

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PAWNEE CITY, HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 14, 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:** Council Members Donnie Fisher, Pat Hatfield, Vickie Zelenka and Susan Eisenhower; Foreman Spencer Cumley; Tamela Curtis, City Clerk/Treasurer and Kellie Wiers, Deputy City Clerk. **Absent:** Mayor Charlie Hatfield.

Council President Fisher 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 Eisenhower moved to accept March 24, 2025, regular meeting minutes. Council Member Hatfield 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:** \$11,195.84; **Union Bank & Trust**, FWH 3173.05; **NE Dept. of Rev**, SWH 427.46/Sales & Use Tax 1979.99; **John Hancock**, retirement 1350.49; **BOK Financial**, Swr/Wtr Bond Int Pymt 13,781.25; **OPPD**, elec at wells 373.79; **NPPD**, elec 6238.30; **Amazon**, hoist/concrete anchors 175.87; **Pawnee Republican**, publ 291.63; **Biblionix**, Libr license 1430.00; **Midwest Lab**, swr samples s/h labels 336.07; **Stallbaumer Lumber**, materials-salter hoist 173.48; **One Call Concepts**, Digger Hotline Locates 17.14; **Pawnee City Thriftway**, bleach 5.99; **Stehlik Law**, Apt atty fees 1,000.00; **Access Systems**, total IT Care/parts 965.26; **Pawnee Co. Rural Water**, water @ pond 45.00; **Windstream**, pool ph/office int/Libr ph 272.33; **Matt Kuhlmann**, Apr. Zoning serv 800.00; **Access Systems**, mobile license 497.01; **H & H Auto Parts**, rep parts/sup 97.96; **Hometown Leasing**, libr copier lease 100.79; **Seneca SA**, dumpster @ pond 120.00; **Pawnee Co. Register of Deeds**, file declaration of covenants 28.00; **SEND**, Gen Admin CDBG Str grant 3952.67; **DEMCO**, Libr office supplies 43.65; **US Cellular**, emerg cellphone 48.74; **Binder Bros.**, lumber 16.84; **Coral's Cleaning Services**, Mar. Cleaning 120.00; **Gary Droge Jr**, contract labor 371.25; **Surnali**, drug testing/mileage 123.00; **Wilson Electric**, generators for shop/wtr tower 5710.00; **Hach Co**, buffer solution 92.00; **One Call Concepts**, digger hotline 20.46; **Martin Marietta**, stock rock pile 1418.90; **Friedly Oil**, equip fuel 586.22; **State of NE/Dept of Labor**, 141.01; PC Asst Living, Equity Transfer to cover PCAL invoices 9363.50. Council Member Zelenka moved to approve the claims as submitted. Council Member

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

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

**Sheriff Braden Lang & Deputy Justyce Stankoski: Discuss K-9 Unit (review previous meeting minutes re: past attempt at K-9 unit):** Deputy Stankoski was absent due to presenting the discussions on the County getting a K-9 unit to the Village Board of Table Rock. Council reviewed the past meeting minutes on the last time the County tried getting a K-9 unit in force. Sheriff Braden Lang stated the Sheriff's Department had gotten approval from the County Commissioners on their K-9 Unit request. This time it will be a completely different situation as the K-9 officer in charge of the dog, Deputy Justyce Stankowski is already a certified officer and a former K-9 handler having experience with a K-9 dog of this same breed while he worked in Ashland. The County is getting the dog for free, but Deputy Stankowski will be going to Texas to pick up the dog and train with him. Right now, they are looking at around \$4500 plus travel expenses to take the training. Deputy Stankowski will be keeping the dog at his home in Tecumseh. Council Member Eisenhauer moved to approve using the \$3658 that the County had returned to the City after the last County K-9 unit failed, towards K-9 Unit expenses including but not limited to training, care, and travel expenses. Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. Sheriff Lang stated that Deputy Stankowski will be getting the County contracted with a veterinarian so that he can take care of this new K-9 Dog. Sheriff Lang stated that building a new evidence room has stalled. Lang stated the Sheriff's Department had been told by the County Commissioners that they would be given a larger room upstairs, but there have been some issues with making that happen. Sheriff Lang stated that the Department is down a deputy again as Deputy Taylor Bredemeier resigned effective April 7<sup>th</sup>. Lang stated it would probably be a while before they can hire a new deputy. They have started advertising and performed a couple job interviews earlier tonight, but they can't actually hire a new deputy until May, when a couple of the County's former employees drop off the "50 employees" maximum on the books at one time.

