

Broken Bow City Council
Meeting Minutes January 14th, 2025

The Broken Bow City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, January 14th, 2025, in the Broken Bow Municipal Auditorium. Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Custer County Chief, the designated method for giving notice. Advance notice of the meeting, a copy of the agenda, and related council materials were given to the Mayor and all members of the City Council and shared with various media outlets. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

Mayor Rod Sonnichsen called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, with the following Councilmembers present: Russ Smith, Travis Kleeb, Joe Wamsley, and Paul Holland. Absent: None. Mayor Sonnichsen announced the availability of the Open Meetings Act, followed by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Holland to approve the consent agenda items A, B, D, F and G only for January 14, 2025. Said motion includes approval of the Minutes of the December 10, 2024, Council Meeting, Bills to Date, Broken Bow Ambulance Service Official Roster, Broken Bow Volunteer Fire Department Official Roster, and the November 2024 Treasurer's Report. Roll call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

911 Custom \$664.08, AKRS Equipment \$33.46, Aflac \$563.75, \$119.50, Beaver Bearing Co Albion \$41.75, Black Hills Energy \$1,511.43, Bound Tree Medical \$476.81, Broken Bow Airport Authority \$1,083.33, Broken Bow Chamber of Commerce \$7,280.00, Broken Bow Mun Utilities \$6,728.65, \$14,675.90, \$1,272.69, Callaway District Hospital \$29.32, Capital One \$1,670.13, Card Services 4834 \$1,618.31, Card Services 0591 \$1,940.03, Card Services 0609 \$370.74, \$464.12, Carquest of Broken Bow \$441.93, \$38.74, Central Nebraska Bobcat NP \$118.64, Century Link \$206.50, \$86.03, \$89.07, \$136.58, \$84.59, \$337.69, \$100.01, City Flex Benefit Plan \$455.00, City of Broken Bow - Health Insurance - \$26,931.72, \$4,376.25, City of Broken Bow Pension Fund \$2,558.22, \$11,945.52, \$1,816.75, Colonial Insurance \$541.29, \$283.08, \$589.62, Custer County Chief \$552.78, Custer County Treasurer \$19,386.68, Custer Public Power \$50.32, EFTPS Online Payment \$3,107.16, \$8,629.06, \$13,286.18, EZ IT Solutions \$35.54, \$2,765.00, Eakes Office Products \$246.19, Family Heritage \$25.50, First Interstate Bank \$30.00, Fyr-Tek \$1,552.10, Great Plains Communications \$150.00, \$112.95, \$182.76, Grocery Kart \$30.36, Hometown Leasing \$116.65, \$73.57, \$291.12, Island Supply Welding Co. \$103.93, JEO \$1,600.00, \$711.25, Kirkpatrick Cleaning Solutions \$1,330.00, LARM \$576.23, Lyne's \$130.00, Mead Lumber \$838.51, NMC Inc \$67.72, Nebraska Child Support Payment Center \$851.09, Nebraska Pasture Door \$215.07, Nebraska Salt and Grain \$6,581.01, Platte Valley Communications \$1,526.49, \$297.68, \$63.93, Police Chief Assn of Nebraska \$120.00, Powerplan \$4,038.21, R&S Radiator \$69.50, RT Ace, LLC \$328.37, \$14.73, \$577.66, Ranchland Ford \$76.78, S&L Sanitary Service \$58.30, Sara J. Hulinsky \$837.00, Schaper and White Law Firm \$3,000.00, State Income Tax WH NE Online Payment \$4,180.43, Statewide Collection LLC \$15.95, Steve Scott \$80.18, TX Child Support SDU \$410.23, Tracker Systems \$16.99, Trotter's Whoa & Go West BB \$710.58, Verizon Wireless \$320.08, \$129.68, \$249.12, Wenquist Inc. \$329.94, \$1,197.47, Wesco Receivables Corp \$8,830.00, Total \$182,789.26 Bi-Weekly Payroll (12/18/24) \$84,708.85, (12/31/24) \$74,112.56, Grand Total \$341,610.67

In other communication, Fire Chief Dustin Watson gave an update on the Round Valley Road Fire in December. He explained that the fire came within 1.0-1.25 miles of the City of Broken Bow, three

uninhabited structures were lost in the fire, and two rural houses were within thirty yards of the fire. He further noted that 33 Fire Departments provided mutual aid, eighty-two pieces of fire equipment were utilized, and 225 fire fighters all worked together to get the fire under control. He explained that one of the take-aways learned from the fire is to please try to avoid the area during these types of emergencies. With heavy smoke, intense wind, and that many firefighters and pieces of equipment moving around, it becomes a hazard for fire fighters when the public is pulled over on the side of the road. He asked the public to avoid the area as much as possible during emergency situations so the crews can maintain their communication and eliminate hazards.

