

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PAWNEE CITY, HELD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2024, AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE PAWNEE CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY, 735 8TH 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:** Council Members Vickie Zelenka, Donnie Fisher, Susan Eisenhauer (by phone) and Laura Poskochil; Kellie Wiers, Deputy City Clerk, Tamela Curtis, City Clerk/Treasurer and Foreman Spencer Cumley. **Absent:** Mayor Charles Hatfield.

Council President Donnie Fisher called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. informing all those present of the Posters stating the Open Meeting Law Changes on the West meeting room wall accessible to the public. At this time, all those present stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Member Zelenka moved to accept the February 12, 2024, regular meeting minutes. Council Member Poskochil 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: **2/27/24 Payroll:** \$10,763.04; **Union Bank & Trust**, FWH 3185.94; **NE Dept. of Rev**, SWH 494.55; **John Hancock**, retirement 1694.76; **Allstate**, cancer/accid 218.06; **Ameritas**, vision 92.40; **Madison National Life**, life ins. 55.09; **United Healthcare**, health ins. 6563.70; **Windstream**, internet @ city office, & ph @ swr plant 229.86; **Spectrum**, internet & ph @ 445 6<sup>th</sup> St. 184.97; **Access Systems**, copier contract & overages 164.79; **BHE**, gas service 1050.02; **PCDC**, Dec. 2023 sales tax 9,811.57; **Seneca Sanitation**, Jan. 2024 garbage service, dumpster @ pond 6988.03; **Pawnee Republican**, publications 352.26; **Lola Seitz**, reimb library materials 11.67; **Martin Marietta**, rock stockpile 1231.85; **Axtell Lumber**, DD#10, Cornerstone Proj 9001.04; **Amazon Cap Serv**, shop supplies 26.98; **Capital Bus Syst.**, Elevate ph syst 192.77; **Lincoln Winwater**, water parts 994.38; **Nebr. Public Health Environ Lab**, wtr sample testing 15.00; **Pawnee City Thriftway**, shop supplies 33.75; **Rose Holding**, rent fee Pacific Tek Hydro Vac 6000.00; **Verizon Wireless**, home connect/jetpack 64.79; Council Member Eisenhauer moved to approve the claims as submitted. Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

**PUBLIC HEARING—Application for new Class “D” Liquor License for the Little Brown Jug LLC dba The Little Brown Jug 126248: *Open Public Hearing:*** Council Member Zelenka moved to open the Public Hearing for the Application for new Class “D” Liquor License for the Little Brown Jug LLC dba The Little Brown Jug 126248. Council Member Poskochil seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried and public hearing opened at 7:02 p.m. Jamie Kramer and Angie Hunt were present to

answer any questions. They plan to open a deli in the next couple of weeks and brought tables back to the business so the card players have a place to play cards again. At some point, they would like to install gas pumps. They plan to operate longer hours so they are open during summer ball games, evening school activities and other community events. **Close Public Hearing:** Council Member Eisenhauer moved to close the Public Hearing for the Application for new Class “D” Liquor License for the Little Brown Jug LLC dba The Little Brown Jug 126248. Council Member Poskochil seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried and public hearing closed at 7:08 p.m. Council Member Poskochil moved to approve the Class D liquor license for the Little Brown Jug LLC dba The Little Brown Jug 126248. Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON SALES TAX/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN ON PRIMARY BALLOT:** **Open Public Hearing:** Council Member Zelenka moved to open the public hearing on the sales tax/economic development plan to put it on the primary ballot. Council Member Poskochil seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried and public hearing opened at 7:25 p.m. Mike Habegger, president of the Pawnee City Development Corp. (PCDC) and member, Nanette Smith were present to discuss this issue. Mr. Habegger explained he would like the 2% sales tax to continue as it has really helped Pawnee City. The Corp. tries very hard to turn the sales tax money right back around to make improvements such as the store front grant program for existing buildings. PCDC rescued the two burned out buildings a few years ago in 2015 and now there are two businesses located there now. They have also helped with improvements to the fairgrounds and helped with seventeen demolition property tear downs. PCDC would like to see the demolition program continue with the \$4,000 match and assistance with other community improvement projects. Clerk Curtis explained that the ½% sales tax helps pay the USDA loan payment for the street project. The 1.5% tax helped with finishing the concrete on the trail, improvements to the pool, Van Horne Park, etc. Clerk Curtis explained that it is important for the voters to know that the tax rate was 1.5% in 2008 until 2016 and then it was raised to 2% to help with the payment to USDA for the Street Project and nothing is going to change. This action will just continue the current tax. Council Member Zelenka moved to close the public hearing on the sales tax/economic development plan to put it on the primary ballot. Council Member Poskochil seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried and public hearing closed at 7:32 p.m. **Resolution #4:** Council Member Eisenhauer moved to approve Resolution #4 Submitting Ballot Issue of City Sales & Use Tax to Voters. Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. **Resolution #5:** Council Member Eisenhauer moved to approve Resolution #5 Approving the Economic Development Program and Submitting Ballot Issue to Voters. Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