**Review/Discuss the Rural Fire Dept wanting to obtain an Infrared Drone & the email correspondence between Mike Habegger and Megan Buckley, Emergency Manager and Certificate of Authorization (COA) Template:** Sheriff Lang and Mike Habegger met to discuss the Pawnee County Rural Fire Board considering purchasing a 3T Drone, which runs around \$4000 with an infrared camera for the Pawnee City Fire Dept. This is in response to the three recent situations where there were searches for missing persons. Sheriff Lang stated that he has a 107 FAA License, which is for a commercial drone pilot. Mr. Habegger stated that he and Megan Buckley, Emergency Manager, had gone through the FAA regulations and it is looking like if a Certificate of Authorization (COA) were passed by the governing board, then the whole department would be covered. Sheriff Lang stated that he has the County Attorney looking at the COA for his drones so any of his deputies could also be able to use them. More discussion followed with Sheriff Lang stating that it might make sense to have the Sheriff's Department and all the Fire Departments within the County all have a COA that covers all of them. Mr. Habegger stated that they have four or five firemen in the Pawnee City Fire Department that would be willing to get trained and would be willing to take the drone to assist other Fire Departments

within the County, if needed. Habegger stated that the Department is not looking for any monetary donations from the City but needs their authorization to obtain a COA. Council Member Zelenka moved to approve the City authorizing the Pawnee City Fire Department in obtaining a Certificate of Authorization to legally pilot a drone with infrared camera abilities. Council Member Hatfield seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

**Donations to Organizations: Terry Borchert, Fairview Golf Course (*previously gave \$1000 credit on Fairview Golf Water Account & \$500 credit on the Ag Society's South Meter Account due to watering new grass in 2023 & 2024*):** Terry Borchert, Fairview Golf Club handed out their Financial Report for the past year. Mr. Borchert thanked the City for all their past support and hopes that the City continues to support the Fairview Golf Club. Mr. Borchert would appreciate the City continuing to provide \$1000 credit towards their water bill and again a \$500 credit to the Ag Society's water account, too. The Golf Club is continuing to use the South Meter, which water is paid for by the Ag Society, to water the T-boxes that are on the south end of the course. Council Member Eisenhauer moved to approve a \$1000 credit on the Fairview Golf Clubhouse water account plus a \$500 credit on the Ag Society's South meter with that to be revisited again at next year's request for donations. Council Member Hatfield seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

**Review/Discuss any updates on the 522 & 526 G Street buildings collapsing:** Council reviewed the text messages between Mayor Hatfield and Ed Raper, owner of the collapsed buildings with Mayor Hatfield stating it was still permissible for Mr. Raper to take loads of the broken bricks down to the sewer plant (tree dump area). Mayor Hatfield also stated that Ed was to let him know once he had hauled ten (10) loads down there so at that time the City Crew could push up the brick pile. Mayor Hatfield had also stated in the text message dated April 3rd that the City would appreciate Ed moving his lift off the street and hauling the bricks off the sidewalks. A few days later on April 9<sup>th</sup>, Mayor Hatfield inquired when the "brick removal company" was planning to get started and inquired if Mr. Raper had removed the lift off the street and gotten the bricks off the sidewalk. Mr. Raper stated the brick company had been delayed on their current job and should be here by the end of the week, also stating he would move the lift after they cleaned the bricks off from around it. Clerk Curtis stated that Mayor Hatfield had text Mr. Raper again late this afternoon inquiring when the brick company was going to show up. Mr. Raper had replied they would be here first thing Tuesday morning.

**Notice of Release of Funds on the Rural Community Recovery Program Grant #23-RCRP-035: City Atty Stehlik-Ladman is doing a Title Search on the 522 & 526 G Street properties and has started working on a Purchase Agreement between the City and Ed Raper:** Clerk Curtis stated that City Attorney Stehlik-Ladman had finished typing up the purchase agreement between the City and Mr. Raper, which she had passed out to everyone before the Council meeting. Since the City had received the release of funds on the RCRP project, they could now proceed with obtaining the property from Mr. Raper. Much discussion was had on the purchase agreement and Council liked the deadline of May 30<sup>th</sup> for Mr. Raper to have the possession of said premises delivered to the purchaser on or before said date. They also thought it was a good idea to include the point that the money would stay in an escrow account until the terms

