Vice Mayor McDonald acknowledged that valid points were raised on multiple sides of the discussion. He noted that the economic development role is a relatively new position for the City, and as such, expectations and performance measures are still being defined. He stated that heightened scrutiny is natural when evaluating a new position and that constructive dialogue can lead to clearer standards and improved outcomes. He emphasized the importance of establishing formal evaluation processes, noting that annual written reviews would provide transparency and accountability, particularly when salary increases occur. He expressed that performance reviews are a sound management practice for all positions and would benefit both the employee and the City. Vice Mayor McDonald noted that while the discussion has been challenging and at times repetitive, it has the potential to strengthen the economic development position and clarify expectations moving forward.

Commissioner Roberts acknowledged the importance of confidentiality in economic development matters but expressed concern that the Board lacks sufficient visibility into ongoing projects. It was stated that while specific details may need to remain confidential, there are methods potentially through the City Attorney or structured reporting that could provide the Board with measurable indicators of progress. Commissioner Roberts emphasized that improved communication is necessary to demonstrate that initiatives are advancing and noted that other jurisdictions utilize models that balance confidentiality with transparency to governing bodies.

Commissioner Hall shared historical context regarding economic development efforts in Fairview, noting that past recruitment of businesses occurred without a formal economic development position but often relied on individual relationships and informal outreach. Commissioner Hall referenced prior business losses, including retail, hospitality, and manufacturing establishments, and emphasized the importance of having a designated representative to engage with developers and businesses proactively. He expressed support for maintaining the economic development position, stating that having a representative "at the table" is important for attracting and retaining businesses and preventing future losses.

Mayor Anderson stated that large-scale projects, particularly multi-million-dollar developments, often require strict confidentiality to protect business interests and competitive positioning. She noted that developers and healthcare providers may be reluctant to proceed if confidentiality cannot be assured. Mayor Anderson acknowledged the Board's desire for updates but emphasized that maintaining confidentiality is critical to securing major investments. She stated that while smaller projects may not require the same level of discretion, significant developments such as proposed medical facilities often depend on trust and controlled disclosure. She added that if updates can be provided without compromising confidentiality, that approach should be considered, but protecting the interests of potential investors remains essential to ensuring projects move forward.

City Attorney Patrick Carter explained that confidential economic development matters can be communicated to the Board through established legal channels. He noted that the economic development director typically works with the City Attorney and City Manager to provide updates, sometimes using code names and limited details to protect sensitive projects. He stated that if public action is required, those matters can be handled appropriately while maintaining confidentiality. Mr. Carter emphasized that successful economic development efforts require trust among Board members and between the Board and staff. He noted that developers often seek stable governance and may be discouraged by perceptions of instability or lack of cohesion. He added that maintaining professionalism, confidentiality, and collaborative governance supports the City's ability to attract high-quality development. He concluded by reiterating that confidential updates can be provided through the City Attorney, City Manager, individual communications when appropriate, or executive session in accordance with the law.

3. Meeting Adjournment

Meeting adjournment by Mayor Anderson at 6:57PM.

City Recorder, Rachel Jones

Rachel Jones

Mayor, Lisa Anderson

Mayor Lisa Anderson