

**City of Clearwater, Kansas**  
Sedgwick County  
City Council Meeting - **MINUTES**  
May 26, 2026  
Clearwater City Hall – Council Chambers  
129 E. Ross Avenue Clearwater, KS 67026

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**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 Administrator called the roll to confirm the presence of a quorum. The following members were present: Mayor Burt Ussery, Councilmembers; Justin Shore, Samantha Warkins, Shirley Palmer-Witt and Dalton Chambers.

The following staff members were present:

City Administrator Zollinger, Kirk Ives, Amber Ives, Jared Dinwiddie and City Scott Ufford.

Others present who spoke:

Henry Schmidt via GoTo Meetings and Logan Mills.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

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

**Motion:** *Warkins* moved; *Shore* 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. Zollinger clarified that the total amount for the Utility Account Write off was actually \$437.68.

Previous Council Meeting Minutes  
Claims and Warrants  
Hire of Full Time Police Officer  
Utility Accounts Write Off

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

**6. Staff Reports:**

- Administration Office – Courtney Zollinger – Updated Council that one of the Air Conditioning units is down on one side of City Hall and it will be getting replaced. The Senior Center's west ADA entrance is closed due to the expansion project, and the east automatic door is not working. Repairs are estimated at \$3,200 and will be scheduled soon. Public Works will install a temporary doorbell to assist visitors needing access. Warkins inquired about the algae at the Chisholm Ridge ponds. Zollinger reported that during visit, KDHE visually identified the algae as potentially blue-green algae and conducted testing this week to confirm. KDHE required the City to post public notices as well as signs at the ponds. The ponds are currently under a visual watch, and KDHE will continue monitoring and testing until the algae is no longer present. Zollinger noted that fishing is still permitted; however, pets and other animals should be kept out of the water. Shore asked if there were aerators in the ponds, Zollinger replied there are not nor are there fountains. He noted it may help to keep the ponds clean. Palmer-Witt asked if customers were notified about having to re-register their utility accounts online, Zollinger stated that the website was updated to include that information in a big red notice when they went online to pay, but personal emails did not go out. She then inquired about the burning at Hammers Park, Zollinger stated that the conditions were never right for the departments to get together to get that done. Palmer-Witt noted that the signs on the batting cages should probably go on the pitching lanes as well, Zollinger

stated that she ordered two more for that purpose. She then asked about the ditch on Grant Street, Zollinger said that it is still on their list. Chambers inquired about the Clearwater sign that used to be at K-42, Zollinger explained that it was on private property and the owner decided they no longer wanted it on there.

- Fire Department – Jared Dinwiddie – Warkins stated that she appreciated all of the hard work put into the presentation done at the last council meeting. Mayor Ussery would like the reporting to be clarified who reported to the fire station verses onsite to the fire scene. Chambers asked about the fire hydrant paint, Dinwiddie hasn't decided on a color scheme yet but wants it to be visible in the evenings for the fire department.
- Police Department – Kirk Ives – No questions from Council.
- Public Works/Parks – Courtney Zollinger – Chambers asked about the stop sign off Ross and Wood St. as it is difficult to see it with the railroad arm, Zollinger stated that Cole looked at it and there was no issue with the location. She will have him look at it again.
- Senior Center – Amber Ives – Palmer-Witt asked whether the \$50 fruit and vegetable cards have an age requirement. Ives said she believes the minimum age is 60 and will confirm. She noted the cards are new this year; last year, recipients received checks instead. Ives also said the number of cards appears to have increased from 10 to 15, and several people have already asked about them because they are claimed quickly. Recipients will receive a list of participating farmers markets and eligible items. Mayor Ussery asked whether there has been strong interest in the Senior Center expansion. Ives said there has and mentioned that Mary has spent hours watching the progress.