contained in paragraphs #6 & 7 were completed to the satisfaction of the Pawnee City Council. Paragraph #6 states: Prior to closing, Seller shall satisfactorily settle any and all claims arising from the collapse of the buildings and provide written verification to Purchaser, including, but not limited to written release of liability and claims against Purchaser by HealthFirst Pharmacy and Union Bank and Trust. By this agreement, Seller hereby assumes, releases and agrees to indemnify, defend, protect and hold harmless Purchaser and its officials, agents, and representatives from and against any loss of and/or damage to the property and all loss and/or damage or injury to persons or property arising in any way from the ownership, maintenance, alteration, negligent use, or demolition of the property by Seller or his agents, representatives, and independent contractors, including the cost of any legal action and attorney's fees. Paragraph #7 states: This offer is based upon Purchaser's personal inspection or investigation of the premises and not upon any representation or warranties of condition by the Seller or Seller's agent. Purchaser is buying premises in "as is" condition and agrees to be solely responsible for all cost of demolition and removal of debris from the property. Damage to neighboring property that occurs during the removal of the debris will be considered damage arising from the collapse of the building unless said damage is caused by an intervening act of gross negligence by Purchaser, its agents, or independent contractors. More discussion followed. Council Member Eisenhower moved to approve Mayor Hatfield signing the Purchase Agreement between the City and Ed Raper on the 522 G & 526 G Street property. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

**Review Aaron Sawyer's PC Economic Development Report as of 3/30/2025:** Mr. Sawyer handed out the PawneeCityNewHomes.com presentation with Mr. Glenn stating that the Council really did have a lot on their plates at tonight's meeting. Clerk Curtis stated she wasn't kidding when she emailed Mr. Glenn back stating that tonight's meeting had a very full agenda and there wouldn't be time for this presentation as it was not on the agenda. Mr. Glenn stated this will only take a few minutes to go over this presentation on the \$50,000 down payment assistance program to purchase a Pawnee City Community Foundation (PCCF) new house, what the income qualifications were as people may be asking all of you about this program. Glenn went on stating that this was very exciting news for Pawnee City as these news releases have been viewed by over a million people with positive coverage worldwide. Glenn shared some of the news media that had run the articles on Pawnee City's housing initiative including 10/11 News, The Des Moines Register, Yahoo news, realtor.com, Newsweek, Omaha World Herald, Lincoln Journal Star and even the New York Post. Glenn read a few sample headlines from these articles, "The US City Offering \$50,000 to Move There"; "Want to Live in Pawnee? Nebraska Will Give You \$50,000 to Move There". Clerk Curtis and Deputy Clerk Wiers both stated that these headlines were misinforming what that \$50,000 downpayment assistance initiative was all about, stating their office alone had already received over 75 phone calls and dozens of emails from the City Website asking if the City was really giving people \$50,000 if they would move to our town. So, each time they receive those phone calls and emails they explain to them that this program has nothing to do with the City, sending them to pawneecitynewhomes.com website and sharing Aaron's phone number with them if they have additional questions about it. Mr. Glenn stated that the Clerks should just direct them to Jim Warrelmann at SENDD to answer their questions. Clerk Curtis stated it wouldn't matter who they directed these people to, they still had to explain it wasn't from the City and share the website and someone's phone number with them all. Mr.

Glenn continued that the pawneecitynewhomes.com website had received 17,000 visits in the last 30 days with 8,264 people visiting that website on March 29<sup>th</sup> alone. To date there have been 572 people that have filled out forms indicating they were interested in Pawnee City. Glenn stated he didn't know if the Council understood how valuable that is, it's a eureka moment. Glenn then went over the traits of the 572 applicants including the average age being 43.4, household size 2.7, 97% employed, 10% pre-approved for a mortgage with 86% meeting the Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund (NAHTF) qualified income guidelines. Interesting enough, most of these were younger families with small children, too. There are a total of 36 people who are pre-approved for a mortgage and qualified to meet the NAHTF income guidelines. Glenn continued that 58% of the applicants were from Nebraska with the other top out of state sources being California, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and Texas and within 100 miles from Pawnee City there were 132 applicants. All the people who filled out the forms on the pawneecitynewhomes.com website have been forwarded onto Southeast Nebraska Development District (SEND), who will contact all interested parties and be responsible for the qualifying and sales process from that point on. SEND is in charge of building the homes and selling the homes. Steve Glenn stated they are rolling out the red-carpet invitation by inviting all the applicants of the \$50,000 housing initiative to attend the Memorial Day weekend free barbecue and entertainment to be held at VanHorne Park. At this point they don't know how many will show up, but they are asking them if they are coming, and they plan to throw out the welcome mat to Pawnee City. Glenn continued that the bottom line is that it's been estimated that between a million and three (3) million people have read about Pawnee City in the last 30 days, so we've gotten more PR than the history of Pawnee City has. Hopefully, they can take these 36 people and get them to want to buy a house here. Council Member Hatfield asked if there were 36 people who were pre-approved to purchase one of those houses or if there were 491 that had qualified? Mr. Glenn stated that there were 36 people that were pre-approved for a mortgage and 491 were who had qualified with the NAHTF income guidelines. Mr. Glenn stated those who qualify with a pre-approved mortgage and meet the income guidelines for this program would be provided with \$50,000 downpayment assistance on their house as a second mortgage and they do not have to pay it back until they sell the house, then they have to pay it back from the proceeds from the sale of the home. Mr. Glenn went on to explain that the Community Foundation, which has Suzanne Borchert and Sherri Smith on it, applied and received \$650,000 (NAHTF) grant (through SEND), which \$325,000 will build each house, so they received money to build two houses. When one sells, they can use the proceeds from the sale of that house to build another house and keep back \$50,000. So, in theory they can build 12 houses. Glenn stated people around the State have taken notice of Pawnee City and all the many things it has to offer. Glenn stated they will be meeting with the director of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDeD), as he wants to know about this program because even though it's their money, they don't know how to do it. Council Member Eisenhower stated that she felt it would be good, especially for the City Office staff, that in the future when you put something out saying people are getting \$50,000 that you specifically say that it's \$50,000 downpayment, because of how it came out there is a lot of confusion as the office has been fielding tons of phone calls and emails about people thinking the City is going to be handing them \$50,000 to move here to Pawnee City. Mr. Glenn stated that is why it is important on those phone calls and emails that they be forwarded to Mr. Jim Warrelmann and Brittany McCullough with SEND and they can answer any questions that these people may have, so you need to re-direct them that way. Deputy Clerk Wiers stated the problem is that we

