

**MINUTES
BUHLER CITY COUNCIL
July 29, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

Councilmember Yutzy made note of Mayor Jake Schmidt's absent and needing to elect a chairman. **A motion was made by Councilmember Davidson, seconded by Councilmember Taylor to elect Councilmember Yutzy to be chairman of the meeting.** Voice vote 4 yeas, 0 nays—Carried. Councilmember Yutzy called the regular session of the City Council for the City of Buhler to order at 7:00 pm at the Buhler City Offices on Tuesday, July 29, 2025.

Councilmembers present: Councilmember Michael Yutzy, Candace Davidson, Chuck Taylor, Ryan Brady, and Andrew Epp.

CITIZENS FORUM

Maxi Wiebe-She inquired about the grant funding for smart meters and was informed that the funding likely came as a lump sum covering all water projects, it will be a temporary note or general obligation bond. She also asked whether the reported \$10–\$20 increase on water bills related to smart meters is accurate. The resident expressed concerns about potential health impacts from smart meters, referencing *The Invisible Rainbow*, a book linking electromagnetic fields (EMF) to disease. She stated her desire to be grandfathered out of the smart meter program; however, she was told this is not an option and that accepting the meter is required to maintain water service. Councilmember Yutzy also noted that the EMF emitted by smart meters is significantly lower than that of a Wi-Fi router left on throughout the day.

Michelle Ernst- Michelle is inquiring about the LED lights and if they will be receiving those. Sara Howard replied with yes, they will be.

Allison Reed- She is from Open Door Health Services; she is here inviting all elected officials to an open house on August 19th from 4:30-6pm.

PLANNED PRESENTATION

Buher Frolic-Monte Cross presented. He thanked the city for the continued support with insurance coverage and sponsorship for this year's event. The theme will be a 1950s-style Sock Hop, featuring classic cars in both the parade and the car show. New additions include expanded inflatables, the Axe It Up trailer, mini golf, and root beer floats served during the community meal. A band is scheduled to perform after dinner, and a truck trailer will be used to serve beverages. Organizers expressed interest in shortening the length of the blocked-off road and hiring security for the event. They also requested approval to hold a "beverage garden" on both Friday evening from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. and Saturday until 10:00 p.m. **A motion was made by Councilmember Brady, seconded by Councilmember Davidson to sponsor the event with \$500.** Voice vote 5 yeas, 0 nays—Carried. **A motion was made by Councilmember Brady, seconded by Councilmember Epp to allow alcohol on Main Street, and have the police department assist with oversight.** Voice Vote 5 yeas, 0 nays—Carried.

CONSENT MOTION

Council reviewed the Minutes of the June 24, 2025 Regular Council meetings, Appropriations Ordinance #1172, Budget, Income and Water Reports, and Resolution 2025-10 Wage FT PW TS. **A motion was made by Councilmember Brady, seconded by Councilmember Davidson to approve the Minutes of the June 24, 2025 Regular Council meetings, Appropriations Ordinance #1172, Budget, Income and Water Reports and Resolution 2025-10 Wage FT PW TS.** Voice vote 5 yeas, 0 nays – Carried

OLD BUSINESS

Wage Discussion- The council was presented with two options for employee wage increases, prompted by ongoing difficulty in hiring at current pay levels. Councilmember Brady expressed concern about applying a flat increase across the board, suggesting instead that wages be adjusted based on position and performance, which would require forming a committee. Councilmember Yutzy favored a \$2 across-the-board increase, noting it would help raise wages for the lowest-paid employees more quickly. Councilmember Taylor pointed out that when we changed the Personnel handbook a portion focused on rewarding long-term employees and felt that a percentage-based increase would again favor them; he proposed \$2.50 as a fair compromise. Councilmember Yutzy asked Sara to bring back additional data, including detailed tables and KPERS impact figures, for further review. Councilmember Davidson also supported the \$2.50 increase, citing a recent hire who is now earning more than the lowest-paid existing employee.

TEXTMYGOV Proposal- Councilmembers don't feel the need for another form of communication. If it is necessary maybe we could also look at other options to compare pricing.

