

City Commission Minutes

Regular Session
September 22, 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; Tina Bailey, City Clerk; David Brake, City Attorney; Cory Kepley, Chief Finance Officer; Brandon Westerman, Director of Electric Operations; Chris Pefley, Police Chief; and Jeff Mitchell, Fire Chief.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Commissioner Tim Fairchild.

AGENDA

The Agenda was approved on motion by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Egner. 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 – September 8, 2025
- Warrant Register dated September 10, 2025
- Warrant Register dated September 17, 2025
- Review Various Board and Committee Minutes and Reports

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

City Manager Todd Newman gave his report on City activities and operations. Items reported on included an update on the USD #413 FFA Building and on the Solar Farm Project.

NEW BUSINESS

REQUEST TO HOLD PARADE NOVEMBER 22, 2025 – BEST OF AMERICA BY HORSEBACK

Del Shields, Best of America by Horseback Producer/Host, is requesting permission to temporarily block City streets, including use of City barricades, to hold a Parade on November 22, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. The parade route will begin at Katy Park, travel west on Main Street and end at the corner of Main and Steuben. The request also includes personnel support from the Chanute Police and Fire Departments and for the City street sweeper to follow after the parade for clean up if needed.

Del Shields provided a brief summary of his request.

General discussion was made.

Motion made by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Berthot, to approve request to temporarily block certain streets for a Parade on November 22, 2025, including barricades, street sweeper, and personnel support from the Chanute Police and Fire Departments. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

FIRE PROTECTION CONTRACTS - 2026

In 2018, the City Commission approved a 2.5% increase, and we have asked for a 2.5% increase each year after. A spreadsheet was included for review, proposing a 2.5% increase.

General discussion was made. Comments were made by Fire Chief Jeff Mitchell, Big Creek Township Trustee Tara Dillow, Tioga Township Treasurer Brady Taylor, and City Attorney David Brake.

Commission consensus was for City Staff to work with the City Attorney and review previous contract wording related to response time and to place the contracts/ordinances on the next Agenda for review and further discussion.

Motion made by Commissioner Egner, seconded by Commissioner Berthot, to approve the 2026 Fire Protection Contract Price reflecting a 2.5% increase for Tioga, Big Creek, and Canville Townships. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

GOLF CARTS AND UTILITY VEHICLES

In 2006 the Chanute City Commission adopted an ordinance which allowed for the operation of golf carts and utility vehicles on certain city streets. The ordinance requires the driver to have a valid Kansas driver's license and to have vehicle liability insurance.

The Chanute ordinance varies slightly from State law. A copy of both were provided to the Commission for review and discussion.

General discussion was made. Comments were made by Police Chief Chris Pefley, City Manager Todd Newman, and City Attorney David Brake.

Commission consensus was to table this item and to place it on the next Agenda further review and discussion, allowing the City Attorney time to draft an amended Ordinance related to utility vehicle operating hours.

PURCHASE OF REAL ESTATE

The owner of the lot adjacent to the Armory and contingent with Santa Fe Park is willing to sell the property to the city.

This property is currently unused and would expand the land that goes with both the Armory and Santa Fe Park. It is also a potential site for a new business so it could be sold for that purpose in the future.

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

Motion made by Commissioner Egner, seconded by Commissioner Fairchild, to approve the purchase of the property located at 2909 South Santa Fe Avenue in the amount of \$40,000.00 plus legal fees. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

VACATION OF CERTAIN CITY STREETS BETWEEN 19TH STREET AND 21ST STREET

Kevin Berthot is requesting the City to vacate streets that were platted but never constructed between 19th and 21st Street. An aerial photo was provided to the Commission for review.

The rebuild of 21st Street eliminated any need for 20th Street. Accordingly, City staff has no objection to the proposed street vacation.

The City Attorney has prepared a proposed Ordinance vacating portions of 20th Street, Malcolm, and Ashby.

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

Motion made by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Egner, to pass an ORDINANCE VACATING CERTAIN STREETS IN THE CITY OF CHANUTE, NEOSHO COUNTY, KANSAS, RESERVING A UTILITY EASEMENT OVER, UNDER, UPON AND ACROSS SAID VACATED STREETS.

