

The El Dorado City Commission met in a work session on April 15, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. in the Commission Room with the following present: Mayor Bill Young, Commissioner Andrew Tipton, Commissioner Syndee Scribner, Commissioner Leon Leachman, Commissioner Kendra Wilkinson, and City Manager David Dillner. Absent:

VISITORS

Tabitha Sharp	Assistant City Manager	El Dorado, KS
Scott Rickard	Director of Engineering	El Dorado, KS
Kevin Wishart	Parks and Recreation Director	El Dorado, KS
Brad Meyer	Director of Public Works	El Dorado, KS
Haley Remsberg	HR Director	El Dorado, KS
Michael Holton	Police Chief	El Dorado, KS
Sarah Hoefgen	Executive Director	El Dorado Inc.
Amanda McGee		
Ryan Murry		El Dorado, KS
Melissa Hall	SBMH	El Dorado, KS

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bill Young called the April 15, 2026, meeting to order.

WORK SESSION DISCUSSION ITEMS:

SUSAN B. ALLEN HOSPITAL (SBA) REQUEST FOR A SALES TAX BALLOT QUESTION

City Manager David Dillner stated that there were representatives from Susan B. Allen Hospital present to request the Commission to pass an Ordinance to place a Sales Tax on the August ballot. This would require a decision by May 4th to provide proper notice prior to the election. CEO Melissa Hall introduced key members of the hospital's executive team and Board. Hall stated that she wished to provide transparency on the current financial situation of the hospital. She mentioned that a majority of rural hospitals in Kansas operate at a negative margin. Susan B. Allen hospital is financially at risk yet provides essential services to the community as well as being an employer for the area. Hall provided the Commission with the financials from the last nine years and mentioned measures taken to get these financials in a better state, while still providing excellent care. Hall stated that reimbursements from insurance companies does not fully cover operating costs for the hospital as reimbursements have not increased while costs of business have increased. Additional costs have come in the form of uncompensated care. Hall also stated that because of these conditions staff have not seen pay or cost of living increases, which has made retaining and recruiting staff difficult. The hospital is also facing approximately 2.6 million dollars in critical equipment needs. SBA has previously utilized funds from donor giving within the allotted ranges per year to try and make up the gap in funding. SBA has tried to change their designation type which would lead to changes in funding, though they did not meet the criteria. SBA has decided to ask for a one cent sales tax and provided information regarding other hospitals that are supported through mill levy or sales tax funding.

Mayor Young asked for clarification on why SBA does not meet the criteria for alternative hospital types. Hall stated that proximity to other hospitals precludes them from being designated a critical access hospital and that the population of El Dorado is too high to be considered for a rural emergency hospital designation.

Commissioner Wilkinson requested clarification on the limitations of foundation giving. Hall stated that endowment setups have an impact and that some funds are restricted and only 5% of funds can be pulled from each year.

Mayor Young asked for an estimate of revenue that can be expected from a one cent sales tax. City Manager David Dillner stated that currently a one cent sales tax brings in approximately 3.1-3.2 million dollars per year.

Mayor Young asked what SBA could do with this approximately 3 million dollars to address the current state of affairs. Hall stated that these funds would be used to raise current staff wages to remain competitive in hiring new staff.

Commissioner Scribner asked how contract nursing has changed the benefit expectations for other nurses. Hall stated that increased demand for staff in COVID has led to contract staffing becoming more prominent. While there have been recruitment challenges, lack of qualified workforce has not been an issue.

Commissioner Tipton asked for clarification on disparities in the deficits between 2023 and 2024. Hall stated that number reflects deliberate action from department leadership to reduce spending and the change in provider group in the Emergency Room and hospital.

Commissioner Scribner asked if SBA had recovered from the cyber-attack. Hall stated that they are still recovering and that this is a difficult event to come back from.

Commissioner Scribner asked for clarification on whether SBA has had to cut back on services to curb overhead costs. Hall stated that full services have not been cut but have cut some service offerings from departments.

Commissioner Scribner asked if this Sales Tax would get the hospital to a break-even point. Hall stated that this tax is aimed at raising staff wages to solve staffing problems to help combat other issues.

Commissioner Leachman asked if SBA has considered cost saving through resource sharing with other organizations. Hall stated that they have discussed joint service line ventures. Hall mentioned utilizing grant funding for some costs, such as equipment.

Commissioner Leachman asked where the closest hospital that is subsidized with mill levy funds is located. Hall stated that Greenwood utilizes this method.

Commissioner Scribner stated that this is a statewide issue and asked what measures the state has taken to alleviate the issue. Hall stated that SBA receives support from the Kansas Hospital Association in their efforts to receive Medicare payments.

Commissioner Tipton asked if there is a minimum need for funding and if a lower sales tax would suffice. Hall stated that for now the full cent is necessary but is willing to revisit the amount in future.

Commissioner Tipton asked if SBA has considered a mill levy instead of a sales tax. Hall stated that they believed having two hospitals in the County would complicate gaining support from the County.

Mayor Young asked where SBA is in their real estate investments. Hall clarified that the only unused property is the piece across from the hospital that is for sale.