received the initial emails and phone calls that we have to deal with, along with everything else we have to deal with every day and the calls are like, "hey is it true that the City is going to give us \$50,000 to move there?" So, we still must explain that no, the City is not going to be giving you \$50,000 to just move here. Clerk Curtis stated that they have been sending them to the pawneecitynewhomes.com website. Mr. Glenn stated that is correct, so when anyone who signs up, those applications get sent to Jim and Brittany with SENDD because they've asked specifically that they be in charge of that as they told us to keep our hands off of that part, so we're keeping our hands off of it and following the process. Mr. Glenn stated he doesn't want us to kick a gift horse in the mouth because we have more positive PR (on Pawnee City) than anybody would trade places with so don't make it a downer as you all should be saying hallelujah. Council Member Zelenka stated that she doesn't feel that we are against this at all or are trying to put it down but it's all perspective as she would like to see as many new homes in this town as possible as I may someday want to sell a house, Zelenka continued, being on the water department I have to have an infrastructure that will handle those things because that's the last thing those people that are buying or building a new house here want to hear is that there is not enough water as that scares her to death. Council Member Zelenka stated last year we weren't in this shape and we were already rationing water usage and looking at where we are at right now (with rains) and she's got to come up with a million plus to figure out how we're going to put a new well in, that might work because if the water's not there, it's not there. She continued stating she wants people to come here. She wants our school to grow. She wants everything but this whole time she's been thinking, slow down just a hare. We need to all work together to see what we can do or what we can even handle. The City is not against this (housing project) at all but we have to working together because opening up the newspaper and reading or better yet a phone call asking her where the City was getting the \$50,000 from to give away and she had no idea what they were even talking about. Steve Glenn stated that you can't stop people from talking silly. Clerk Curtis & Council Member Fisher both stated but you don't have to have the headline in bold saying that we're going to give a person \$50,000 to move here to Pawnee City. Steve Glenn inquired if he wrote the headline. Council and the Clerks answered they had no idea. Clerk Curtis stated Steve Glenn was quoted in it. Mr. Glenn replied that he didn't write the headline, and he didn't write the story, so please don't go spinning it back on me. Clerk Curtis stated that probably some sort of differential that it's not actually the City of Pawnee City giving the money out. Glenn stated they tried to say the Pawnee City Community Foundation was and they've added that onto the website, but you've got millions of people reading about Pawnee City positively and the last thing you should do is complain about it. Council Member Zelenka stated she wasn't complaining she was just scared that the City is not going to have some things that those people are going to want. Glenn stated that he heard complaints, pointing to Council Member Hatfield and both Clerks Curtis and Wiers. Clerk Curtis stated that we weren't complaining, we were just telling it like it really is. Council Member Zelenka stated that she wasn't sure how this all transpired, but she knew when she put some sort of information in the newspaper then I'm given the first shot on whether I approve it or not. Mr. Glenn stated he didn't have approval of all of these articles, as did the Council think Newsweek asked him to proof their articles? Council Member Zelenka stated maybe not, but it was a cold pan of water that got thrown into our faces and so we're a little reactive to it because then she starts worrying about how she's going to try to get this all put together for this many houses and that's just her water department, not even anybody else's departments. Zelenka stated we just must work together. Mr. Glenn stated he totally agreed and that was why he was here was to try and explain

