

Regular Council Meeting
August 11, 2025

1. **Mayor Amanda Milne called the regular Council meeting to order at 7:00 pm.** Present were Council members Justin Lohr, Dara Carmichael, Larry Finley, Kale Dankenbring, and Robert (Bud) Erskin. Also present were City Superintendent Dan Blair, Interim City Clerk Lila Whitmore, City Treasurer Jennifer Blair, and Attorney Lauren Reyelts.
2. **Visitors/Audience:** Sheree Downs, Robert Grace, Scott Lesuer, Makeesha Lesuer
3. **Minutes** from the July 28 Council meeting were distributed and read. A motion was made by Justin and seconded by Kale to approve the minutes as written. Motion passed.
4. A motion was made by Dara and seconded by Larry to approve the following **consent agenda**: Permission for Clerk to pay insurance at time of billing; Permission for Clerk to pay utilities at time of billing; Permission for Clerk to pay utility incentives before the 25th of the month; Permission for Clerk to pay theater bills when due; Permission for Clerk to pay Payment Service Network bills when due; Permission for Clerk to pay City Attorney bills when due. Motion passed.
5. **Sheriff Report:** none
6. **New Business:**
 - John Guthmiller, Kristi Guthmiller, and David Guthmiller were present to discuss the recent city code violation notices that Ross Manufacturing received regarding the shipping container they are using for storage. John read a statement and requested the Council consider a vote to amend the ordinance to allow shipping containers in commercially zoned properties or to give them a variance to allow additional time to come up with an alternate storage solution for their business. After discussion a motion was made by Kale and seconded by Larry to give Ross Manufacturing an extension of time of one year to address the violation. Motion passed. The Council asked Mr. Guthmiller to attend one of the two Council meetings in August 2026 to follow up.
 - ❖ John, Kristi, and David Guthmiller left the meeting.
 - Lacey Grogan – Mrs. Grogan had asked to be on the agenda but did not attend the meeting.
 - A motion was made by Larry and seconded by Kale to approve the following building permits: Debbie and Robert Grace – 420 E. Spencer, curb and gutter concrete; Larry Hobbs – 500 S. Benton, concrete pad. Motion passed.
 - A motion was made by Kale and seconded by Dara to approve Ordinance No. 653: AN ORDINANCE REGULATING OFFENSES WITHIN THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF ST. FRANCIS, KANSAS; INCORPORATING BY REFERENCE THE “UNIFORM PUBLIC OFFENSE CODE FOR KANSAS CITIES”, EDITION OF 2025, AMENDING SECTION 101 OF ARTICLE 11 OF THE 2015 CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. FRANCIS, KANSAS, AND REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 649. Bud – yes; Kale – yes; Larry – yes; Dara- yes; Justin – yes. Motion passed.
 - A motion was made by Kale and seconded by Larry to approve Ordinance No. 654: AN ORDINANCE REGULATING TRAFFIC WITHIN THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF ST. FRANCIS, KANSAS; INCORPORATING BY REFERENCE THE “STANDARD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE FOR KANSAS CITIES”, EDITION OF 2025, AMENDING SECTION 101 OF ARTICLE 14 OF THE 2015 CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. FRANCIS, KANSAS, AND REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 650. Bud – yes; Kale – yes; Larry – yes; Dara – yes; Justin – yes. Motion passed.
7. **Old Business:**
 - a. **Solar Panels:** Darren Prince, KMEA Manager of Regulatory & Rates, joined the meeting via phone. A hardcopy version of a slideshow presentation was shared. Mr. Prince stated that there are Kansas laws regarding distributed generation, parallel generation, and net metering and the City needs to have a policy in place. The laws regarding parallel generation apply to all utilities. Those regarding net metering only apply to investor-owned utilities. He explained in detail the differences between parallel generation and net metering. KMU has created a Distributed Generation Tool Kit which provides guidance on creating a distributed generation policy and includes the interconnection standards and ordinance examples. KMEA recommends the City adopt a parallel generation rate ordinance for

distributed generation customers which also adopts the Interconnection Standards. This is required per state statute. The City may choose to adopt a net metering policy as well, but it is not required. With no further questions from the Council *Mr. Prince left the meeting*. Robert Grace was asked to share his thoughts on the topic. He explained why he believes net metering is the better option. Jen will put together information for the next meeting showing the actual costs of power to the City. Lauren will review the ordinance and policies from the KMU documents, modify them to fit the City, and bring those to the next meeting as well. A rate can then be determined by the Council and put into the ordinance, which will then be sent to KMEA/KMU for review. The ordinance can then be adopted at the first meeting in September.

❖ *Robert Grace left the meeting.*

- b. **Frances Street Water Main:** Dan and Scott Lesuer provided details regarding the replacement of the water main on Frances street. Customers can expect to be without water for approximately an hour at the most while water is switched to the new line. They expect the work to take about a week not including the concrete work. The total cost of the project will be \$58,740.21 which includes the concrete work. A motion was made by Justin and seconded by Kale to approve the work to be done and to be paid for out of Capital Improvement. Motion passed.

