

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PAWNEE CITY, HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 10, 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 shown hereafter were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

Present: Mayor Charlie Hatfield, Council Members Pat Hatfield, Vickie Zelenka and Donnie Fisher; Tamela Curtis City Clerk/Treasurer and Kellie Wiers, Deputy City Clerk. **Absent:** CM Susan Eisenhauer and Foreman Spencer Cumley.

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 February 24, 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: **3/11/25 Payroll:** \$11,608.69; **Union Bank & Trust**, FWH 3331.05; **NE Dept. of Rev**, SWH 458.05/ Feb 2025 sales & use tax 2029.10; **John Hancock**, retirement 1431.66; **Community Ins**, City's ½ FirePak Ins 2734.00; **OPPD**, elec at wells 417.72; **NPPD**, elec 3448.62; **Lincoln WinWater**, stock wtr parts 148.47; **Schendel Pest Control**, swr plant qtrly spraying 70.00; **Bottom Line**, mag sub-Libr 39.00; **Midwest Lab**, swr S/H labels 18.00; **JR Libr Guild**, Libr materials 59.72; **One Call Concepts**, Digger Hotline Locates 17.14; **Pawnee City Thriftway**, bleach 5.99; **Stehlik Law**, Mar atty fees 1,000.00; **Access Systems Leasing**, copier contract 196.98; **Pawnee Co. Rural Water**, water @ pond 45.00; **Windstream**, pool ph/, city office internet 261.39; **Matt Kuhlmann**, Mar. Zoning services 800.00; **Access Systems**, mobile license 497.01; **H & H Auto Parts**, rep parts/sup 250.43; **Hometown Leasing**, libr photocopier lease 100.79. Council Member Zelenka moved to approve the claims as submitted. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Review February Treasurer's Report: Council reviewed the February 2025 Treasurer's report with no questions.

Sheriff Braden Lang: *Review State Statute 28-1202.01; Discuss how to handle "conceal/carry" weapons in public places, ie: City Office, Library, etc.:* Clerk Curtis stated she had

included a copy of Nebraska State Statute 28-1202.01 on carrying a concealed handgun, etc. Sheriff Braden Lang met to discuss how to handle “conceal and carry” weapons in public places such as the public Library, City Office or Cornerstone Community Building. Sheriff Lang stated he had first been asked about it at the Courthouse which because they hold Court in that building, there are no concealed handguns allowed. Places such as the Library and City Hall can post signage that prohibits “concealed carry”, but it would not prohibit open carry. For a conceal/carry offense it is a Class III Misdemeanor but for the second and on offense it moves up to a Class I Misdemeanor. This is an arrestable offense if an officer is present, but his department probably would not go that way. Sheriff Lang stated that if a person is properly carrying a concealed weapon, you would never know it. Sheriff Lang continued that he knows a lot of people who have conceal and carry permits but most of them do not carry them. A Trespassing charge can be made on an “Open Carry” offense. Signage that exists for “Conceal & Carry” does not count towards “open carry”. Lang stated that a person can state it in verbal form too, not just a posted notice. **Review/Discuss EVOLIS Vision Radar Speed Signs:** Sheriff Lang stated he just wanted to share the flyer he had received in the mail on a special on radar speed signs. Council Member Hatfield stated that if the City was to purchase something like this they need to make sure to check with the Nebraska Dept of Transportation (NDOT) as he was told that the first radar sign the Village of DuBois had purchased did not meet the State’s specifications and they had to order a different one. Discussion continued that there was probably grant money available to assist communities in purchasing these radar speed signs. **Old Police Cars & Semi Trailer at Truck Parking Lot:** Council Member Hatfield inquired what Sheriff Lang had found out about the old police cars he had previously proposed the City purchase to use as “decoy” police vehicle to slow traffic down. Sheriff Lang stated that the County Commissioners ordered them to be scrapped, so they are no longer available. Council Member Hatfield inquired about the semi-trailer that had been parked in the City Truck Parking Lot for the past couple of years. Sheriff Lang stated that his office sent a certified letter to the (local) owner, and they have since switched that trailer out for another trailer, still sitting in the same location. Sheriff Lang stated the gentleman who owns the trailers owns a place close by the truck parking lot, so he is not sure why he just cannot park those trailers on it. Lang continued that he still felt the best way the City can deal with this kind of an issue is to set up a camera on the West side of the County Shop building, as it would cover the whole truck parking lot. Discussion continued how hot that camera could get if placed on the west side of the County Shop. Council Member Hatfield stated he would take a closer look at the truck parking lot area and see if NPPD did not have a power pole that might work better for the camera placement rather than the tin building side of the County Shop.

