

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PAWNEE CITY, HELD ON MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025, AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE CORNERSTONE BUILDING, 601 G STREET, ALL IN PAWNEE CITY, PAWNEE COUNTY, NEBRASKA.

Notice of this meeting was given in advance thereof by advertising in the Pawnee Republican, a designated method for giving notice as shown by the Affidavit of Publishing on file in the office of the City Clerk. Notice of this meeting was given to the Mayor and City Council and a copy of their acknowledgment of receipt of the notice and the Agenda are on file in the office of the City Clerk. The availability of the agenda was communicated in advance and in the notice to the Mayor and Council of this meeting. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

Present: Mayor Charlie Hatfield, Council Members Pat Hatfield, Donnie Fisher, Vickie Zelenka and Susan Eisenhower; City Clerk/Treasurer Tamela Curtis, Deputy City Clerk Kellie Wiers and Foreman Spencer Cumley. **Absent:** None.

Mayor Charlie Hatfield called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. informing all those present of the Poster stating the Open Meeting Law Changes on the West meeting room wall, next to the storage closet, accessible to the public. At this time, all those present stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Member Zelenka moved to accept the August 11, 2025, regular meeting minutes. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

The Treasurer submitted the following claims for consideration: **8/26/25 Payroll:** \$13,787.03; **Union Bank & Trust**, FWH 3,647.70; **NE Dept. of Rev**, SWH 473.96; **John Hancock**, retirement 1,390.24; **Allstate**, accid ins. 184.04; **Ameritas**, vision ins 81.20; **Madison Nat'l. Life**, employee life ins. 53.71; **MEDICA**, empl health ins. 8606.55; **Seneca SA**, July 2025 garb service 7069.64, city wide clean up/dumpsters @ pool & pond 916.40; **PCDC**, June sales tax 7,936.61; **Capital Bus. Syst.**, Elevate Phone Syst 201.92; **Verizon Wireless**, home conn & jetpack 64.89; **Access Systems Leasing**, IT hardware 232.14; **Windstream**, phone @ swr plant 64.16; **Pawnee True Value**, repair supplies 247.85; **Amazon Capital Services**, mower blades 131.85; **Martin Marietta**, rock for backfill 847.03; **Nebr. Public Health Environ Lab**, wtr sample test 15.00; **U.S. Cellular**, emergency cell phone 48.71; **Pawnee Co. Sheriff**, service fee 18.50; **Binder Bros., Inc.**, materials for camper pads 5,808.76; **Black Hills Energy**, gas service 228.77; **Kyle's Service Center**, repair flat tire 40.00; **League of Nebraska Municipalities**, membership utilities 544.00, annual 1622.00; **NPPD**, electric service 4416.18; **Sapp Bros.**, equip fuel 389.14; **Beatrice Fire Protection**, fire extinguisher inspect 518.30; **BHE**, gas service 12.73; **Eakes Office Solutions**, library agreement 56.42; **Futuramic's Clean Water**, library check system 141.00; **Immense Impact**, website subscr. 737.00; **Pawnee Republican**, publications 855.93; **Spectrum**, internet & phone at city shop 184.99; **Casey's**, equip fuel 282.66. Council Member Zelenka moved to approve the claims as submitted. Council Member Eisenhower seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING—CDBG Planning Grant to update City's Comprehensive Plan:

Council Member Eisenhower moved to open the public hearing at 7:05 p.m. Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. Brittany McCullough from SENDD (Southeast Nebraska Development District) was present to explain the purpose of a comprehensive plan. The City is applying for a public planning grant of \$53,000 to update the City's Comprehensive Plan with a \$10,000 match from the City. It is basically a guideline for the City to use in planning and growth of the community. It covers such areas as infrastructure, housing, streets, resources in the community, etc. The current plan was written in 2016 and expires in 2026. Discussion was had whether the new plan will cover a 5 year or 10-year plan. Many grant applications require a municipality to have a current comprehensive plan. Council Member Eisenhower moved to close the public hearing at 7:09 p.m. Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. ***Resolution #12 Authorizing Chief Elected Official to Sign an Application for CDBG Funds:*** Council Member Eisenhower moved to approve Resolution #12, Authorizing the Chief Elected Official to Sign an Application for CDBG Funds for the City of Pawnee City. Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Julie Bauman, Present Final Draft of Budget Document and Levy, Valuation: The certified valuations have been received from the county assessor for a total of \$43,812,263.00 which is a bit more than a \$7 million increase. This budget draft will not exceed the allowable growth and no need to proceed to a joint public hearing to access more. The property tax requirement is \$236,127.14 for 2025 – 2026. Ms. Bauman stated the City is doing really well on their reserve accounts and the cash reserve percentage is 18% while the State allows up to 45%. The reserve accounts are set up to allow for unexpected events. The City will not have to vote for a 1% increase on the levy on next year's budget because the State now gives an inflation percent. The overall budget decreased 3% from last year to \$3,964,791.08. Ms. Bauman will return on the Sept. 8th Council meeting with the actual budget for the budget hearing and the special public hearing to set the final tax request and for the Council to approve. Ms. Bauman stated the City is in a good financial position.

