

MINUTES OF THE PONCA CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD 2.27.25

Mayor DJ Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM on Thursday, February 27th, 2025, and referenced the meeting recording process, optional sign-in sheet and Open Meetings Law posting. All those present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmembers Ron Mahler, Kristie Henjes, Josh Blatchford, Eric Bevelhymmer, Dillon Rickett, and Marcus Burki were present for Roll Call. Prior notice of the meeting and agenda were provided to the Mayor and all Members of the Governing Body. Notice of the meeting was distributed and posted at the Ponca City Hall, US Post Office-Ponca, Ponca City Library, Bank of Dixon County, Keller's Pharmacy, and the Dixon County Courthouse.

Mayor Communications

None.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Smith stated to the Governing Body that the City Clerk-Finance Directors' February Claims & Accounts Payable Report, Fund Balance/Treasurers Report, City Budget Cash Report, General Journal Entry Report, Bank Statements and Check Register Report, and NPAIT statement were included in the Council Meeting Package sent out. Motion was made by Rickett and a second by Blatchford to approve the Consent Agenda. The following Councilmembers voting "YEA": Mahler, Henjes, Burki, Blatchford, Rickett, Councilmembers voting "NAY": None. Abstaining: Bevelhymmer. Motion passed 5-0.

Proclamations, Presentations. Appointments, Affirmations & Introductions

Reports & Updates

Travis Olander gave the City Administrator's Update. He has finished submitting our gas paperwork to the state, finished office updates. We have been in contact with a company from Hastings NE, for cellular ERTS, for the gas meter replacement project. He is hoping to have more information to present at the March Meeting. Jaime, Steve, Bill and himself met at the annex building with Dixon County to discuss emergency management. Jaime, DJ, and he had also met with NENEDD on Monday to discuss the CCCFF Grant and community center. Jaime, Ashley, and Steve went with Veenstra and Kimm to view the progress of the water tower at Maguire Iron in Sioux Falls. He also has the resolution for the car show ready when PACC is ready to submit to the state.

Travis Olander gave the Street Report. Union street had core samples taken this week. The final plans were sent to council members via email and bids will be discussed later in the meeting. He pushed snow and salted, burned the tree pile at the yard and started street sweeping this month. He will clean up the gravel that got pushed into the post office lawn.

Travis Olander updated the council on the water/sewer department. Steve had pushed snow and helped residents with frozen pipes. He will be sending out information this fall with utility bills on troubleshooting and preventing frozen pipes. He will be in Kearney from March 10th to March 13th. The generator at the well will have maintenance on it in March. Ashley Karrer attended water school and passed. Her certification will be sent in with claims this month.

Bill Persinger gave a report on the Police Department. His last day with the City of Ponca is 2/28/2025.

The library board did not meet due to the cold weather.

The Volunteer Fire and Rescue submitted their report.

City Attorney's Report

Matt Munderloh was not in attendance.

Public Hearings

None.

Unfinished Business

There has been no progress or updates on the status of either the Dixon County Courthouse or Community Center.

Agenda Comments/Speakers

None.

New Business

Schweers called Kyle Overturf to discuss the September 30th, 2024, Audit. He states that in the beginning of the Fiscal Year (10/1/2023) Jaime was still cleaning up issues with the conversion and previous administration. Those have all since been addressed and rectified. The comments for the current audit suggest closing credit cards daily and a more detailed treasurers report. He also recommended having 3-4 months cash reserves on hand. Currently the City has 1-2 months on hand due to the 2 ambulance purchases and projects that were finished during the same calendar month. He can give an Unmodified Opinion to the state. He has no concerns about the financial accountability and stability of the City. No Action Taken.

Bill Persinger submitted a formal letter of resignation. His last day will be February 28th, 2025. A motion to accept the letter of resignation was made by Bevelhymer and seconded by Blatchford. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Rickett, Henjes, Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Burki, Mahler. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 6-0.

Mayor Smith spoke about an opportunity that was told to him by the Sheriff's department. It was called COPS Grant. It would help to cover the salary of a new police officer. The deadline has since passed, but Sarah will be in touch if she hears of any other grant opportunities. Jaime would be willing to help apply for grants as well. No action taken.

The Fire Department reviewed the bids submitted at the last meeting. They would like to re-advertise. A motion to reject the bids submitted on January 27th for the Polaris Ranger was made by Mahler and seconded by Bevelhymer. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Burki, Mahler, Henjes, Rickett. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 6-0

The Fire Department requested that Polaris Ranger bids be submitted to the City Clerk by March 31st by 10AM to be opened at the council meeting that evening. A motion to set the bid date for March 31st at 10 AM was made by Bevelhymer and seconded by Mahler. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Burki, Henjes, Mahler, Rickett. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 6-0.

