

City Commission Minutes
Regular Session
August 25, 2025

City Commission Chambers
101 S Lincoln Ave.
Chanute, KS 66720

CALL TO ORDER – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Jacob LaRue presided and called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Commissioners Present: Mayor Jacob LaRue and Commissioners Kevin Berthot, Tim Egner, Tim Fairchild, and Larry Taylor.

Staff Present: Todd Newman, City Manager; Ryan Follmer, Assistant City Manager; Tina Bailey, City Clerk; David Brake, City Attorney; Cory Kepley, Chief Finance Officer; Matthea Hendrickson, 911 Director; Jeff Mitchell, Fire Chief; and Chris Pefley, Police Chief.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Commissioner Kevin Berthot.

AGENDA

The Agenda was approved on motion by Commissioner Egner, seconded by Commissioner Berthot. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda is used to approve non-controversial or routine matters by a single motion and vote. The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

- Minutes – City Commission – August 11, 2025
- Warrant Register dated August 13, 2025
- Warrant Register dated August 20, 2025
- Review Various Board and Committee Minutes and Reports
- Request to Hold Artist Alley Festival & Annual Run for Ollie – September 27, 2025

Motion made by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Egner, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Paula Roberts, 502 South Evergreen commented on the recent utility rate increase, high taxes, vacant businesses and homes, high utility bills, her support of first responders and alternative funding options for a communication system, and survival of the present and future community.

Ashley Shreve, 724 North Evergreen distributed a petition titled “Petition Against the August 11th Utility Rate Hike”. Ms. Shreve commented on the recent utility rate increase, support of

first responders, alternative funding options for equipment, and past elimination of property taxes.

Cindy Morrison, 724 South Evergreen commented on the Commission's decision making and lack of the community trust, comments made by the Commission related to the lack of citizen participation, and the upcoming special sales tax ballot question related to CRDA.

Emma Hole, 806 North Garfield commented on Chanute's census number and poverty level rating, state retirement and social security benefits, support of first responders and upgrade of communication equipment, utility rate increases, elimination of property taxes, and concern that utility rates won't decrease after the communication system is paid in full.

Nickolaus Roy Adams, 212 South Kansas commented on the Chanute's poverty rate and average annual household income, disabled and social security benefits, cost of living, high utilities, and the need for repair of City storm drain infrastructure.

Sara Chambliss, 221 East 9th commented on her conversation with KMU and her request for clarification on the City's use of utility rate increases, her support of first responders and upgrading communication equipment, and that an apology is owed to herself and the community from the City Manager and City Commission.

Christina Balch, Chanute Plaza Apartments commented on the recent utility rate increase.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Todd Newman gave his report on City activities and operations. Items reported on included an update on the Fiber Pon 13 Project and the Osa Martin Option B Project.

City Manager Newman distributed a copy of an article from the Iola Register to the City Commission and commented on the City of Iola's mil levy and utility rates.

General discussion was made. Comments were made by City Manager Todd Newman and City Attorney David Brake.

PUBLIC HEARING – REINVESTMENT HOUSING INCENTIVE DISTRICT

Conduct a Public Hearing for the purpose of "Establishing a Reinvestment Housing Incentive District within the City and Adopting a Plan for the Development of Housing and Public Facilities in such Proposed District" and for that purpose, Mayor LaRue opened a hearing at 6:55 p.m.

As there were no comments from the public the Public Hearing was closed at 6:56 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

REINVESTMENT HOUSING INCENTIVE DISTRICT FOR CHANUTE HOUSING, LLC (HIDDEN HILLS RHID)

The Chanute City Commission on June 9, 2025, approved the initial Resolution for a Reinvestment Housing Incentive District for Chanute Housing, LLC. The Chanute City Commission set a public hearing for the August 25, 2025, Chanute City Commission meeting.

The Kansas Department of Commerce has granted initial approval for the Reinvestment Housing Incentive District. The next required commission action to establish the district is passage of ordinance.

General discussion was made. Comments were made by Chanute Housing, LLC representative Darrin Luebbering.

Motion made by Commission Fairchild, seconded by Commissioner Taylor to pass AN ORDINANCE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF CHANUTE, KANSAS ESTABLISHING A REINVESTMENT HOUSING INCENTIVE DISTRICT WITHIN THE CITY AND ADOPTING A PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOUSING AND PUBLIC FACILITIES IN SUCH DISTRICT, AND MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS IN CONJUNCTION THEREWITH THE HIDDEN HILLS REINVESTMENT HOUSING INCENTIVE DISTRICT and to authorize the Mayor to sign the Development Agreement. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

The Ordinance was assigned: No. S-580

SOUTHEAST KANSAS INC. PRESENTATION

Southeast Kansas Inc. is a resource to help grow your network, your business, and the Southeast Kansas Community that we are all a part of.

Patty Ann Sanborn on behalf of Southeast Kansas Inc. provided an update of available services.

General discussion was made.

CONSIDER REQUEST FOR FOOD VENDORS TO SET UP ON CITY PROPERTY AND REQUEST TO CONSUME ALCOHOL ON CITY PROPERTY DURING CHS HALL OF FAME EVENT

Tommy Rodriguez, on behalf of the USD 413 Foundation, CHS Alumni Committee, and CHS Hall of Fame is requesting permission to allow food vendors to set up on City property and for consumption of alcohol on City property during their CHS Hall of Fame event, Katy Park, Friday, September 26, 2025, 3:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. The event will be held on the north end of Katy Park from Main Street going south to the storm drainage ditch. No road closures requested. The request also includes use of electric.

