

CITY OF THE HIGHLANDS

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, August 11, 2025 @ 6:00 pm

Upper Level, 922 W. Crazy Horse Dr. 67502

Minutes

I. Meeting Called to order

A. Welcome

B. Pledge of Allegiance

C. Roll Call of the Council by City Clerk, Zane Jackson

Present: Lyle Foss, Christie Gardner, Mark Kerschen, and Kenny Nuss

Absent: Jeff Jackson

AZC: Mo Penny

Guests: Lacey Stone, Dennis Boggs, Jim Humiston, Howard Shipley, Chuck Gaebhart, Loren Henson, Debbie Henson, Wyatt Henson, Cheryl Wiggins, and Kelly Poppelreiter

II. Approval of the agenda as presented/amended

Discussion: Christie Gardner questioned the months listed regarding city clerk pay. There was also question of the amount. Minutes from December 16, 2024, stated the pay was \$25 per hour to be paid quarterly.

Motion to accept: Kenny Nuss Seconded: Mark Kerschen All in favor.

III. Public Comment(s):

- Chuck Gaebhart shared information regarding the sewer. He suggested votes should go by sewer connections – services. He inquired what exactly the bond had been for. He also asked if it was paid through taxes, will we be charged interest since it needs paid monthly?
- Howard Shipley asked why the revenue neutral rate with property values was going up. Why are we in need of more money?
- Loren Henson asked how the fallen tree would be handled. Who is responsible with the right of way. He feels the installation of fiber optics was a contributing factor to the tree falling. Carol reported there would be further discussion regarding the tree later on the agenda. Christie spoke with Cara Calloway of the Dept of Aging regarding people who may be able to help the community with downed trees.
- Kelly Poppelreiter inquired about right of way issues. Who is taking care of the costs we are incurring? She is concerned how funds are being spent.

IV. Approval of draft minutes:

Regular meeting, July 14, 2025

Special meeting, July 14, 2025

Regular meeting, June 9, 2025

Regular meeting, April 28, 2025

Motion to accept all meetings listed: Mark Kerschen Seconded: Lyle Foss

All in favor

V. Reports

A. Mayor

1. Post Office box rate increases. We paid \$120.00 just before the increase went into effect. We are good for another year at the old rate.
2. LKM membership rate adjustment -\$426.96, decrease from \$542.04. This will be paid in January of 2026.
3. Sewer bond/interest payment option choices selected by citizens. Results listed are through Saturday, August 9, 2025. They will continue to be collected until Tuesday, August 12, 2025. Carol will be sharing results with the Reno County Commissioners at their meeting Wednesday, August 13, 2025. The results are as follows: 105 ballots returned, five of those were unusable due to a lack of address and one duplicate return. 68% for option #1; 6% for option #2; 26% for option #3. It was noted the reason this changed in 2023 was because the sitting commissioners didn't want the bond on the taxes. Current commissioners want to know our opinion before their September meeting because it will take time to make adjustments to the budget. This bond will pay off in 2038.
4. Carol plans to attend the LKM policy meeting in Topeka on the 28th.
5. August 25, 2025, at 6:00 pm, Municipal court is scheduled. There are two cases to be addressed. This is an open meeting.

B. Treasurer

1. Monthly Financial Report: \$2506.00 in income. \$40,978.00 in expenses. \$309,649.00 in investments.

Motion to approve: Kenny Nuss Seconded: Mark Kerschen All in favor.

2. Invoice Approvals:

a. Visa Card Services:

- 1) Ink Cartridges - \$429.66 (Printing for community event)
- 2) Stamps - \$156.00 (Sewer option envelopes)
- 3) National Sign Company Inc - \$360.50 (10 new stop signs)
- 4) Duds Customs - \$50.00 (Community Event)

5) Late fee - \$29.00 (Credit Card bill came in after council meeting last month.) Discussion: Should this payment be an automatic bank draft? The council feels we owe it to the tax papers to avoid the late fee. This will be made an automatic bank draft.

Motion: Mark Kerschen Seconded: Kenny Nuss All in favor

- b. Digital Liaison - \$300.00 (July 1, 2025 - August 1, 2025)
- c. City Clerk - \$100.00 (May/June/July/August) Deferred until next month.
- d. TW Roll-Off - \$600.00 (Brush removal from park area)
- e. Gibby Plumbing - \$1,526.32 (Rough in bathroom at pavilion)
- f. BARC Tree Care - \$200.00 (Removal of tree to clear road. Discussion to follow later on agenda.)
- g. Mowing ROW - \$250.00 (August)
- h. Reimbursement - \$924.00 to Jeff Jackson for assorted city tree trimming and clean up.
- i. Reno County Utilities - \$90.75
- j. Automatic bank payment to AVEC - \$96.88

Motion to Approve: Lyle Foss all items except "c"

Seconded: Kenny Nuss All in favor.

