



# City of Elkins Municipal Properties Committee Meeting

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February 9, 2026

11:00 AM

Phil Gainer Community Center  
142 Robert E. Lee Ave. Ext.

**Charter Authority of the Municipal Properties Committee:** Monitor and report to Council on the condition of and proposed plans for city buildings, real estate, and rights-of-way. Review and propose to Council capital investment in buildings, real estate, and associated infrastructure.

## **AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call**
- 2. Public Comment**
- 3. Minutes**
  - a. Proposed minutes for the meeting of January 12, 2026
- 4. Reports**
- 5. New Business**
  - a. Downtown sound system
  - b. City Hall kiosk
  - c. Traffic control improvements
  - d. Fire Department wall repairs
- 6. Announcements**
- 7. Adjournment**



## CITY OF ELKINS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	February 9, 2026
<b>Section:</b>	Minutes
<b>Category:</b>	Action Item
<b>Agenda Item Name:</b>	Proposed minutes for the meeting of January 12, 2026
<b>Recommended By:</b>	City Clerk
<b>Summary:</b>	Minutes proposed for the referenced meeting
<b>Fiscal Impact:</b>	n/a
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Consider for approval
<b>Attachments:</b>	1. Municipal Properties Committee - 2026_01_12 - minutes_proposed

# MUNICIPAL PROPERTIES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

*Phil Gainer Community Center  
142 Robert E. Lee Ave. Ext.  
January 12, 2026  
11:00 a.m.*

Present were members: C. Lowther (chair), R. Chenoweth, and B. Woods.

Also present were: Jerry Marco (mayor), Mike Kesecker (operations manager), Tracy Judy (treasurer), Steve Himes (fire chief), Sutton Stokes (city clerk), and Mikayla Goins (executive secretary).

## MINUTES

Chenoweth **MOVED APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NOVEMBER 17, 2025.** The motion carried.

## NEW BUSINESS

**By unanimous consent of the committee the agenda was reordered as follows:**

**g. Review committee “job descriptions”**

The Committee discussed the “job description” for the committee. No action taken.

**c. Downtown sound system**

The Committee discussed the downtown sound system. The Operations Manager will direct the Street Department to remove the speakers and either remove or secure any other loose equipment.

**a. Harrison Avenue property planning**

The Committee discussed plans for the Harrison Avenue property. No action taken.

**b. Acceptance of bid to replace PGCC roof**

Chenoweth **MOVED TO RECOMMEND COUNCIL ACCEPTANCE OF THE BID FROM APPALACHIAN ROOFING & SHEET METAL, LLC TO REPLACE PGCC ROOF TO BE PAID OUT OF THE FINANCIAL STABILIZATION FUND.** The motion carried.

**d. City Hall IT room**

The Committee discussed the City Hall IT room. No action taken.

**e. Fire department wall**

The Committee discussed repairs needed for the Fire department wall. No action taken.

**f. Update on traffic study**

The Committee received an update on the traffic study. No action taken.

The meeting adjourned at 12:28 p.m.

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Name & Title

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Signature



## CITY OF ELKINS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	February 9, 2026
<b>Section:</b>	New Business
<b>Category:</b>	Action Item
<b>Agenda Item Name:</b>	Downtown sound system
<b>Recommended By:</b>	City Clerk
<b>Summary:</b>	The attached memo reviews the evolution of the downtown sound system and how changes in its primary users and use patterns now offer the opportunity for redesign. It outlines challenges with the original multi-use approach and presents an option focused on background music that may be more broadly acceptable, easier to manage, and better aligned with current downtown needs.
<b>Fiscal Impact:</b>	TBD
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Review, discuss, and plan next steps
<b>Attachments:</b>	1. Memo - Plan for downtown sound - 2026_02_06

# **Memo: Downtown Sound System – Notes & Considerations**

**From: Sutton Stokes, City Clerk**

Changes in how the downtown sound system has been used, along with changes in its primary users, create an opportunity to reconsider both its purpose and design. This memo reviews the system's original intent, how actual use evolved over time, and the challenges that emerged. It then outlines options for a redesigned approach that may be more broadly useful, better accepted, and easier to manage going forward.

