

- **Councilmember Fowler:** "I'll keep it brief—sincerely, thank you all for participating in our town."
- **Mayor Jaffe:** Mayor Jaffe concluded the meeting by emphasizing the importance of forward progress and accountability. He encouraged the community to hold him and the council responsible for staying focused on the future, rather than dwelling on past divisions or misinformation. He clarified that there are no intentions to dissolve the town or eliminate planning bodies like the Planning & Zoning Commission. He pointed out that the current council faces many of the same challenges as previous ones but expressed confidence that they are now better prepared to meet them. The mayor reiterated his commitment to open communication and responsible leadership as the town continues to grow and mature. He extended sincere thanks to Dr. Horan and the Poetry Community Christian School for allowing use of the facility, noting that future council meetings will likely be held there due to logistical ease. He also recognized Scott & Laura Lehew, and Zoe Hughes, Sandy Horan, and David Emard for their help in preparing the event and supporting technical needs. Mayor Jaffe expressed pride in the community's engagement and enthusiasm for what lies ahead.

F. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 8:25pm

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF POETRY, TEXAS ON THIS 19TH DAY OF JUNE 2025


Mike Jaffe, Mayor


Anne E. Hamilton, Town Secretary

intersections along the way. Adding hydrants at intersections could positively impact the town's ISO rating and potentially lower residents' insurance costs.

Mayor Jaffe: shared his perspective in response to concerns raised by Josh, Larry, and others about the potential impact of building codes on existing properties. He made it clear that, during his time as mayor, he intends to strongly oppose any measures that would allow inspectors or officials to start scrutinizing residents' existing properties. He emphasized his personal stance, saying no one should be coming onto private property—to challenge the way things were originally built, especially when those structures were built to the best of residents' abilities at the time, even if not to the highest modern standards. He acknowledged that while he doesn't have a vote, he does have influence through his ability to communicate with council members. He committed to doing everything in his power to prevent longtime residents and older structures from being penalized under new regulations. Mayor Jaffe clarified that when he talks about implementing codes or standards, he is thinking more about future development—particularly new subdivisions that may arise in the ETJ (extraterritorial jurisdiction) or areas like the Lamar Ranch property. His position is that these new homes should be built to solid standards to avoid attracting substandard construction. He expressed a desire for well-built, high-quality homes that reflect the character and aspirations of the community.

3. Closing Remarks from the Mayor and Council:

- **Councilmember Kendrick:** thanked everyone for coming and expressing hope that attendees felt more at ease about the town's direction. He compared the process to setting up dominoes—emphasizing that they are starting at the beginning, laying a solid foundation. He stressed the benefits of incorporation, especially in emergency management, noting that as part of Kaufman County's plan, Poetry receives better disaster response than unincorporated areas. Councilmember Kendrick explained that efforts like building codes and planning will help the town grow responsibly and may improve insurance and safety. He ended by saying the council is excited about the work ahead and proud to serve the community.
- **Councilmember Hibbs:** closed by saying it was a pleasure to hear from the citizens, calling it a "breath of fresh air." She thanked everyone who spoke, noting their ideas were valuable. She emphasized the importance of preserving community traditions and said residents are an extension of the council. She ended by thanking everyone again and expressing hope to see more community involvement.
- **Councilmember Anderson:** reflected on serving since 2021, acknowledging the challenges of starting a new town. He noted that while it's still difficult, it has also been rewarding. He thanked the community for their support and votes and said he looks forward to continuing to work through the challenges ahead.
- **Councilmember Bryant:** emphasized that his role is to research, gather facts, and present them to the council—not to make unilateral decisions. He reassured residents that the council's purpose is to serve the community, not to push drastic changes.

to be whether adopting building codes might help lower insurance premiums. Councilmember Hibbs admitted she wasn't entirely certain but suggested that adopting formal building codes could potentially have a positive impact on insurance rates. The implication was that a more structured and regulated approach to construction and safety might result in improved classifications for insurance purposes, thereby reducing premiums for residents.

