

City of Clearwater, Kansas
Sedgwick County
City Council Meeting - **MINUTES**
May 12, 2026
Clearwater City Hall – Council Chambers
129 E. Ross Avenue Clearwater, KS 67026

1. Call to Order/ Invocation and Flag Salute

Mayor Burt Ussery called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. followed the invocation and flag salute.

2. Roll Call

The City Clerk called the roll to confirm the presence of a quorum. The following members were present:

Mayor Burt Ussery, Councilmembers; Justin Shore, Jason Gordon and Dalton Chambers.

The following staff members were present:

City Administrator Zollinger, City Clerk Poe, Kirk Ives, Cole Hollis, Amber Ives, Justin Patrick, Jared Dinwiddie and City Attorney Jennifer Hill.

Others present who spoke:

Henry Schmidt.

3. Approval of Agenda

Mayor Ussery asked if there were any modifications to the agenda, there were none.

Motion: *Shore* moved; *Gordon* seconded to approve the agenda as submitted. Voted and passed unanimously.

4. Public Forum

None.

5. Consent Agenda

Mayor Ussery asked if there was any question on the consent agenda and if not asked for a motion to approve.

Previous Council Meeting Minutes

Claims and Warrants

Wholesale Fireworks Stand Permit

Hire Seasonal Staff

Motion: *Shore* moved; *Chambers* seconded to approve the consent agenda as submitted. Voted and passed unanimously.

Samantha Warkins entered at 6:02 pm.

6. Staff Reports:

- Administration Office – Courtney Zollinger – Zollinger updated Council that Waste Connections has updated their trucks and they will no longer be able to pick up the trash from the decorative bins downtown. The two options are to have the blue carts replace the decorative carts so waste connections can continue to pick them up, or to have Public Works dump them and asked for guidance from Council since Public Works is already stretched. Mayor Ussery suggested having Public Works dump them since the blue cans would get blown over and Waste Connections doesn't offer any other carts. Shore mentioned the slurry seal not being cured yet on his street, Zollinger will reach out to South Central Sealing.
- Fire Department – Justin Patrick – No questions from Council.
- Police Department – Kirk Ives – No questions from Council.
- Public Works/Parks – Cole Hollis – The pool is being prepped for the season. Shore asked if all meters have been changed to the automatic readers, Hollis said not all will be changed due to size of meters. Zollinger updated Council that there are 58 meters not changed.

- Senior Center – Amber Ives – Asked if June 9th would work for the City lunch and learn at the Senior Center, Mayor Ussery confirmed that it would.

7. Business

a. GO Temporary Note 2026A – Senior Center

On April 10, 2026, the City Council adopted Resolution 5-2026 authorizing the sale of temporary notes for the Senior Center Improvements. The next step in the General Obligation Temporary Notes are to award the bid and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the bid form. Adopt a Resolution and finally City Council will need to Authorize the Issuance of General Obligation Temporary Notes Series 2026A and authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute the closing documents. The Temporary Note principal is \$600,000. Maturity date for General Obligation Temporary Notes Series 2026A will be 10/01/2029. Gilmore and Bell has prepared the documents for council’s review. There were 2 bids received, Central States Capital Markets and Northland Securities Inc. with Capital Markets being the lowest overall with average interest cost at 3.2544% where Northern Securities was 3.5404%. It is recommended to go with the lowest interest rate with Central States. Warkins asked if the City had any other notes with them, Zollinger stated that she believes so. She then asked about the payments, Zollinger said it would be interest payments covered by the bond but asked for Henry Schmidt to clarify. Mr. Schmidt stated that the first interest payment would be \$6,150 and then it will be \$18,000 after than annually but reiterated that it is baked into the bond and capitalized interest fund and the City doesn’t have to budget for it. He mentioned they were able to reduce that capitalized interest fund based on the bid from their preliminary numbers, they had about \$75 ,000 going into that fund additional and it was lowered to \$60,150.

Motion: Shore moved; **Gordon** seconded to award the bid to Central States Capital Markets at true interest cost of 3.2714%. Voted and passed unanimously.

Motion: Warkins moved; **Chambers** seconded to adopt Resolution 6-2026 A Resolution Authorizing And Directing The Issuance, Sale And Delivery Of General Obligation Temporary Notes, Series 2026a, Of The City Of Clearwater, Kansas; Providing For The Levy And Collection Of An Annual Tax, If Necessary, For The Purpose Of Paying The Principal Of And Interest On Said Notes As They Become Due; Making Certain Covenants And Agreements To Provide For The Payment And Security Thereof; And Authorizing Certain Other Documents And Actions Connected Therewith. Voted and passed unanimously.

Motion: Warkins moved; **Shore** seconded to Authorize GO Temp Note 2026A Issuance and authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute the closing documents.Voted and passed unanimously.

b. Annual Mayoral Appointments

Per State Statute and Clearwater Municipal Code, the Mayor is required at the first meeting in May to appoint the following city officers for the City: State Statute 15-204 requires the Mayor to appoint a City Clerk, Treasurer, Freedom of Information Officer, Court Clerk and Municipal Judge.