## **Original System Design (2019)**

The downtown sound system was originally designed to support multiple functions:

- City-controlled public music from City Hall
- Public music controlled by outside users from various access points
- Event announcements by sponsors from access points
- Urgent or emergency announcements by City officials from desk phones (never implemented)

This design required relatively large, high-mounted speakers and relied on outside users to supply their own playback devices.

The City has been advised to pay annual music licensing fees to BMI and ASCAP totaling approximately \$1,200. Regardless of any decision regarding the downtown system, these licenses should continue to be purchased to cover music use at Phil Gainer Community Center events.

## **Original Use Case**

- Outside users paid to use the system, controlled it themselves, and provided their own music (phones, iPods, or similar devices).
- Some users (e.g., Mountain State Street Machines) connected external sound systems to enable announcements, introducing risks such as excessive input levels and potential equipment damage.
- The City was intended to be largely hands-off, using the system only for emergency announcements, a capability that was never achieved.
- Start and stop times were fully controlled by outside users.

**Key drawbacks included:**

- Excessive volume impacts on nearby businesses and residences.
- Requests for exceptions to the fee requirement.
- Music selections and input methods were inconsistent.

**Evolved Use Case and Recent Improvements**

In 2023, the City adopted the Soundtrack app, automating music scheduling and providing access to themed playlists and an extremely large music library.

This allowed the City to manage its music programs without modifying the underlying system.

The app was not compatible with events requiring spoken announcements (e.g., Mountain State Street Machines), which again relied on connecting external sound systems to the downtown sound system.

The City managed music for most events until fall 2024, when the system failed and was disassembled.

**Current Status**

All speakers have been removed from downtown poles for safety reasons. Some internal components (e.g., processors and amplifiers) may require repair or replacement. Any new installation would effectively begin from a clean slate, allowing the City to reconsider system design and purpose.

**Redesign Considerations**

Before proceeding, the City must decide whether the system should:

- Retain full original capabilities, including outside user control and announcements;  
or
- Be limited to background music only, under exclusive City control.

**City Park Consideration**

Extending any new system to City Park has also been suggested due to Mountain State Street Machines' relocation of its Independence Day event.

Including City Park in the downtown system is not recommended. Doing so would require a cable crossing Randolph Avenue and would create challenges in managing music programming and volume across two very different environments.

A standalone sound system in City Park is also not recommended due to likely noise conflicts with surrounding residences. MSSM's needs during its Independence Day event can be met using the same portable equipment it already uses for downtown cruise-ins, which is appropriate and customary for that event.

By contrast, a permanent sound system in City Park would likely encourage year-round amplified music, increasing the risk of ongoing neighborhood disruption.

For park settings, the preferred approach would be to require event organizers to provide their own sound equipment. This approach ensures better scaling to the size of each event, limits noise impacts, aligns with public expectations for park use, and avoids assigning sound system management responsibilities to EPRC staff, which falls outside their expertise.

### **Recommendation: Background Music–Focused Option**

The relocation of Mountain State Street Machines removes the primary driver for announcement capability downtown and creates an opportunity to adopt a simpler, more focused system.

If it can be agreed that no user input access is needed outside City Hall, a redesigned system could operate as follows:

- Install smaller, lower-volume speakers mounted lower on poles to reduce impacts on nearby businesses and residences (e.g., Buckhannon, Virginia Beach).
- Eliminate announcement capability, reducing cost and complexity.
- Maintain full City control of the music program from City Hall using the Soundtrack app or a similar platform, with the following framework:
  - Low-level background music playing year-round to enhance the downtown atmosphere.
  - Seasonal, time-of-day, or themed programming (e.g., “Friday Happy Hour”).
  - Collaboration with organizers of approved City-sponsored events to select appropriate playlists.
  - No outside control or input, reducing conflicts, staff involvement, and risk of equipment damage.
- Consider piloting ambient “soundscapes” in partnership with Augusta, based on research suggesting such programs can improve perceived safety and comfort in downtown areas and encourage longer visits.

- Events requiring announcements (e.g., car shows) would use their own PA systems, with City music temporarily suspended during those events if necessary.

### **Recommended Next Steps**

- Decide whether the system will support announcements or be limited to background music under City control.
- Retain a consultant to design the system based on that decision, including speaker type, placement, and volume.
- Develop cost estimates.
- Determine an appropriate procurement method if the project is cost-feasible.