Review/Discuss Quotes/Take Action for a \$185,000 Loan for the Water Meter Project:

Council Member Hatfield asked whether it would be better to pay for the new meter with current funds versus taking out a loan to pay for it? City Auditor Bauman commented this money would come out of the utility fund not taxpayer funded money so money cannot be transferred out of the general fund to the utility fund to help pay for it. Also, there are two big payments coming up out of the utility fund and a payment on the street project out of the general fund. She suggested looking at leverage and how fast would the City be able to replace that \$185,000? What if something else happens and there isn't money available? The water fund barely covers expenses as it is and there isn't much extra. Clerk Curtis explained that it may be possible the City could make extra payments on this loan. Currently, the City has money set aside in NFIT interest bearing accounts which is possible for the City to make more in interest than what it will pay in interest on this loan. Council Member Eisenhower moved to accept the offer from Union Bank & Trust for a \$185,000 loan at 5.25% for five years with annual payments of \$42,144.00. Council

Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Report and update from Mayor Hatfield: Review/Discuss emails re: Eileen D. Hines offering City property for sale:

Clerk Curtis explained she had received an email from Eileen Hines about the property she owns between the pharmacy and the collapsed buildings on G street. She would be willing to sell it to the City for \$7500.00. Clerk Curtis explained it is currently valued at \$2900.00 and Jerry Graham signed it over to Eileen in 2013 for \$0. Discussion was had about her offer being too high and the City would still have to clean the debris from the property. Discussion was had about a more realistic counteroffer or not purchasing the property and building a fence to hide it from view of the future park. Previously, the Council had discussed having a mural painted on the south side of the pharmacy building as part of a grant but the City didn't receive the grant. City Atty Stehlik-Ladman advised to give Ms. Hines a counteroffer but still pursue abatement on her property. Council Member Zelenka moved to give Eileen Hines a counteroffer of \$3000.00 for the property as it is currently assessed at \$2900.00. Council Member Eisenhower seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Jennifer Stehlik-Ladman, City Atty: 522 & 526 G Street properties: Jennifer reported Mr. Raper has signed the addendum to the purchase agreement adding the extra \$1600.80 bill from UBT onto the original agreement so the City should be able to close on the property next week as long as Heidi Kohake signs her release and Jennifer needs to contact UB&T for their signed release. Mr. Raper will owe some fees and property taxes so, hopefully, he realizes that because the taxes are his. Mr. Raper still owes the City for the decorative lamp post he knocked down in front of the pharmacy. Jennifer should have the paperwork ready on Wednesday for Mr. Raper and Mayor Hatfield to sign to close on the property. ***Review/Discuss/Take Action on the Request for Quotes—Building Demolition & Site Clean-up & Quote Form that Brittany McCullough @ SENDD prepared:*** Brittany submitted information to the City Office about what items need to be listed in the demolition quotes and requirements for contractors with a sample letter to send to contractors. ***1145 G Street (Percival):*** Janice Lewis was served notice of the show cause hearing on this date. Ms. Lewis called Jennifer and stated she would be present at the show cause hearing but she wanted more time to clean up the property. Ms. Lewis had stated to Jennifer that she had called Gyhra Construction about their \$12,000 quote for demolition and left a voicemail. Gyhra's submitted that quote at least a year ago. Gyhra's submitted a recent quote for the City for close to \$17,000. The asbestos has not yet been removed from the kitchen and that would have to be removed before Gyhra's could demolish the building. Jennifer expressed concern that Ms. Lewis may not have funds to pay Gyhra's. Jennifer recommended continuing with the show cause hearing scheduled August 27th and discuss this with Ms. Lewis at that time. Council Member Eisenhower stated that Mike Habegger with PCDC had contacted Ms. Lewis about the 1145 G Street property in regard to the amnesty program since there are back taxes owed but she hung up on him. The amnesty program would have paid the back taxes and fees plus reimbursed Ms. Lewis for the asbestos testing. Council Member Eisenhower will contact Mike Habegger to see if the amnesty offer is still available and if he had offered money for the property. Clerks Curtis and Wiers will contact Gyhra's to verify whether Ms. Lewis contacted them today and left a voicemail. Council Member Hatfield asked if the Pawnee City Fire Dept. could burn the house and buildings on this property to save money versus demolishing them?