Courtney Zollinger	Treasurer
Jaye Poe	City Clerk/Freedom of Information Officer
Jamie Burley	Court Clerk
Becky L Hurtig	Municipal Judge

City Code requires the Mayor appoint a Fire Chief (7-101), Chief Medical Officer and Chief of Police (10-102).

Jared Dinwiddie	Fire Chief
Justin Patrick	Chief Medical Officer
Kirk Ives	Chief of Police

City Code, requires the Mayor to appoint members of committees and board established by the Governing Body of Clearwater to staff each entity or fill vacancies. Appointments are also made to fill vacancies as they occur throughout the year.

CHISHOLM TRAIL RECREATION COMMISSION (May – May) 4 yr term	
Sean Phipps	2026 – 2030
PLANNING COMMISSION (May to May) 3 yr Term	
Lyle Berntsen	2026 - 2029 City
Jerod Ledington	2026 - 2029 City
Vacant	2026 - 2029 County
HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD 4 yr Term	
Karen Randa	2026 - 2030
Vacant	2026 – 2030
Vacant	2026 – 2030

The Mayor also will reappoint all volunteer members of the Fire Department at the first meeting in May. Volunteers are also appointed throughout the year as they join the service.

FIRE DEPARTMENT	
FIREFIGHTER/ MEDICAL	
Jared Dinwiddie	Fire Chief/ EMT
Justin Patrick	Chief Med Of. / Paramedic/ FF/ Training Of.
Kyle Berger	Lieutenant/ EMT/ FF
Michael Cowherd	Lieutenant/ EMT/ FF
Andy Rakes	EMT/ FF
Donald Schauf	Paramedic/ FF
Lisa Corr	AEMT
Kyle Yates	EMT/ FF
Austin Roberson	EMT/ FF
Richard Grizzle	EMT/ FF
Tim Vaughn	EMT/ FF
Timothy Robben	Paramedic
Trent Zimmerman	EMT/ FF
FIREFIGHTER ONLY	
Jason Templin	Captain/ FF
Austin Baumann	FF
Colton Coughlin	FF
Tyler Roberson	FF
Hank Pate	FF
Nick Schauf	FF
Robert Schoeder	FF
Zach Schauf	FF
Jacob Worman	FF
Bill Kenney	FF
Landon Churchman	FF
Brian Wood	FF
Tyler Pankratz	FF
Gibson Craft	FF
Chance Keesling	Cadet
Sylas Kraft	Cadet
Keaton Grizzle	Cadet
Jaidyn Baxter	Cadet

Motion: *Shore* moved; *Gordon* seconded to approve the 2026 Mayoral appointments. Voted and passed unanimously.

c. Mayer Specialty Contract

Since 2006, Mayer Specialty Services (MSS) has performed sewer line cleaning services and televised inspection for Clearwater. As with the last two contracts, the contract up for approval is a 3-year contract for 2027, 2028, 2029. This contract sees a 3% increase each successive year. The contract includes televised inspection of 10% of the cleaned sewer line. This video will be uploaded to the GIS mapping system for access in the field. Public Works has been very happy with the work and convenience of Mayer over the last 20 years and would like to continue doing business with them. The City Attorney requested the removal of the mandatory arbitration. Mediation is acceptable but not arbitration, one is binding, and one is not. Mayer prepared the agreement with the mediation change.

