

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PAWNEE CITY, HELD ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2024, AT 7:00 P.M. AT CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY 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. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice and in the notice to the Mayor and Council of this meeting. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

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

Council Member Zelenka moved to approve the August 26th, 2024, regular meeting minutes. Council Member Eisenhower 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 **9/10/24 Payroll:** 10,845.45; **Union Bank & Trust**, FWH 3134.20; **NE Dept. of Rev**, SWH 469.42; **John Hancock**, retirement 1616.94; **Black Hills Energy**, pool gas serv 12.69; **Julie D. Bauman**, FY 2024-25 Budget Prep 2550.00; **Ferebee Law Offices**, atty fee retainer 1000.00; **Matt Kuhlmann**, zoning-Sept 800.00; **NPPD**, elec 2557.35; **SENDD**, Admin-Comm Needs Survey 771.68; **Gyhra Const.** Str Drainage Rep 18th & G 14,700.00; **Consumer Reports**, Libr sub 49.00; **Binder Bros.** Str patches 2795.00; **OPPD**, elec-wells 375.02; **Hometown Leasing**, Libr copier pymt, 100.79; **PC Thriftway**, sup 70.56; **OneCall Concepts**, digger locates 37.52; **Quill**, Libr sup 78.67; **H&H Auto**, sup/rep parts 438.07; **Access Systems**, copier/hardware serv 428.92; **R. Kemp**, refund dep 100.00; **Lincoln Winwater Works**, wtr parts 314.65; **Martin Marietta**, Rock-18th & G 1018.24; **Pawnee Co Rural Water Dist.**, Pond wtr hydrants 45.00; **Stallbaumer Lumber**, battery weed eater w/pole saw 477.98; **Futeramic's Clean Wtr Center**, Libr annual serv/rep 206.29; **Gale-Cengage Learning**, library books 3090.00; **Healthfirst Rx**, pool conc-ice cream 35.00; **JEO Consulting Group**, water PER 10,500.00; **Jr Libr Guild**, library materials 2775.67; **Windstream**, ph/int/pool ph 223.40; **Coral's Cleaning**, office cleaning 120.00. Council Member Eisenhower 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 Treasurer's Report of Fund Budgets as of 8/31/2024 & as of 9/10/2024: Council reviewed the Treasurer's Report. Clerk Curtis stated she would be preparing another Treasurer's Report as of 9/24/2024 for the next meeting so everyone can see where they are at with their individual fund budgets before the end of the fiscal year on 9/30/2024.

Recess from regular Council meeting: At this time Council Member Eisenhower moved to recess from the Regular Council Meeting. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried, and regular meeting recessed at 7:13 p.m.

Open Special Hearing to Set Final Tax Request – At 7:13 p.m., Council Member Eisenhower moved to open the Special Hearing to set the Final Tax Request. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. There was no public input at this time. Council member Eisenhower moved to close the Special Hearing at 7:20 p.m. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Reconvene back into regular Council meeting: Council Member Fisher moved to reconvene back into the Regular Council Meeting. Council Member Eisenhower seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried with the regular meeting reconvening at 7:21 p.m.

Pass Resolution #8 approving 2024-2025 Fiscal Year Budget – Council Member Eisenhower moved to pass Resolution #8 approving the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year Budget. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Pass Resolution #8, setting 2024-2025 Property Tax Request be set at \$230,059.06 and Proposed 2024 Tax Rate be set at .638486: Council Member Eisenhower moved to pass Resolution #8, setting 2024-2025 Property Tax Request be set at \$230,059.06 and Proposed 2024 Tax Rate be set at .638486. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