- Larry followed up by explained that he owns an older home, and many such homes in the area were built without being up to current code standards. He worried that if the town begins to require Certificates of Occupancy (COs) or similar inspections for existing structures, it could inadvertently penalize long-time residents. By exposing the non-compliance of older homes—especially through inspections or official documentation—insurance adjusters and underwriters might take notice. This could lead to increased insurance premiums for properties that were never originally held to modern code standards, potentially placing an undue financial burden on homeowners who have lived in the area for decades. Larry emphasized the risk that bringing in modern oversight might unintentionally hurt the very people who helped build the community.

Councilmember Fowler: responded by emphasizing the importance of including as many people as possible in the town's planning and regulatory process before implementing new laws. He advised having a contingency plan in place to address concerns before any formal adoption.

Councilmember Fowler further clarified that the term "legal non-conforming" is essentially the legal equivalent of being "grandfathered in." He explained that this designation applies to the property itself—not necessarily to the structure—meaning that older homes would not be required to immediately meet new building codes. He reassured residents that insurance companies typically wouldn't be alerted to whether a house is substandard according to city code, so long-time homeowners should remain unaffected.

He went on to explain that insurance rates are largely influenced by ISO (Insurance Services Office) ratings. While cities with higher ratings (e.g., ISO1) might see marginally lower premiums, they also pay higher taxes to maintain that rating. As a result, the savings in premiums are often offset by increased tax burdens, making the financial impact a wash.

- Larry shared his personal experience with insurance challenges during his four years living in the area, he's already had to switch insurance providers twice despite having a clean claims record. He feels this instability is largely due to the area's absence of a fire hydrant within 1,000 feet of his home. He noted that the Union Valley Fire Department is just over half a mile away, but unfortunately his property is still in a higher insurance risk category. He feels residents are being penalized with higher premiums, as if they were living in a remote or rural area, despite technically residing within a city. Larry suggested for the future: when the town begins infrastructure projects like replacing roads—such as Poetry Road—it should consider installing fire hydrants at

challenges, especially if it prevents a property owner from using or selling their land in a way that reflects its highest and best use. He noted that while the town has chosen to incorporate and accept some collective restrictions, those restrictions cannot cross into the territory of depriving owners of their fundamental property rights—doing so would not only be unconstitutional but would also result in expensive legal battles the town could not afford.

- **Larry Faulhaber:** expressed concern about how the implementation of new codes might affect long-standing residents and existing properties. Specifically, he questioned how grandfather clauses would apply to homes that have been in Poetry for decades. His main worry centered on whether these grandfathered properties might be forced to make upgrades or changes due to new regulations, particularly in a way that could influence insurance rates.

Larry explained that many areas in Poetry already suffer from high fire insurance classifications due to the lack of nearby fire hydrants and the extended response times for emergency services. He worried that the introduction of stricter building codes could lead insurance companies to reassess existing properties and potentially hold homeowners accountable for not meeting updated standards. He emphasized that while it makes sense to enforce new codes on future developments, it would be problematic if homeowners of older properties were required to retrofit or upgrade their homes simply because the town adopted new codes. His key point was a desire to avoid unintended financial consequences, like increased insurance costs, for residents living in grandfathered structures.

Councilmember Bryant's Response: suggested that one potential solution to address concerns about grandfathered properties under new building codes would be to issue Certificates of Occupancy for existing structures. He noted that in established towns, once a construction project is completed and passes all final inspections and fire marshal reviews, a Certificate of Occupancy is issued—often displayed in a restaurant or store as a sign that the building meets the necessary requirements. This process could protect long-standing properties that may not fully conform to new setback or construction standards by ensuring that, in the event of significant damage, homeowners retain the right to rebuild under the conditions they originally met. Bryant suggested that as Poetry grows, the town might need to identify properties with potential issues and then gradually implement a system of Certificates of Occupancy. Furthermore, he proposed that if the town adopts a statewide minimum code (for example, the 2018 International Residential Code), the council could amend it through city-specific amendments. Such amendments would allow Poetry to tailor the building code to local needs—maintaining reasonable standards without imposing undue burdens on residents or forcing changes that could negatively impact property values or push residents out of town.