## **7. Business**

### **a. Park Glen Estates 2nd Proposed Assessments**

The Park Glen Estates 2nd projects are complete, and we anticipate issuing bonds to permanently finance them in August. All of the costs are to be paid by special assessments upon benefiting property owners. Before levying assessments, state law requires the City to hold a hearing allowing property owners to comment on proposed assessments. Tonight's action schedules the hearing for the June 23, 2026, city council meeting and authorizes city staff and consultants to provide for the appropriate notices. Special assessment billings will begin this year in December. Assessments will be for 20 years to cover the related debt service payments of the General Obligations Bonds to be issued later this summer. Special assessments will cover the bonded debt service related to these improvements. The total cost for street per lot was \$33,424.49, the total cost for Sewer per lot was \$7,323.74 and the total cost of water per lot was \$7,307.33 totaling \$48,055.56. The estimated monthly specials for 20 years at 4.25% interest rate is around \$301.23. Mr. Schmidt wanted to point out the time was not updated in the documents for the hearing to be at 6 instead of 6:30, but it can still verbally be approved. Chambers asked for more explanation on specials, Zollinger stated that the property owners of Park Glen Estates 2<sup>nd</sup>, which is Stoney Creek (the loop) will be responsible for paying the specials. She explained when the area was developed, it needed streets, water and sewer in which the developer requested the City to sign up to borrow money for these improvements in turn, it will be made into a special assessment or improved district. Mayor Ussery explained that the property owners will be notified of the costs and have the opportunity to pay the lump sum or make payments over the term, Zollinger added the costs stay with the property, not the owner. Palmer-Witt added that the interest is not added if they pay the specials early in one lump sum. There are currently around 5 people occupying this development, so the developer is responsible for paying the specials until the lots get sold.

**Motion:** *Shore* moved; *Palmer-Witt* seconded to approve each of the documents; establish June 23, 2026 at 6:00 P.M., or as soon thereafter as may be heard, to meet for the purpose of hearing any and all written or oral objections to the respective assessments set forth therein; Cause the City Clerk to publish the Notice of Public Hearing (Exhibit C) in the official City newspaper not less than 10 days prior to such public meeting date; Mail the Form of Notice of Hearing and Statement of Cost Proposed to be Assessed (Exhibit D) to each and all owners of property affected by such assessments at their last known post office address on the same date as the publication of Notice of Public Hearing (Exhibit C); and File each of the documents of record in the office of the City Clerk and make the same available for public inspection. Voted and passed unanimously.

### **b. E Ross Sidewalk Project**

During the discussion and planning for the extension project for Yvonne and Janet the City Council stated they would like to see an add alternate to the project for sidewalk on the north side of East Ross and around the ponds as well as from