it more so everybody knows but we have got to build an attitude of yes, we can, not no, we can't. If this community wants to be a yes we can community we can be successful and build houses and make sure that we balance it with the water and make sure that we do that but if we're a no we can't community then we should just acknowledge it and go down the road. Glenn stated he was excited, and he wanted to share that excitement, but it doesn't seem like anybody here appreciates the fact that Pawnee City got PR that no other community has ever gotten. Council Member Eisenhower shared that she had gotten phone calls from family members in Seattle, California and the East Coast wanting to know what was going on in Pawnee City, which she thought was fantastic until she heard about the nonstop phone calls and emails that the City Office is getting. Council Member Fisher stated that there seemed to be a lot of misconceptions out there. Mr. Glenn stated that if we all do nothing he guarantee there won't be any phone calls about it so if you want no phone calls then let's just stop doing everything but we've got to balance the good and the bad and there is so much more good with this than bad but he senses a song of doom here. Council Member Eisenhower stated she thought the houses looked great so far. Glenn stated he totally understood that we must balance the water, balance everything else in the City as there are other major issues that the Council is aware of, that they are not like the streets, sewer, etc. This is only the start of what needs to be addressed to make all these things work together and a positive plus for everybody. Mr. Glenn stated that he wanted everyone there to reach out to him if they had a problem or call Aaron and they would try to get to the bottom of it. Like if you have somebody that's all mad and yelling at you, then call him and they will try to help. It was stated that the Clerks haven't been yelled at, but a lot of the callers are very hard to understand as we've even had people from Pakistan and Germany and others that do not speak very good English inquire about the \$50,000. Clerk Curtis included that there was a message left today and when they tried to call him back, it immediately rang busy. Mr. Glenn recommended that the Clerks send those to SENDD as that's what their job is. Clerk Curtis stated that if the number was ringing busy for them, it would just ring busy for SENDD too and that meant that we couldn't even tell them to visit [pawneecitynewhomes.com](http://pawneecitynewhomes.com) website or to call Aaron with more questions. Mr. Glenn stated they were just trying to set up a system to where these people know who to contact or where to refer them to right away. Mr. Glenn stated he felt this was all very exciting but if the City Council felt that they were going in the right direction then just tell them that they are. Council Member Hatfield stated he felt what they were all stating tonight was that this was all going a little too fast so it's not that they don't all appreciate it, but there are a lot of things that the City Council also has to consider and when he understood that they (Steve & Aaron) may not have had a lot to do with it, but when things aren't put in these articles right and then our office has to deal with all of that and they don't need it honestly. Mr. Glenn stated that if Pawnee City was going to grow then you're going to get that. Council Member Hatfield continued that then we talk about the water infrastructure and are adding a couple homes going to make a difference, probably not, but we all still worry about stuff like that. Council Member Fisher stated there will be "growing pains" to deal with maybe first water and then how to handle the sewer and streets, but you know the City will just have to work through it. Mr. Glenn stated that we are all in this together and if they are doing something wrong, just call them and tell them and if they do make a mistake, it's an honest mistake and it was not meant to hurt anybody. Glenn stated he has plenty to do, so he doesn't need to do this project, and he doesn't need to get 1-3 million people reading articles about Pawnee City but he's happy to do it. Glenn stated he has a store here and he needs everybody to understand this because he knows their plates are full but if Pawnee City goes below 800 people then you don't have a hardware store, or a grocery