**Review/take action on Semi-Annual Audit from PCDC performed by Citizen Advisory Board:** Council reviewed the semi-annual audit from PCDC performed by the Citizen Advisory Board. Council Member Eisenhauer moved to approve the semi-annual audit from PCDC performed by the Citizen Advisory Board. Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

**Robert & Courtney Kosiski—Application for Propane Gas Tank Placement at new residence (1209 14<sup>th</sup> Street):** Courtney Kosiski explained it would cost \$25,000 to run a gas line (with Black Hills Energy) three blocks to their property where they are building a new house. Courtney and her husband, Rob are requesting permission to install a propane tank on their property for gas service which would be much cheaper. Council Member Eisenhauer moved to approve Robert and Courtney Kosiski's propane permit at 1209 14<sup>th</sup> Street. Council Member Poskochil seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

**Discuss Pawnee City Assisted Living: Review PCAL January 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Minutes:**

Jill Sunneberg submitted minutes from the last regular PCAL Board meeting as Caralyn was absent. **Discuss document USDA presented to John & Caralyn at special meeting with USDA Members, Tammy & Kellie:** The City Office has not received minutes from this special meeting scheduled February 14, 2024. PCAL hasn't met again since the special meeting so the City Office hasn't received minutes yet from this meeting. At this meeting, Luann Brown (USDA) gave Caralyn a document with a list of items USDA needed for the loan which included several financial documents such as a budget, balance sheet, verification of the balances of the reserve accounts and a list of residents with payor types. Tammy will follow up with Luann to verify whether all of the information has been submitted. City Auditor, Julie Bauman, is still working on the PCAL audit. **Discuss letter dated 2/15/24 from, USDA re: PCAL'S loan with USDA:** USDA has suspended the monthly \$1049 reserve deposit for 12 months. The balance of \$39,000 will be used to make the monthly \$10,000 deposit. The annual \$5,000 reserve deposit will be suspended for 2024. Clerk Cutis explained that Julie Bauman had talked with John DeFreece and Caralyn putting financial controls in place and encouraged them to listen to recommendations from the PCAL Committee and to cooperate with the committee. The Committee should have more PCAL board members on it and it should actually be an arm of the PCAL Board. Julie Bauman feels that it will not work for one person to be in control of financial and medical operations and PCAL REALLY needs to set up internal controls. Council Member Poskochil commented that Rural Health Development (RHD) management company has an RN consultant on staff so RHD would not have one person in charge of both departments but would charge \$3000 compared to the current \$1400 PCAL pays Amie Schrack. Poskochil stated the PCAL Committee did request Amie complete specific tasks before she leaves on Febr. 29<sup>th</sup> that are part of her job such as yearly care plans and other licensing requirements. Mary Marteney stated the PCAL employees received a text today from Caralyn that Amie is staying on as nurse consultant and the facility is hiring RHD. DC Wiers commented the PCAL Board hasn't met yet so that has not been decided by the Board when it will be voted on Wednesday, Febr. 28. Council Member Eisenhauer stated that it seems strange Caralyn has sent out this mass text message when nothing has been decided by the Board. The cart before the horse. Council Member Poskochil stated the Dietary Manager has given her two week notice. Mary Marteney stated she voluntarily cut her hours down because of the stress. Clerk Curtis will attend the PCAL Board meeting with DC Wiers ON February 28th.