4th St to Indian Lakes Dr. CED has put together a sidewalk exhibit and pricing for a 6' and 8' sidewalk in those areas for council consideration. The Project Estimates are for a 6' sidewalk, \$715,057.70 and for a 8' sidewalk, \$786,031.10. The Equipment reserve balance for sidewalks is \$269,489. Zollinger noted that Yvonne and Janet already have sidewalks built into the plan, so this is an addition. Zollinger asked Logan Mills to expand on the estimate. Mills explained there are drainage and outlet structures worked in that include the large dip on the Southwest side of the West pond which they will try to match for a smooth level area and South of the house on the Northeast of the West pond they have worked in some walls due to the steep embankment which is driving some of the cost. He then mentioned the sidewalks at Cornerstone being 6' and matching that but increasing it to an 8' wide sidewalk which is not a requirement and can always be downsized. They have been in communication with Jumpstart to make sure any future plans they have would be considered. The driveway will be 6" thick for vehicle traffic whereas the rest of the sidewalks will be 4" thick. Mills stated they are exploring a solar-powered pedestrian crossing similar to the existing crossing on Ross Street, which is activated by a push button. Shore asked if these estimates were assuming that the 3 property owners grant a 15' easement, Mills stated yes. Mayor Ussery asked if these were all concrete, Mills confirmed they were. Palmer-Witt asked if there were any other 8' sidewalks in town, Mills believes there are not and noted that the sidewalks south of the middle school are 6'. Council inquired whether the sidewalks for the Yvonne Street project estimate were 6' or 8', Mills stated they are 6'. Mayor Ussery asked what the estimate for that project was, Mills believes it was just over \$2 million, Mayor Ussery asked what the estimated cost would be to go to 8' sidewalks instead of 6', Mills mentioned it would be comparable to the difference in the estimate provided this evening at about \$70,000 for every \$700,000. Mayor Ussery then inquired if there would be enough room for 8' sidewalks North of Janet as he thought it was tight, Mills was unsure. Mills noticed they might need to add a connection near the Senior living then asked if the Senior Center project included any sidewalk improvements, Zollinger stated they were not. Zollinger noted that she asked Mr. Mills to provide estimates for 8' so the information would be there, but most of the sidewalks are 4' throughout the City and 6' around the ponds and sports complex. Warkins asked if this proposal was for the City at large and not specials for property owners, Zollinger stated yes, it is being proposed to be a City at large project. Zollinger expressed concern about whether the project is financially feasible at this time. Palmer-Witt stated she had originally supported the sidewalks due to their condition but is now uncertain whether the project is necessary given budget uncertainties related to potential fire department changes but believes the sidewalks along Ross are important just not the ponds at this point. Warkins stated that she would like to see the connection along Fourth to Janet and the ponds potentially at a later time. Shore expressed concern on the condition of the pond sidewalks and being a liability. Mayor Ussery asked if they were considered sidewalks or paths around the pond, Zollinger and Palmer-Witt stated they were paths. Palmer-Witt mentioned the North side not getting utilized very much. Warkins asked if the estimate was for linear foot, Mills stated it is per square foot, Warkins then explained this is an estimate and not the contractor's price, that would come with a bid. Zollinger asked what CED estimated for the area Southwest of the West pond to match the downstream, Mills estimated it to be \$30,000 and noted it isn't pedestrian friendly. Chambers asked about the pipe crossing, Mills estimated that at \$20,000 with the end sections estimated around \$36,000 and noted that the 4 solar crossing are expensive as well. Shore asked if easements couldn't be obtained, would the storm drain solution against the road be needed, Zollinger stated that would be an alternative to which Warkins replied it would potentially double the cost. Warkins asked if the solar crossings were required, Mills was unsure but will look into it. He said they have been in contact with Jumpstart and Dollar General, and they seem receptive to the easements but they do not want to maintain or be liable for the sidewalks and the surveyor has been in contact with Mr. Fleming and Mr. Beck. Shore mentioned the large dip on the West pond not being ADA compliant at this point and if the sidewalks are being improved, that will probably have to be done. Council then discussed the maintaining of the sidewalks in residential areas which City policy states the property owner is to maintain, it was mentioned residents may be more agreeable if the City were to maintain the sidewalks. Zollinger asked what the next steps would be if the project moved forward, Mills stated they could go for easements but will need more design suggestions to understand what would be needed. Palmer-Witt asked if there would be additional costs if easements were not granted, Zollinger stated yes, they would have to redesign to take the sidewalks into the ditch with concrete tunnels to be in the right of way. Zollinger mentioned there are benefits when requesting easements for the sidewalks such as keeping people out of the residents yards and creating easier access but the downside is the maintenance associated with them which could be put in the agreement that the City would maintain but there are fees associated with obtaining easements. Council consensus was to move forward with 6' sidewalks and the project in the entirety the decisions can be made on what to keep after the designs are presented.

**c. Solar Farm Resolution**

At the last council meeting the Governing Body discussed whether, as a group, they wanted to send a statement to the County Commission regarding the solar farm projects. The consensus was the group would like to adopt a resolution