Discussion was had about the many trees located close to the house and if some of them should be saved. He will ask Mary Moser to look at the trees and designate which ones should be saved. **1120 5th Street & 728 9th Street (Parker):** Clerk Wiers and Mayor Hatfield explained Dan Palmer had made an offer on the 5th street property but Ed Parker has not yet refused or accepted the offer. Mr. Palmer is also interested in the 9th street property. He would like to repair the properties and then re-sell or rent them out. Clerk Curtis and Clerk Wiers have verified Ed and Barb Parker's address in Lincoln. Barb Parker was supposed to show up in the City Office on Aug. 20th so the clerks could serve her with abatement documents but she didn't show up. City Atty Stehlik-Ladman will have her served in Lincoln. **1038 7th Street (C. Johnson):** No progress has been made on this property. Neighbor, Gary Droge Sr. continues to mow the front of the property. **112 12th Street (Osborne):** Jennifer will send Jeff a letter to clean up the increased number of items that have piled up on the east side of the property. **738 3rd Street (K. Lee):** Jennifer explained Kara had paid off the lien against this property so the sheriff's sale was cancelled. Ms. Lee was recently sentenced to prison for 8 years so she will not be around to keep this property mowed. **200 11th Street (F. Burcham):** Discussion was had that Mr. Burcham has mowed paths around the vehicles and auto parts in his yard but there are still tall weeds and grass inside these areas. The number of vehicles and auto parts has also increased. Jennifer will send him a nuisance letter. Jennifer stated that Dave Glynn will dig up the asphalt under the sidewalk at the PCAL park so the Rotary can plant flowers there. Therefore, the City Crew will no longer need to assist with this project.

Review quote (per month) from Eakes Office Solutions for the City's Elevate Phone

System: Clerk Curtis explained the City is currently paying \$201.00/month to Capital Business for the Elevate phone system. Eakes offered a quote of \$149.29/month for the same phone service or the City could pay \$108.80/month for phone service without a faxing service. Council Member Eisenhower moved to accept the quote from Eakes Office Solutions for the City's Elevate Phone System for \$108.80/month, omitting the faxing service. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Review Interlocal Agreement for a Mutual Finance Organization (MFO): Review/Approve Resolution #13 Authorizing the City to enter into an Interlocal Agreement for a MFO:

Council Member Eisenhower moved to approve Resolution #13 authorizing the City to enter into an interlocal cooperation agreement for a Mutual Finance Organization (MFO). Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Report and update from Council Member Fisher & Deputy Clerk Wiers: Discuss possible

purchase of a property for a dog park: Council Member Fisher explained Lucas Birdsley wants to sell the property located east of the library that he purchased from the Burt deKoning estate. Lucas paid \$5000 for the property but he is willing to sell it for \$1100. The property is valued at \$8470 but there are unpaid taxes. Discussion was had about cleaning up the grass and weeds at the street level plus cutting down some of the fruit trees. Also, fencing could cost around \$5500 plus there would be a cost for benches, signage, waste containers, etc. Clerk Wiers had submitted pictures of the dog park at the Love's truck stop in Syracuse to show that their dog park is divided into two pens, one for large dogs and the other for small dogs and to show the

City's dog park could be small but still functional. Discussion was had about possibly contacting Alpha or Phyllis Wherry for donations to help set up the dog park. Clerk Wiers had contacted Laura Poskochil and Olivia Weinmann from the Safe Haven Animal Rescue Effort (SHARE) for support of a dog park and if they would be interested in donating funds to the park. Laura Poskochil had sent Clerk Wiers a text stating: "The SHARE Board discussed donating at least \$200 toward fencing but if the Council is open to partnering to expand services for homeless pets maybe partnering on a grant to build a small shelter in the future and secure low cost spay/neuter/rabies we would donate up to \$1000 now with an MOU. The City could lease the building to SHARE, etc. wouldn't have to be operated by the city but we strongly support the acquisition of the property if there's a future for expanding services." Foreman Cumley and Clerk Curtis explained there is no water service on this property and Burt deKoning had hauled water in for his garden and fruit trees. Foreman Cumley explained it would probably cost around \$2500 to add water service since they would have to bore under the street to connect to the water main by Richard Klepper's property. Also, the sides of that property are pretty steep and suggested taking some of the dirt from the sewer plant to level them to make it easier to mow. Council Member Eisenhower moved to offer Lucas Birdsley \$1100 for the property located at (LOTS 3-4-5 BLK 1 HOLLINSHEAD'S ADD) aka Burt deKoning's garden spot. Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. Council Member Fisher will contact Lucas Birdsley.

