Broken Bow City Council

Meeting Minutes October 13, 2026

The Broken Bow City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, October 13, 2026, in the Broken Bow City Council Chamber. Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Custer County Chief, the designated method for giving notice. Advance notice of the meeting, a copy of the agenda, and related council materials were given to the Mayor and all members of the City Council. These items were also given to various local media outlets. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

Mayor Rod Sonnichsen called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, with the following Councilmembers present: Russ Smith, Travis Kleeb, Joe Wamsley, and Paul Holland. Absent: none. Also in attendance was City Administrator David Schmidt, City Attorney Jason White, City Clerk Jennifer Waterhouse, and City Deputy Clerk Jacob Holcomb. Mayor Sonnichsen announced the availability of the Open Meetings Act, followed by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Kleeb to approve the consent agenda for October 13, 2026. Said motion includes approval of the Minutes of the September 22, 2026, Council Meeting, Bills to Date, Approval of Broken Bow Ambulance Service Official Roster, and Approval of Broken Bow Volunteer Fire Department Official Roster. Roll call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

AKRS Equipment, Mower repairs $219.62. Aflac, Insurance $511.52, $119.50, $587.80, $258.22, $189.30. Ag Land ATV, Battery $119.99. Ahren Finney, Ambulance incentive $328.00. Alex McConnell, Ambulance incentive $60.00. Andy C Holland, Ambulance incentive $703.00. Auto Value Broken Bow, Battery and cleaner $171.62. Auto Value Broken Bow, Cleaners and supplies $78.21. Barco Municipal Products Inc - Road signs $815.00. Bear Frame & Alignment, Repairs to BB Engine 32 $507.94. Beaver Bearing Co Albion, Maint and repairs equipment, V Belt $11.38. Vehicle maintenance $273.80. Billy Hendricks Ambulance incentive $315.00. Black Hills Energy, Utilities $196.53, $239.33. Breanna Holmes, Ambulance incentive $60.00. Broken Bow Airport Authority, Interlocal agreement $1,083.33. Broken Bow Municipal Utilities, Utilities $5,338.90. Buffalo Outdoor Power LLC, Mower repairs $132.28. Callaway District Hospital, Medications $28.88. Capitol One Bank, WAGE GARNISHMENT $67.62, $67.62. Card Services 4834, Fuel, heater for tree dump, concrete chute, and repairs $1,249.86. Card Services 5174, Supplies, transport meals, equipment, uniforms, plants $4,372.31. Card Services 0583, Office supplies and equipment $1,094.14. Card Services 8031, Transport meals $137.55. Card Services 7729, Hard drives and treats for pound $295.47. Card Services 0609, Software fees, admin veh maint, office supplies, equipment $1,588.54. Central Nebraska Pest Control, pest control $65.00, $75.00. Century Link, Radio, basic and long distance phone $86.03, $53.19, $373.65. Chad Hempstead, Ambulance incentive $195.00. Christina Watson, Ambulance incentive $90.00. City Flex Benefit Plan, SELECT FLEX-UNREIMBURSED M/D/V $769.79, $769.79. SELECT FLEX-DEPENDENT CARE $192.30, 192.30. City of Broken Bow Health Insurance, HEALTH INS $5,561.66, $5,561.66. September health insurance reimbursement $44,838.15. City of Broken Bow Pension Fund, RETIREMENT LOAN PAYMENT $3,359.00, $3,589.30. 414H RETIREMENT $13,585.50, $14,157.92. 457 RETIREMENT $1,730.05, $1,942.11. Colonial Insurance, Insurance $698.56, $396.72, $725.22, $409.21, $631.18. Community Leasing Partners, Ambulance equipment lease $12,046.15. Custer County Chief, Printing and publications $1,013.70. Custer County Treasurer, Interlocal Agreement Communications, $22,203.53. Custer Public Power, CD Cell Power $56.00. David Baltz, Ambulance incentive $445.00. David Schmidt, Personal equipment repairs/responding to emergency call $318.86. Dennis Schiller, Ambulance incentive $308.00. Doyle Wood, Ambulance incentive $195.00. Dr. Jordan Homan, Yearly PMD fee 2026-27 $3,750.00. EFTPS Online Payment, MEDICARE $3,729.70, $3,650.48. FEDERAL $9,959.64, $10,905.43 FICA $15,947.02, $15,609.12. EZ IT Solutions, IT Services $7,000.00. Eakes Office Products, Office supplies, office phones $405.12. Elizabeth Baumgartner, Ambulance incentive $95.00. Family Heritage, Insurance $25.50, $25.50. First Response Billing Associates, LLC, EMS billing $1,466.73. Gina Gorham, Ambulance incentive $150.00. Great Plains Communications, Phone/Internet