Commissioner Tipton asked if the property has any interest. Hall stated that there has been one offer that was extremely low.

Commissioner Wilkinson asked if SBA receives donations from the refinery. Hall stated that they are one of the larger donors they have. Commissioner Wilkinson emphasized the importance of the hospital to the City.

City Manager Dillner gave an overview of Sales Taxes. The State of Kansas allows Cities to levy sales taxes up to 3%. 2% can be authorized for a general public purpose, which could apply to the hospital. Special Sales Taxes up to 1% can be allocated to specific projects, however they have a sunset period. General Sales Taxes, unless otherwise stated, go on in perpetuity. The City currently has one cent in General Sales Tax and no Special Sales Tax. The Sales Tax for the hospital would work as either a General or Special Sales Tax. An additional Sales Tax would bring our total Sales Tax rate to 8.5%, except for food purchases which are only subject to local Sales Tax. David Dillner stated that Sales Taxes must be voted on, and this will need to be

placed either on the August, November, or a Special Election. In order to get this on the August ballot the Commission must make a decision at the May 4th meeting.

Commissioner Scribner asked City Manager Dillner what percentage of sales tax revenue comes from those outside City limits. Dillner stated that approximately 35-40% comes from outside the City limits.

Commissioner Leachman asked about the timeline for the duration of the Sales Tax. Dillner stated that a definitive timeframe has not been determined, though 5 years would be a good start to determine the financial landscape of the hospital in the future.

City Manager David Dillner stated that an additional Sales Tax could limit the City's ability to finance operations in lieu of property taxes, a concern that has been floated given the legislative priorities in Topeka. Dillner did state that the City currently has no concerns, but this could impact the future of the Municipal Pool project that would require a Sales Tax.

Commissioner Tipton raised his concern for the impact on the community if SBA closes. He also stated his concern for the City's financial future given the situation in Topeka. He asked about the potential for projects to be put on hold for the duration of the Sales Tax for SBA. Dillner clarified that most projects have funding not tied to Sales Tax and that the only projects impacted would be those requiring a Special Sales Tax.

Commissioner Wilkinson asked if Dr. Greg Joyce had any input as a representative of the Board. Joyce stated that the Board is in support of this endeavor. He hopes this Sales Tax can aid in keeping SBA viable.

Mayor Young asked about the breakdown of which hospitals receive Special Sales Tax. KHA President Chad Austin did not have a further breakdown of these numbers. Dr. Joyce stated that the type of Sales Tax is less relevant to SBA. Mayor Young stated that this difference is more pertinent to the City. He stated that he would prefer to see this as a Special Sales Tax to give the City flexibility if additional Sales Tax is needed for City operations.

Commissioner Scribner asked Hall how long she has been with SBA. Hall stated that she has been with the hospital for a total of 5 years and has been in the CEO role since July 2023.

Commissioner Tipton asked if SBA would be amenable to a 5-year Special Sales Tax. Hall stated yes and that this would give them the ability to turn things around.

Commissioner Tipton asked what would happen if voters do not pass the Special Sales Tax. Hall stated that the Board would then have to make decisions about what services would stay. Hall stated that they would revisit the potential to be designated a Rural Emergency Hospital. However, this would be a larger effort given how criteria is determined. Mayor Young stated that he would support SBA in continuing down that route even with a Sales Tax passed to improve reimbursement rates.

Mayor Young asked what communication plan SBA has to garner support for the measure. Hall stated that the Board has plans to support financially and that KHA has support opportunities. They have reached out to other hospitals that have undergone this process for their plans.

Commissioner Scribner expressed curiosity in how many hospitals that currently receive supplemental support from Sales Tax and Mill Levy funds would be closed without those resources. Hall stated that those who do receive subsidizing have had to cut services still. Hall stated that SBA is unique due to its status as an independent hospital.

Commissioner Scribner asked for clarification on distance from critical care centers in directions other than the West. Hall stated that Eureka is a critical care center.

Mayor Young stated that next steps are to figure out details of the initiative. City Manager David Dillner stated that the Commission will meet 3 times before May 4th and that providing direction at this meeting would help staff in getting the ballot measure ready in time for the August election. Dillner asked for input.

Mayor Young stated that he is in favor of a Special Sales Tax to preserve the City's taxing flexibility and that the Sunset provision is a bonus for citizen decision. He did state concern if SBA does not have plans in place to cover this revenue if it does sunset without a renewal. Commissioner Tipton expressed his support for a Special Sales Tax as well. Commissioners Leachman, Wilkinson, and Scribner also voiced their support for this measure. Commissioner Scribner voiced her concerns for the impacts losing the hospital could have on the community and that it should take priority over other potential Sales Tax Special projects. She also expressed concern for the short timeline of the process and wondered if a longer time is needed and should it be pushed to a later election. Mayor Young stated that he wants input from SBA on if they want to wait for a November ballot. Hall stated that given the timeline for going into effect August is preferred but will follow up with the Board for clarification. Dillner stated that the City can start drafting now and the election time will have minimal impact on the paperwork. Dr. Joyce asked for clarification on when the Sales tax could be brought back if it were to fail. Dillner stated that they can try in the next election after.