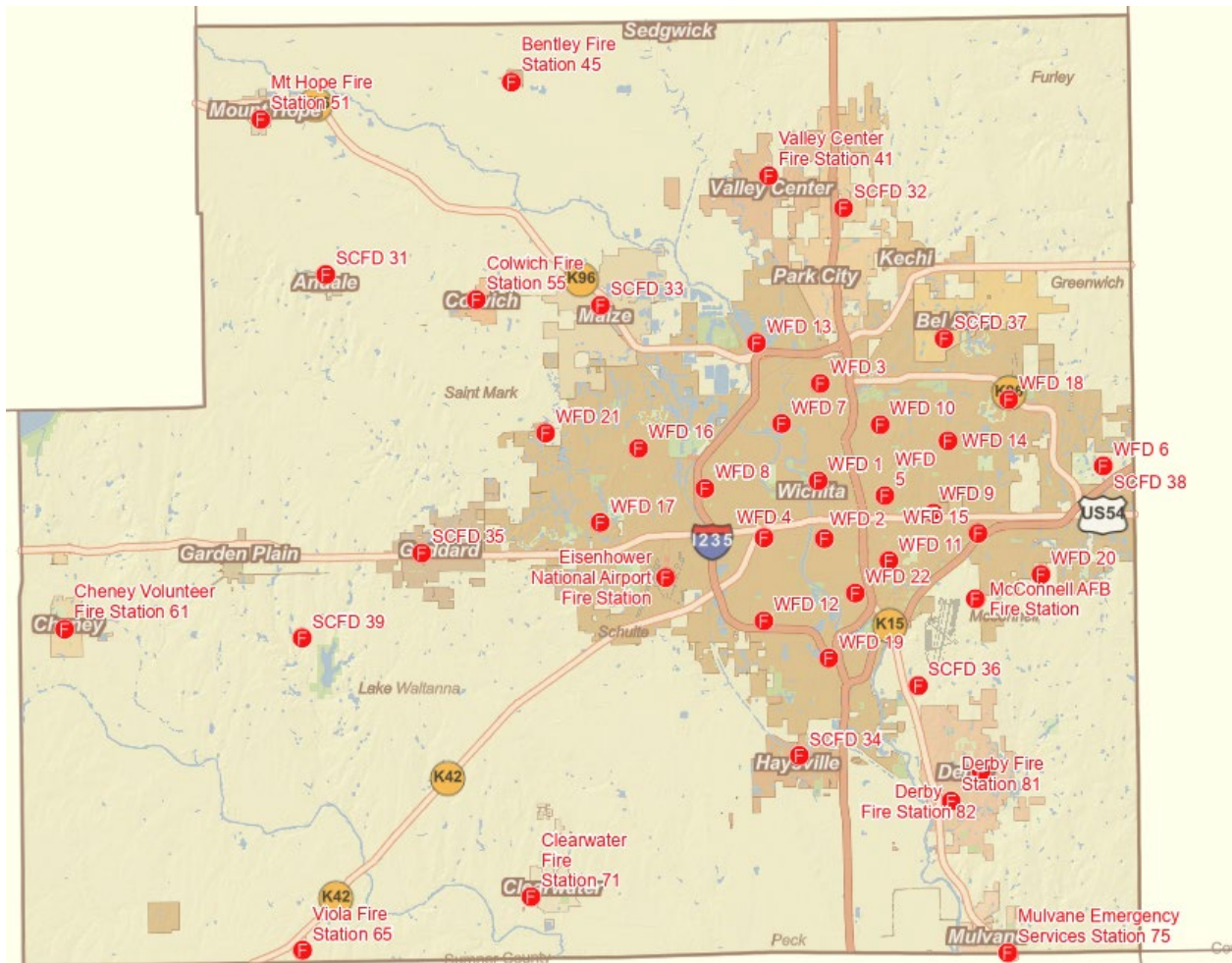
Year	Linear Feet Televised	Linear Feet Cleaned	Cost	Extended Cost
2027	2,918	29,176	\$0.79	\$23,049.04
2028	3,380	33,280	\$0.82	\$27,289.60
2029	1,960	15,595	\$0.85	\$16,655.75

Motion: *Warkins* moved; *Gordon* seconded to Approve the 3-year agreement with Mayer Specialty Services for sewer line cleaning and televised inspection. Voted and passed unanimously.

from 2020 to 2025. 19 in 2026 so far. Would having one or both solar farms in the direct path cause even future delay of Arc 95, or diminish growth in the area? The City and USD 264 has a need to continue to grow and provide additional support to our community and schools. Perhaps, the solar farm would bring additional tax for both, but that projection is not clear. I have been asked by many in the community if the City will make a formal statement regarding the solar projects. The City has been very proactive in putting out information regarding the MAPC meeting to consider the projects. I believe direct community input is critical in providing the MAPC and ultimately the County Commission with the feelings of the community. Gordon asked for more clarification regarding ARC 95, ARC95 is a long-term transportation plan to improve and extend 95th Street west toward I-35, eventually connecting to major roads such as 103rd, 111th, or 135th Street. The goal is to create a major arterial route that could connect with the future Northwest Bypass and improve commercial access around the Wichita metro area. Some planning, funding, and property identification have already taken place, though the project is still many years away. Mayor Ussery shared that he spoke with the school district, and they stated they would not make a public statement because they do not feel it is their role to be involved in decisions regarding private property. Chambers briefly mentioned the proposed tax deferment related to the solar farm project. Shore mentioned he is not opposed to Solar Farms, but this project surrounds some of Clearwater's property and believes it is not good for the long-term growth. Council discussed the proposed solar farms and reached a consensus to bring back a Resolution or letter formally stating that the City of Clearwater believes the TED project would hinder future growth and that the City is not in favor of the project and deliver it to the County Commissioners.