Councilmember Hibbs Response: Councilmember Hibbs addressed Larry's concern by first confirming that part of the issue was the rising cost of insurance. While acknowledging that the grandfather clause had been discussed, Hibbs wanted to clarify that the concern now seemed

counsel had previously advised that offering future tax exemptions was not legally permissible. However, Fowler emphasized that this shouldn't be the end of the discussion. He encouraged continued exploration of creative incentives and even suggested forming a committee to brainstorm viable alternatives. Fowler reaffirmed the importance of expanding the town's footprint, stating that increased annexation strengthens the town's protective "bubble." He closed by reiterating his support for Josh's goal and his willingness to revisit the legal avenues available, even if past advice was limiting.

- **Kenny Hibbs:** Presented a question regarding the Texas Open Meetings Act and why all of council is not permitted to respond to an email if the sender addresses it to every council member.

Mayor Jaffe's Response: Mayor Jaffe addressed this concern about communication with the Town Council by explaining the limitations imposed by the Texas Open Meetings Act (OMA). He acknowledged that while citizens often have good intentions when sending emails to the entire council and mayor, doing so triggers legal restrictions. Once all council members receive the same communication, they are prohibited from replying due to OMA rules, which are designed to prevent unofficial deliberations outside public meetings.

Mayor Jaffe shared that even internal practices have changed to comply with these rules—for instance, secretaries now blind-copy council members to avoid accidental violations. He admitted the rules can be frustrating, especially when citizens want to express concerns broadly, but emphasized their purpose in maintaining transparency.

To navigate this, he recommended reaching out to one or two council members directly, or contacting him as a central point of communication. Since the mayor does not vote, he does not count toward the quorum limit and can be involved in any such discussion. He reiterated that matters raised this way can still be brought forward formally and discussed by the full council in a public meeting. Ultimately, he urged residents to avoid using "reply all" and instead identify which council member(s) they feel are most likely to engage with their concerns effectively.

- Mr. Hibbs then asked Councilmember Bryant a question regarding the legal process of a property transaction in Poetry. Specifically, if the Town could intervene or prevent a sale or transfer of property.

Councilmember Bryant's Response: Councilmember Bryant clarified that the Town of Poetry cannot stop the sale of private property, as doing so would infringe on constitutionally protected property rights. He explained that attempting to block a property transaction would be akin to telling a landowner they couldn't use their land for a lawful purpose, like raising cattle, simply because others disapprove. He emphasized that property rights are protected under several constitutional amendments, including the Fourth Amendment.

Bryant further explained that while zoning laws can place some restrictions on property use for the community's benefit, there are legal limits. Excessively restrictive zoning can result in legal

- Clarify voter rolls in all counties involved to ensure residents know their eligibility and correct voting districts — emphasizing this as a critical issue tied to the town's mapping and boundaries.
- Implement a reverse 911 or mass notification system to keep residents informed about emergencies (like tornados, floods, or road closures) and key updates (like meetings).

In closing, he reiterated his appreciation for the council's service and his optimism about the town's direction.

- **Jonathan Blake:** Jonathan briefly stated that he looks forward to seeing some of the topics discussed tonight appear on upcoming agendas, and mentioned that he plans to present counterpoints to some of the ideas shared.

He also provided an update on the new streetlight installation by Encore, noting that:

- The streetlight was installed following a citizen's suggestion.
- He initiated the request back in January, and while it turned out to be a more involved process than expected, it was ultimately successful.

Mayor Jaffe publicly thanked Jonathan for his effort, noting the improved lighting. Jonathan's comments were brief but acknowledged both his ongoing engagement with town matters and willingness to offer alternative perspectives in future discussions.

- **Josh Senkevech:** Josh addressed the council with a focus on town growth and annexation. He pointed out that the town's boundaries currently touch many properties that could be voluntarily brought into Poetry, and emphasized the importance of encouraging those landowners to annex their property. Doing so would help "thicken" the town map, creating a more cohesive layout with larger lot sizes and a stronger sense of unity. Since the town does not currently offer services like water, sewer, or septic that might typically attract annexation, Josh proposed an alternative incentive: offering a long-term exemption from future property taxes, as an example—possibly for up to 25 years—to landowners who choose to join the town. He noted that this idea has been discussed in the past but never fully pursued. Josh also urged caution in the implementation of building codes. While he agreed that strong regulations are important for managing new development, he stressed the need to avoid placing unnecessary burdens on residents, expressing a concern that people in Poetry likely do not want inspectors coming onto their property to approve projects like barns or sheds, which are common in rural communities. In his view, it is important to ensure that building codes protect the town without interfering with the traditional freedoms that property owners in Poetry value.