Mayor Young thanked those from SBA for being there and what they do for the community.

12TH AVENUE BIKE PATH TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES APPLICATION

City Engineer Scott Rickard stated that staff are seeking more input because the Transportation Alternative grant closes May 15th. Rickard stated that residents of properties adjacent to the proposed bike path received a letter via mail to solicit feedback. Feedback received was included in the agenda packet. Rickard stated this alignment was identified as high use in the Transportation Master Plan. Rickard asked for input on whether the Commission would like to proceed with applying for the grant this year.

Commissioner Tipton asked for clarification on where local matching dollars would come from. Rickard stated that they have looked into the Federal Fund Exchange program, and there have been funds set aside from this program.

Commissioner Leachman asked for clarification on the differences between Options 1 and 2. Rickard provided clarification on the routes.

Commissioner Tipton asked for Rickard's takeaway from public comments received. Rickard stated that property owners have legitimate concerns, and that from his conversations he believes most would prefer not to pursue an option that would cross front yards.

Commissioner Leachman expressed concerns about the impacts on drainage in homes. Rickard stated that if the City proceeds with the application and received the funding staff would solicit bids for design which would include drainage and other methods of protecting property.

Commissioner Leachman expressed concerns about costs on citizens for privacy but believes this to be less obtrusive than tearing up front yards. Rickard stated that sidewalks do tend to receive positive feedback overall.

Commissioner Tipton stated that this route would be useful for the entire community and supports option 1. Rickard stated that staff have discussed with State Wildlife and Parks regarding potential partnership for recreation activities. He clarified that the issue before the Commission is the intent to apply for grant money.

Mayor Young stated that he thinks applying for grant money is fiscally responsible to the community. He expressed his agreement with Commissioner Tipton that expanding pedestrian and bike access is important especially since City facilities are out by the Lake. Rickard stated that this presents an opportunity to get those visiting the Lake into town easier.

Commissioner Leachman asked for clarification on who will be responsible for mowing right of ways. Rickard states that currently City Code states that property owners are responsible, yet this can be discussed further and may require additional insight. Mayor Young stated that he sees no difference between this and other sidewalks.

Commissioner Scribner stated that she likes the idea of connecting existing networks and that the data has shown this path to be one of interest. Commissioner Scribner stated that she supports option 1.

Commissioner Wilkinson stated that she is in favor of option 1.

Rickard stated staff will prepare a Resolution for the next Commission Meeting and that they will start to prepare grant materials.

SAFE STREETS FOR ALL (SS4A) PLAN PRESENTATION

City Engineer Scott Rickard introduced Jason Cyboron, a planner from JEO. Rickard provided background on the SS4A program and the needs it seeks to address. Cyboron presented the Final Plan for the City as well as the process undertaken to create the SS4A Plan and the data collected on crash data. He presented on areas that are of special concern and potential projects the City could pursue with Federal SS4A monies to reduce crashes and fatalities. City Engineer Scott Rickard noted that with this Plan in place the City can apply for Federal funding for projects if the Commission wishes to. He stated that the grant application would be due May 26th if the Commission wishes to seek out these funds.

Mayor Young stated that he has heard concerns at the Senior Center regarding concerns on crosswalk safety.

City Manager David Dillner stated that staff will present a project list to the Commission to determine which project the city will apply for in this round of funding.

GREENS AT PRAIRIE TRAILS REIMBURSEMENT INTEREST AND CONDITIONAL RELEASE

City Engineer Scott Rickard stated that in response to the Commission's discussion, staff is bringing forward a proposed Notice of City Reimbursement Interest and Conditional Release as a possible tool to help address concerns regarding City interests in the development of the Greens at Prairie Trails Phase 2. The concept is straightforward. With the owner's consent, the City would record a notice against the lots in Greens at Prairie Trails 2nd Addition stating that the City has a reimbursement interest for engineering, surveying, design, and related reimbursable project initiation costs advanced for the benefit of the development. The notice would stay in place until the City is reimbursed, a later development agreement or other approved reimbursement mechanism takes over, or the City records a release. This would not replace the need for a development agreement, CID, RHID, or any later project authorization. It would simply be an interim way to better document and protect the City's position while the rest of the package is still being completed. It would also make clear that recording such a notice does not obligate the City to approve any future plat, permit, agreement, CID, RHID, or other authorization.

Regular Agenda Preview:

The Commission reviewed the

COMMISSION REPORTS

There were no reports.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

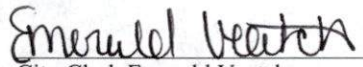
There were no reports.

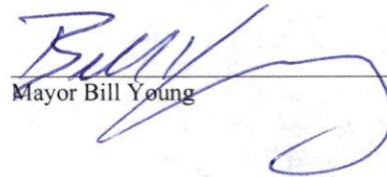
ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Leon Leachman moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:09 PM.

Commissioner Syndee Scribner seconded the motion.

Motion carried 5 – 0.


City Clerk Emerald Veatch


Mayor Bill Young