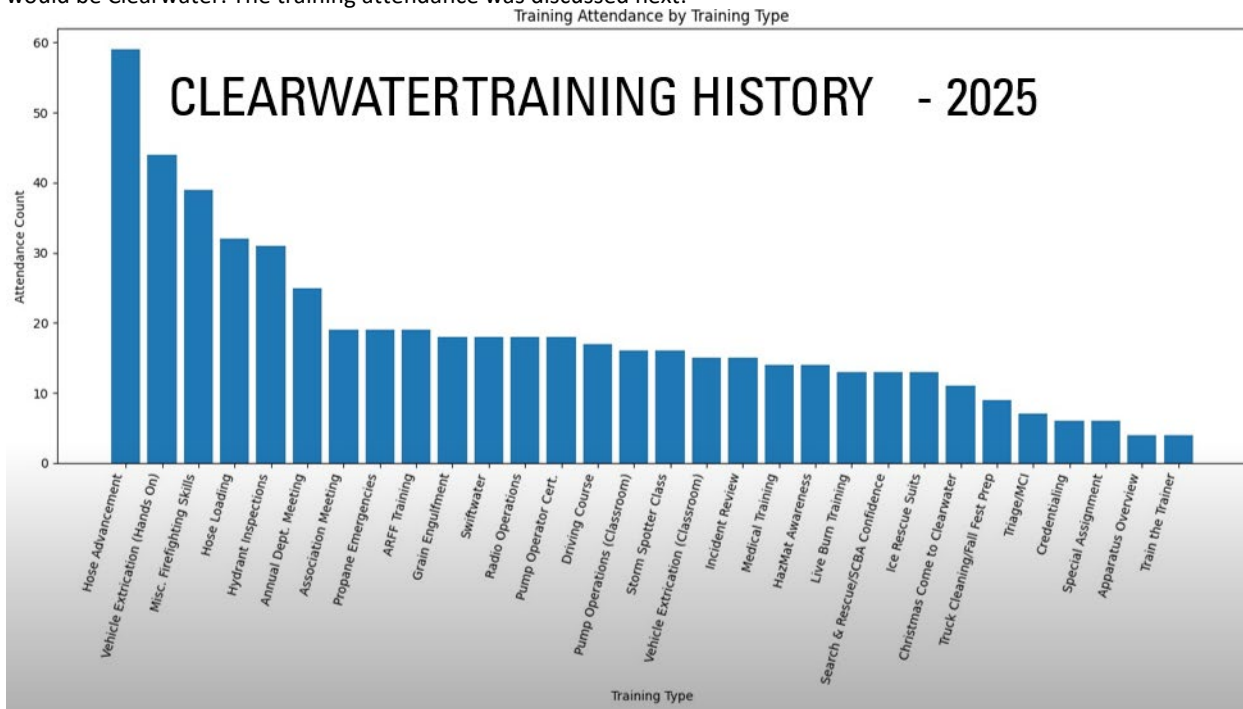
e. Sedwick County Fire District Mutual/Auto Aid

Mayor Ussery read a statement regarding the cancellation of aid agreements from Sedgwick County Fire District #1 (SCFD #1) Sedgwick County Commissioners have taken action to cancel the agreements between Clearwater and SCFD #1 for both Mutual and Auto Aid. Neither agreement had a financial reimbursement impact on the other. The purpose and scope for both is different. A little history, he is sure Clearwater has had a "volunteer" fire response since it's very beginning. Community taking care of itself. In 1955 SCFD#1 was established and became its own taxing unit. In 1959 Clearwater "Volunteer" Fire Department was formally established and funded by the Clearwater General Budget. In 1959 Clearwater entered into an agreement with Ninnescah Township to provide Fire Service, with revisions that relationship remains current. Ninnescah pays Clearwater on an annual basis for the coverage. From 1959 through today, neither Clearwater nor Ninnescah Township have paid SCFD #1 tax. In 1977, Clearwater entered into Fire Service agreement with northern Sumner County to provide their fire service. From 1964 to 1996, Clearwater Fire Department has maintained a "Mutual Aid" agreement with SCFD #1. Under the mutual aid agreement; if one needed the other, they would ask for assistance, and if the requested party had available resources, they would support the other. From 1996 to current, The current "Mutual Aid" agreement has remained in effect. From 2011 to current: Clearwater Fire and SCFD #1 entered into an "Auto Aid" agreement. The "auto aid" agreement is different in that it was limited to "structure" fires only, and it set a specific boundary. This boundary included the Clearwater Fire District (City & Ninnescah Township) plus two miles East of Clearwater and two miles North of Clearwater). Under the terms of this agreement, if a structure fire was communicated via the emergency line (911) both agencies would respond with resources. If the event occurred in the Clearwater Fire District, SCFD #1 would respond to "assist" Clearwater. If the event occurred in the outlying area, Clearwater Fire would "assist" SCFD #1. If the primary responding agency did not "need" the assistance, they would be called off. Of note, those outlying areas do pay SCFD #1, and when they receive service under the agreement by Clearwater Fire Department, receive it at no additional cost. As stated, these agreements have been formally cancelled with a 90-day notice. Today our responsibility is to understand what impact that has on our community and the options available. In the action taken by the County Commissioners, they basically have based their decision on two main factors. Cost equity and Fairness to all those in Sedgwick County who pay into SCFD #1 and those that do not. We will cover the costing in detail in a bit, but basically Clearwater invests about 7 mils for Fire & EMS Coverage (aided by a payment from the Ninnescah Township on an annual basis) compared to 17 mils for SCFD #1 for fire alone as everyone in Sedgwick County pays taxes that are used to provide the EMS county wide. Secondly, there are a wide range of concerns regarding the joint support when it does happen. SCFD #1 has an advisory board who created a report which called out safety concerns, staffing issues, training and performance deficiencies, and command and control issues. The letter mentioned "some" and Clearwater was not specifically called out. SCFD #1 made the recommendation to the County Commissioners that all aid agreements be cancelled, with the intention of a new agreement needing to be established or Clearwater could join SCFD #1. The SCFD#1 advisory board and SCFD #1 leadership have based their concerns on safety based on NFPA standards. NFPA has one set of standards for full-time departments and a second for volunteer departments. It is not clear which standard they based their comments on. We will touch on this in more details in a bit, but basically, the NFPA standards require for a "structure" fire be met with adequate response within a period of time. This can be a single