Councilmember Fowler's Response: Councilmember Terry Fowler responded to Josh Senkevech's suggestion by expressing agreement with the overall goal of encouraging annexation and filling in the town boundaries. He recalled having raised a similar idea in the past regarding tax incentives for annexation but noted that, if memory serves, the town's legal

which mandates that open records requests be fulfilled within 10 business days, except in exceptional cases.

Finally, Robin thanked the new council, expressing optimism for the town's direction, appreciation for being heard, and willingness to continue volunteering.

Mayor Jaffe's Response: Mayor Jaffe acknowledged Robin's remarks, particularly her point about the challenges posed by the town spanning three counties. He emphasized that it's not the citizens' fault that Poetry's jurisdiction is divided, and he sees it as the town leadership's responsibility to create consistent standards across all areas. Mayor Jaffe believes that Poetry's growth and increased legitimacy may allow for a more positive outcome now, if we go back and review the division within the counties. He expressed support for taking back certain responsibilities from the counties, including building code enforcement, so that all residents and developers are held to the same requirements, regardless of which county they are in.

He clarified that this would apply only to new development, and existing structures would be grandfathered in under current conditions. The goal, he said, is to remove incentives for developers or homeowners to choose one part of town over another based on differing building standards.

Mayor Jaffe concluded by signaling this initiative as a priority moving forward, encouraging citizens to stay engaged as the town works toward uniformity.

- **Katherine Hardwick:** Katherine began by expressing renewed hope and gratitude following the recent election, saying it's rare that all her chosen candidates are elected, a sign to her that positive change is coming.
She voiced support for the points raised by previous speakers, affirming that those reflect her own concerns as well. Katherine expressed confidence in Councilmember Bryant's knowledge of subdivision-related issues and acknowledged Councilmember Fowler's involvement in prior related meetings, stating that she feels the town is now in capable hands.
She concluded with strong support for efforts to avoid implementing a property tax, stating clearly that she is fully behind any action that helps the town stay tax-free.
- **Scott Lehew:** Scott began by congratulating the newly elected officials and thanking them for their willingness to serve the community. He felt most of his concerns have already been addressed by other citizens so he was going to offer a bullet-point summary of priorities he feels needs the town's focus:
 - Maintain legal compliance with the state in all basic functions and do so efficiently.
 - Pass meaningful ordinances that protect the town from overdevelopment without placing unnecessary burdens on residents.
 - Build relationships with counties and neighboring towns, which will have both direct benefits (like improved roads) and indirect benefits for town operations.

Support was voiced for the ongoing work to clarify town boundaries, with specific mention of voting eligibility confusion. She further emphasized the importance of finalizing a boundary survey and suggested that outreach efforts could help affected residents understand their status and potentially explore annexation options. Additional ideas were offered to foster community engagement, such as hosting annual town events, organizing a town-wide garage sale, inviting vendors, and continuing to grow the town's Christmas lights tradition. These were noted as efforts best handled by volunteers and community committees.

Mayor Jaffe's Response: Mayor Jaffe addressed the ongoing challenge of effectively communicating with residents. He acknowledged that various methods have been tried over the years—such as direct mail and online notices—with limited success in reaching everyone. To improve consistency and predictability, the Mayor proposed standardizing meeting schedules, with regular council meetings held on the third Thursday of each month. He is working with town staff to maintain a 12-month rolling calendar that includes all known meetings and recurring agenda items to help residents stay informed. Additionally, Mayor Jaffe expressed interest in implementing a voluntary text alert system to notify citizens of important updates, including meetings and community events. This would provide a modern, direct form of communication and could help bridge current gaps in outreach. He noted this idea will be further explored, including potential costs and logistics.