store, or maybe a hospital or a school so Pawnee City in some point in time has to say we're all in and we are not willing to accept getting smaller. If you don't do that you will lose what we currently have, which most towns don't. Once you lose the critical mass of people you will become a village if you go under 800. Clerk Curtis stated that Pawnee City could stay a second-class city even if they went below 800 people, they did not have to become a Village. Mr. Glenn stated he was given incorrect information on that, but the point is that Pawnee City probably won't have a lot of retail stores if we keep declining in population. Mr. Glenn's point is to just say welcome world, be positive and go for the gusto and then if we get ahead of ourselves, which is what he felt he was hearing tonight, to not let the cart get ahead of the horse. Council Member Zelenka stated that at times there are things that don't have a lot of control over things, but those that we do have control of, it would be nice not to be blind-sided or something like that or just a heads up that you have been thinking about this or talking to people. Zelenka stated those would be good things to share with the City from the very beginning instead of her walking into the Library and getting jumped about all of this but having no idea about any of it. Mr. Glenn stated that was one of the reasons he had asked Aaron to try and always come down to these meetings so he can hear these are our problems, these are our points of pain and try to go back and try to better figure out what is best for everybody. Glenn stated they also want to have open communication in this town, but they can't attend the Community Foundation's meetings, and they can't the PCDC (Pawnee City Development Corporation) meetings. Council Member Eisenhower stated that they can attend the PCDC meetings if they have things to present but then let them get on with what is on their agenda because she is on PCDC. More discussion was had on PCDC being funded with public funds with Council Member Eisenhower stating that if they had questions about all of that they could visit Attorney Joe Stehlik about that as it had been fought in the courts before it has not changed. Eisenhower continued that there are things that go on in those meetings that are very personal to the people that are presenting items, and they don't want that information made public. Deputy Clerk Wiers stated she wanted to make it clear that they were not against people moving to Pawnee City, which would be great, but we do need some economic growth here. We have people that live here now that are struggling and they could use some better paying jobs. DC Wiers continued that to her it would be more important to focus on that vs. focusing on a tree grant, like focusing on some storefront money. She knows of someone who is trying to get a storefront so she can open a business downtown. Glenn stated the first step is that this person needs to visit with Aaron about those things as he is the Economic Development Director for Pawnee City.... Chamber of Commerce. DC Wiers wondered why they haven't been talking about some economic development things vs the tree grant. Glenn agreed that the tree grant should be far down on the list and again these types of questions need to be directed to Aaron as he can research grants. Glenn stated an example would be that he has a meeting to talk with a contractor with grants for looking into turning the manor into apartments, but he doesn't know what is even going on with the manor since it closed. Mr. Glenn stated that those are the things that are going on behind the scenes that aren't public because they aren't tangible, they're just ideas. Clerk Curtis inquired if Mr. Glenn had heard from Tim Keelan with Hanna:Keelan lately, as he had a Developer that did exactly that, turned another community that had a former manor into apartments. Mr. Glenn stated those are the things that need to be shared with Aaron as the Economic Development Director. Clerk Curtis stated the last time she had visited with Mr. Keelan he had planned to call Steve directly but apparently, he had not. Mr. Glenn stated that if somebody comes in asking about businesses, send them to Aaron because he will sit down with them and find out what they are wanting and then reach out to SENDD or

NDeD or even PCDC and inquire what grants might fit their needs so opening that communication directly to him will build the hub to finding the grants from other sources. Glenn continued that they were correct that Pawnee City needs jobs, they need housing but the people that usually are coming in for housing usually have income or might be a virtual workplace, which is a great job. Deputy Clerk Wiers stated that was true and she understood all of that, but she didn't realize Aaron would be the direction they should send them. Mr. Glenn stated Aaron being the Economic Development Director didn't mean that he had the money, but that it is his job to use his resources to try and find the money. Mr. Glenn by stating that up until now the employees of the City have been forced to do it all by yourselves for decades as Clerk Curtis has probably applied for more grants than the average person has ever seen, but now you all have a ED Director that can assist in doing the research and those kinds of things.

**Notice of Release of Funds on CDBG Street Improvement Grant #24-PWI-013:** Clerk Curtis stated there was a zoom meeting held on April 10<sup>th</sup> with Kelly Gentrup/SENDD, Evan Wickersham/JEO and herself to discuss the next steps on the Street Improvement Project. JEO is working on their Engineering Agreement with the City and will be starting to work on the design, plans & specs with the bid opening planned for early fall with the Street Project to be completed in 2026. Clerk Curtis stated that the City has until 2027 to complete the project.

**Review/Act on Robert & Betty McDaniel Demolition Reimbursement Request at 1208 10<sup>th</sup> Street:** Council Member Zelenka moved to approve Robert & Betty McDaniel's Demolition Reimbursement Request at 1208 10<sup>th</sup> Street for \$4000. Council Member Eisenhower seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. Clerk Curtis stated she would email the demolition reimbursement paperwork onto Mike Habegger and Council Member Eisenhower, members of the Pawnee City Development Corporation (PCDC), for them to take action on this demo reimbursement request next. Much discussion followed about the continued issues with the large piles of concrete, bricks plus dirt piles that also contain demolition debris in them at the sewer plant/tree dump area and how the City was ever going to get rid of these piles without it costing the City an extreme amount of money. Council Member Hatfield inquired how many more demolition projects the City had received applications for. Clerk Curtis stated that the only one left was the Percival property at the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> & G Street but that the City had budgeted to put \$20,000 in the Demolition Reserve Account to go towards demolition reimbursement projects. Clerk Curtis stated she has transferred those funds into that Demo Reserve Account. More discussion followed with Council Member Hatfield stating he felt that the City needed to visit with the contractors who were tearing down the houses and inform them that the City could no longer accept demolition debris at our tree dump site.