T-Mobile Tower- Discussions continues. Councilmember Brady suggest maybe this be sent to Planning & Zoning and also hold a public forum for local residents. He was informed that doing so will add a couple of months onto the timeline as we would have to post with plenty of notice for that to happen. Other councilmembers felt that if we waited too long that T-Mobile would move on and take it to private property. Councilmember Yutzy suggest moving it closer to the ball diamonds vs closer to the road. **A motion was made by Councilmember Davidson, seconded by Councilmember Taylor to look at space and build and choosing the one-time payment option.** Councilmember Brady voice that he would still prefer the monthly payment option. **A motion was made by Councilmember Brady, seconded by Councilmember Taylor to amend the previous motion to state that the one-time payment goes toward paying down the city's debt on water projects.** Voice Vote on amendment 5 yeas, 0 nays—Carried. Voice Vote on motion 5 yeas, 0 nays—Carried.

NEW BUSINESS

2026 Budget-City of Buhler-Set Public Hearing Date/Time- **A motion was made by Councilmember Davidson, seconded by Councilmember Brady to set the Budget Public hearing for August 12, 2025 at 7pm.** Voice Vote 5 yeas, 0 nays—Carried.

STAFF REPORTS

City Clerk Sara Howard- Sara shared that Sunflower Metal Design has finished and delivered our sign for the front of the building. She also wanted noted that the assessed valuation has gone up therefore our mill levy decreased.

Deputy City Clerk Sarah Glass- Sarah reported that the city has received funding from the Buhler Community Foundation to support hardware and veteran banners. Combined with the \$717 in donations collected during Spark in the Park, the initial focus will be on producing the first 18 banners, which will be displayed in the business district. Some applications have already been distributed, and a few have been returned. She also provided an update on the city newsletter, which is coming together with plans to release the first issue in mid-August. The newsletter will be issued monthly during the third week to highlight both the current and upcoming month. Each edition will feature a highlight written by a local pastor, as well as a 50-word business spotlight provided by the chamber

City Superintendent James Perry- James stated that water tower painting is set to happen in September-October. He will schedule as the time gets closer.

Chief Darrin Banning- Service calls on record in the office. Darrin reported that the city received a \$4,500 grant from the Community Foundation to be used for new computers. The traffic sign has been installed and is scheduled to be activated on the first day of school. There was also interest expressed in beginning discussions about lowering the speed limit on all of Main Street to 20 mph for improved safety

Wellness Director Tegan Meadors- The summer program has officially wrapped up, though adult softball is still ongoing. There are plans to introduce a new sandlot-style softball league. The pool is operating well with only a few weeks left in the season; final revenue numbers are expected by the August meeting, though they may not be available until September. A discussion was initiated about the future of the high dive, after a recent incident where a 9-year-old fell off the ladder, causing concern among staff. While the feature is popular, staff are open to exploring options such as improved signage and rules, a possible revamp, or considering alternative features. The wellness center has generated approximately \$48,000 in revenue so far this year.

Community Development Director Lauren Meadors- Lauren wanted to share that the second initiative of the 3 year has started. The Reno County NRP was signed, good news the school has joined and still hoping HCC will jump on board. This plan will benefit new builds, commercial and residential, or renovations for 5 years.

MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

Councilmember Brady noted that this is the second safety warning involving the high dive and suggested it may be time to take action. Concerns were also raised about the condition of the soccer field in the park. Tegan explained that the field has been maintained by the school, which is currently understaffed. The school approached Buhler Rec about taking over its upkeep, and Buhler Rec is planning to do so, as they aim to launch youth soccer and basketball programs. The city will contribute \$1,800 toward field maintenance, which will begin next week to get a head start on lawn treatment. The school has agreed to continue mowing once per week through the end of the year

A motion was made by Councilmember Davidson, seconded by Councilmember Taylor to adjourn. Voice vote – 5 yea, 0 nay - carried
Adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Glass, Deputy City Clerk

PRESENT:

City Clerk Sara Howard
Deputy City Clerk Sarah Glass
City Superintendent James Perry
Chief Darrin Banning
Wellness Director Tegan Meadors
Community Development Director Lauren Meadors

GUESTS:

Allison Reed
Michelle Ernst (Library Board)
Monte Cross