C. AZC

1. Road Repair Progress Report: Application to approve to enclose a screened in area with glass. Check for \$50.00 submitted with application. Also, PoweredByMe will be back next week to complete work on Paganica Pass. It is unknown how much more work will be done this season due to budget restrictions.

D. Parks and Recreation Report:

1. Location of Sewer/Water Lines. Working with Reno County to locate lines. Requested a refresh from Alpha Surveyor around pump house.
2. Island at entrance. What is the status of the tree replacement? Zane will check with Brad Easter regarding the tree situation. The group will meet and discuss new trees if needed.
3. Grant writing class. Request to fund a grant writing class for Christie to attend. The cost is \$60.00.

Motion to approve: Mark Kerschen Seconded: Lyle Foss

In Favor: Kenny Nuss Abstain: Christie Gardner

VI. New Business

- A. Flag Taskforce group report: Alex McCleod and Larry Young retired. For their work on the taskforce, they were given a framed photo of the highlands with a thank you. Lyle Foss and Tom Dobson will join this group to help with the flag.
- B. Resolution NO 2025-0087, Approving proposed intent to except the RNR.
Discussion: Be ready to approve at September 8, 2025, meeting before approving budget for 2026.
- C. Final approval of Ordinance NO 2025-35, establishing a municipal court. It was noted the judge would only be paid for time in court.
Motion to approve: Kenny Nuss Seconded: Christie Gardner All in favor.
- D. Council approval of request to subdivide lot on Wovoka.
Discussion: This request was submitted by Jeff Jackson. This is deferred to September meeting so council can have more information.
- E. Council Meeting Place: We will continue to meet in the upper level of the club house.
- F. Candidate biographical information:
Discussion: Carol will send out a survey to the candidates. With the information obtained, the digital liaison will send a blast email to residents. This will also be uploaded to the website and social media. An informational meeting to help candidates better understand their role on the council may be held in the future. It was also suggested candidates begin attending council meetings to learn proceedings.

VII. Unfinished Business

- A. Draft Ordinance NO 2024-34 review (Right of Way)
Discussion: John Goodyear of the LKM general council shared the opinion that this needs revised. There needs to be more clarity regarding trees in the right of way and what to do with them. State statute says maintaining the right of way is the homeowner's responsibility, however this becomes sticky when it blocks the road. A citizen also inquired if there needs to be clarification regarding the height of grass in the right of way when mowed. The council will take time to research this and discuss it further at the September meeting.
- B. Response to ROW clearing letters mailed in July.
Discussion: A non-compliant landowner has contacted Kenny to say they plan to clean their ROW when the weather is cooler.
- C. Status of NW drainage project (ARPA Funding)

Discussion: It would be good to host an informational meeting of the residents who live in that area. Once the project starts moving forward, it would be beneficial to have a group of residents oversee this. Christie will discuss with Jeff possible residents to reach out to.

VIII. As May Arise

- A. The new website was to launch August 1st. There have been some issues with getting this going. Hopefully, these issues will be resolved before the end of the month.
- B. Communication among council members between meetings can be difficult. To stay in compliance, we cannot communicate as a group. When situations such as a tree blocking the road occur, how do we handle this? If an email is sent to the group, we cannot respond to that email. We can respond individually to the sender. It would also be good to send a text to members to check their emails in such instances.
- C. The phone directory group has been working hard to make sure all the information is correct. They could have it ready for print as early as four weeks. It will take ten days to print once submitted. They may wait until after the election to send it to print. A list of sponsors was shared. There was a total of twenty sponsors, three of which were new.

IX. Agenda Items for Future Meetings

- A. Terms for city council members
- B. Review of Ordinances 2018-01, 2020-13, 2022-27
- C. Charter Ordinance NO 11
- D. ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) Also referred to as “Granny House.”

X. Date for next City Council Meeting

- A. August 25, 2025
Motion to cancel regular council meeting to allow for Municipal court hearing: Mark Kerschen Seconded: Kenny Nuss All in favor.
- B. Special Meetings;
 - a. September 8, 2025, 5:30 meeting to exceed the revenue neutral rate.
 - b. September 8, 2025, 5:45 meeting to approve 2026 budget.
Motion to schedule two special meetings for September 8, 2025: Kenny
Seconded: Mark All in favor
- C. September 8, 2025, 6:00 Regular Council Meeting
Motion: Kenny Nuss Seconded: Mark Kerschen All in favor

XI. Motion to Adjourn

- Motion: Mark Kerschen Seconded: Christie Gardner All in favor