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## CITY OF ELKINS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	February 9, 2026
<b>Section:</b>	New Business
<b>Category:</b>	Action Item
<b>Agenda Item Name:</b>	City Hall kiosk
<b>Recommended By:</b>	City Clerk
<b>Summary:</b>	<p>The City Hall kiosk (outdoor bulletin boards) was installed in 2019 or 2020 at an apparent cost to the City of approximately \$7,500. Over time, it has significantly deteriorated and is now unusable and increasingly an eyesore. An assessment by City Hall maintenance staff indicates that the materials used in its construction are not conducive to repair.</p> <p>The City Clerk recommends removal of the kiosk with no plan for replacement. Bulletin boards are no longer an effective means of providing public information in 2026, and this particular location is largely out of public view. The kiosk was installed prior to the City's deployment of an online agenda management platform.</p> <p>The City's current communications practices reflect a leading-edge use of technology, including consistent live-streaming of Council meetings, an online agenda management system, active social media postings, and a full-time communications staff member. As a result, City of Elkins is among the most transparent municipalities in the state in terms of access to public information. Replacing the kiosk would be largely cosmetic and would not materially enhance transparency or public access; doing so would represent an expenditure driven by sentiment rather than by demonstrated need or rational analysis, especially given that another bulletin board is located inside the City Hall lobby, where the same information will be posted once the building reopens.</p>
<b>Fiscal Impact:</b>	Avoiding expenditure of approximately \$7,500
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Review presented information
<b>Attachments:</b>	1. Kiosk_Images



## CITY OF ELKINS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

	2. Kiosk_Images
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Birds & 

Walk

January 14, 10 a.m.

Elkins, First Pavilion

Volunteer will be on hand to help with  
 shovels if you have them. Some will  
 Dress warmly! Follow Elkins  
 on FB for possible weather


## Tree Talks Lecture Series

at the Kump House

**WEDNESDAY 3/4: 7pm**  
 Under Pressure: A Tale of  
 Two Salamanders  
 Lacy Rucker,  
 USDA Forest Service

**WEDNESDAY 4/1: 7pm**  
 Exploring Woods With  
 Wonder  
 Valerie Hart and Kate Reed,  
 Wonder & Grow

**WEDNESDAY 5/6: 7pm**  
 Forest Invaders: How  
 Invasives Wreck Woodland  
 Havoc  
 Michelle Fonda,  
 WV DNR



401 Randolph Ave., Elkins (across from Kroger)  
 Easy access to parking behind the historic Kump  
 House via Seneca Road. FREE!

KUMPEducationCenter.org







**ELKINS TREE BOARD  
MEETING AGENDA**

*Darden House, 421 Davis Ave. Elkins WV 26241  
February 2, 2026 6:30 p.m.*

1. Call to order and roll call
2. Public comment
3. Consent calendar  
Minutes proposed for the meeting of January 7, 2026
4. Budget Report
5. Old Business
  - Grant Discussion- Bradford Pear Removal
  - Hazard Tree Voucher Program
  - City's Hazard Tree Communication
6. New Business
  - Winter Tree Walk
7. Announcements
8. Adjournment





Birds & 

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<b>Meeting Date:</b>	February 9, 2026
<b>Section:</b>	New Business
<b>Category:</b>	Action Item
<b>Agenda Item Name:</b>	Traffic control improvements
<b>Recommended By:</b>	Committee Chair
<b>Summary:</b>	Standing item to discuss traffic control improvements
<b>Fiscal Impact:</b>	TBD
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Review, discuss, and consider recommended actions
<b>Attachments:</b>	None



## CITY OF ELKINS AGENDA ITEM REPORT

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	February 9, 2026
<b>Section:</b>	New Business
<b>Category:</b>	Action Item
<b>Agenda Item Name:</b>	Fire Department wall repairs
<b>Recommended By:</b>	Fire Chief
<b>Summary:</b>	Standing item for monitoring and discussing needed repairs to the rear wall of the Fire Department
<b>Fiscal Impact:</b>	TBD
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Review, discuss, and consider next steps
<b>Attachments:</b>	None