Chad with Veenstra and Kimm had emailed Travis the final specs for the Union Street Project this summer. He is suggesting a bid opening date of March 27th at 10AM and the bids will be ready for review by the council for the March 31st meeting. A motion to set the bid date for March 27th at 10AM for the Union Street Project was made by Blatchford and seconded by Rickett. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Blatchford, Burki, Henjes, Mahler, Rickett, Bevelhymer. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 6-0.

Schweers presented Ordinance 486, continuation of 1.5% Sales Tax. This was voted on and approved during the general election on November 5th, 2024. A motion to waive the three-reading rule was made by Bevelhymer and seconded by Burki. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Burki, Henjes, Mahler, Rickett, Bevelhymer, Blatchford. Voting "NAY": none. A motion to approve Ordinance 486, a continuation of 1.5% Sales Tax was made by Rickett and seconded by Blatchford. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Henjes, Mahler, Rickett, Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Burki. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 6-0.

Olander presented the 2025 contract with Black Hills. Matt Munderloh looked it over when it was received and it is exactly the same as last year's contract, with the 3% increase that is added every year. A motion to approve the 2025 contract with Black Hills was made by Bevelhymer and seconded by Blatchford. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Blatchford, Burki, Henjes, Mahler, Rickett, Bevelhymer. Councilmembers voting "NAY" none. Motion passed 6-0.

Schweers had discussed that Steve Harris is requesting to be paid the balance owed to them in full from the work completed on the downtown block this fall. The pay estimate was voted on to be made in 4 installments due to the cost of the pay estimate. The city did not have the funds to cover it until reimbursed from the SRF fund. The city has since been reimbursed and has the funds to fulfill the request. A motion to pay Steve Harris the balance owed from the Pay Estimate was made by Mahler and seconded by Rickett. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Burki, Henjes, Mahler, Rickett, Bevelhymer, Blatchford. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 6-0.

Schweers presented a plan for updating the streetlights to all LED lights. Zach with NNPPD had been contact with her and states that there are 34 lights that are still the old technology and orange in color. With the changing of the bulbs, the city would save roughly 1800 dollars over a year. There is no cost for them to be changed out, just the monthly bill for the lights. She will be in contact with NNPPD and get the bulbs ordered. No Action Taken.

Olander presented to the Council a plan to fulfill the Utility Ordinance that was passed in 2024 for hydrants. There are roughly 17 hydrants that are not charged a monthly service charge. There will be a letter going to the residents informing them of their options and explaining that according to our Ordinance, all water service lines will be charged the monthly base fee regardless of usage. No Action Taken.

Olander presented bids from 2 companies for spraying services for the City for 2025. They are lower this year due to the water tower, ball fields, and friendship park having construction being completed. A motion to accept the lowest bid from Jay-Lan in the amount of \$8,818.26 was made by Blatchford and seconded by Henjes. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Mahler, Henjes, Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Burki. Voting "NAY": Rickett. Motion passed 5-1.

Schweers presented the cost for dental coverage with LIGHT. There was discussion about who would want to sign up for the benefit and how it would look with the cost of premiums this year. It will be discussed and ready to be voted on by the April 2025 Meeting. No Action Taken.

Mayor Smtih discussed the meeting with NENEDD on Monday. They are needing the City to participate in an anonymous income survey. It is not cost to the City. This is needed to apply for grants as many of them are income driven. It would be conducted via mail by NENEDD, and they will be random. Once received NENEDD will gather the data and see where our income level is as a city. A motion to allow NENEDD to conduct an income survey was made by Blatchford and seconded by Bevelhymer. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Rickett, Bevelhymer, Blatchford, Burki, Henjes, Mahler, Rickett. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 6-0.

Governing Body Comments and Correspondence

Mayor Smith asked if there were any future agenda requests for consideration or administrative action. Next Ponca City Governing Body Meeting scheduled for Monday, March 31st at 7:00PM.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mahler at 8:12 PM and seconded by Burki. Councilmembers voting "YEA": Mahler, Rickett, Henjes, Blatchford, Burki, Bevelhymer. Voting "NAY": none. Motion passed 6-0.

Mayor; DJ Smith

City Clerk- Finance Director; Jaime Schweers