

**CITY OF HIGHLAND, KANSAS
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
CITY HALL
September 10, 2025
5:00 P.M.**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Gibson, Robert Ellerman, Tana Snyder, and Roger Rush

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Keith Edmonds

CITY EMPLOYEES PRESENT: Attorney Andy Parker, City Clerk Joann Karn, Deputy Clerk Annabelle Diebolt; Water/Sewer Superintendent Trevor Saunder, Maintenance Dalton Krier and Police Chief Dustin Winters

GUESTS PRESENT: Janet Tyler, Michael Lamb, Chris Waggoner, Michael Stonebarger, April Heim and Jill Denton

PRESIDING: Mayor Charles Batchelder

Mayor Batchelder opened the meeting with the first of two public hearings. The purpose of the first hearing was to hear and answer public comments of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of funds, amount of ad valorem tax and exceeding the calculated Revenue Neutral Rate of 48.631 mills. The public had a couple comments concerning valuation and property tax increases. Tana Snyder moved and Robert Ellerman seconded a motion to close public comments. Motion carried 4-0 Following opportunity of public comments, Tana Snyder moved and Robert Ellerman seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-02, a resolution to levy a property tax exceeding the Revenue Neutral Rate of 48.631. Motion carried 4-0 Roll call vote: Gibson-yes; Snyder-yes; Ellerman-yes, Rush-yes Tana Snyder moved and Robert Ellerman seconded a motion to adjourn the Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing at 5:05 p.m. Motion carried 4-0

Mayor Batchelder asked for public comments regarding the proposed 2026 budget. The purpose of holding this public hearing is to hear any public comments on adoption of the 2026 budget. The public had no comments. Tana Snyder moved and Terry Gibson seconded a motion to close public hearing for the adoption of 2026 budget. Motion carried 4-0 Tana Snyder moved and Robert Ellerman seconded a motion to adopt the 2026 budget as published. Motion carried 4-0 Tana Snyder moved and Terry Gibson seconded a motion to adjourn the budget hearing at 5:10 p.m. Motion carried 4-0

Following the public hearings and signing of budgets, Mayor Batchelder opened the regular city council meeting at 5:15 p.m.

Tana Snyder moved and Robert Ellerman seconded a motion to approve the agenda as amended which added Main Street Closure for Trunk or Treat. Motion carried 4-0

Tana Snyder moved and Terry Gibson seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda: a) August 13, 2025, regular meeting minutes b) August 14, 2025, special meeting minutes c) August 19, 2025, special meeting minutes d) August 25, 2025, special meeting minutes e) claims list for August 14, 2025, through September 10, 2025. Motion carried 4-0

PUBLIC FORUM:

Michael Stonebarger inquired about the process of a council member resigning.

CONSIDER/APPROVAL

Following discussion on a water tower agreement, Terry Gibson moved to put \$10,000 in the water tower fund. Motion died for lack of second. Discussion followed and asked Fire Chief Chris Waggoner to check if the department has the ability to clean the outside of the tower's bowl, if so, offered to pay \$2,000.

Robert Ellerman moved and Tana Snyder seconded a motion to table the West Water Tower Maintenance Agreement until more information is available. Motion carried 4-0

Terry Gibson moved and Roger Rush seconded a motion to approve Option #2 (Only affected areas) of Kauffman Roofing estimate, totaling \$70,500, for the Community Building roof and possible replace roofing screws. Motion carried 4-0

Tana Snyder moved and Robert Ellerman seconded a motion to approve an ad in the 2026 DWHS yearbook, costing \$100, and donate \$100 to the Mustang Booster Club. Motion carried 4-0

Councilman Gibson informed the council the Masonic Lodge would donate \$1,000 to the city for payment of the USD #111 school district's amount to use the city's baseball field next season. Action will be taken following receipt of donation.

Attorney Parker handed out a draft copy for review of an ordinance establishing regulations for food truck/mobile food vendor operations within the city and will be providing a draft for review concerning solar panels within the city.