Report and update from Foreman Cumley: Discuss Thiele Geotech Services updated quote on Street Project: Foreman Cumley explained the quote from Thiele Geotech (\$8185.50) came in a lot higher than last year's quote of around \$4700. Cumley had talked with Evan from JEO who explained that JEO will be on site checking the work completed on the streets. The City has been happy with the contractor so Cumley felt the City didn't need this added expense. Council Member Eisenhower moved to decline the Thiele Geotech quote of \$8185.50 for checking work completed on the street project. Council Member Hatfield seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. **Discuss concrete at City tree dump:** Foreman Cumley explained he hasn't heard back from Tyler Binder about the concrete at the tree dump but originally, Tyler had said he could possibly haul the concrete away for the cost of fuel which would be around \$2500 to \$5000. This would be a good winter project. **Review/Discuss Poster for Year-Round Part-time City Crew:** Discussion was had about how long to advertise the position and that it should be at least 2 weeks and it will be too late to advertise in this week's newspaper so the position will be open until Sept. 19th and the Council meeting will be Sept. 22nd so the Council will schedule interviews on that date. Gary Droge, Jr. is interested in the position but the Council wants to make it clear that they are not creating a job just for him. Everyone interested in the position will have to submit an application. **Discuss updates on various projects in the City:** The City Crew finished up the camper pads last week and finished mowing; repaired a recent water leak; fixed potholes and started a water tap on one of the new houses being built through SENDD. Council Member Fisher suggested the City Crew clean up around the City Shop area, especially on the south side of the shop where the pile of wooden pallets are located. Foreman Cumley stated the crew will work on that. Recently, the command link for the radio reads broke and will cost around \$900 to replace. The City could borrow one from Core & Main but they need it back immediately the next day. Foreman Cumley is concerned that the City could buy a new one but this equipment will be obsolete when the City starts the meter replacement project. Discussion was had to replace the command link now.

Council Member Eisenhower moved to purchase a new Command Link for the radio reads if necessary, at the foreman's discretion. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Report and update from Council Member Hatfield: Discuss rules and regulations on “on-call” time for the City Handbook: Council Member Hatfield explained the Council previously approved the city crew members receiving 7 days of 1 hr./day of straight time while they are on call. He proposes the crew receive time and ½ if they get physically called out. If the worker missed a call and didn't return the call within a certain amount of time, then that worker shouldn't receive the on-call pay. Discussion was had on what would be an appropriate amount of time to return a call. The first time it happens, they should receive a verbal warning, second time, a written warning and third time, probation. If there are three write ups in 12 months, what should the disciplinary action be? Should we use the disciplinary action listed in the employee handbook? Council Member Hatfield referred to pg. 18 in the handbook and suggested this needs to be updated. Council Member Hatfield will review the current handbook with the clerks for revisions and then submit the revisions to the Council for approval.

Need to set up a new Housing Advisory Committee to approve Project #001 to use up the remaining funds in the Housing Rehab Income Account: Review past meeting minutes when original Housing Advisory Committee was set up: Clerk Curtis explained the last Housing Advisory Committee was set up in 2009 consisting of the Planning Commission, Council Member Klein and Terri Brethower (SENCA). Teri Brethower no longer works for SENCA, council members have changed and the members of the planning commission have changed. The Housing Advisory Committee needs to approve a current contract award under the Housing Rehab Program which will be the last project using most of the funds left in the housing rehab program income account. The committee needs 3 – 9 people and Clerk Curtis suggested using the current planning commission and DC Wiers has volunteered to represent the Council. Council Member Eisenhower moved to approve the members of the Housing Advisory Committee to include the members of the Planning Commission and Kellie Wiers to represent the City Council. Council Member Hatfield seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Review emails from USDA-RD & Caralyn re: 6-week check in for PCAL: Luann Brown from USDA emailed she still has not received the documents she requested six weeks ago that included documentation for reimbursement and financials, plus, an update on PCAL's marketing plan. Caralyn had replied via email that she had talked with Matt from RHD about the marketing plan and had forgotten about the receipts for reimbursement but she had sent the financials.

Review flyer on ZeroTrace Shredding from Trey Marteney, Co-Owner—is the City interested in shredding any of their old computer hard drives, monitors, printer, etc. to clean out old equipment? Trey Marteney recently stopped in the City Office to let us know this service is available and if we are interested, to let him know.

Review Correspondence: Council reviewed the spreadsheet on June 2025 Total Sales Tax of \$24,308.63 with ½% Street Repairs Sales Tax totaling \$5,291.07 and \$3,144.34 being Motor Vehicle Sales Tax. **Daycare Update:** PC Little Learners will not be pursuing the City applying

for CDBG Grant. Wendy Werner, Troop Support Specialist, is trying to get a Girl Scout Troop started in PC.

Council Member Zelenka moved to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all in favor of the motion and meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.

ATTEST: Kellie A. Wiers, Deputy City Clerk

Charlie Hatfield, Mayor