Chief Watson also spent time going over the 2024 Broken Bow Fire Department statistics. He explained that they had 95 total calls of service, with 60 calls being within the city limits. He said that the rest were for rural Custer County, except for 3 that were for mutual aid outside Custer County. The calls included: 18 fire alarm, 18 vehicle accident, 13 grass fire, 2 for smoke in the area, 9 natural gas leak, 3 for CO2, 5 assisting the public, 5 ambulance assistance, 5 vehicle fire, 2 sprinkler system water leak, 1 electrical pole on fire, 1 tree falling on house, 1 building collapse due to storm, 1 power line on tree, 2 burning without a permit, 1 Weather spotting, 2 tree dump, 1 fuel spill and 4 structure fire. He explained that the two calls for burning without a permit happened within the city limits for burning leaves and railroad ties and he reminded the public that Broken Bow has an Ordinance prohibiting burning within the city limits. He concluded by reminding everyone that if they have any questions, they can contact him by calling the non-emergency number at 308-872-6424.

Mayor Sonnichsen also added that with dry conditions and extreme winds, fires are going to happen, and everyone needs to have an evacuation plan. He also took time to discuss the complex role of the Fire Chief by reviewing city Ordinances and highlighting his authority to investigate all fires in the county and arrest suspected arsonist or anyone impeding the flow of emergency vehicles to the scene of a fire. Councilmember Holland asked if the city has an Emergency Operating plan and was told that the city is in the process of updating the plan. Councilmembers Holland and Smith both concluded by thanking everyone involved that helped with the fire.

Mayor Sonnichsen, Administrator Schmidt, and the Broken Bow Police Department also spent time discussing proposed traffic changes for the city. Administrator Schmidt explained that the changes are being presented as a discussion item to inform the public and allow them time to offer input regarding the proposed changes. Captain Anderson also explained that the proposed changes have been prompted by intersections that are notoriously hard to see around as well as traffic accidents in those areas. The proposed changes include a two-way stop at 6th Ave and South C, a four-way stop at 6th Ave and South D, a two-way stop at 7th and South C, a two-way stop at 7th and South D, a speed zone adjustment on South B Street returning it back to 25 mph, and a four-way stop at North 9th and North H. Library Director, Megan Svoboda spoke in favor of the potential changes around the Library. She explained that there has been a substantial increase in children walking to the library after school as well as an 40% increase in library usage over the last 5 years and that the Library Board wants to keep everyone using the library safe. Mayor Sonnichsen also explained that 10 years ago the block that is now Legacy Apartments was half commercial with approximately four houses on it and that it now consists of forty-two units. He further stated that the city will need to make some traffic adjustments due to these population changes.

In new business, Ethan Harders presented a plan regarding potential upgrades to the Melham Disc Golf Course. He explained that the current course is aging and has homemade baskets that will not catch disks. He stated that the course also does not have tee pads and the layout that discourages participation with

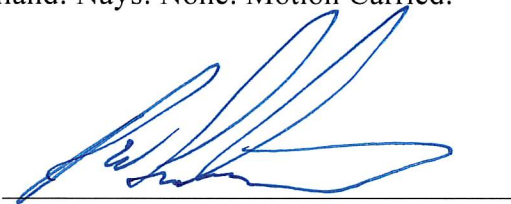
shots that land next to the lake causing a high potential for lost disks. He said that his group is working on a project to upgrade the course with grant money, donations, and partnerships with community members. Their total cost for the upgrade project is around \$15,000 and includes adding nine more holes, new concrete tee pads, replacing the homemade tee baskets with PDGA approved commercial baskets, and replacing all signage. He also explained that the course will utilize the current footprint of the course and will stay away from the walking path where the Story Walk will be located. He explained that these upgrades will significantly improve course participation and will also enable them to host tournaments which in turn will draw more tourism to Broken Bow. Administrator Schmidt explained that the City is prohibited from donating money to the project but that he could see partnering with them regarding shared labor because the course is already in an existing park.

During public comments, Mona Weatherly explained that this meeting was her last official evening covering city council meetings as she works toward retiring in October 2026. She explained that Mary Jean will be taking her place at future city council meetings. She said she appreciated the relationship that she had with the city council, and she looks forward seeing that relationship continue with Mary Jean.

During Mayor and council comments, Mayor Sonnichsen discussed Ordinance 2015-8 as a reminder to the public. He explained that due to recent problems, the Ordinance is getting a renewed enforcement emphasis. The current Ordinance states that it is unlawful to park trailers that are pulled behind vehicles, detached from a vehicle on a city street for more than 8 hours. He further explained that a temporary permit can be obtained from the City for contractors that need to park an unattached trailer for more than 8 hours that must be posted on the trailer.

Administrator Schmidt also echoed the appreciation previously expressed at the meeting to everyone involved in helping with the Round Valley Road Fire. He wanted to express a special thank you to the Fire Department Auxiliary for staying up all night to keep hundreds of fire fighters well fed with hot meals.

Moved by Holland, seconded by Kleeb, to adjourn the City Council meeting at 6:48 pm. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion Carried.



Rodney W. Sonnichsen, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jennifer Waterhouse, City Clerk

