

City of Baldwin City
Minutes
Tuesday, September 02, 2025
Regular Council Meeting

BUDGET HEARING

Mayor Simoneau opened the hearing at 7:00p.m.
There were no comments.
The hearing was closed at 7:00p.m.

A. Call to Order

The Baldwin City Council was called to Regular Session at 7:00 p.m. at the Baldwin City Community Center, 712 Chapel Street, with Mayor Casey Simoneau presiding.

Present were Council Members: Jay King, Susan Pitts, Cory Venable, Julie Constantinescu and Scott Lauridsen.

Also, attending: Russ Harding-Interim City Administrator; Amara Packard-City Clerk; Shiloh Afonja-Deputy City Clerk; Jeff Winkler-Power Plant Superintendent; Shaye Downing-City Attorney; and Lynn Meador-Communications Director.

B. Approval of Agenda

Julie Constantinescu moved and Jay King seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried with a vote of 5 yes and 0 no.

C. Consent Agenda

Susan Pitts moved and Jay King seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried with a vote of 5 yes and 0 no.

1. Minutes - 8.19.25
2. Scheduled Claims List
3. Special Event-BHS Homecoming
4. Special Event-Baker University Beer Garden

D. Public Comment

Tina Rakes-Baldwin City KS-wanted to ask about one of the forums regarding renewable energy, will the council still be looking into the tax credits in case of price spikes in the market place. Also wanted to know what plans the council had in place to fix the water line from Lawrence. Tina also inquired about the 56 Highway Corridor Project that was initiated approximately 12 years ago, and if the city had the funding to get that project going.

Mayor Simoneau took notes from Tina's questions and will address them later in the meeting.

E. Special Reports or Presentations

F. Old Business

1. Solar Ordinance 1518

Cory Venable and Susan Pitts recused themselves for this agenda item.

The state legislature has updated some policies in regards to solar, so the city needed to develop an ordinance that will follow state statute. This ordinance will only affect our net metering customers. Residential customers will still receive the same rate back, but now when they over generate, they will now receive a credit of \$.05 per kw.

Scott Lauridsen moved and Jay King seconded to approve ordinance 1518 as presented. Motion carried with a vote of 3 yes and 0 no. Julie Constantinescu-yes, Scott Lauridsen-yes and Jay King-yes.

G. New Business

1. RHID Resolution 2025-19

This is the 2nd step in this process for the moderate to low income housing project that has gone before the council, located between Washington Street and Eisenhower Road, north of Highway 56. If approved, there would be a hearing in October. This is for the property tax rebate.

Cory Venable moved and Julie Constantinescu seconded to approve resolution number 2025-19. Motion carried with a vote of 5 yes and 0 no.

2. City Administrator Job Description

Scott told the council that the job description before them this evening was with suggestions from the League of Kansas Municipalities, with some edits here and there.

Julie Constantinescu said that this is the first working copy for the council to look at and make any changes they feel are necessary.

Jay King asked about the portion under knowledge that requested a Masters in Public Administration be completed in the first 3 years after being hired. He asked if it could be similar, or if it has to be that one specifically. He felt that was a lot of pressure on a new city attorney potentially.

Council discussed how to best state it in the job description. The job description will state "Have completed their Masters of Public Administration, or City and County Management Certification or equivalent within three years of employment."

Jay King moved and Cory Venable seconded to approve the city administrator job description as amended. Motion carried with a vote of 5 yes and 0 no.

3. Budget

Revenue Neutral Hearing was opened at 7:29pm.

Revenue Neutral means the city will not accept any new money from property taxes next year.

There were no comments.

Revenue Neutral Hearing was closed at 7:29pm.

The Budget Hearing opened at 7:29pm.

There were no comments.

The Budget Hearing was closed at 7:30pm.

The finance committee discussed the budget with our financial advisors and the committee recommends a half mill decrease from the current mill levy which is about \$21,500.00.

Tina Rakes asked if any departments would have any shortfalls. Mayor Simoneau explained how the city's financial advisor meets with each department to go over their lists of needs for the following year, and after everything is reviewed, the council works with the financial advisor to see if there is anything that can be cut or adjusted.

Cory Venable moved and Julie Constantinescu seconded to approve resolution number 2025-20. Motion carried with a vote of 4 yes and 1 no. Jay King-no, Susan Pitts-yes, Cory Venable-yes, Scott Lauridsen-yes, and Julie Constantinescu-yes.

Cory Venable moved and Scott Lauridsen seconded to approve resolution number 2025-21. Motion carried with a vote of 5 yes and 0 no. Julie Constantinescu-yes, Scott Lauridsen-yes, Cory Venable-yes, Susan Pitts-yes, and Jay King-yes.

4. Communication Policy Committee Appointment

After the town forums there were some individuals interested in being on the communication committee. Susan Pitts has volunteered to chair the committee, and Scott Lauridsen agreed to co-chair. Also appointed were: Andrew Markley, Gwen Fogarty, Matt Beck, Rachel Moore, Leigh Anne Bathke and Emma Bailey. City employees: Russ Harding and Lynn Meador.

Julie Constantinescu moved and Jay King seconded to approve the communications policy committee appointments that were made. Motion carried with a vote of 5 yes and 0 no.

H. Committee Reports

1. Budget and Finance - Scott Lauridsen/Cory Venable

- Solar Ordinance that was heard tonight
- Budget

Next meeting 9/19/2025 at 7:30am, second floor of City Hall

2. Community Development - Cory Venable/Susan Pitts

Next meeting will be 9/22/2025 at 4:00pm, second floor of City Hall

3. Public Safety - Susan Pitts/Jay King

Next meeting will be 9/09/2025 at 4:00pm, second floor of City Hall

4. Public Works and Utilities - Julie Constantinescu/Jay King

Next meeting will be 9/11/2025 at 9:00am, Public Works Conference Room

5. Strategic Planning-Scott Lauridsen/Julie Constantinescu

Next meeting TBD at 2:00pm, second floor of City Hall

I. City Administrator and Staff Comments

The brick street project has started at 8th and High Street. The project should be completed in the next

3 to 4 weeks.

J. Council & Mayor Comments

Mayor Simonau responded to the questions that had been asked during public comment. He said the tax credit incentives have been removed for the renewable energy programs, so that project was put on hold indefinitely.

The waterline has been a constant discussion. Mayor Simoneau reached out to Congressman Schmidt's office and they are looking to see if there is any federal funding to help with this project.

Julie Constantinescu let Tina know that they have been discussing the water line project for a while in her committee and it needs to be done.

Mayor Simoneau addressed the 56 Highway Corridor Project. The city has resubmitted to the state requesting up to the maximum level since the amounts have increased since the original time this project was discussed.

K. Executive Session

Cory Venable moved and Julie Constantinescu seconded to go into executive session with the Council, the Mayor, Acting City Administrator Russ Harding, and City Attorney Shaye Downing, to discuss non-elected personnel for attorney client privilege for 20 minutes, from 7:55pm until 8:15. Motion passes with a vote of 5 yes and 0 no.

Mayor Simoneau called the meeting back to order at 8:15pm.

L. Adjourn

Julie Constantinescu moved and Cory Venable seconded to adjourn the regular meeting. Motion passes 5-0. Time: 8:15 p.m.

Attest:

Amara M. Packard
City Clerk