Prior to the event, food trucks will be required to obtain proper licensing through the City.

General discussion was made. Comments were made by City Manager Todd Newman.

Motion made by Commissioner Egner, seconded by Commissioner Fairchild, to approve the request for use of Katy Park to hold a CHS Hall of Fame Event on Friday, September 26, 2025, from 3:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. as presented and approval for food vendors to set up on City property and for consumption of alcohol on City property during the event. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

REQUEST TO EXCHANGE FEDERAL FUNDS

On February 5, 2018 KDOT and the City of Chanute entered into a supplemental agreement with KDOT regarding the federal fund exchange program (Supplemental No. 1 to Agreement No. 74-16). A program which allows a local public agency (LPA) to trade all or a portion of its federal

fund allocations in a specific federal fiscal year with KDOT in exchange for state transportation dollars or with another LPA in exchange for their local funds. The 2025 Exchange Rate for the program is \$.90 of state funds for every \$1.00 of local federal obligations authority exchanged. State funds will be paid on a reimbursement basis as the LPA incur costs.

Currently the amount of City federal funds available to be exchanged is \$123,135.36. State funds must be used for transportation project(s) in accordance with the program guidelines and would be paid on a reimbursement basis as the City incurs costs on the project(s). If Commission wishes to exchange or bank its federal fund allocations, authorize the City Manager to sign and return the requested forms.

General discussion was made. Comments were made by City Manager Todd Newman.

Motion made by Commissioner Egner, seconded by Commissioner Taylor, to approve the Request to Exchange Federal Funds and authorize the City Manager to complete and sign required forms. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW COMMUNICATION SYSTEM FOR POLICE AND FIRE

During the 2025 budget work sessions, City staff presented a new communications system to the Commission. The new system would include radios, dispatch consoles, software, and tower equipment. A Communications System Financing Proposal with three lease options was provided to the Commission for review and discussion. The Proposal is estimated at \$2,225,962.00.

Fire Chief Jeff Mitchell, Police Chief Chris Pefley, and Chanute 911 Director Matthea Hendrickson presented a proposal for a new communications system. Motorola representative Mike Skalitzky was available for questions.

General discussion was made. Comments were made by City Manager Todd Newman, Fire Chief Jeff Mitchell, Police Chief Chris Pefley, Chanute 911 Director Matthea Hendrickson, and Motorola representative Mike Skalitzky.

Motion made by Commissioner Fairchild, seconded by Commissioner Taylor, to approve a 10-Year Lease Agreement with Motorola Solutions, Inc., in the amount of \$2,225,962.00 as presented and approval for the Mayor to execute the agreement.

Further discussion was made.

The Mayor called for a vote for the motion on the floor. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 1301 SOUTH GRANT

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 102 WEST MULBERRY

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 318 SOUTH MALCOLM

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 201 SOUTH ASHBY

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 219 SOUTH ASHBY

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 1411 SOUTH HIGHLAND

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 1021 SOUTH GRANT

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 1811 SOUTH EDITH

Motion made by Commissioner Egner, seconded by Commissioner Taylor, to adopt resolution declaring that the above properties are in violation of Chanute Municipal Codes and authorizing abatement of certain nuisances as presented. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

The Resolutions were assigned: No. 2025-109, No. 2025-110, No. 2025-111, No. 2025-112, No. 2025-113, No. 2025-114, No. 2025-115, and No. 2025-116.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Taylor thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for their input.

Commissioner Taylor commented on the recent utility rate increase, the average national and state electric rate, budget work session discussion, utility bills and usage, use of municipal utility funds, property taxes and past elimination of the City's mil levy, and the City Budget.

Commissioner Taylor thanked City Manager Newman for his commitment to the community.

Commissioner Taylor encouraged the community to contact him by email, phone, or in person.

Commissioner Egner stated that he is glad to see the community getting involved and that his hope is for them to continue.

Commissioner Berthot thanked the community for their feedback and comments. He encouraged everyone to stay involved and to communicate with the Commission, their contact information is available on the City's Website and published in the Chanute Tribune.

Commissioner Fairchild thanked everyone for attending the meeting and that he appreciates them.

Commissioner Fairchild asked the Commission to consider restarting "Coffee with Commissioners" meetings.

Commissioner Fairchild encouraged everyone to stay involved and that civil disagreement creates utilitarian ideas and encourages actions that lead to the greatest good for the community as a whole. He stated "I Love Chanute."

General discussion was made. Comments were made by City Manager Todd Newman.

Commission consensus was for the City Manager to research and provide follow-up related to future "Coffee with Commissioners" meetings.

Mayor LaRue thanked the community for their involvement over the past couple weeks and their conquest for information and understanding and to hold the Commission accountable.

Mayor LaRue commented on the recent electric rate increase and also electric usage.

Mayor LaRue commented on past projects, current projects, future projects, funding mechanisms, and the City's 2025 Strategic Plan. He stated "I Love Chanute".

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Mayor LaRue, seconded by Commissioner Fairchild, to adjourn. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Tina L Bailey, CMC
City Clerk