

Broken Bow City Council

Meeting Minutes March 3rd, 2025

The Broken Bow City Council met in regular session on Monday, March 3rd, 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, Joe Wamsley, and Paul Holland. Absent: Travis Kleeb. Mayor Sonnichsen announced the availability of the Open Meetings Act, followed by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moved by Holland, seconded by Wamsley, to excuse the absence of councilmember Kleeb. Roll call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Wamsley to approve the consent agenda for March 3, 2025. Said motion includes approval of the Minutes of the February 11, 2025, Council Meeting and Bills to Date. Roll call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Aflac \$436.46, \$119.50, \$162.27, \$436.46, \$119.50, Black Hills Energy \$1,861.77, Bob's Truck Repair \$44.70, Bound Tree Medical \$2,860.11, Carquest of Broken Bow \$349.21, \$16.82, City Flex Benefit Plan \$455.00, \$455.00, City of Broken Bow - Health Insurance \$4,377.59, \$4,377.59, City of Broken Bow Pension Fund \$2,684.87, \$11,339.24, \$1,537.36, \$250.00, \$2,684.87, \$12,139.04, \$1,606.54, Colonial Insurance \$520.88, \$280.64, \$880.75, \$520.88, \$280.64, Culligan Water Conditioning \$51.00, Custer County Chief \$212.60, \$268.71, EFTPS Online Payment \$3,007.32, \$8,006.11, \$12,859.20, \$3,239.56, \$9,166.35, \$13,852.50, EZ IT Solutions \$398.31, \$196.99, Eakes Office Products \$169.07, \$2,449.93, Eakes Office Solutions \$99.55, Family Heritage \$25.50, \$25.50, Great Plains Communications \$185.00, Grocery Kart \$15.71, Ingram Library Services \$1,902.34, JEO \$4,445.75, Kirkpatrick Cleaning Solutions \$16.46, Library Journal \$99.00, Mother Earth News \$39.95, NMC Inc \$605.99, National Geographic \$59.00, Nebraska Child Support Payment Center \$851.09, \$851.09, Nebraska Library Association \$210.00, Pareto Health \$76.00, Peak Software System \$500.00, Platte Valley Communications \$95.00, Presto X Company \$72.49, RT Ace, LLC \$15.98, Ranchland Ford \$176.93, \$238.06, \$508.31, SEEKO, LLC \$366.57, School Library Journal \$169.00, Science News \$99.00, South Loup Community Pharmacy \$91.85, State Income Tax WH NE Online Payment \$3,691.05, \$4,093.10, Statewide Collection LLC \$15.95, \$174.47, Stryker \$632.00, TX Child Support SDU \$401.00, \$401.00, The Atlantic \$79.95, Time \$15.00, Trotter Service \$2,381.28, Trotter Whoa & Go West BB \$1,057.67, \$48.93, \$347.54, Total - \$129,855.40 Bi-Weekly Payroll (2/12/25) \$72,512.06, Grand Total \$202,367.46.

In new business, moved by Holland, seconded by Smith, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Broken Bow and Brookestone View for handi bus utilization in the event of an emergency. During discussion Roni Boeser, Administrator of Brookestone View, explained that they do not have a wheelchair accessible bus and that the MOU will allow them to use the city handi bus to evacuate residents in the event of a disaster. Roll Call Vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Holland to approve Highway 2 Sanitary Sewer Extension 15th to Webster Change Order #1 with JEO Consulting Group Inc., moving the “substantial completion” milestone date from December 1, 2024, to March 1, 2025. Roll Call Vote: Voting aye: Smith and Holland. Abstain: Wamsley. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Holland, seconded by Smith to approve Highway 2 Sanitary Sewer Extension 15th to Webster Change Order #2 with JEO Consulting Group Inc., for adding 8” by 8’ wide concrete with rebar at 24” O.C. to protect sewer main (80 linear feet), in the amount of \$9,280.00. Roll Call Vote: Voting aye: Smith and Holland. Abstain: Wamsley. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Holland, seconded by Wamsley, to approve Resolution 2025-01, Approving and authorizing the City Administrator to send notice to Custer County of the City of Broken Bow’s desire to terminate the current Interlocal Cooperative Agreement for the Custer County Communications Center between Custer County and the City of Broken Bow, Nebraska. During discussion, Mayor Sonnichsen explained that this agreement has been in place since 2000 and to renegotiate the agreement, the city must give notice to terminate which will start the renegotiation process. He also added that this is a one-year notice. Roll Call Vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Wamsley, seconded by Smith to open a public hearing at 6:09 pm regarding Ordinance 1295, providing for the placement of a designated stop sign located on the north side of the S. 8th Avenue and S. D St. intersection in the City of Broken Bow. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried. Discussion was held. Mayor Sonnichsen explained that all the Ordinances being discussed at the meeting are recommended based on traffic and that council ran out of time last year addressing the issues. He also advised that council not waive the readings which would allow for public transparency and give Councilmembers time to research each additional options. He explained that Ordinance 1295 is for the placement of a stop sign by Brunning Bank where truck traffic is going past the city square and presenting safety concerns.