**Review emails re: more updates on NAHTF Housing Owner Occupied Rehab Grant:** Clerk Curtis explained the Housing Rehab Program Income funds cannot be used as a match for a NAHTF housing project as reported by Ashley Larsen from SENDD. The priorities for this funding cycle doesn't include Owner Occupied Rehab. The City's application is still valid but

any matching funds will significantly help with pointing along with the large number of preapplications received but the City will still probably, have to come up with a cash match. In regards to market analysis, Ashley suggests Pawnee City host a public meeting to see if there is enough interest to validate the need for the program. Clerk Curtis suggested contacting all of the people that submitted preapplications encouraging them to attend the public meeting. Council Member Poskochil suggested prioritizing activities suggested in the email in order for Pawnee City's application to be more competitive such as building new houses? Clerk Curtis stated she will contact Ashley Larsen and Jim Warrelmann to see what Pawnee City can point well in an application for new housing units. There is a balance of \$16,000 in the Housing Rehab Program Income account and could probably be used to purchase lots to build on. Council Member Eisenhower stated that the newly formed Housing Committee has suggested building townhomes on some of the empty lots in town. Steve Glenn stated the City should concentrate on building new housing stock available for new employees coming to work in the town. Mr. Glenn suggested rental housing could be built as long as it is affordable. He said it would be beneficial if some of the Housing Rehab funds could be used to help build new houses since the Housing Committee would like to break ground on two or three units this year with eventually building twenty-five houses. Glenn explained the Housing Committee has written a grant to get matching funds to hire a Housing Director for the \$30,000 already received. Mike Habegger researched a list of empty lots in town for probabl building sites. There might be micro-TIF funds available for building houses. Council Member Eisenhower stated that many people can work from home and that could be a selling point for new families to locate in Pawnee City along with the local hospital, school, etc. Clerk Curtis will contact SENDD about possible setting up a town hall meeting.

**Report and update from Council Member Eisenhower: *Review Pool Manager/Asst Mgr & Lifeguard Ads to start running in newspaper with Pool Manager/Asst. Mgr interviews the week of March 15<sup>th</sup> & Lifeguard Interviews the week of April 1<sup>st</sup>*:** Council Member Eisenhower explained last year's pool manager is not coming back because she has started a daycare so they will need a new pool manager and hopefully, last year's assistant manager submits an application. Foreman Cumley stated Doug Daily is starting on replacing the water line to the pool.

**A Report and update from Foreman Cumley: *Items for discussion are: Updates on how the Jet Vac Trailer is working to assist in identifying the material of water lines*:** Foreman Cumley explained the jet vac is working well. The crew was able to complete twelve water line identifications today and at least forty five (in total) have been completed. Hopefully, they will be completed in thirty working days. Sometimes they run into places where they have to cut through tree roots so that takes longer. They are taking pictures and loading them into the GIS program. So far, twenty lead lines have been identified in the process. ***General discussion on things going on in the City;*** Other projects/repairs are behind because the crew is working on identifying lead lines while they have access to the jet vac.

**Review Correspondence From:** Spreadsheet on December 2023 Sales tax of \$27,871.87 with ½% Street Repairs Sales Tax totaling \$6,541.05 and \$1,707.69 being Motor Vehicle Sales Tax; ***2024 League Midwinter Conference February 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>***: FYI. ***Requested letter sent to Woolsoncroft's explaining how the credit would be handled once they decided to have a water***

*meter installed in the property at the old Fire Hall;* Hopefully this answers their questions. ***Review News Release on Affordable Housing Project;*** This was information from the Housing Committee. Next meeting is scheduled for March 8th. Mr. Glenn explained there is a Housing Grant bill in the legislature that Gov. Pillen is making a priority. Discussion was had on the progress the Committee has made and goals for the program. ***Review letter and check received re: MFO Funds;*** The City received a check for \$12,300. ***Review flyer on Pawnee Co. Friends of 4-H Donation Request;*** Council decided not donate to the Friends of 4-H to make it fair to other organizations. Mr. Glenn commented on the email he sent out earlier today in regards to events scheduled for Memorial Day weekend at the Van Horne Park. Mr. Glenn has hired a landscaping company to dress up the park with new trees and flowers which will cost around \$50,000 to \$100,000 to include a sprinkler system. Wilson Electric will install extra lines to get more power available in the amphitheater. On Saturday night of Memorial Day weekend, a band and free barbeque are scheduled while the Southeast Nebraska Community Band will perform Sunday with an ice cream social.

Council Member Poskochil moved to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Zelenka seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all in favor of the motion and meeting adjourned at 8:16 pm.

ATTEST: Kellie A. Wiers, Deputy City Clerk

Donnie Fisher, Council President