Jeff Osborne, Discuss dumpster charges: Deputy Clerk Wiers stated she and Clerk Curtis had visited with Mr. Osborne when he came into the office to pay his water bill and had inquired about why he was being billed for the dumpster costs when he worked cleaning up his property this past year. Wiers had encouraged Mr. Osborne to come to a meeting and voice his concerns. Council reviewed the letter and billing statement Mr. Osborne had been mailed at the beginning of February. Mr. Osborne stated that when Sheriff Braden Lang came to talk with him about the City Attorney nuisance letters that he had received to clean up his property, Sheriff Lang stated the City would have a roll-off dumpster delivered to his property. Osborne stated but there was nothing ever said to him about having to pay for the dumpster. Osborne continued that he knew his property had gotten out of hand and he filled the first dumpster completely up and filled up

his mother's small dumpster too at that same time. Then the second dumpster was delivered, and he was not sure why as there was not much put in that one, so it really was not needed. He did work hard on his yard and stated that he had at least gotten the items all picked up that were scattered down along the street side. Clerk Curtis stated that in the City Ordinances it states that once you receive a nuisance letter, you have so many days to rectify the situation, or the City can have the work done and assess the charges against your property. The City had been told by the Sheriff that you had stated if anyone tried to step foot on your property and remove anything you would shoot them. The City was not willing to put our City Crew Members in that kind of danger. That is when the Sheriff had agreed to talk with Mr. Osborne about the City having a dumpster delivered to his property if Osborne would agree to clean it up. Clerk Curtis continued that the costs of the dumpsters were a lot cheaper than if the City would have done the clean up work because a property owner gets charged for any equipment, they use plus an hourly wage for each City Crew Member that was onsite. More discussion followed with Mr. Osborne stating that he better understood what was previously discussed and he would agree to pay for the first dumpster charge, if the City would agree to him signing a payment plan to make monthly payments. Osborne continued that he did not feel that the second dumpster was necessary, so he should not have to pay for that one. Mayor Hatfield stated that if Mr. Osborne pays for the first dumpster cost of \$399, then he would personally pay for the second dumpster himself. At this time Council Member Hatfield stated that he would agree to assist Mayor Hatfield in paying for the costs of the second dumpster. Mr. Osborne stated that he knows he has more cleaning up to do in his yard. His plans are to organize the items he has left, moving them to the West side of his shed and covering them up with a tarp so nobody sees them. The Council thanked Mr. Osborne for continuing to work at cleaning up his property and for also coming to discuss the dumpster item with them tonight.

Angie Hunt & Jamie Kramer, Little Brown Jug - Request for Special Designated License (SDL) for two events: March 29th – Farmer Appreciation/Community Get Together @ Little Brown Jug, 715 F Street: Angie Hunt and Jamie Kramer were present to answer any questions the Council might have about the two events they were requesting a Special Designated Liquor License for. Angie explained that the March 29th event is a Pre-Planting Season Celebration/Farmer Appreciation & Community Get Together directed towards celebrating Spring. Clerk Curtis explained the requests for each special designated liquor license must be approved by the City before it will be approved by the Liquor Commission. Council Member Zelenka moved to approve the Special Designated Liquor License for the Little Brown Jug on March 29th for their Farmer Appreciation & Community Get Together to be held at the Little Brown Jug at 715 F Street. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. **May 10th – Jiggle Butt Run @ Fairview Golf Course Clubhouse, 1800 D Street:** Ms. Hunt stated that with SchillingBridge Winery closing this past year, the Jiggle Butt Run (JBR) Committee had to find a different venue to hold their annual event. The Committee decided to hold this year's Jiggle Butt Run Event at the Fairview Golf Course Clubhouse and asked if the Little Brown Jug would be interested in being a vendor to handle the sale of alcohol to those participants at the Jiggle Butt Run so that is why they are needing to apply for another Special Designated Liquor License. Council Member Zelenka moved to approve the Special Designated Liquor License for the Little Brown Jug on May 10th for the Jiggle Butt Run to be held at the Fairview Golf Course

Clubhouse at 1800 D Street. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Review/Approve Proclamation declaring April 6-12, 2025, as National Library Week:

Council Member Zelenka moved to approve the proclamation declaring April 6-12, 2025, as National Library Week. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Review/Discuss Economic Development: PC Economic Dev. Report as of 3/4/25: Council reviewed Aaron Sawyer's PC Economic Development Report as of March 4th. Mr. Sawyer reported that the Economic Development Committee has decided to pursue a Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund (NAHTF) grant to build four duplexes providing rental homes for up to four families. Clerk Curtis stated that the upcoming events at VanHorne Park Amphitheater listed in this report were different than what Mr. Sawyer had asked Council Member Eisenhauer to present to the City Council last month. Aaron stated that the Pawnee City High School Band was added to be performing on 4/14; Midland Band, which is Steely Dan's cover band on 5/2 (tentative); Taxi Driver rock n roll band on 5/24 and Southeast Nebraska Community Band with ice cream social on 5/25 are both confirmed; Movie Night featuring Wicked Sing-a-long on 5/31 (tentative); Varsity Jazz Band on 6/7 has been cancelled due to kids activity conflicts and replaced with Josh Luce (rockabilly) (tentative); Frailin Hearts (Americana, pop, blues, jazz fusion) on 6/14 (tentative); Southeast Nebraska Community Band on 7/5 (confirmed) and Bob Blecha & the Bouncin Czechs August date TBD. Clerk Curtis stated she would need to make changes to the volunteer opportunities on the City's website from all of the changes that Mr. Sawyer had originally asked her to list. Mr. Sawyer inquired if he was still supposed to be running these activities by Council Member Eisenhauer? Clerk Curtis stated yes and then she will put them on a Council meeting agenda for City approval. Clerk Curtis also stated that the City Office has started a VanHorne Amphitheater Calendar, so that there are no activities being planned for the same dates/times. Mr. Sawyer stated that he is still working on the Tree Grant and looking for volunteers that could download the app to verify which trees needed removed, trimmed, etc., although he could actually drive around town himself and do it. Sawyer also stated that Foreman Cumley had stated that he was not interested in having the City Crew take the training to become an arborist as they do not have the time or equipment necessary to take on more projects. Clerk Curtis inquired if he had met with the Tree Board yet about this Tree Grant that he is interested in applying for? Mr. Sawyer stated he needed the Clerks to send him the Tree Board members and their contact information. Deputy Clerk Wiers stated they would email this information to Mr. Sawyer in the morning. **Discuss 3/4/25 Economic Development meeting between NPPD and City Clerks, Mayor & CM:** Clerk Curtis stated that Mayor Hatfield, Council Member Hatfield, Deputy Clerk Wiers and Clerk Curtis all met with Craig Vincent and the Economic Development Team from NPPD to discuss the items that they have assisted Aaron Sawyer with. Some of those items included the Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) interviews, working on getting LOIS updated for Pawnee City, working on a Strategic Plan which is needed to finish the final steps to become a Leadership Certified Community. The NPPD group also discussed preparing an Official Community Guide for Pawnee City, which will be done at no cost to the City. Clerk Curtis will be working with Sara to assist NPPD on updating LOIS and will be writing up a summary of the City's current Comp Plan as part of the Strategic Plan. NPPD's main reason for the meeting was to remind City

