

City Commission Minutes
Regular Session
October 27, 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, and Larry Taylor.

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Tim Fairchild.

Staff Present: Todd Newman, City Manager; Tina Bailey, City Clerk; David Brake, City Attorney; Cory Kepley, Chief Finance Officer; Chris Pefley, Police Chief; and Brandon Westerman, Director of Electric Utilities.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Commissioner Kevin Berthot.

AGENDA

The Mayor requested the removal of Agenda Item 9A-Street Closure Request. The amended 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 – October 13, 2025
- Warrant Register dated October 15, 2025
- Warrant Register dated October 22, 2025
- Review Various Board and Committee Minutes and Reports

Motion made by Commissioner Egner, seconded by Commissioner Taylor, to approve the consent agenda. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Iola Scout Troop #55, troop member Johnny Slaughter, requested that the Commission consider upgrading the Skate Park at Katy Park. He also asked the Commission questions related to being a City Commissioner.

Iola Scout Troop 55, Scoutmaster Barney Divine reported on scout membership and activities.

Amy Jensen, Chanute Chamber of Commerce and Office of Tourism Executive Director reported on upcoming events.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Todd Newman gave his report on City activities and operations. Items reported on included an update on the new trash trucks & trash carts. He reported that this project should be completed by the end of the year.

General discussion was made.

OLD BUSINESS

AMENDING GOLF CART AND UTILITY VEHICLE ORDINANCES

At the last two Chanute City Commission meetings, the commissioners discussed making changes to the City's current ordinance regulating golf carts and utility vehicles.

The consensus of the commission was to allow utility vehicles properly equipped with lights to operate 24/7 on all city streets.

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

Motion made by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Egner, to pass AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHANUTE MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 10.50 – GOLF CARTS AND UTILITY VEHICLES ON THE STREETS WITHIN THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF CHANUTE. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

The Ordinance was assigned: No. 2675

NEW BUSINESS

REQUEST THAT THE CITY OF CHANUTE RECOGNIZE ROOTED IN RENEW AS A COMMUNITY

INNOVATION & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PARTNER

Carmen Diaz, on behalf of Rooted in Renew, a community-based initiative rooted in Chanute, is requesting that the City Commission consider a 60-day pilot program. The pilot program is designed to engage youth through a library-anchored skills club focused on multi-fiber arts and introductory technology, support small businesses by testing hemp natural product micro-pilots, and demonstrate sustainable building innovation with a small hempcrete structure or façade panel aligned with permitting and code guidance.

Ms. Diaz is specifically requesting that the City Commission approve a 60-day pilot program, appoint a City liaison to coordinate space and communications, and to permit a City approved site for the demonstration structure.

Ms. Diaz provided an overview of her proposal and plans to provide the City Commission with a copy via email.

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

The Commission invited Ms. Diaz to provide a quarterly update on the project.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A REQUEST TO WAIVE THE USE OF GENERAL ACCEPTED ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES (GAAP) SPECIFIED IN K.S.A. 75-1120A (A)

The waiver is provided to cities which demonstrate compliance with the cash basis and budget laws of Kansas, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting and differs with GAAP in the United States of America (K.S.A. 75-1120a (c) (1)).

The Resolution and waiver request must be presented each year and the Resolution requires that financial statements and financial reports be prepared on the basis of cash receipts and disbursements as adjusted to show compliance with the cash basis and budget laws of the State.

The City of Chanute audit is conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the Kansas Municipal Audit and Accounting Guide.

The Resolution and waiver requests are required by law to be submitted each year to the Kansas Director of Accounts and Reports.

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

Motion made by Commissioner Berthot, seconded by Commissioner Taylor, to adopt a Resolution authorizing a request to waive the use of GAAP specified in K.S.A. 75-1120a (a). Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

The Resolution was assigned: No. 2025-137

PURCHASE OF ADDITIONAL GENERATION

There have been several recent severe weather incidents which created the situation where there was insufficient electric generating capacity to cover customer demand in the Southwest Power Pool. Because of that, SPP raised the reserve requirement from 15% to 36% in the winter. If a utility does not have the required generation capacity it must pay a significant financial penalty to the Southwest Power Pool.

The Chanute electric municipal utility believes that it does have enough capacity to meet the new reserve requirement but it will be close. Because of new data centers the electric load in the Southwest Power Pool is growing significantly. It takes approximately five years to obtain the air permits from the EPA and obtain permission from Southwest Power Pool to build a new stand-alone electric utility generating plant. For example, KPP which is a collection from 20 Kansas cities has been trying to get authorization to build a new 56 MW plant in Winfield, Kansas. During those five years the estimated cost of construction for the new plant has gone from \$90 million dollars to \$180 million dollars. The cost per megawatt for that plant is now over \$3 million dollars. Electric utilities are allowed to build up to 10 MW's of generation at existing power plant sites without having to go through a lengthy process like with a new stand-alone plant. The City has looked at multiple offers to add generation to the existing power plants. The Chanute electric utility has been pricing different generators for the last several

years. City staff provided the City Commission with a PROFORMA quote for review. It is by far the best value that Chanute has seen. The total cost would be less than \$300,000 a megawatt. The additional capacity can be sold to other utilities until it is needed to replace some of the current units that are aging out of service. Two 2 megawatt units at Plant 2 placed in service in 1965 and three of the units at Plant 3 were placed in service in 1986.

General discussion was made. Comments were made by City Manager Todd Newman, City Attorney David Brake, Director of Electric Utilities Brandon Westerman, and Chief Finance Officer Cory Kepley.

Motion made by Commission Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Berthot, to authorize the purchase of additional generation to protect the City from financial penalty if SPP raises reserve requirements again or Chanute has a failure with one of its aging generators. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Taylor commented on the Fiber Pon 13 Project and that the contractor is doing a good job.

Commissioner Egner thanked scout member Johnny Slaughter for attending tonight's meeting and addressing the Commission.

Commissioner Egner encouraged everyone to have a safe Halloween.

Commissioner Berthot encouraged everyone to have a safe Halloween.

Commissioner Berthot encouraged everyone to exercise their right to vote and vote in the upcoming General Election, November 4, 2025.

Mayor LaRue thanked scout member Johnny Slaughter for attending tonight's meeting.

Mayor LaRue thanked the Friends of the Chanute Public Library for their recent donation to the Depot HVAC Project.

Mayor LaRue encouraged everyone to be kind to one another.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Commissioner Egner, seconded by Mayor LaRue, to adjourn. Voting Aye: All. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Tina L Bailey, CMC
City Clerk