1&6 Year Public Hearing: Council Member Fisher moved to open the 1&6 Year Street Plan Public Hearing at 7:24 p.m. Council Member Eisenhower seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Hear public input: Clerk Curtis stated that no changes had been made to the 1&6 Year Street Plan since the last meeting. Discussion was had on the top three streets from the 1-Year Plan that take priority and are included in the CDBG Public Works Street Grant to be repaired. Those streets include E Street from 14th to 16th Street; 17th Street from D to F Street that goes to the Fairgrounds, with the tube replacement to be done by Gyhra Construction and is not included in the grant application and 15th Street from E to F Street. Foreman Cumley stated that Constructors have started on the street repairs on 10th Street from E to F Street that goes by Palmer's Café and also on E Street from 11th to 12th Street that goes on the East side of the Village Apartments with work to be completed by the end of the week. Clerk Curtis recommended that the City contact School Superintendent Brian Rottinghaus that both of those blocks of street would be closed until the end of the week so he can let his School Bus Drivers know so that they can go around the back of the school to let the kids off instead of trying to turn on those streets to let kids off at the school. Council Member Eisenhower texted Mr. Rottinghaus the heads up about those two streets. There was no public input at this time. **Close Public Hearing:** Council Member Eisenhower moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:28 p.m. Council Member Fisher

seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. **Resolution #9 adopting the 1&6 Year Street Plan:** Council Member Eisenhauer moved to Pass Resolution #9 adopting the 1&6 Year Street Plan. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

CDBG Public Works Grant on Street Improvements: Need Motion to OPEN Public Hearing for the purpose of considering an application, in the amount of \$480,000, to the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Works application to address Street

Improvements: Council Member Eisenhauer moved to open the Public Hearing at 7:29 p.m. for the purpose of considering an application, in the amount of \$480,000, to NDeD for a CDBG Public Works application to address Street Improvements. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. **Consideration of match requirements for CDBG Public Works App for a minimum of \$135,000:** Brittany McCullough with SENDD discussed the grant application process. The scope of improvements for this project will include pulverizing the existing asphalt, incorporating it into the subgrade and re-compacting the street subgrade. Then new 20-foot wide, 6-inch-thick asphalt streets will be constructed to comply with Title 428. Drive culverts will be replaced where necessary to facilitate positive drainage. Project activities include improvements to “E” Street between 14th & 16th Streets (665 feet long), improvements to 17th Street, between “D” Street and “F” Street (660 feet long), and improvements to 15th Street, between “E” Street and “F” Street (330 feet long). Total project costs are estimated to be \$615,000. \$480,000 in CDBG funds are being requested for the following activities: Streets - \$450,000; Construction Management - \$5,000 and General Administration - \$25,000. The remaining funds, estimated to be \$135,000, will be provided in match by the City of Pawnee City. This project will benefit Low to Moderate-Income (LMI) persons on an area basis, which is 55.30% of Pawnee City’s population or 520 people. Clerk Curtis inquired to Ms. McCullough if they had everything to complete the CDBG Public Works application. Ms. McCullough stated that as far as she knows they have everything that they need to submit the application on Friday. Ms. McCullough stated that SENDD should find out if the City was awarded this grant sometime in October. There was no other public input heard at this time. **Motion to Close Public Hearing:** Council Member Eisenhauer moved to Close Public Hearing at 7:32 p.m. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Review/Approve Resolution #11 executing the public works application and any other documents* necessary for the Nebraska Department of Economic Development Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program within the City. Clerk Curtis stated that copies of all of the documents are included in the agenda packet that currently needs signatures on them. Council Member Zelenka moved to approve Resolution #11 executing the public works application and any other documents necessary for the NDeD CDBG program within the City. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

Aaron Sawyer, Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Coordinator: At this time, Mayor Hatfield introduced Aaron Sawyer as the newly hired Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Coordinator that will be assisting in the Housing Development - Vision 2030, the building of 25 new houses by 2030 and also working hand in hand with the City assisting with applying for grants and also helping businesses in town. Mayor

Hatfield stated that Mr. Sawyer does have a little bit of Pawnee City blood in him as his Dad, Jay Sawyer is originally from Pawnee City as was his grandparents Tom and Thelma Sawyer ran Sawyer Clothing here in Pawnee City for many years, so Aaron does have a little background to Pawnee City. Mr. Sawyer stated that he is currently learning about Pawnee City becoming a Creative District, which could assist with community beautification and maybe an entertainment budget for the amphitheater located in VanHorne Park.