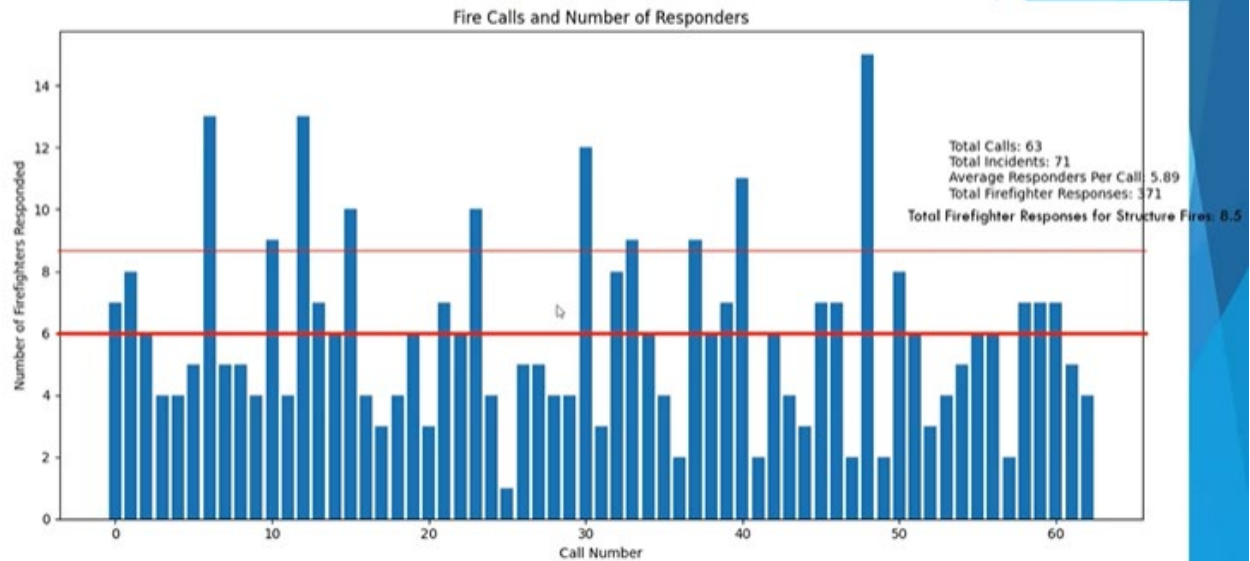


Dinwiddie said that Station 34 (Haysville) is usually the first station to respond with a tender and Battalion Chief, but this varies on what units are available. Patrick noted that mutual aid agreements call out Officer levels (meaning Captain, Lieutenant, Chief) having to be on scene to confirm any requests for mutual aid. If SCFD #1 decides to terminate the mutual aid agreement, this will no longer be in effect. Patrick went through the probationary period for members. All new firefighters are placed on a probationary period when they join the department. Members with prior fire service experience serve a six-month probationary period, while those with no experience serve a one-year probationary period. During probation, firefighters must complete required training and skills evaluations to demonstrate competency as entry-level firefighters. Required skills include donning full PPE and SCBA within one minute, hydrant hookups, attack line deployment and placement, forcible entry, search techniques, ladder deployment, and basic pump operations. These standards were developed by department and command staff based on essential firefighting skills. The department is also implementing a new identification system for probationary firefighters. Staff helmets are currently color-coded by rank, and probationary firefighters who have not completed all required signoffs will wear a different colored helmet, likely blue, to clearly identify their status. Other departments use similar systems, such as blue helmets or probationary shields, and the department believes this change will improve visibility and accountability on scene. Patrick and Dinwiddie then explained the trainings for the department. The department conducts scheduled training on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., regardless of weather conditions. Additional training are held as needed based on weather, seasonal conditions, or specialized topics, including ice rescue, vehicle extrication, and live fire training. Training topics include hose line operations, search and rescue, forcible entry, vehicle extrication, live burn evolutions, driver training, mayday and rapid intervention team (RIT) training, water shuttle operations, SCBA confidence training, severe weather response, hazmat, wildland fire, CPR, and monthly medical continuing education. The department maintains a long-term care provider status with the Kansas Board of EMS, allowing certified staff to receive continuing education hours in-house for EMT and paramedic licensure requirements. Training schedules are managed by department leadership, including chiefs, captains, and lieutenants. While the department ensures key topics are covered annually, training plans remain flexible and are adjusted based on weather conditions, staffing availability, and