Terry Gibson moved and Robert Ellerman seconded a motion to close the bank account 21-PF-022 Water Treatment Plant, at the Bank of Highland, as the project has been completed and the account is no longer needed. Motion carried 4-0

Robert Ellerman moved and Tana Snyder seconded a motion to approve a transfer of \$67,413.00 (Series 2023-A - \$41,230 and Series 2023-B - \$26,183) from the Water Fund to Debt Service Fund for the water treatment plant GO Bonds payment. Motion carried 4-0

Water/Sewer Superintendent Trevor Saunders explained the root control program provided by Duke's Rooted in Innovation in the amount of \$18,077. Following discussion, the program may be reviewed again later after the city investigates the current condition of the sewer lines and what can be treated by the city. Continue to apply for a grant to assist with the sewer renovations and/or maintenance.

Tana Snyder moved and Roger Rush seconded the motion to close Main Street from near the hardware store to Kirkwood St. on October 26, 2025, for Trunk or Treat, 5-7 p.m., closing at 4:15 p.m. Motion carried 4-0

DISCUSSION/OPEN ISSUES

Councilperson Roger Rush and Attorney Parker recommended tabling the Highland Community Ball Park Agreement discussions until after the completion of the proposed HCC upgrades. The lodges donation would only be for one year but the agreement needs to be for multi years. April Heims voiced her concern about the additional water run-off from the proposed upgrades.

Attorney Parker has not received any information from the signee of the unsafe McVicker property. Discussion followed. Recommendation is to have Code Enforcer Malcom Greer inspect the property and seek bids for demolition. Councilman Ellerman stressed the need to have a permit for demolition of buildings within the city.

April Heim addressed the council regarding the west side and the east side of the ditch. Ms. Heim is concerned about the erosion near the 200-year-old silver maple tree. The city did contact the expert recommended by Ms. Heim to assist with the issue, and the answer was not able to assist with the situation. The city is aware of the water flow through that ditch.

Janet Tyler provided a report on the Community Tree Canopy Project as Grimm's Gardens has taken approximately 12 dead or dying trees down that were in the city right of way and has approximately 12 left to prune. New trees will be planted on city property beginning the end of September or first of October. Terry Gibson moved and Roger Rush seconded a motion for Supt. Saunders to purchase a pole saw and equipment (up to \$1,500) to trim trees as allotted for reimbursement in the tree canopy grant. Motion carried 4-0

The Low to Moderate Income Survey was completed with results showing the city will qualify as 51% LMI.

Janet Tyler addressed the council about the Doniphan County Economic Development forming a committee, using housing assessment tool (HAT) to gather data for make housing needs a priority in the county so grants could be used for housing.

REPORTS

- BrightSpeed offered 2% in their franchise agreement, but the electricity and gas are 5%. Council asked for Attorney Parker to negotiate to 5%. Attorney Parker is working with the fire district on transferring titles of the fire trucks from the city to the district. Randy Parsons wishes to purchase the former Highland Community Housing property to construct storage units and will be present at the October meeting. Attorney Parker has been reviewing various permits for possible city use.
- Chief Police Winters review his handouts. Chief Winters addressed the issue with the Durango, to reset the module will cost \$170 and a new module will cost \$700. Robert Ellerman moved and Terry Gibson seconded a motion to approve the purchase of a new module for \$700 from Reed Dodge. Motion carried 4-0 Chief Winters reported the brakes on the police truck are bad and Triple L quoted a repair price of \$313.81. Roger Rush moved and Robert Ellerman seconded a motion to approve the brake repair on the police truck totaling \$313.81 at Triple L. Motion carried 4-0 Chief Winters reminded the council of the need for a new furnace on the police side of the building, a 9 month old quote was \$6,500. Robert Ellerman moved and Terry Gibson seconded a motion to table until next month. Motion carried 4-0 Chief Winters presented information on a Casey's credit card which would give 8 cents off. Council asked Clerk Karn to gather information and present next month.
- Water/Sewer Supt. Saunders reported the steering pump on the F450 has issues, and the repair costs \$1,200 at Diamond Fab. Council tabled until October. Terry Gibson moved and Robert Ellerman seconded a motion to purchase 3 ton cold patch costing less than \$500. Motion carried 4-0 W/S Supt. Saunders will continue to purchase/replace water meters as needed.
- Councilperson Ellerman asked to review/modify the motion on the community building roof as the quote did not have a contingency amount included. Robert Ellerman moved and Terry Gibson seconded a motion to approve the total for the community building roof amount up to \$78,000. Motion carried 4-0

Terry Gibson moved and Tana Snyder seconded a motion to adjourn at 7:04 p.m.. Motion carried 4-0

Mayor

City Clerk