Sheriff Braden Lang, Introduce new Deputy Sheriff Justyce Stankoski – City presents Deputy Stankoski with a Certificate of Appreciation for his extraordinary service to Pawnee County: Sheriff Braden Lang stated he had gone and taken photos of the 112 12th Street nuisance property to show the progress that had been made and to get the Council's opinion on if they felt the owner needed to continue cleaning up his property. Sheriff Lang stated that the property owner had actually completely filled up one roll-off dumpster. Deputy Clerk Wiers stated that she had called Seneca Sanitation to pick up the dumpster and Greg had told her that if they wanted it back again they would have to be put back on the waiting list. More discussion followed with the Council requesting Sheriff Lang talk with the property owner again that the City appreciated him filling up the first roll-off dumpster but the City is on the waiting list for another roll-off with the City expecting him to continue filling it up. At this time Sheriff Lang introduced newly hired Deputy Justyce Stankoski.

Mayor Hatfield presented Deputy Stankoski with a Certificate of Appreciation for his extraordinary service to Pawnee County since joining the Sheriff's Department. Discussion was had on the continued arrests that Deputy Stankoski has made in an attempt to get the rising drug problems removed from Pawnee County. Mayor Hatfield stated that he had visited with City Attorney Betsy Samuelson about the nuisance properties at 738 3rd Street and 1145 G Street. City Atty Samuelson had stated that she would get a hold of the property owner at 1145 G Street to inquire about if the asbestos inspection has been completed and get an intended date for demolition. Mayor Hatfield stated that the owners that are renovating the house at 1113 G Street (with the copper roof) have been taking siding off of the nuisance property at 1145 G Street because it is the exact same size that he needs to replace some of the boards on the renovation project. City Atty Samuelson also stated that she would need to have the Health Board meet to go look at Kara Lee's nuisance property at 738 3rd Street. Sheriff Lang stated that it had been a long time since he had been inside that property but Deputy Stankoski had recently been inside of the property when the fire broke out a couple of months ago. Council Member Hatfield added that neither NPPD or the State Electrical Inspector will allow power to be turned back on to this property until the whole house has been rewired. Mayor Hatfield stated he would get some dates that City Atty Samuelson would be in Pawnee City and reach out to members of the Health Board to get a meeting set up. Council Member Eisenhower inquired how the renovations to the evidence room are going. Sheriff Lang stated that Scott Hanna Construction and AHRS Construction had come to look at the evidence room project. Scott Hanna is not interested and AHRS gave a rough estimate of at least \$20,000.

Review/Discuss Applicants for Full-Time City Crew Member to replace Gary Droge Jr: Foreman Cumley stated he had numbered each one of the applications 1-6 in the order that they appeared in the agenda packet to avoid any controversy naming candidates that will be interviewed for the position. After much discussion the Mayor, Council and Foreman Cumley decided that out of the six applicants those chosen to be interviewed included applicants' number one (1), two (2) and three (3). *Set up Special Meeting to*

perform Interviews & make decision on filling the position ASAP: Council discussed dates this week that would work to hold a special meeting to perform the interviewing process with the whole Council so a decision could be made at that meeting instead of waiting until the September 23rd meeting as the applicant would need to put in their two weeks' notice to their current employer. Council Member Eisenhower moved to hold a special meeting on Wednesday, September 11th at 7:00 p.m. at the Cornerstone Building to perform interviews and make a decision to fill the open City Crew position with an alternate date of Friday, September 13th at 7:00 p.m. at the Cornerstone Building. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. Clerk Curtis stated she would be posting the Special Meeting notices right away Tuesday morning around town.