operational needs. The department has previously outsourced grain silo rescue training. Recently, a grain rescue trailer was brought in for training purposes, and the department also can coordinate additional grain rescue training opportunities with neighboring departments. The department plans to conduct annual grain rescue refresher training now that it has a rescue tube available. Because grain rescue incidents are low frequency but high-risk events. Council asked if they were required to complete a certain amount of training each year, Patrick stated there is for paramedics and EMT's and Dinwiddie stated members must meet the department's minimum participation and training requirements in order to remain active members in good standing with Clearwater Fire Department. Patrick also pointed out that all drivers must be certified annually by the Fire Chief, which was implemented around 4 years ago. The certification program was established to ensure safe emergency response driving and competent pump operations on scene. As part of the annual evaluation, drivers complete a cone course, drive throughout the community, and demonstrate operational skills including charging hand lines, securing water supply, and performing pump calculations. All firefighters and medical personnel must meet minimum training and response requirements outlined in the department bylaws. Members are required to attend at least two training meetings per quarter and respond to at least 30% of emergency calls. Failure to meet these standards may result in removal from the department. Member participation and attendance are reviewed annually. Council asked if the standard for training coincides with NFPA, Dinwiddie was unsure but stated that there were almost 60 hours of available training last year. Patrick stated that the NFPA standards are more relaxed with volunteer fire departments, he could only find recommendations when researching though verses set standards and that it ultimately refers to the AHJ (authority having the jurisdiction) which would be Clearwater. The training attendance was discussed next:



Hose line advancement training is held multiple times throughout the year because it is a fundamental firefighting skill. These training courses often have larger participation due to multiple training sessions being offered. Other specialized training courses, such as ice rescue operations, are considered low-frequency events and are typically conducted once or twice per year due to limited opportunities and seasonal conditions. Clearwater falls under rural for NFPA 1720 requirements. In NFPA 1720 volunteer departments with a population density less than 500 people per square mile (rural areas) staffing benchmarks are 6 firefighters responding within 14 minutes 80% of the time. These standards reference structure fires only. Clearwater's population density is roughly about 94 per square mile. Sedgwick County falls under 1710, which states that they must have 15, 17 firefighters on scene within 8 to 10 minutes, 90% of the time. Mayor Ussery stated that the same expectations should apply to all parties involved, including SCFD #1. SCFD #1 has expressed concerns about not enough volunteers responding to calls, while our Chief has acknowledged that SCFD #1 faces meeting their own standards. Patrick mentioned that auto and mutual aid agreements are nationwide. They are able to place firefighters on scene sooner and in greater numbers, allowing for safer and more effective firefighting operations to combat the fire and better serve citizens, regardless of jurisdiction. The calls and number of responders was presented as a graph.



Patrick mentioned that the department holds themselves to the standard for rural in NFDA 1720 under six within 10 minutes, and typically for structure fires there are about 8.5 firefighters. In the chart, it is including all fire calls, not just structure for information. There were 63 calls and 5 of which he believes were structure. Out of all the 63 calls, an average of 5.89 responders responded to any one call with the minimum being 6 for structure fires only. Zollinger noted there has been 15 fire related calls this year, zero of them have been in Sumner County, eight of them have been outside the City limits.

Fire Calls/Runs

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
All Calls - (Assist a citizen, gas out, line down, medical, stand by, fire)	219	340	272	378	361	121
Sumner County	7	16	15	13	17	4
Outside City Limits	33	69	37	74	65	21
% of Calls outside City	15%	19%	13%	19%	17%	17%
All FIRE Related Calls Only	27	51	27	25	21	15
% of all call that were Fire related	12%	15%	10%	7%	6%	12%
Sumner County	1	6	3	3	2	0
Outside City Limits	14	32	14	15	10	8
*% of call that were outside of limits	56%	75%	63%	72%	57%	53%

**possibly other calls were outside but when a fire is labeled brush it is most likely outside of town. Other fire related calls are classified as "other", "structure", or "vehicle"*

Auto-aid / Mutual Aid SG Cty #1

Actual received/Disregarded

	2023	2024	2025	2026
Auto Given	1/0	1/3	1/1	4/1
Auto Received	2/3	3/2	1/2	0/0
Mutual Given	5/3	1/3	3/1	0/0
Mutual Received	1/0	1/1	1/1	0/0
Given	6/3	2/3	4/2	4/1
Received	3/3	4/3	2/3	0/0

Zollinger presented the Auto Aid and Mutual Aid data received, given, and disregarded, explaining that "disregarded" meant the assisting entity was called off and no longer needed. After reviewing the chart, Mayor Ussery referenced the auto aid received during the house fire on North 4th. Patrick noted that the numbers for that incident had accidentally been reversed. Mayor Ussery emphasized the importance of ensuring all information presented is accurate and also referenced County data stating they respond to 15–20 calls for every one response Clearwater provides and vice versa. Patrick went over the call response history next.

