Minutes of the March 27, 2026
Joplin Citizen's Committee: Proposition Police & Fire

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of March 27, 2026, Citizen's Committee: Proposition Police & Fire was called to order by Chair CB Eastman at 7:30 am.

Roll Call: Committee Members Present: CB Eastman, Dottie Murphy, Jhan Hurn, Payton Layne, Terry Wachter, Bob Loudermilk, Fred Palmer, Dan Pekarek and Ryan Stanley.

Absent: Drew Kimble, Anthony Monteleone, Chris Stockton, Kim Cox, and Greg Wilkerson.

City Employees Present: Nick Edwards, Drew Douglas, Leslie Haase, Felicia Urban, Gerald Ezell, Richard Pearson, Brian Lewis, Charles Copple, Josh Bard, Thomas Bowin, Luke Stahl, Betsy Mense, and Erin Slifka.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Dottie Murphy motioned to approve minutes as is, Josh Bard second the motion. All in favor to pass minutes unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Overview of Citizen's Committee: The meeting was called to order with the acknowledgment that only one meeting remains before Election Day. Members were asked to review the previous meeting minutes, and no objections were noted. A sign-up sheet for polling locations was circulated, with several positions still needing volunteers. Members were reminded to maintain a distance of 25 feet from polling locations and to arrive between 6:00 and 6:30 AM before voting begins. It was also noted that Dottie and another member will be unavailable on Election Day.

Updates were provided on upcoming speaking engagements, including a Daybreak session on Friday the 27th, a radio appearance on April 1, a Women's Club event at Twin Hills, and a community "Wine Share" event on April 3. Members were encouraged to attend the Expo on the 28th and 29th, where a booth will be staffed, and to continue participating in walk-and-talk outreach efforts. Feedback from recent engagements indicated strong overall support for public safety improvements, though some community members expressed concerns regarding transparency, police equipment, and long-term planning. It was noted that the City is aware of these concerns and is taking steps to improve communication, including updates to its website and financial reporting, while also emphasizing the importance of maintaining proper oversight of public safety tools and equipment.

Discussion highlighted ongoing staffing shortages, with more than 20 officer positions currently unfilled, which limits the ability to focus on long-term planning. The City's priorities remain improving wages, maintaining and replacing equipment, and addressing facility needs, including future fire station improvements. Members emphasized the importance of clearly communicating long-term plans to the public. A fundraising update indicated an expected $2,500 contribution from Crossland, with additional funding discussions ongoing. Available funds may be used to support radio and outreach efforts.

The sign campaign update noted that 30 of 40 large signs have been placed, with 10 remaining, and 57-yard signs are still available, some of which are reserved for polling locations. Additional placement sites were identified, and members were reminded that all signs must be removed promptly after Election Day. Outreach metrics showed approximately 842 doors reached, with strong positive sentiment among voters. Digital advertising launched on March 24 has generated solid engagement, and members were encouraged to continue submitting letters to the editor.

Members also discussed upcoming community events, including the Outdoor Expo and an FOP breakfast, as opportunities to increase visibility and engagement. A ballot processing issue affecting several voters was reported but has since been resolved, with corrective measures implemented. Additional discussion included the effectiveness of larger campaign signs and the need to engage more community advocates to support messaging efforts. With no further business, the meeting adjourned, noting that one final meeting remains before Election Day.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:26 am.

Submitted,

Felicia Urban, Secretary