Voting Aye: Mayor LaRue and Commissioners Egner, Fairchild, and Taylor

Voting Nay: None

Abstained: Commissioner Berthot

Motion carried.

The Ordinance was assigned: No. S-581

AMENDING ORDINANCE TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL CUSTOMERS TO SELF-GENERATE WITH SOLAR

The City of Chanute has an ordinance that allows its electric retail customers to install solar panels and generate electricity for their own use and resale to the city. The original ordinance capped the percentage of customers allowed to do this at 1%.

Chanute now has more retail customers that want to install solar panels and that will exceed the current 1% limit. Chanute's electric utility has no objection to customers installing solar panels if the customer believes that will help them reduce their electric costs. Evergy, the state's largest utility, has also increased the percentage of solar customers that it allows in its service territory.

General discussion was made. Comments were made by City Manager Todd Newman, City Attorney David Brake, and Director of Electric Operations Brandon Westerman.

Motion made by Commissioner Fairchild, seconded by Commissioner Taylor, to pass an ORDINANCE AMENDING CHANUTE MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 14.44.010(C) PERTAINING TO NET METERING AND ADDING SECTION D TO CHANUTE MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 14.44.040. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

The Ordinance was assigned: No. 2674

PURCHASE OF BASELOAD ELECTRICITY

Chanute supplies electricity to its customers through a combination of self-generation, purchase of wholesale electricity on the Southwest Power Pool hourly market, and long-term 24/7 baseload contracts. The City's current baseload contract for 5 MW's of energy from Evergy expires at the end of the year. Chanute also receives energy from two long-term wind farm contracts.

To limit exposure to the hourly market, Chanute has traditionally had baseload contracts to cover most of the minimum daily load. Accordingly, city staff is recommending entering into two baseload contracts effective January 1, 2026. One is for 5 MW's for three (3) years at \$43.50/MWh. And one is for 10 MW's for one (1) year at \$40/MWh.

General discussion was made. Comments were made by City Manager Todd Newman, City Attorney David Brake, and Director of Electric Operations Brandon Westerman.

Motion made by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Berthot, to authorize the City Manager to execute the baseload contracts to minimize the City's exposure to the hourly market costs. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 902 NORTH SANTA FE

Kale Krusich requested that the City Commission approve a sixty-day extension to allow him time to abate the nuisances presented.

General discussion was made.

Motion made by Commissioner Egner, seconded by Commissioner Fairchild, to adopt resolution declaring that the above property is in violation of Chanute Municipal Codes and authorizing abatement of certain nuisances as presented, if not abated within sixty-days. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

The Resolution was assigned: No. 2025-125

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 1104 SOUTH STEUBEN

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 512 WEST MAIN

Motion made by Commissioner Berthot, 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. 2025-126 and No. 2025-127

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 722 SOUTH GRANT

Rose Dunser, 628 S Malcolm requested that the City Commission approve an extension to allow her time to abate the nuisances presented.

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

Commission consensus was to table this time and place it on the next Agenda for review and further discussion, allowing City staff time to meet with Ms. Dunser and clarify the nuisances identified for abatement.

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 1108 SOUTH SANTA FE

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 310 NORTH WILSON

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 1011 WEST MULBERRY

PROPERTY RESOLUTION – 307 NORTH MALCOLM

Motion made by Commissioner Egner, seconded by Commissioner Fairchild, 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. 2025-128, No. 2025-129, No. 2025-130, and No. 2025-131.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Taylor encouraged everyone to attend the Artist Alley Festival. He also reported that he attended the Chanute Mexican Fiesta and that it was a success.

Commissioner Egner commented on the recent repairs to the Main Street Train Shanty and specifically thanked community volunteers Brian Baker, Tim Harding, and the Chanute Fire Department.

Commissioner Berthot commented on the Best of America by Horseback Parade and expressed his excitement for the community.

Mayor LaRue reported that he had attended the Chanute Mexican Fiesta and thanked the Fiesta Committee for providing the annual event and that the event is a good reminder of the individuals that helped build the community.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Mayor LaRue, seconded by Commissioner Fairchild, to adjourn. Voting Aye: All.
Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Tina L Bailey, CMC
City Clerk