2025	Date	Address	Call Type	CFD Units	CFD Staff	SCFD#1 units	SCFD#1 Staff	Assignment	
Automatic Received	2/11/25	114 S Byers Ave	House Trapped	710,E71,E72,T71,STN	10	E39,T34,Q34,B34	9	On Scene Fire Operations	
Mutual Given	5/11/25	6025 S 215th	Bldg	T71,STN	10			Disregarded	
Automatic Received	7/26/25	700 E Janet Apt 101	Apartment Fire	710, E71,T71,STN	9	B34,T34,Q34	6	Disregarded	
Automatic Given	10/2/25	8800 W 79th St	House	E72,T71,STN	11			Released	
Mutual Received	11/14/25	111th St S and 119th St W	Medical	Sq72,710	5	Q34,Sq34	5	Assist CLFire w/ Medical Care	
Mutual Given	11/22/25	71st and 135th	48T	Sq72,E71,E72	9			Extrication, pt care	
Mutual Given	11/22/25	63rd and 135th	48	E72,Sq72,STN	10			Pt care	
Automatic Received	12/5/25	127 S Prospect	Garage Fire	E71,STN	7	T35,Q35,B34,	6	Disregarded	
Automatic Given	12/8/25	63rd and 135th	BLDG	T71,STN	5			Disregarded	
Mutual Given	12/27/25	9714 S 47th St W	House	720,T71,STN	6			Disregarded	
Automatic Received:			2	Mutual Received:			1	Received:	3
Automatic Given:			2	Mutual Given:			4	Given:	6

The report includes the date, address, and call type for each incident. The first column lists the Clearwater units that responded and the number of personnel sent. If aid was received from the County, the responding County units and personnel were also documented. Warkins asked if the CFD Staff was the number of volunteers who responded, Dinwiddie confirmed it was. Patrick clarified they are considered responding when they enter the station, in an apparatus and leaving the station but he included those that were on standby at the station in those numbers. Standby is used if another apparatus is needed once the scene is assessed. Mayor Ussery asked for the numbers of responses verses standby to be depicted for clarification purposes. Patrick can pull reports that will break data out by whatever information is requested. Patrick mentioned that our agreement with the County lines out that one engine or quint and one tender or squad and battalion chief, this is around 6 people each response. Zollinger pointed out that the County only has to meet NFPA standards within their jurisdiction. Dinwiddie went over the different types of structure fires. House fire, house fire versus traffic, car fire versus building fire, and shed /outbuilding fire, These are the main ones that dictate how to respond and what we to respond with. Shore asked about the different building in town, and the ability to handle a fire with CFD, Patrick said they may need help on a standard house fire, but will need help on apartment fires, commercial building fires, etc. Mayor Ussery stated that the goal is to find a balance between maintaining enough fire response resources to meet normal day-to-day needs without overbuilding for rare disaster-level events. He noted that those larger or unusual incidents have traditionally been managed through mutual aid and interlocal agreements, emphasizing that cooperation between communities is a critical part of emergency response. He added that no single community can handle every situation alone. Dinwiddie went over how the incident command works in the event of an event. Incident command is based on the ICS structure within the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Countywide protocol states that command is assumed by the first arriving chief officer, regardless of the agency they represent. If no chief officer is on scene, command is assumed by the second arriving company officer until relieved by a chief officer. Once a second chief officer arrives, they are typically assigned as the safety officer. If for some reason Dinwiddie or Patrick is not on scene, then the CFD first arriving apparatus should initiate the fire attack on the structure fire, second arriving would be to assume command until a chief officer shows up. He stated it is better to just leave whoever is on command, on command since they know what is going on and avoid interruptions. Patrick mentioned they are working on a training plan for the captains to be able to serve in his and the Chiefs role in the event they are gone. there is communication within CFD to ensure personnel are aware of schedules and staffing. Zollinger noted that the command structure discussed is commonly used by many departments. She also referenced concerns raised by SCFD #1 regarding command structure and the number of volunteers responding to incidents in relation to NFPA standards as well as capabilities of volunteer departments. Zollinger then stated that CFD data shows the department is meeting NFPA standards. Under the current agreements, both departments were expected to conduct quarterly joint trainings; however, those trainings did not occur. Clearwater can present to the County and clearly outline what is currently done and request that the agreement be restored. From there, they may agree to return to mutual aid but not auto-aid. If SCFD #1 determines that is not sufficient, there are additional options that could be considered depending on their response. Zollinger went over financials next. She explained that 7.03 mils are dedicated to the fire department for the