Officials that NPPD is here to work with the City and wanted to make sure that we were on board with everything before proceeding. ***Suzanne Borchers' email update on NAHFT Grant Houses, questioned mural on pool house location due to future large grant for a new water/pool park; possibility of turning old Sewing Machine Factory into Community Center vs. SchillingBridge Winery:*** Clerk Curtis stated that Ms. Borchers had called the City Office this morning to let us know these were just ideas she was putting out there and she was not trying to take over City business. She just felt that the location and size of the old Sewing Machine Factory would make a much better choice for a Community Building in Pawnee City to hold larger wedding receptions, anniversary parties, etc. than the SchillingBridge Winery would. Clerk Curtis inquired if Mr. Sawyer knew what the maximum capacity of the SchillingBridge Winery was? Mr. Sawyer did not know what that number was. Council stated that they are not planning to apply for a CDBG Grant in 2026 to turn the winery into a community building as they have already repeatedly said that they are going to need a few years to build back up the City's General Funds, especially after the Street Project is completed this year. Ms. Borchers had also stated to the Clerks that she did not mean to overstep on stating that a future water park was in the works but was looking at future possibilities of a new pool facility/aquatic center being built in the next 10+ years. Council Member Fisher stated that he cannot foresee Alpha ever wanting to sell the old sewing machine factory, which is used for storage for both the Pawnee City and Bern, KS Alpha plants and is completely packed full. Mayor Hatfield stated that he cannot foresee a new pool or aquatic center happening in his lifetime, especially since the price for doing a pool project like that is no longer several hundred thousand dollars but several million dollars. Council Member Hatfield stated he feels that the City has many other more important infrastructure items that need some major improvements made before the City even thinks about building a new pool such as the water and sewer systems and streets. Clerk Curtis inquired to Aaron that if a mural was painted on the pool house, is there anything in the AARP Grant that states that the pool house building can never be torn down as some grants do specify that the area must always stay as designated, etc. Mr. Sawyer stated he was not aware of anything in the AARP Grant that stated that a building where a mural is painted would have to stay there forever. Ms. Borchers had also stated that all the Red Bud Crown Houses are for sale with two current occupants buying the houses they are living in with closing planned for some time in May. Clerk Curtis stated to give a little background history on this project, around 15-20 years ago the Pawnee City Community Foundation applied for NIFA funding to build these five (5) Red Bud Crown Houses. With the NIFA funding stipulated that after the program had been going for 15 years, the tenant would have the option to purchase the house at that time or just continue renting. The houses are appraised at \$180,000 and before they are sold, Crown Point is making all the repairs needed such as replacing carpet, doors, painting, etc. The Pawnee City Community Foundation is selling the houses for \$95,000 and reducing the price by \$20,000 if the tenant has lived there for five (5) years or longer, making the purchase price \$75,000. Then each tenant has had a portion of their rent money put into an escrow account so they could potentially have between \$5,000 to \$10,000 collected to also go towards the purchase of the house, so it could be bought for as low as \$65,000; Council reviewed the email from Brian Rottinghaus inquiring about putting Aaron's ED report items on Chamber Website & in Newspaper. ***Review/Discuss AARP Grant Application submitted for three murals:*** Clerk Curtis inquired who had filled out the AARP grant application, Mr. Sawyer or Steve Glenn as there was some questionable information included on that application. Mr. Sawyer stated that he had filled out the grant application and had just noticed in looking through the public agenda packet that

there were some places that had been highlighted. Clerk Curtis inquired how Mr. Sawyer could have started out the AARP grant application with the statement “As a lifelong resident of Pawnee City...” when he never has lived in Pawnee City? Mr. Sawyer stated that he was filling out the grant application from the prospective of long time Pawnee City citizens. Clerk Curtis and Deputy Clerk Wiers then requested that Mr. Sawyer stop calling the area where the Raper buildings are to be demolished “Heritage Park” as when they filled out the RCRP Grant Application last July, they were required to come up with a name for that space that will be turned into a park area that would encourage being outside to assist in better mental health. They chose the name “Tranquility Park”, so they requested that area being called that instead of Heritage Square, so people are not confused. Mr. Sawyer stated he did not feel that in the AARP grant application he could call that area “the place where the falling down buildings once were located”, so he named it Heritage Square. Council Member Hatfield stated that before any future grants are submitted on behalf of the City, the application must first come before the City Council or at least be proofread by one or both City Clerks. Clerk Curtis continued that Mr. Sawyer had stated in this grant application that the City planned to donate the City Foreman and his team’s labor as well as their scaffolding and cherry picker lift. Clerk Curtis stated that the City does not own any scaffolding, nor a cherry picker lift but Council Member Fisher has some scaffolding that the mural painter could borrow. Mayor Hatfield stated that he would visit with his boss, Todd Stallbaumer to see if he would donate one of their lifts from Stallbaumer Lumber for the City to use while painting the murals on the three buildings. ***Review Photos/ Info on Academy & 1958 Pawnee Co Swim Meet Ribbons:*** Clerk Curtis stated in doing a little research on Facebook on the Pawnee City Academy and Swimming Pool there were people that submitted some of these pictures to her. She thought Aaron and the City Council might find them of interest to consider as part of the Mural that is going on the pool building.

Review Support CDBG Email – Mayor Hatfield directed Clerk Curtis to “sign” the support letter online from the City of Pawnee City: Mayor Hatfield stated he had received a call from Clerk Curtis last week after she had received an email from the Nebraska Dept of Economic Development (NDeD) with a support letter attached urging Congress to provide at least \$4.2 billion for the CDBG program in FY 2026 as the current funding level of \$3.3 billion is not sufficient to meet increased program needs and costs. Mayor Hatfield stated he had directed Clerk Curtis to go ahead and sign/submit the CDBG support letter. Clerk Curtis stated the City has been fortunate to receive several CDBG Grants in the past for various projects including the new Fire Station Project and the City’s upcoming Street Improvement Project.

Review letter from NE Dept of Economic Development (NDeD) on Certificate of Completion of CCCFF Grant Project for finishing the inside of Cornerstone Building; Final Disbursement Amount to be reimbursed to City is \$22,104.25: Clerk Curtis stated that the closeout process on the CCCFF Grant on the Inside Cornerstone Building Project has finally been completed with the City to receive their final reimbursement check of \$22,104.25 sometime in the next week or two.

