

City of Smith Center
City Council Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2025

I. Call to Order

Mayor Bryce Wiehl opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, January 13, 2025, at the Srader Building.

Attendance

Council Members: Don Wick, Ty Wallgren, Chris Cole, and Tracy Kingsbury.
Absent: Everett Mansholt.

Others: Tabitha Owen, Jamie Marshall, Kim Maudlin, Rick Hileman, Melissa Colby, Kim Phelps, Sherry Weatherholt, Chris Rowe, Brady Peterson, and Jill Conaway.

II. 23-CVR-012 Hearing

Mayor Wiehl opened the hearing to solicit citizen input regarding the closeout of Grant Agreement 23-CVR-012. Corina Cox, NWKS Planning and Development, explained the grant; and that the majority of businesses were either not eligible or did not apply. Sherry Weatherholt shared that she had applied but did not move forward as the process was complicated and time extensive. With no other comments or questions, a motion was made by Cole, seconded by Wick, to close the 23-CVR-012 grant. Motion carried.

III. Consent Agenda

Following review, a motion was made by Wick, seconded by Kingsbury, to approve the December 23, 2024, minutes, vouchers, and receipts. Motion carried.

IV. Guest

Chris Rowe stated that he respects the council working to build a good disposition policy, however, he would like to move forward with an offer on the city owned property on West Court. Rowe presented a purchase agreement to the council. Rowe explained that he would like to purchase the lot to use with the building he owns to the west.

Mayor Wiehl announced a recess of the regular meeting to conduct the condemnation hearing scheduled to be held at 6:15 p.m.

V. Condemnation Hearing

Mayor Wiehl opened the condemnation hearing for properties located at 216 North Main Street and 604 East Kansas Avenue in Smith Center. Attorney Owen reviewed the hearing procedures and property options. All notifications and publications were completed, with no response in regard to 216 North Main Street. Hileman reported his determination that the properties are in a condition considered unsafe/dangerous. Following detailed discussion, the consensus of

the council was to contact the owners with the city's intent to demolish, allowing 30 days from notification to bring the properties into compliance.

VI. Hearing to Vacate Public Alley

A petition to vacate the east/west public alley between lot sections 1-7; 17-23 (west) and 8-16; 24-32 (east) of block 1, Dutton's Addition, was presented to the council. Discussion was held on the properties adjacent to the alleyway. There were no petitioners in attendance. The petition has signatures from four of the property owners, but not from all owners adjacent to the alleyway. As there are other property owners affected, a motion was made by Wick, seconded by Kingsbury, to deny the petition to vacate said alley at this time. Motion carried.

VII. Executive Session

A motion was made by Wick, seconded by Kingsbury, to enter into an executive session for ten minutes, legal advice and personnel exception matters of non-elected personnel, with Owen and Conaway in attendance. Motion carried. In session at 6:51 p.m. – out of session at 7:01 p.m.

A motion was made by Wick, seconded by Wallgren, that employee 1 will be awarded vacation time based on his hire date/anniversary date. Motion carried.

The council resumed conversation with Chris Rowe regarding the Court Street property. Each of the council members stated that they would like to have the policy in place first, then make the decision on the sale of the property. Wiehl stated that the council could accept the offer then review the property disposition and procurement policy for adoption, and that it is the council's decision to either accept or deny. A motion was made by Wick, seconded by Kingsbury, to table this item to follow the governing body reports. Motion carried.

VIII. Previous/Ongoing Business

a) Property Disposal Policy-Without a full council in attendance, a motion was made by Cole, seconded by Peterson, to table the property disposition and procurement policy to the next meeting. Motion carried.

IX. New Business

a) Resolution 2025-1

A motion was made by Cole, seconded by Kingsbury, to adopt Resolution 2025-1 waiving GAAP. Motion carried.

b) Resolution 2025-2

A motion was made Cole, seconded by Wick, to adopt Resolution 2025-2, designating the Smith County Pioneer as the official newspaper for publication of legal notices, advertisements, or publications of any kind. Motion carried.

c) Resolution 2025-3

A motion was made by Cole, seconded by Wick, to adopt Resolution 2025-3, designating The Peoples Bank, The Guaranty State Bank, and the Smith County Bank as the city's official depositories. Motion carried.

d) Resolution 2025-4

A motion was made by Cole, seconded by Kingsbury, to adopt Resolution 2025-4, designating \$20,000 to the sidewalk incentive program for 2025. Motion carried.

X. Department Reports/Committee & Board Reports

a) Economic Development-Motion by Cole, seconded by Wallgren, to extend Dana Peterson's contract with the economic development department for four months. Motion carried.

b) Golf Course-Motion by Kingsbury, seconded by Wick, to terminate the employment offer to Aaron LaDuke. Motion carried.

c) Police Department-Chief Marshall reported on vehicle repairs. He will be researching vehicle purchase options.

d) Hileman-Wick asked if anyone was covering the work at the golf course. Hileman responded that all of the equipment and carts have been serviced. Conaway has listed the greenskeeper position. Kingsbury thanked the city crew for their help in Portis; and said that the crew did a great job on snow removal.

e) Clerk-Conaway reported on a Teams meeting with Kansas Gas Service, and shared three upcoming projects that KGS has planned for this year. Conaway provided a list of some grant options available to support expenses aimed at reducing property and liability losses through KCAMP. A report and estimate were shared with the council on the windowpane that broke during store removal. The information has been submitted to insurance. Conaway provided a letter and cyber protection quote from HOA Solutions for review prior to the next meeting.

XI. Governing Body Reports

a) Cole-Discussed the need to replace the garage doors on the old firehouse building with insulated doors. Hileman will obtain pricing.

b) Wick-Asked Wiehl for status on the pool house construction. Wiehl responded that the next step is the roof.

c) Wiehl-Stated that the utility rates need to be raised and put on a schedule. He also said that with the fires in California, he has been thinking about where

the city stands should there be an emergency. Discussion was held on the various remedies that are already in place. There would be a need to place a propane generator on well 8, and possibly a second well. Hileman stated that there would need to be a way to pump to the tower.

XII. Executive Session

A motion was made by Kingsbury, seconded by Wallgren, to enter into an executive session for five minutes, data relating to financial affairs, with Chris Rowe in attendance. Motion carried. In session at 7:48 p.m. – out of session at 7:53 p.m.

Discussion was held on the property tabled earlier in the meeting. A motion was made by Kingsbury, seconded by Wallgren, to table the offer made by Chris Rowe. Motion carried.

XIII. Council Designations

Wiehl made the following council designations: Cole-Fire and Police; Kingsbury-Water and Sewer; Wick-Pool and Recreation Commission; Mansholt-Transit, Parks, and Golf; and Wallgren-Airport and Streets. Wiehl will be the department head for Economic Development.

XIV. Adjournment

A motion was made by Wick, seconded by Cole, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.