$150.00, $195.90, $289.95, $84.95. Grocery Kart, open enrollment mtg food $50.61. Hometown Leasing, copier lease $73.57, $55.33, $291.12, $119.30, $116.65. Internal Revenue Service, Federal Excise Tax for 6/30/22 $166.63. Island Supply Welding Co, Oxygen $114.95. Jose Ambriz, Boots reimbursement $131.99. Kelly Gorham, Ambulance incentive, $278.00. Kelvin Kreitman, Ambulance incentive, $669.00. LARM, 2026-27 Insurance Renewal $294,970.10. Londa Wood, Ambulance incentive $180.00. Madison Siedschlag, Ambulance incentive $45.00. Mark Porter, Safety boot reimbursement $176.54. Mason Holmes, Ambulance incentive $155.00. Mead Lumber, Shelf kit and paint $4.54, Street construction $180.77, Grounds work $41.78, ramp and steps behind City Hall $520.49. Michael Jilg, Ambulance incentive $360.00. Michael Todd Industrial Supply, Safety drums and street sign posts $3,891.67. Mishele Wooters, Ambulance incentive $60.00. Murphy Tractor & Equipment, Bolts $993.30. Nebraska Child Support Payment Center, CHILD SUPPORT-NE $336.47, $336.47. Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center, Tuition for Rifle instructor course $400.00. Fleet use fee for basics $175.00. Nicholas Gaddy, Ambulance incentive $80.00. Nissa Shelby, Ambulance incentive $105.00. O'Brien's Hardware, Pipe repair $4.58. nuts and bolts $5.16. O'Reilly Auto Parts, FC on account $1.16, supplies $51.97. Paper Tiger Shredding, Paper shredding $48.00. Pareto Health, Cost management and annual fees $1,108.00. Paulsen Inc, Concrete $2,220.24. Platte Valley Communications, radio programming $348.75. Quincy Eggleston, Safety boots reimbursement $178.72. RT Ace, LLC, building repairs and maintenance $280.01, Equipment repairs $281.45, Equipment and grounds repairs $858.71. Ranchland Ford, blower motor on Handi Bus $299.80. Oil changes and battery replacement $501.34. Rebecca Neumiller, Ambulance incentive $365.00. Rebeka Anderson, Ambulance incentive $135.00. Reed Schaefer, Ambulance incentive $313.00. S&L Sanitary Service, Trask pickup $62.30. Sandra Manning, Sew on pink patches $21.60. Sara Arnold, Ambulance incentive $45.00. Sara J. Hulinsky Cleaning services Library $1,245.00, City Hall $2,355.00. Schaper and White Law Firm, Legal fees $3,000.00. State Income Tax WH NE Online Payment, STATE $3,915.00, $4,131.57. Sylvia Schiller, Ambulance incentive $323.00. Trotter Service, Tire repair and oil change $140.33, Fuel $733.45. Troy Mack, Ambulance incentive $388.00. Van Diest Supply Co, Herbicides $1,682.50. Verizon Wireless, Handi Bus phone, EMS lifepack monitors, ALS phone $115.93, Phones and hotspots $200.11, Wifi for patrol units $280.17. Wenquist, Inc Battery cable terminal $7.99, Equipment maintenance $37.96, $1,846.34, Oil dry for accident by Pump and Pantry $125.13. Total $564,033.38, Bi-Weekly Payroll (9/23/26) $91,891.74, (10/7/26) $87,339.24, Grand Total $743,264.36.