**Review PCAL's 2/26/2025 regular meeting minutes:** Council reviewed Pawnee City Assisted Living's regular board meeting minutes from February.

**A Report and update from Foreman Cumley: *Water Certification Test:*** Foreman Cumley stated that City Crew Member Brandon Holthus had passed his Water Certification Test the week of March 24<sup>th</sup>! ***Discuss hiring part-time spring/summer help ASAP:*** Council reviewed the seasonal help advertisement. It was decided to run the ad for two weeks in the April 24<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup> editions of the newspaper, with the deadline to submit applications on May 5<sup>th</sup> at 4:30

p.m. The interviews will be held the week of May 5<sup>th</sup> with the Interviewing Committee members Council Members Eisenhower and Fisher along with Foreman Cumley. ***Review/Discuss Quote from NMC Cat on Jack Hammer for Bobcat Skid Steer:*** Foreman Cumley stated that the City Crew plans to do a lot of concrete patchwork this year and a jack hammer would make these projects go a lot quicker. The City could rent a jack hammer from Rooster Rentals, but it would cost \$1500 per week, so it wouldn't take very long, and the City would have spent the same costs in rental fees as they would have just buying the jack hammer. Clerk Curtis had split the total cost of the jack hammer between five funds including General, Street, Park, Water and Sewer, which would be \$1738 per fund and if they split it between four funds, omitting the Park fund it would be \$2172.50. Council Member Eisenhower stated she was sure at one time or another that the City Crew would need to use this piece of equipment in the parks, so she felt it should be split between the five funds. Council Member Eisenhower moved to approve the purchase of the Jack Hammer from NMC Cat for the Bobcat Skid Steer for \$8690, with the total cost to be split between the five funds. Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. ***Review City Code 3-216; Discuss/Take Action on request for a private septic sewer system:*** Council reviewed City Code #3-216 public sewers, required, mandatory hookup. Clerk Curtis stated that Scott Hanna had inquired if a new house being built up at 230 L Street could install a septic tank sewer system since the property owner was over 2+ blocks away from a City sewer main. Clerk Curtis was able to visit with City Attorney Stehlik and she agreed that since the premises did not abut a City sewer main, the City could approve the property owner putting in a private septic sewer system. Council Member Eisenhower moved to authorize the property owners at 230 L Street to put in a private septic sewer system since their residence meets the requirements. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. ***Review/Discuss updates to the Pond restroom facility:*** Mezger Construction plans to be back this week to put on the roof and doors, which are poured in place doors. Doug Daily has the toilets, sinks, etc. ready to be put in. Brett from Wilson Electric asked Foreman Cumley if the City could find another electrician to do the electrical in the new pond restrooms. Dave Pope has agreed to do that. Brett has sent the fan specs to Foreman Cumley to order them through Grainger. ***Discuss issues at Sewer Plant:*** Foreman Cumley stated that the new pump they just got in does work, but the bolts didn't line up with the motor they are replacing, so he went through the salesman and ordered a mounting bracket, but the bracket he sent still doesn't line up so he plans to contact him again on the issue. Clerk Curtis stated that Foreman Cumley reported that there was a camper issue last week when a camper who had paid to park on #1, ended up parking on spot #4 because someone was already parked on the #1 spot. This camper had paid online for an additional week, leaving his camper, hitch paddle locked and parked on spot #4 while he went home to Iowa, not planning to return until next weekend. The problem was that the City had a group of campers that had already reserved many campsites, including spot #4 where that Iowa camper was parked. Foreman Cumley visited with the owner of the camper, and he was fine with the City crew picking up his camper with the forks and putting it over on campsite #5, but the electricity had been unhooked from that campsite due to the new pond restroom going in close to that site. The City Crew ended up digging to find the electrical line and contacting Dave Pope who was able to get campsite #5's electrical hooked back up. ***Review/Discuss updates on projects in the City:*** Foreman Cumley stated they have been working on concrete patches on G Street by the stop sign, south of the Post Office; the road leading to the golf course/fairgrounds at 14<sup>th</sup> & D Street by Gale Nutters residence and the

intersection of 6<sup>th</sup> & I street going to the hospital. At the hospital intersection, they have done one section and have two more sections to go. It's a busy time of year with the parks and trail needing sprayed, mowing has started, working on concrete patches and soon they will be working on cleaning the pool with Z-Ox to get it ready for the season. Council Member Hatfield inquired if the City ever received permission from the County Commissioners to put up cameras on the County Shop building and if they were working on getting the handrails made. Foreman Cumley stated that he had left a message with Chris Rauner, Co Hwy Supt. but had not heard back from him and Russ Smith had to order the metal for the handrails, so that is why they have not been completed.