- **Robin Followell:** As a certified zoning inspector with municipal experience, she expressed strong interest in contributing her expertise to the Town of Poetry. She volunteered to support any future zoning or signage committees and emphasized how her knowledge could help protect and guide responsible development in the town.

Her primary concern was the absence of a standardized building code in Poetry. She noted that the town spans three counties—each of which may follow different building codes—resulting in inconsistent construction standards. She advocated for adopting the minimum statewide building code (currently believed to be the 2018 International Building Code) to ensure fairness and quality across all new construction and remodels within Poetry, regardless of county jurisdiction, adding that adopting a code does not require the town to hire inspectors directly, as third-party inspection services are available. Importantly, implementing this policy would not only improve safety and consistency but could also become a source of revenue for the town.

Robin offered to provide additional research and clarification from her city's building official upon her return from travel, with the goal of helping council members begin the process of formal adoption.

She also supported: Reintroducing comments after each agenda item during council meetings, as well as ensuring compliance with the Texas Public Information Act,

During the citizen comment portion:

- Attendees will speak in the order they signed up.
 - While there's no strict time limit, comments should be brief to keep the meeting moving.
 - A sand timer will be used to help manage speaking time.
 - The council will listen but will not engage in deliberation or debate during this session.
 - All relevant ideas will be recorded live and displayed; if something is missed, attendees can request it be added.
 - This is a brainstorming-style session — all input is welcome, without immediate judgment.
 - The goal is to gather new ideas and perspectives for the council to consider as they shape the town's future.
- **Chad McFarland:** reported that the requested grant records he reviewed were incomplete, disorganized, and contained duplicate pages. Although more information may exist in an online portal, access had not yet been transferred to the new administration at the time of their review. He noted an upcoming grant filing deadline and had informed Mayor Jaffe accordingly.
His goal in seeking the information was to be able to ask informed questions of experienced grant writers he is in contact with. Additionally, he highlighted positive interactions between Mayor Jaffe and regional leaders—such as the Kaufman County Judge and Commissioner—suggesting that the town is already benefiting from those growing relationships.
 - **Shelley Smith:** Requested for the council to create a clear and honest list outlining what a town government can and cannot do for its citizens. For example, developments like the Lamar Ranch project are outside the town's control, though it's still important for residents to be informed. She also noted that a nearby thoroughfare, while not directly within Poetry, could help divert traffic from local roads like League Line Road, potentially reducing wear and repair costs.
Mrs. Smith also voiced support for restoring the previous practice of allowing public input after each agenda item, while also acknowledging confidence in the current council's willingness to listen and engage with residents outside of formal meetings. A concern was shared about the previous tense atmosphere in town meetings, with a hope for more constructive and respectful dialogue going forward. Lastly, she pointed out an error with the placement of a city limit sign on FM 3486, which is located outside the town boundaries and should be corrected.
 - **Debbie Emard:** Appreciation was expressed to the council for their efforts in creating space for citizen input. Suggestions were made to improve public awareness of meetings and events, including the installation of a changeable marquee sign at a central location (e.g., FM 1565 and FM 986), temporary yard signs at key entry points to town, and occasional town-wide mailings.

- **Councilmember Terry Fowler:** Terry expressed enthusiasm for seeing many familiar faces as well as new community members present. Over the past four years, numerous new relationships have been forged, and appreciation was extended to all attendees. He acknowledged those who could not attend but emphasized that many citizens remain deeply invested in the town's future.
He commended the council, stating that the community has elected intelligent leaders with thoughtful ideas and open hearts. He highlighted their willingness to listen as a key strength.
He shared insights from a recent class he taught on perspective, challenging both the council and citizens to consider multiple viewpoints. Sometimes council members possess information the public does not yet have, and patience is requested while details are clarified. Conversely, council members are encouraged to listen carefully and thoughtfully, even when feedback is difficult to hear. He illustrated this with an analogy of a shape perceived differently by two groups — one seeing a circle, the other a square — when in fact it was a cylinder. This exemplifies the importance of understanding different perspectives.
On the topic of emergency management, Terry noted the positive engagement with the emergency management team in Kaufman County, highlighting long-standing professional relationships and recent outreach that signal growing recognition of the town as a serious and capable entity. Doug will lead emergency management efforts in collaboration with local experts such as Steve Howie, with Terry offering support as needed.
Regarding town goals, Councilmember Fowler agreed with previous remarks emphasizing the importance of continued community input. He stressed the value of strategic planning, recommending development of one-year, five-year, and ten-year plans to guide future councils and secure community buy-in. Though challenging, such planning efforts are essential for setting clear objectives and measuring progress.
He continued by discussing capital projects and the necessity of establishing dedicated funds to support future initiatives, acknowledging current budget constraints. A top priority is obtaining an on-the-ground survey of the town's boundaries to clarify zoning lines and legal enforcement areas. This effort is supported by the town's legal counsel but will require significant funding and careful consideration of project timelines. The council will ultimately determine whether to pursue this as a multi-year initiative or accelerate the timeline.
Finally, Councilmember Fowler addressed the sensitive issue of taxation, emphasizing that any tax decisions will be approached carefully and with transparency.
He concluded by thanking the community for their participation and expressing optimism about the town's direction and collaborative spirit.