A Report and update from Foreman Cumley: *Discuss updates to various projects going on around town:* ***Sewer Main:*** Foreman Cumley stated that the Sewer Main has been repaired under Hwy 50 with the void under that portion of the highway being huge, approximately three (3) feet tall by four (4) feet long. Cumley stated that Gary Kuhl with Kuhl Trenching will be adjusting his original quote since the whole project took much less time than anticipated and he used some of the City's equipment instead of driving back to Tecumseh to haul his back down. Kuhl's also came back the next morning and assisted the City Crew in pouring concrete since the City was shorthanded. ***Water Leak:*** A water main leak was discovered earlier today on the Southwest part of town, which ended up being a lead service line on an abandoned property that hasn't had water service on since 2011. This lead service line goes under the road to the water main that is on the other side underneath the road, so Foreman Cumley will have to dig up the street and discontinue the service line at the corp. Foreman Cumley stated that because the limited City Crew members were already scheduled to do the two new water taps North of town starting Tuesday morning, they dug up the street, crimped copper over the lead service line to temporarily stop the leak and covered the street back up in hopes to get the line repaired properly by the end of this week. Another water leak in the same area in front of Creative Thoughts on 6th Street was reported to the City Office last Friday. This was in the same area as the water leak a couple of weeks ago that the City Crew repaired. When Foreman Cumley went to look at that area, the water pooled on the street appeared to have been from someone just dumping some water out right there. Then when Foreman Cumley re-checked the reported water leak area Friday night, three hours after he had looked the reported leak area over, it was completely dry and there was no longer any water pooled up on 6th street. ***Sewer Plant Issues:*** Foreman Cumley stated the motor is down again on the vertical screen at the Sewer Plant. The vertical screen keeps throwing an alarm. Foreman Cumley will be calling to get a new motor ordered as they have been running off the bar screen again as he hasn't had time to get that ordered. Foreman Cumley continued that when the vertical screen was down last time and they had to go down into the lift station everyday and clean the bar screen, they've been having to do that same thing again as it won't even run without tripping the alarm system. Council Member Hatfield inquired if it was just a bad motor? Cumley stated they have gone down and inspected the vertical screen because of what happened last time. Cumley continued that there's a giant stainless steel auger that's around 39' long and the bolts backed out of the gear box and it settled down. The bottom is like a noodle strainer basket and then it's just a corkscrew that augers anything man made up out of there. Last time it fell down but was still turning and so then the corkscrew destroyed that strainer basket and everything. That's when the City had to end up rebuilding the whole vertical screen and it cost us over \$70,000 including having to bring in AHR's crane to lift it. Foreman Cumley has a call into WesTech to see if that

motor had any sort of warranty on it at all but hasn't heard back yet. Foreman Cumley stated that they had been going down in the lift station but then their gas monitor had been acting up. He was able to fix it the first time, but the second time when he took it apart there was bad corrosion on the O2 sensor, which led to other issues with the mother board and now the screen isn't working. Clerk Curtis and the whole Council stated that the whole gas monitor just needs to be replaced as they don't want our City Crew Members going in the lift station without it. Foreman Cumley stated that they cannot go down in the lift station and check the bar screen without it. Cumley had received a quote for a new gas monitor for \$1205 and a new thing of bump gas as theirs had expired for \$291. Council Member Eisenhauer moved to approve purchasing a confined space gas detector and gas alert micro-clip calibration blend for a total of \$1496. Council Member Hatfield seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried. **VanHorne Park:** Foreman Cumley stated that they had started working on the backfilling at VanHorne Park as they had hauled in some better dirt to backfill around all of the new sidewalks and low areas. Foreman Cumley stated that the City needs to get eight (8) five (5) inch round fence posts that are eight (8) foot tall to put in as new poles to stop people from driving past the new concrete at VanHorne Park. Council Member Eisenhauer volunteered to go pick them up Tuesday morning. Foreman Cumley reported the new benches have been put together and are ready to be placed where they need to be placed. Foreman Cumley stated he would like to get the benches out of the shop area and get the VanHorne Park finished but with the water leaks, sewer main repair and being shorthanded it's been difficult. Once the new water taps are done and this last water leak is repaired the City Crew will get VanHorne park all finished. Foreman Cumley stated that they plan to get back to street repairs once all of those other items are finished. **New Christmas Lights:** Foreman Cumley stated he had been told that the Chamber of Commerce is planning to purchase new Christmas Lights to put up on the light poles going North on Highway 50 or F Street. Council Member Hatfield stated that he was told that Chamber was holding a special meeting tonight to decide exactly how many new Christmas Lights they would be able to purchase and where they will be located. Council Member Hatfield will report back to the Council once they let him know since NPPD will be putting them up as part of providing community service to the City.