In new business, Mayor Sonnichsen introduced Ordinance 1323, entitled "AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BROKEN BOW, NEBRASKA, A CITY OF THE SECOND CLASS, AMENDING CHAPTER 93 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE BY ADDING SECTIONS 93.60 THROUGH 93.66 REGULATING THE KEEPING OF LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY WITHIN THE CORPORATE LIMITS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION IN TITLE XVII; REPEALING CONFLICTING ORDINANCES TO THE EXTENT OF THE CONFLICT; AND PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE." Moved by Kleeb, seconded by Smith to open a public hearing at 6:03 pm regarding said Ordinance. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Discussion was held. Administrator Schmidt reported that the only revisions since the prior meeting were equalizing pen-size limits for horses and cattle and removing quail and guinea fowl from the permitted list. He explained all other provisions remained unchanged but that significant staff work, and public input had occurred in the interim that will be discussed at the end of the public hearing.

Several residents addressed the council. Principal concerns included:

- The proposed limit of six chickens was widely viewed as too low for typical household egg consumption, breed diversity, and bird welfare. Speakers suggested 12 or capacity-based limits and noted that many keep poultry as both pets and a local food source.

- The setback requirements of 10 ft from property lines and 25 ft from dwellings were described as impractical on smaller or corner lots. Suggestions included greater flexibility for alley-side placement and neighbor consent.
- Support was expressed for grandfathering existing animals and for facility-based standards, but several opposed locking future owners to a current owner's specific inventory. Flexibility based on adequate housing, sanitation, and nuisance control was requested.
- Opposition was voiced regarding the prohibition of quail (described as quiet and requiring minimal space requirements), guinea fowl, peafowl, ducks, geese, and certain other poultry/game birds. Distinctions were drawn between noisier traditional poultry and quieter game birds.
- On hooved animals, speakers noted that solitary goats can become stressed and noisy, and that intact males are substantially louder; sex-specific limits and companion-animal considerations were suggested.
- Additional points included questions about 4-H animals in town, the value of neighbor communication over rigid rules, and support for basic standards of care, square footage, coops, and runs to prevent neglect and nuisance. One speaker raised an unrelated personal livestock-loss matter, which was directed to law enforcement and the county attorney as outside the scope of the ordinance hearing.

Zoning Administrator Jacob Holcomb explained that setbacks under the proposed ordinance follow existing zoning standards, regardless of the structure's purpose, for reasons of safety, easements, and line of sight, and that the draft is only modestly more restrictive, requiring 10 feet rather than the standard 6-foot setback.

Administrator Schmidt noted that many of the concerns raised by the public had also been brought to staff's attention earlier and that he had spent the late afternoon reviewing them with legal counsel. He explained that staff is exploring options to revise the grandfather provisions—potentially shifting from specific animal counts to property-based registration and a shorter compliance window—to better address the feedback received. Enforcement practicality, potential legal liability related to noise, and conflicts with existing ordinances were also identified as issues requiring further work.

Both Administrator Schmidt and Mayor Sonnichsen recommended postponing further action until November 10, 2026, to allow time to incorporate public comments, complete legal and zoning reviews, and prepare a revised draft. Mayor Sonnichsen concluded that the final ordinance needs to be specific and readily enforceable by city staff, and that the goal is to find a balanced middle ground that serves the entire community. Moved by Holland, seconded by Smith to close public hearing at 6:53 pm. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Holland, to postpone action regarding Ordinance 1323, until November 10, 2026. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

Mayor Sonnichsen introduced Ordinance 1325, entitled "AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BROKEN BOW, CUSTER COUNTY, NEBRASKA, COMBINING AND MERGING THE OFFICES OF DEPUTY CLERK AND CITY TREASURER INTO THE POSITION OF DEPUTY CLERK/TREASURER; CREATING THE APPOINTIVE OFFICE OF CITY PLANNER AND DESIGNATING THE CITY PLANNER AS ZONING ADMINISTRATOR AND FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATOR; PROVIDING FOR APPOINTMENT, DUTIES, REPORTING, QUALIFICATION, AND COMPENSATION; REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 1250 AND ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE." Moved by Wamsley, seconded by Kleeb to open a public hearing at 6:54 pm regarding said Ordinance. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith,

Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried. Administrator Schmidt explained that in smaller communities such as Broken Bow, duties like floodplain administration and zoning have traditionally fallen solely on the city administrator. Over the past few years, however, Jacob Holcomb has assumed these responsibilities—along with related project work—and has excelled in the role. This has allowed Schmidt to focus on other critical priorities while ensuring these critical areas of municipal operations receive the dedicated attention they require.