2. **Citizen Comments:** Mayor Jaffe spoke before opening the floor up to public comments. He emphasized that no decisions have been made outside of official public meetings. All discussions so far are ideas and priorities, not finalized actions, unless formally voted on in past meetings.

legal grounds, not personal preference. With his background as a licensed chemical engineer and experience in litigation related to fuel tank safety, Tom believes he can contribute meaningfully to that effort.

Tom emphasized the broader development pressures facing Poetry due to explosive regional growth. Citing recent data, he noted that between 2000 and 2024, Kaufman County grew by 27%, Hunt County by 19%, and Rockwall County by 25%, bringing the local population of the three counties to over 400,000 residents. This rapid expansion has prompted infrastructure proposals that could dramatically affect Poetry, including a Kaufman County thoroughfare extending from Kemp toward Rockwall and the Rockwall Outer Loop near Hwy 548.

In addition to Bishop Field, Tom raised concerns about Lamar Ranch, a 2,000-acre property on CR 986 owned by Hunt Oil Company, which he confirmed is planning to develop. Hunt Oil, through a maze of interlocking private trusts, holds 8,000 acres in Kaufman County. While development timelines are secretive, Tom warned that once bulldozers arrive, it will be too late to react. He has worked with Hunt's trusts before and described them as deliberately opaque.

Tom stressed that while many newcomers may share the desire for open land, trees, and peace, the greatest threat to Poetry's rural nature comes from large-scale housing developments, not individual homeowners. These developments will bring high traffic volumes, putting immense strain on local roads and aging bridges, which are ill-equipped to handle constant heavy truck use. The risk of stress fractures and infrastructure failure is real and must be planned for.

In conclusion, Tom urged residents and leadership to face the reality of incoming development, even if it's unwelcome, and to prepare proactively with legal, technical, and infrastructural defenses to protect Poetry's character.

- **Councilmember Dale Bryant:** Emphasized the need for proactive planning. He is leading efforts to establish development agreements and standards, referencing successful models from towns like Parker, Texas, to ensure developers comply with Poetry's goals before construction begins. He stressed the importance of leveraging impact fees to offset road wear and infrastructure costs.

Dale is also spearheading a project to implement consistent and standardized street and traffic signage. Residents are asked to confirm their street signs and report missing stop or yield signs. He is coordinating with Hunt County and TxDOT's Paris office for funding through a \$200K safety initiative.

On zoning, Dale warned of potential conflicts between existing deed restrictions and new zoning overlays. He is exploring solutions such as Planned Development (PD) districts and Certificates of Occupancy to protect homeowners. A significant concern is the number of legal non-conforming lots, especially under one acre, that currently cannot be rebuilt if a structure is lost. He is mapping these lots—particularly in the CR 2434 area—and working on ordinance tweaks to ensure fair treatment for all residents. He encouraged public input, particularly from those on small or irregular lots, and asked for help organizing street teams for signage installation.

- **Preserving Agrarian Lifestyle:** Protect farming traditions and educate new residents.
- **ETJ Development Oversight:** Explore options for regulating and gaining impact fees from development in the ETJ, using Wildwood as a current example of traffic burden without benefit.