Water Improvement Project: Review Water Wastewater Advisory Committee (WWAC) Funding Package Proposals: Council reviewed the funding package proposals from the WWAC funding committee that included funding package #1: United States Dept of Agriculture (USDA) with a 2.75% annual interest rate that also included a \$353,000 grant & package #2: Drinking

Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF) with a 1.4% Annual Interest Rate. **Review 9/23/2024 minutes re: motion on applying for WWAC Funding for All Project Alternatives:** Clerk Curtis reminded Council that the City had submitted all of the water project options to the WWAC Committee to see what kind of funding packages they would offer, so the City is not necessarily required to accept any of these water project options from either funding source. **Review JEO's Spreadsheet of the funding proposals: SRF vs USDA Water Alternatives from JEO:** Tyler Keenan with JEO had contacted Clerk Curtis once the WWAC Committee had emailed out their funding proposal packages stating he was a little disappointed in how low the grant funding offer was from USDA. He worked up a spreadsheet for each funding package so the City Council could see what each line item of the overall water project would end up costing the City, depending on which line item and funding agency the City went with. Clerk Curtis stated that Mr. Keenan plans to be at the next City Council meeting to discuss options, so if anyone has any questions, please give them to the Clerks well in advance of that meeting so Tyler can get the answers beforehand. Clerk Curtis stated that she also visited with Foreman Cumley who stated that the only two options that he feels may be the most viable are Priority #1, New Municipal Supply Well and in Priority #2, Alternate #5, Water Meter Replacements, which the City has already started transferring funds monthly from the Utility account into the Water Meter Reserve account to assist with paying for updating to all water meters. Mr. Keenan had stated to Clerk Curtis that once the City decides on which water projects they would like to proceed with, he will have the WWAC Committee provide another breakdown of the funding options on those line items only as the interest rates could possibly change and the USDA may eliminate the grant money altogether. More discussion followed with Clerk Curtis stating that she had sent all this same information to City Auditor Julie Bauman, but due to this being her busy time with tax season she had not heard back from Julie yet. Clerk Curtis stated she planned to call Ms. Bauman tomorrow morning just to touch base with her on all of this. More discussion followed with the Council deciding to have JEO work with WWAC to send the City new funding package proposals that only included Priority #1: New Municipal Supply Well; Priority #2, Alternate #5, Water Meter Replacements and Priority #3: Portable Well Generator. Clerk Curtis reminded everyone that by choosing these three priorities, they were not committed to anything, but instead just looking at another scenario to their funding options. Clerk Curtis stated she would get this information to Mr. Keenan first thing on Tuesday morning and let him know that the Council would still like him to attend the March 24th Council meeting to discuss the best options for the City.

Review PCAL January Board Meeting Minutes: Council reviewed the Pawnee City Assisted Living Board meeting minutes from January. Clerk Curtis stated she had spoken with Caralyn Friedly about when they would be starting to transfer the funds over to the two PCAL reserve accounts again as according to the letter from USDA when they deferred their payments, the PCAL Reserve Accounts were to become active again in February 2025. Clerk Curtis stated that Union Bank & Trust (UBT) had moved both PCAL Reserve Accounts to "Inactive" due to inactivity for the past year. Clerk Curtis was wanting to call the bank ahead of time to have both reserve accounts made active again before PCAL started transferring funds into those two accounts at UBT. Ms. Friedly stated that with the resident count at the end of January dipping down to 17, leaving five rooms available, it has made funds very tight. In addition to that they have had to replace some carpet and re-do one of the bathrooms inside a room. Clerk Curtis stated that she had also visited with Ms. Friedly about talking to USDA about using some of the

\$15,000 available in the PCAL Short Lived Assets Reserve account to go towards reimbursing PCAL for the new carpet costs and/or bathroom repairs as that is what that fund is to be used for. Clerk Curtis also suggested she visit with Matt with RHD on this option of using some of the PCAL Short Lived Asset Funds to reimburse PCAL for these recent expenses. Ms. Friedly stated she would talk with John DeFreece first about the suggestions Clerk Curtis had made and go from there.

Earth Day Activities: Pawnee City High School (PCHS) has announced Earth Day Service Work activities are planned for April 8th, 2025, with Rain Date #1 on April 14th & Rain Date #2 is scheduled for May 1st. 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 8:37 p.m.

ATTEST: Tamela S. Curtis, City Clerk/Treasurer

Charlie Hatfield, Mayor