**A Report and update from Council Member Eisenhower:** *Discuss Earth Day activities with Pawnee City Schools held April 8<sup>th</sup>:* Council Member Eisenhower reported they had a beautiful day for the Earth Day activities with the Pawnee City Schools on April 8<sup>th</sup>. A group of students worked at VanHorne Park, picking up sticks, leaves and trash along with spreading out a whole pallet of mulch at the Amphitheater. Students also worked at the City's little park by the Post Office picking up trash, removing the old mulch and putting new mulch down while another group of students painted the curbs yellow along the businesses on 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Council Member Eisenhower stated that she had sent a thank you note to the school for continuing to have the students participate in Earth Day activities annually with the City and other community organizations. Eisenhower also sent a thank you to Alpha for donating scoop shovels for the students to use on their Earth Day activities. **VanHorne Park:** Council Member Eisenhower stated that she had Clerk Curtis hand out the sheets showing the upcoming improvements planned at VanHorne Park. Eisenhower stated to Mr. Glenn that she will need him to send her a map again so she can see exactly where all these new items plan to be put. Mr. Glenn stated he would get that sent to her. Council Member Eisenhower inquired to Mr. Glenn what the trenching and 1.5" conduit and 400' of electrical was for. Mr. Glenn stated that when they put the Christmas lights up in the trees they just had open extension cords throughout the park and they don't really want that hazard for the kids so they will bury conduit and put wire there and have an electrician come and wire it so that the trees have different power source. Clerk Curtis stated that one of the biggest requests that they have gotten is why those Christmas lights couldn't stay on year round because they are really beautiful and have been shared on Facebook and she knows of people who have driven to town after hearing about the lights only to be disappointed that they were no longer on after Christmas season was over. Mr. Glenn stated he really didn't have a reason but felt that once they got the conduit and other power source put in, then they could be kept on year-round. Midwest Walls & Landscape will again be doing the work for the next phase of improvements including adding a rocked access road and installation of a bridge over the creek with a 60" culvert to support truck and trailer weight. There will also be new flower beds with built-in irrigation and a drainage system installed all around the stage area. Foreman Cumley stated Midwest Walls does very good work but no matter where they put that culvert pipe it is going to be over the City sewer main. Council Member Eisenhower stated that she felt that Steve Glenn needed to keep in constant contact with Foreman Cumley while this project was going on. Mr. Glenn had stated that they are hoping to have all these improvements completed before Memorial Day weekend. Council Member Eisenhower stated that since this item was not actually on the agenda, the Council couldn't officially vote on this until the April 28th meeting, but she wanted the Council to be aware of the improvement plans they are wanting to get started on right away. **Report on Pool Managers & Lifeguards hired:** Council Member

Eisenhauer stated that the Pool employees have been hired as Pool Manager Mallory Branek with Assistant Pool Managers being Madi Fender & Allison Glathar. The returning lifeguards hired are Larkyn Vlcek, Preston Rumery, Kinsley Benson & Madelyn Osborne with the new lifeguards hired being Gauge Schuetz, Ava Meints and Payton Rose. Council Member Eisenhauer stated that she plans to also take the Pool Managers Certification testing to help cover the pool, at no cost to the City, if needed, to eliminate overtime hours being worked by the pool manager.

**Correspondence:** The Council reviewed the email from the Nebraska Infrastructure Hub on the project inquiry follow-up on the street projects that Clerk Curtis and Foreman Cumley had submitted. Unfortunately, the consultant team did not feel the project Pawnee City had submitted would be a good fit for a federal discretionary grant stating the project's benefits were unlikely to outweigh the costs in a conventional benefit-cost analysis. Council Member Eisenhauer stated she had visited Mike Habegger about this, and he stated that the Hub wasn't even considering projects that weren't over a million dollars. Eisenhauer stated that she knew Clerk Curtis and Foreman Cumley had not planned for our project to be near that big because if there ended up being a City Match required, there is no way the City has those kinds of funds available. Council reviewed Access System's Pawnee City Hardware Lifecycle report, the annual franchise fee payment from Charter Communications and the invitation to celebrate Professional Municipal Clerk's Week May 4-10<sup>th</sup>.

The Mayor and City Council will meet at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup> to hold the Clerk & Foreman Evaluations before the start of regular meeting.

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 9:10 p.m.

ATTEST: Tamela S. Curtis, City Clerk/Treasurer

Donnie Fisher, Council President