The mayor emphasized forward momentum, open communication, and a commitment to serving all citizens fairly and transparently.

- **Councilmember Doug Kendrick:** Councilmember Doug expressed gratitude to the community for their support in the recent election and conveyed his honor in serving. He highlighted the depth of experience brought by the current council and emphasized their commitment to serving the community effectively.

Key Priorities Outlined:

- Strengthening emergency management through ongoing engagement with county officials;
- Prioritizing community input as a guiding principle for council actions;
- Recognizing that some larger initiatives will take time, while others may produce more immediate results;
- Valuing volunteerism as essential to the town's success, citing his own experience in the fire service and referencing past efforts like the volunteer road crew.

Doug encouraged continued community involvement and affirmed the council's shared goal of transparent, community-centered governance.

- **Councilmember Tracie Hibbs:** emphasized her primary reason for joining the council is to hear from the community and foster collaboration. She reiterated the belief that governance should be inclusive and that residents' diverse skills and contributions should be leveraged through committees, such as an election committee. She expressed a desire for a community where all residents — farmers, business owners, and others — succeed together. A particular concern was raised about voter eligibility and mapping, referencing a recent issue where only one of ten provisional ballots was counted. She hopes for more accurate mapping and surveying to ensure that every eligible resident has the ability to vote.

Additionally, Councilmember Hibbs mentioned ongoing efforts to streamline processes for public information requests (PIRs) and other behind-the-scenes projects to improve transparency and efficiency. She closed by thanking the public for their support and encouraging participation, noting, "We need help — and I can't wait to hear what you have to say tonight."

- **Councilmember Tom Anderson:** Councilmember Tom Anderson, who has served since 2001 alongside Mike and Terry, explained that his decision to run for reelection was primarily driven by concerns over Bishop Field, a proposed development involving 2,000 homes on 440 acres. State representatives Brent Mooney and Keith Bell informed the council that opposition to the project must be based on technical and



**STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTIES OF KAUFMAN AND HUNT
CITY OF POETRY, TEXAS**

BE IT REMEMBERED THAT ON THIS DAY OF THE 29th of May 2025 at 6:30 pm, the Town Council of Poetry, Texas, held a Town Hall Meeting at Poetry Community Christian School, 18688 FM 986 Poetry, Texas 75160 with the following present:

- A. Mayor Jaffe** called the public meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll call was taken by Mayor Jaffe. Present were Mayor Mike Jaffe, and Councilmembers Tom Anderson, Terry Fowler Doug Kendrick, Dale Bryant and Tracie Hibbs.

Section 38.13 - Hindering Proceedings By Disorderly Conduct

(a) A person commits an offense if he intentionally hinders an official proceeding by noise or violent or tumultuous behavior or disturbance

(b) A person commits an offense if he recklessly hinders an official proceeding by noise or violent or tumultuous behavior or disturbance and continues after explicit official request to desist.

(c) An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

Tex. Pen. Code § 38.13

- B. Pledge of Allegiance:** Mayor Mike Jaffe
C. Invocation: Councilmember Terry Fowler

F. Regular Agenda:

- 1. Introductions by Mayor and Council Members. Each will introduce themselves and share their vision for the next two years:**

- **Mayor Mike Jaffe:** Mayor Jaffe opened the meeting by noting its informal, conversational nature and explaining that the secretary was excused to preserve hours due to election obligations. The meeting remains governed by the Open Meetings Act, which ensures no decisions or deliberations occur outside the public view. As such, no formal action could be taken during the workshop, but public input is encouraged for future agenda consideration.

The mayor recognized the previous council and mayors (Tara, Jonathan, Brian, Simeon) for their foundational work over the last four years. He also thanked Tara and Josh Senkevech for their help during the administrative handover, acknowledging the lack of prior documentation and the effort being made now to create a clear continuity plan for future transitions.

Key Priorities Outlined:

- **Public Safety:** Establish emergency plans and agency coordination.
- **Road Maintenance:** Continue improving road conditions.
- **Legal Compliance:** Stay current on all legal and financial obligations.
- **Citizen Service:** Foster transparency and responsiveness.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Acknowledge budget constraints while prioritizing needs.