Councilmember Smith explained that this specific stop sign would cause the truck traffic to slow down and will keep the pedestrians safe. Captain Anderson of BBPD explained that they have had complaints regarding trucks speeding through and not paying attention to pedestrian traffic. Administrator Schmidt stated that this request comes from the Park Board and that the only citizen comment he has received was centered around if it should be a four way stop instead so that the north bound traffic would be forced to stop as well. He pointed out that although Ordinance 1295 is not currently written to include a four-way stop, it could be rewritten to include that. Moved by Holland, seconded by Smith to close public hearing at 6:14 pm. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Wamsley, to not waive the three readings of Ordinance 1295, providing for the placement of a designated stop sign located on the north side of the So. 8th Ave and S. D St. intersection in the City of Broken Bow. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

The first reading of Ordinance 1295 was performed by City Clerk Jennifer Waterhouse.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Wamsley to open a public hearing at 6:16 pm regarding Ordinance 1296, providing for the placement of stop signs located at S. 6th Ave and S. C St., S. 7th Ave and S. C St., a four way stop at the S. 6th Ave and S. D St. intersection and a four way stop at S. 7th Ave and S. D St. intersection in the City of Broken Bow. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried. Discussion was held. Mayor Sonnichsen explained that the two intersections addressed in the Ordinance on South C Street have been suggested due to population growth in the area and traffic congestion. He noted that the area went from eight households previously to forty-two currently and it has resulted in many close calls facilitating the need to address the new traffic issues. He also explained that the two four way stop intersections proposed on South D Street are on the east and west sides of the library and that citizen foot traffic to the library has also been a big concern over the last 6-8 years as library programming usage has increased drastically. Library Director Megan Svoboda also confirmed that 300-400 children take part in the summer reading programs each year and children are also walking to the library after school daily.

Corey Clay, a resident at 911 Nome Street and former resident of South D and 6th Street, spoke in favor of the additional stop signs stating that he personally experienced driver's driving too fast, traffic accidents and near misses from people not paying attention. Captain Anderson also added that BBPD agrees with all the changes outlined in the proposed Ordinance because the department has had many traffic accidents at each intersection and some of the intersections are difficult to see around. Moved by Holland, seconded by Wamsley to close public hearing at 6:24 pm. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Wamsley, to not waive the three readings of Ordinance 1296, providing for the placement of stop signs located at S. 6th Ave and S. C St., S. 7th Ave and S. C St., a four way stop at the S. 6th Ave and S. D St. intersection and a four way stop at S. 7th Ave and S. D St. intersection in the City of Broken Bow. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

The first reading of Ordinance 1296 was performed by City Clerk Jennifer Waterhouse.

Moved by Wamsley, seconded by Holland to open a public hearing at 6:26 pm regarding Ordinance 1297, providing for the placement of stop signs at the N. 9th Ave and N, H St. intersection creating a four way stop in the City of Broken Bow. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried. Discussion was held. Mayor Sonnichsen started by reading some concerns about this Ordinance given to him by Councilmember Kleeb who was unable to be at the meeting. Kleeb's concern was centered around Nebraska DOT's Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices and suggested that alternative considerations to promote safety should be explored for this intersection. Mayor Sonnichsen stated that council and administration will investigate the issue in greater detail.

Mayor Sonnichsen also explained that the intersection also has some vision issues at the intersection. Captain Anderson stated that this intersection has seen many near misses because the bushes along the property to the north of the intersection and vehicles parked to the south of the intersection make it hard to see around the corners. He explained that many drivers must roll into the intersection to be

able to see past the problem areas and that getting kids safely across this intersection is a major concern.

Andrew Lacy from KBear 92.3, stated that their station is close to this intersection, and it is his opinion that something needs to be done because the visibility is not great and there are a lot of cars and traffic in the area. He further expressed his concern over the safety of children and school groups that must cross the intersection daily. Moved by Holland, seconded by Wamsley to close public hearing at 6:33 pm. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Wamsley, seconded by Smith, to not waive the three readings of Ordinance 1297, providing for the placement of stop signs at the N. 9th Ave and N. H St. intersection creating a four way stop in the City of Broken Bow. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

The first reading of Ordinance 1297 was performed by City Clerk Jennifer Waterhouse.

Moved by Wamsley, seconded by Holland to open a public hearing at 6:35 pm regarding Ordinance 1298, providing for the speed limit change to 25 mph for all of S. B St. west of S. 10th Ave in the City of Broken Bow. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried. Discussion was held. Mayor Sonnichsen said that this change would return the speed limit back to the 25 mph state standard for residential streets and is recommended by Chief Scott. Captain Anderson said that the speed was previously lowered due to construction at the city square and that it never got returned to 25 mph. Moved by Holland, seconded by Wamsley to close public hearing at 6:38 pm. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Holland, to not waive the three readings of Ordinance 1298, providing for the speed limit change to 25 mph for all of S. B St. west of S. 10th Ave in the City of Broken Bow. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

The first reading of Ordinance 1298 was performed by City Clerk Jennifer Waterhouse.

During public comments, Administrator Schmidt said that in the early morning hours on February 20th, the power plant exploded, and it is currently completely shut down. He stated that Broken Bow will not be generating power for a long time but still hopes to in the future. He explained that preliminary data shows that the probable root cause to the incident was a crank case explosion inside of engine #5. He said that the massive mechanical failure inside the engine caused a chain of events, resulting in a valve cover blowing off and ending up in the electrical bus, causing a massive short and the subsequent fire. He expressed his thanks to the city electrical department and all the electrical crews that helped the City of Broken Bow respond to the event, all first responders and city personnel. He concluded by thanking the citizens for being understanding while the power was restored during those 33 hours.

Fire Chief Watson also gave an update on the grass fires that they have been monitoring since the initial call on Monday night. He thanked the City for opening the armory to house the fire fighters that came to provide mutual aid. Mayor Sonnichsen also thanked Chief Watson for his outstanding job in such demanding situations.

During Mayor and council comments, Councilmember Holland also thanked the Police Department and EMS for doing welfare checks during the freezing weather and power outages. He also thanked the Public Information Officer for relaying information to the public during the difficult last few weeks. Mayor Sonnichsen finished with a special thank you to the media for all the ways that they keep citizens updated during these events.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Holland, to adjourn the City Council meeting at 6:50 pm. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion Carried.



Rodney W. Sonnichsen, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jennifer Waterhouse, City Clerk