about the effects the TED Project may have on the future growth of Clearwater and asked staff to prepare a resolution. Warkins had asked if a letter or Resolution carries more weight at the last Council meeting, Ufford stated that a Resolution would probably be a stronger statement since it is a formal move by the City. Mayor Ussery mentioned the TED project was being discussed rather than the project that is further North since it is much closer to Clearwater. He referenced the comprehensive plan in the letters he prepared as well. Palmer-Witt stated that a resident from Prairie Meadows emailed material that was sent to them from MAPC and it had an older map that did not include all of the annexations into Clearwater and believes it is unfair to provide inaccurate information, Zollinger noted there are only 8 lots that are left undeveloped. Mayor Ussery mentioned asking that the accurate map be included in the final presentation for this project. Council discussed the TED project hindering the growth North of town as well as some residents not being aware of the project when making plans to build or move North. Palmer-Witt then asked for more clarification on Urban Growth Area (UGA), Shore explained the City can ask the County Commission to give us authority over that area to an extent where we have a little say within MAPC over building permits which would have caused a presentation to the Clearwater Planning Commission for a recommendation. Zollinger pulled up the UGA for Clearwater that was in the comprehensive plan and then explained that Clearwater has put a request in to MAPC to discuss Clearwater's UGA. Mayor Ussery believes that ARC 95 west of Broadway may not consider the area if these projects are approved and believes it will be necessary in the next 40-50 years. Shore asked if there were any housed in Prairie Meadows that were built and not annexed in, Zollinger stated there were not and that one is currently being built and they have started the petition process. There are three lots on Butterfly Ct. and four on Prairie Grass and two on Butterfly St that are not annexed into the City. Zollinger explained that property owners who choose to drill a well and provide their own utilities have no requirement to annex into the City, although that situation has not occurred to date. Chambers asked when the City would become responsible for road maintenance in the area, and Zollinger stated that responsibility would begin once an entire street is annexed into the City. Shore brought up Commissioner Howell's concerns against the island annexations the last time Clearwater submitted a request to the Board of County Commissioners then he asked if Clearwater could just annex the whole area, Zollinger replied no and he explained that they could not approve the requests. Zollinger confirmed that and explained that City services wouldn't be provided at that point. Mayor Ussery then explained that his objections prompted the City to contact the remaining lots there and ask if they would like to be annexed in which one developer called and stated he wouldn't see the benefit in annexing in at this time. Following Shore's comment about a social media post regarding a petition to join Sedgwick County Fire District #1 (SCFD #1), Zollinger noted that properties annexed into the City would receive the same fire protection services as other properties within the City but was not sure how it works for Townships to which Mayor Ussery added it could be a mess if Ninnescah opted to join SCFD #1 with the confusion of the City limits. Council then discussed sending the letter and the Resolution stating the concern for the growth of Clearwater regarding the solar farms and the conditional use permit. Council discussed the language and specifically referencing the TED project instead of solar energy and including the UGA of Clearwater that also references the Comprehensive Plan and the request sent to MAPC for the UGA expansion they also wanted to include the ARC95 project and change the heading expressing opposition to large scale solar TED project in proximity. The next BOCC meeting is the 22<sup>nd</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> where they will be considering both projects. Mayor Ussery wants the formal name listed in the name of the Resolution, Ufford suggested using that in the body of the Resolution in the first Whereas then saying the project name after that. Palmer-Witt asked if there were any changes needing made to the letter, Mayor Ussery will update the letter including the formal name and include language to reference the attached Resolution and will have it ready tomorrow morning for signatures since Warkins will be gone the next Council meeting.

**Motion:** *Shore* moved; *Warkins* seconded to adopt Resolution 7-2026 Expressing Opposition To The Pending Large-Scale Solar Conditional Use To Permit Utility, Major, Submitted By The Branch Line Solar, LLC Project Con2026-00048, In Proximity To The City Of Clearwater, Kansas, Due To Potential Long-Term Impacts On Community Growth And Development. Voted and passed unanimously.

#### **8. Governing Body**

Shore – None.

Warkins – There is a fall festival meeting tomorrow which she and Dalton will attend.

Palmer-Witt – She noted that the memorial service at the Church of the Nazarene which was nice. She updated Council that the Recreation Commission is looking for a new Director since the current Director's last day was today. They started advertising the position on Tuesday and Valeen will be interim for baseball and softball.

Chambers – Inquired if there was going to be anything done with the grass where the construction happened near Tracy

and Wood, Zollinger stated not at this time in hopes that the grass will grow back since it is on the side of the road. Zollinger notated that Diagonal is the City responsibility now but the County will continue to maintain the bridge and the railroad will still maintain the railroad. Chambers mentioned 135<sup>th</sup>, Zollinger stated that south of 95<sup>th</sup> is also in the City. Ussery – There is a Council workshop on June 30<sup>th</sup> with a goal to discuss the Fire Department as well as budget discussions. The County should provide information that was requested regarding details of location, responsiveness and cost if the City were to join SCFD #1 as well as Clearwater fire department providing data, training so comparisons and informed decisions can be made before the 90 days is up. There may be an open-house as Mayor Ussery has received some input from the community.

**9. Executive Session**

None.

**10. Adjournment**

**Motion: Palmer-Witt** moved; **Warkins** seconded to adjourn the meeting. Voted and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:28 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 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026, City Council meeting.

Given under my hand and official seal of the City of Clearwater, Kansas, this 9<sup>th</sup> day of June 2026.

  
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Jaye Poe, City Clerk