❖ *Scott and Makeesha Lesuer left the meeting.*

- c. **Property Cleanup:** Dan shared pictures of three properties, one that is now in compliance and two additional that need to receive property cleanup notices.
- d. **Projects Pending:** Signs with the City's phone number will be put on the Empire Motel property. Crosswalks should be painted this week or next and signs will be put up at the intersection of Jackson and Benton. Attorney Baxter will be on the agenda for the next meeting to discuss the access road.
- e. **Streets Project:** Amanda, Justin, and Dan met with Teddy Weber with Weber Road Solutions. They will be sending him a list of the streets the City wants done along with width measurements and he will provide a quote to come out and collect core samples and then provide recommendations.

8. **Visitors:** none

9. **Theater Report:** Board minutes were shared.

10. **Pool Report:** The last full day was August 9. The pool will be open for aquacise and laps through August 29. The pool will be open August 16-17 and 23-24 for open swim from 1 to 5.

11. **Superintendent Report:**

- Dan has ordered a salt/sand spreader in the amount of \$5,374.99. A motion was made by Kale and seconded by Justin to approve to pay this out of cycle out of Equipment Reserve. Motion passed.
- The recent heavy rains caused the lift station to get close to overflowing. It also caused some of the recent street patching to wash out.
- Dan clarified that the crosswalks being painted are on the west and east sides of the grade school and in front of the high school at the stoplight. They will also repaint the crosswalk on Washington street. There was discussion about putting crosswalks across Spencer Street at the intersections of Frances and Denison.
- Tires for the trash truck have been ordered.
- A motion was made by Justin and seconded by Larry to accept and file the Superintendent report. Motion passed.

12. **Attorney Report:**

- There was discussion regarding the Idea-Tek proposal and Ordinance 655. The pole rental agreement was added as Subparagraph D of section 4 Compensation to the City. Justin suggested a pole audit be completed by an engineer to confirm the stability of the poles. There was discussion about feedback received from Atwood regarding the placement of Idea-Tek's equipment in the right of way. The Council agreed they would like to speak with the project manager about these topics at the next Council meeting before approving the ordinance. Lauren will contact Idea-Tek.
- Lauren updated the Council on Municipal Court. One property cleanup case will be dismissed due to health issues of the owner. The process will be restarted at a later date.

- The advertisement for the sale of the Empire Motel property will be run for three weeks in the St. Francis Herald to meet the legal notice requirements.
- Lauren and Amanda received a letter from USPS regarding the storage container at the Post Office. The storage container belongs to the Postal Service and as a Federal entity they are exempt from local ordinances.
- A motion was made by Kale and seconded by Dara to accept and file the Attorney Report. Motion passed.

13. Treasurer Report: none

14. Clerk Report:

- Lila let the Council know that the statute for the capital improvement fund states that these funds may be used to finance any public improvement need including the repair, restoration, and rehabilitation of existing public facilities.
- The City received a donation of \$175 to be used for trees.
- Lila shared a narrative she has written which describes the street improvements that have been completed since 2016 along with the information received from Miller & Associates regarding future improvements. She asked the Council to provide feedback before Friday, and it will then be posted on the City's website.
- A motion was made by Kale and seconded by Justin to approve paying the AirMed Memberships out of cycle when the invoice is received. Motion passed.
- Lila spoke to Corina Cox with NWKP&DC regarding CDBG Community Facility grants that may be available for updating the City Parks. The LMI (Low to Moderate Income) survey completed in 2021 is no longer valid, but the latest Census shows the City is still considered to be 51.8% LMI. CDBG grants required 51%. Corina indicated that because the Roadside Parks are geared more towards tourists the project would be more likely to receive funding if it included all City parks so that it could be shown to benefit everyone in the community. Park improvements can be for anything park related including trees, landscaping, playground equipment and restrooms. Matching funds of up to 20%, depending on the funding being requested, would be required and the City would need to pay upfront costs for preliminary engineering reports, asbestos inspection for any buildings being remodeled or removed, and public hearing costs.
- Corina also indicated that the criteria for CDBG funding for street improvements has changed. The City can now apply for grant funding for smaller projects consisting of a few blocks if at least 51% of the residents who live on the streets being improved are LMI.
- A motion was made by Larry and seconded by Kale to accept and file the Clerk report. Motion passed.

15. Council comments: **Bud** – Asked if it would be possible to get a sound system for the Council chambers so that the meetings could be better heard. Lila will ask on the clerk link what type of equipment other communities use for this. **Kale** – none. **Larry** – reminded to Council of the Concert in the Park on September 6. **Dara** – none. **Justin** – none.

16. Mayor Comments: none

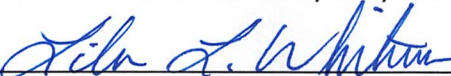
❖ *Attorney Reyelts left the meeting.*

17. All bills on Ordinance #1101 were reviewed. The total amount of claims on Ordinance #1101 is \$288,756.25. A motion was made by Kale and seconded by Justin to approve payment of the bills on Ordinance #1101. Motion passed.

❖ *Sheree Downs left the meeting.*

18. Executive Session: A motion was made by Larry and seconded by Kale for all those present to recess into executive session for the non-elected personnel exception to discuss the City Clerk position/applicants, the open meeting to resume at 9:23. Motion passed. The open meeting resumed. No decisions were made.

19. Adjournment: It was moved by Larry and seconded by Kale to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.



Interim City Clerk