2026 budget which is \$343,000 with one mil being \$28,000. She noted that the MIL is not higher due to getting funds from Ninnescah (\$80,000) and Illinois (Sumner) Township, motor vehicle taxes and other fees that get applied to the fire department. Sedgwick County currently charges 16.754 mills with an expense of \$31 million for their fire department with one mil valuing over \$1 million. For a home that is appraised around \$250,000, \$202 of their annual taxes are going to CFD, for Sedgwick County it would be \$481. Shore asked if Clearwater joined SCFD #1 would it include all emergency response, Zollinger stated that is not what is being suggested, but the numbers and department include all medical and fire response. She noted that Sedgwick County still has a CRV that everybody that lives in Sedgwick County pays those taxes to. Mayor Ussery stated that it makes sense that SCFD #1 would want to be paid for their services, but understanding what the support for CFD would be is needed. She then went through the ISO ratings again and how Clearwater purchased another tender to avoid increasing the rural ISO ratings from 7-9%. Currently if Sedgwick County is in a hydrant area, their ISO rating is a 2 where Clearwater's is 410. Zollinger mentioned it could effect homeowners' insurance by 9%, but she isn't positive on what the umbrella is for that percentage, Mayor Ussery explained it would have the reverse effect for Ninnescah township going from a 6 to a 10. If SCFD #1 came into Clearwater, it would raise the taxes \$279 annually. Zollinger went over some options to appease SCFD #1 to get the aid back from them, one would be having a roster, which has not been popular in the past when Clearwater had ground transport. To ensure an engine can respond, the department would need a minimum of three people available on the roster during the hours that are currently the most difficult to staff, typically 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. This option would be to staff three people, with a maximum of four, during that 10-hour daytime shift. Limits would need to be set so too many personnel do not report at once. One option discussed was implementing on-call pay, similar to the system already used by public works. Public works employees currently receive \$2 per hour simply for carrying the after-hours phone between 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 a.m. If they are called out, they are then paid their normal hourly wage. Applying a similar on-call system for the fire department would require additional budgeting. Estimating that staffing would average three people half the time and four people the other half, the annual cost increase would be nearly \$19,000, which equals approximately 0.65 mills which would increase somebody's taxes by \$18.68 annually. Another option discussed was adding a 4 full-time fire positions. The City of Clearwater has previously operated with full-time EMS staffing, using a schedule of three employees working 24 hours on and 48 hours off. Over time, the cost became difficult to sustain, and the city began relying on cash reserves to cover expenses. At the same time, volunteer staffing was still sufficient to fill the second seat on the apparatus. Because of the financial impact on taxpayers, the decision was made to discontinue ground transport services and rely on Sedgwick County. If the city were to reconsider full-time staffing, the estimated budget increase would be nearly \$217,000 per year. That would equal approximately 7.72 mills, or about \$220 annually per household increasing by \$18.50. If Clearwater were to join SCFRD #1, monthly increase would be about \$23.30., if the ISO was incorporated then it could be a wash. Mayor Ussery reiterated that a decision would not be made tonight, but the most important matter is the safety of the personnel responding and who is being responded to. Mayor Ussery mentioned there being a shortcoming when it comes to annual recertification and will work with the leadership to come up with a better plan. If Clearwater decided to move to an on-call, roster-based, or full-time fire department could increase the mill levy to 14-15 mills. He emphasized the need to fully understand both the department's current capabilities and the role Sedgwick County may play in future fire protection services. If Clearwater were to join SCFD #1, they would need to be held accountable and transparent. Mayor Ussery believes that CFD has every capability to maintain the current level of services provided and convince Sedgwick County to maintain our current agreements. He mentioned the public statement made by the County where they believe that volunteer fire departments do not provide safety enough for themselves. He believes Clearwater is budgeting and doing all that can be done to keep it a volunteer department, if this can't be done, then Clearwater needs to consider joining SCFD #1 when all information is received from them that has been requested numerous times. He then mentioned a comment he made about having any integrated fire system with Wichita, Sedgwick County, Haysville and any other entities in the County with a concentrated effort for fire services that protects the entire county with the resources. Mayor Ussery wanted to let the Volunteers at CFD know that he is extremely pleased and proud of the services offered by them and let them know they could send responses or questions to the governing body. He is not pleased that Sedgwick County did not set meetings up with each volunteer department to have these conversations. He asked the volunteers to let him know if there is anything out of the ordinary going on in the next 90 days to let him know because the agreement should be honored for the 90-day period. Mayor Ussery mentioned that the townships have not been notified by SCFD #1 as far as he has heard. Shore noted that last year when this was discussed by Sedgwick County it was considered their consolidation project. Patrick noted that Dinwiddie brought up last year to have automatic aid agreements reviewed annually during one of the Chiefs meetings, but the idea was ultimately shot down. Mayor Ussery stated that he is committed to being open and as public as possible about the next steps in this decision.

8. Governing Body

Gorin – None.

Shore – None.

Warkins – None.

Chambers – None.

Ussery – None.

9. Executive Session

None.

10. Adjournment

Motion: *Warkins* moved; *Gordon* seconded to adjourn the meeting. Voted and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

CERTIFICATE

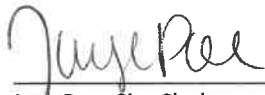
State of Kansas }

County of Sedgwick }

City of Clearwater }

I, Jaye Poe, City Clerk of the City of Clearwater, Sedgwick County, Kansas, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the May 12th, 2026, City Council meeting.

Given under my hand and official seal of the City of Clearwater, Kansas, this 26th day of May 2026.



Jaye Poe, City Clerk