Compare NeRWA Water Rate sheets vs. updated Water Rates, including the add'l costs of Radio Read Meter Replacements, split between the two years: Clerk Curtis stated that Randy Hellbusch with Nebraska Rural Water Association (NeWRA) had emailed her the water rate excel spreadsheets so she was able to make the suggested changes from the last City Council meeting. Clerk Curtis started the rate increase with the suggested 2nd rate of \$37.50 and added half of the \$2.67 for the meter replacement project this year and half next year. As of October 1st billing, the new base rate would be \$38.83 and next year the base rate would increase to \$41.59. to start the rate increases with option two in addition to splitting the total rate increase. **Review/Approve Ordinance #1065 amendment to 3-118 water rates (on First Reading):** Council Member Zelenka moved to approve Ordinance #1065 amendment to 3-118 water rates on first reading. Council Member Eisenhauer seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

A Report and update from Council Member Zelenka: Discuss raising Water Deposit Fee from \$100 to \$175: Council Member Zelenka stated that she had recently spoken to Utility Billing Clerk Kimberly Johnson who suggested that the Water Deposit Fee be increased as the current water deposit amount of \$100 is most generally not enough to

cover the customer's last water billing, especially with the new rate increases being made. **Review/ Approve Ordinance #1066 amendment to 3-102 Water Deposit (First Reading):** Council Member Zelenka moved to approve Ordinance #1066 amendment to 3-102 Water Deposit on first reading. Council Member Eisenhauer seconded the motion. Roll Call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried.

A Report and update from Council Member Eisenhauer: Discuss the 2024 pool season: Council reviewed the 2024 Pool Season Wrap-up. Council Member Eisenhauer stated that she felt they had a really good pool season this year with good Pool Manager Terra Blecha and Assistant Manager Shannon Vlcek. About a month into the pool season Mallory Branek got her pool manager certification and was added on as an assistant manager in addition to her also lifeguarding. Attendance for daily admissions, swim lessons and the three midnight swims were all good this year. The Swim Lessons were held in two different weeks holding the lessons at the beginning of the season working out very well. Eisenhauer stated that the Midnight Swims were well attended with the first one “Ahoy Matey” having 54 swimmers in attendance, the second one “Friday Night Lights (Neon)” hosted as a Fundraiser for the PC Volleyball Team and the last blast of summer “Let’s Fiesta”, held the Saturday before the last day of the pool season having 98 swimmers in attendance! Pool Manager Terra Blecha was able to get a lot of donations once again for the Midnight Swims. The Chamber of Commerce also donated \$300 towards the Midnight Swims, so that really helped too. Council Member Eisenhauer stated they had hired 14 lifeguards this year, so they didn’t have the same issues as they did last year with only six (6) lifeguards. Council Member Eisenhauer stated that there were a couple of days that pool attendance hit the capacity of what the lifeguards could manage. She had told the managers that if they thought there were too many people in the pool to call in another lifeguard to assist them with being on deck. Eisenhauer also informed staff that if they didn’t have enough lifeguards on duty, they could always shut down either the deep or shallow part of the pool. They did have that come up a couple times last year, but not so much this pool season. Eisenhauer continued that there were a few issues with lifeguards on learning how to be accountable with one lifeguard having to come before the City Council. Some of these lifeguards are very young and this would have been their first job, so they are learning on what it takes to become a good employee. The pool inventory looks good this year. Budgeted repairs that need to be done before next pool season include having two tankless electric water heaters installed and ordering a new flume for the Dark Blue Slide in the deep end. Discussion was had that the City Crew will be taking down the sunshades and dropping off the new box of pool noodles at the pool soon; Council Member Eisenhauer will make sure that the freezer has been unplugged and turn off all outside pool lights with Clerk Curtis to check to make sure all pool managers have turned back in their pool keys.

Correspondence: Clerk Curtis inquired if it would work for everyone to meet on Tuesday, October 15th due to Columbus Day being on Monday, October 14th and the City Offices being closed. Council was in agreement to change the first meeting date in October to Tuesday, October 15th. Council Member Zelenka moved to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Fisher seconded the motion. Roll call vote indicated all present voting in favor of the motion, whereupon motion carried, and meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

ATTEST: Tamela S. Curtis, City Clerk

Charlie Hatfield, Mayor