Schmidt said that the proposed city planner position would formalize the current arrangement by making floodplain administration, zoning, and related project work Mr. Holcomb's primary daily responsibilities, with the administrator providing backup and support. This would help maintain the existing pace and high standard of work. Schmidt further explained that because Holcomb currently serves as deputy clerk, his move into the city planner role would create a vacancy. Combining the deputy clerk and treasurer positions is a strong fit for LeeAnn Morgan and is an approach the city has used in the past. Schmidt noted that Morgan has demonstrated strong aptitude in this area and would be well positioned to assist Jennifer Waterhouse with finance-related duties, including payroll, in the combined role. Overall, he concluded, these changes align well, support the city's current momentum, and recognize the contributions of both Holcomb and Morgan. Moved by Smith, seconded by Kleeb to close public hearing at 6:58 pm. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Kleeb, seconded by Holland that the statutory rule requiring reading Ordinance 1325 on three different days be suspended. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion Carried. The motion to suspend the rules of said Ordinance was adopted by three-fourths of the Council and the statutory rule was declared suspended for the consideration of said Ordinance.

Said Ordinance was then read by title and thereafter, Councilmember Holland moved for final passage of Ordinance 1325, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Smith. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion Carried. The final passage and adoption of said Ordinance having been concurred by a majority of all members of the Council, the Mayor declared the Ordinance adopted.

Mayor Sonnichsen introduced Ordinance 1326, entitled "AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BROKEN BOW, NEBRASKA, AMENDING THE SALARIES OF OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES; PAY PLAN FOR ALL CLASSIFICATIONS WITHIN THE CITY; AND MONTHLY SALARY OR HOURLY WAGE RANGES FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL CLASSIFICATION." Moved by Wamsley, seconded by Kleeb to open a public hearing at 7:00 pm regarding said Ordinance. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried. Administrator Schmidt explained that the wage ordinance is identical to the version previously presented at the start of the fiscal year, with the addition of the city planner position and the combination of the deputy clerk and treasurer positions. Moved by Kleeb, seconded by Smith to close public hearing at 7:01 pm. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Holland that the statutory rule requiring reading Ordinance 1326 on three different days be suspended. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion Carried. The motion to suspend the rules of said Ordinance was adopted by three-fourths of the Council and the statutory rule was declared suspended for the consideration of said Ordinance.

Said Ordinance was then read by title and thereafter, Councilmember Holland moved for final passage of Ordinance 1326, which motion was seconded by Councilmember Wamsley. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion Carried. The final passage and adoption of said Ordinance having been concurred by a majority of all members of the Council, the Mayor declared the Ordinance adopted.

Moved by Wamsley, seconded by Smith to approve the mayoral appointment of LeeAnn Morgan to the position of Broken Bow Deputy Clerk-Treasurer. Roll Call Vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Wamsley to approve the mayoral appointment of Jacob Holcomb to the position of Broken Bow City Planner. Roll Call Vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Kleeb, seconded by Smith to approve Resolution 2026-28, authorizing the negotiation, execution, and delivery of a master lease-purchase agreement in the principal amount of $118,368.52, between Kinetic Leasing, Inc, and City of Broken Bow, Nebraska, for a robotic crawler pipe inspection camera system. Administrator Schmidt explained that the item was previously discussed during the budget process. This allows the formal paperwork to be signed for the camera system, which will enable the sewer department to map and inspect the sewer system in-house rather than hiring the work out as had been done previously. The lease Roll Call Vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley, and Holland. Nays: None. Motion carried.

There were no public comments.

During Mayor and Council comments, Mayor Sonnichsen, and Councilmembers Kleeb and Smith thanked the public for their comments and input during the public hearings.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Wamsley, to adjourn the City Council meeting at 7:08 pm. Roll Call vote: Voting aye: Smith, Kleeb, Wamsley and Holland. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

Rodney W. Sonnichsen, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jennifer A. Waterhouse

Jennifer A. Waterhouse, City Clerk

CITY OF BROKEN BOW CORPORATE SEAL NEBRASKA