

City of Bennet, Nebraska
City Council
Minutes September 9, 2024
Budget Hearing & Regular Meeting

The Bennet City Council (the "Council") of the City of Bennet, Nebraska (the "City") held a Budget Hearing on September 9, 2024 at 6:00 PM, at Lancaster Rural Water District #1, 310 Fir Street in the City, the same being open to the public and preceded by advance publicized notice duly given in strict compliance with the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 84, Article 14, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, as amended, and having set forth (a) the time, date and place of the meeting; (b) that the meeting would be open to the attendance of the public; and (c) that the agenda for the meeting, kept continuously current, was available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk and posted at the City Office, Post Office and First Nebraska Bank.

Mayor Ryan Cheney called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and announced the location of the Open Meetings Act. City Clerk Michele Lincoln conducted roll call. Council Members in attendance were Pete Simmons, Dan Zieg, Steve Bettendorf, Justin Dorn and Mayor Ryan Cheney. A quorum being present, and the meeting duly commenced, the following proceedings were taken while the meeting remained open to attendance by the public.

Cheney opened the hearing for presentation of the proposed 2024/2025 budget document at 6:00 p.m. Cheney stated that the proposed operating budget is \$2,193,070.00 which is a 39% decrease from the prior year. The Tax Request would be \$364,822.10, which is a 3% increase from the prior year. The total assessed value has increased by 2% to \$111,119,03 so the levy will increase 1% to .328316. There being no public comment Mayor Cheney closed the hearing at 6:04 p.m.

Cheney opened the hearing to set the final tax request at 6:05 p.m. The final tax request is .328316. There being no public comment Mayor Cheney closed the hearing at 6:09 p.m.

Zieg moved and Dorn seconded a motion to adjourn at 6:09 p.m. Roll call vote: Simmons, Zieg, Bettendorf, Dorn voted YES. Motion carried.

The Bennet City Council (the "Council") of the City of Bennet, Nebraska (the "City") held a Regular Meeting on September 9, 2024 immediately following the Budget Hearing, at Lancaster Rural Water District #1, 685 Monroe Street in the City, the same being open to the public and preceded by advance publicized notice duly given in strict compliance with the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 84, Article 14, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, as amended, and having set forth (a) the time, date and place of the meeting; (b) that the meeting would be open to the attendance of the public; and (c) that the agenda for the meeting, kept continuously current, was available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk and posted at the City Office, Post Office and First Nebraska Bank.

Mayor Ryan Cheney called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. and announced the location of the Open Meetings Act. City Clerk Michele Lincoln conducted roll call. Council Members in attendance were Pete Simmons, Dan Zieg, Steve Bettendorf, Justin Dorn and Mayor Ryan Cheney. A quorum being present, and the meeting duly commenced, the following proceedings were taken while the meeting remained open to attendance by the public.

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Zieg moved and Simmons seconded a motion that all items under the consent agenda be approved and accepted as presented. Roll call vote: Simmons, Zieg, Bettendorf, Dorn voted YES. Motion carried. Zieg moved and Dorn seconded a motion to Motion to reconsider the Consent Agenda. Zieg moved and Bettendorf seconded a motion to pull Consent Agenda Item 3.h & 3.i to New Business. Zieg moved and Dorn seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda without 3.h & 3.i. Roll call vote: Simmons, Zieg, Bettendorf, Dorn voted YES. Motion carried.

Mayor Cheney introduced Ordinance 2024-8.1, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BENNET, LANCASTER COUNTY, NEBRASKA, TO AMEND § 52.02 OF THE CODE OF BENNET RELATING TO WATER RATES BY INCREASING THE USAGE FEE; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO PROVIDE FOR PUBLICATION; AND TO PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Simmons moved and Zieg seconded a motion to waive the third reading for Ordinance 2024-8.1. Roll call vote: Simmons, Zieg, Bettendorf, Dorn voted YES. Motion carried. Simmons moved and Zieg seconded a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-8.1. Roll call vote: Simmons, Zieg, Bettendorf, Dorn voted YES. Motion carried.

Due to discrepancies in the Water Purchase Agreement, Agenda Item 3.h, RESOLUTION 2024-9.2, approval of Water Purchase Agreement with Lancaster Rural Water District No. 1 for bulk water and Agenda item 3.i, approval of Agreement Regarding Annexation between Rural Water District No. 1 and City of Bennet were tabled until the October 14, 2024, meeting.

Mayor Cheney opened the Public Hearing for the Bennet One- and Six-Year Street Plan for 2025 at 6:14 pm. The plan moved the existing Six-Year to the One-Year Plan. It includes the following projects: Tyler Street from Cottonwood Street to Prairie Clover Lane replacing gravel with a 26' wide, 8" asphalt street, Cottonwood Street from Tyler Street to Hackberry Street replacing gravel with a 26' wide 8" asphalt street, and Cottonwood Street from Van Buren Street to S. 162nd Street overlay existing street with 3" asphalt. Engineer Brian Schuele stated that realistically it could be three to four years before construction of Tyler and Cottonwood Street paving if we hope to use Safe Street For All grant funds. Cheney closed the hearing at 6:19 p.m. Dorn moved and Bettendorf seconded a motion to approve Resolution 2024-9.3, a resolution adopting the Bennet One - and - Six Year Street Plan for 2025. Roll call vote: Simmons, Zieg, Bettendorf, Dorn voted YES. Motion carried.

Zieg moved and Bettendorf seconded a motion to approve an additional 1% increase in restricted funds authority. Roll call vote: Simmons, Zieg, Bettendorf, Dorn voted YES. Motion carried. Zieg moved and Simmons seconded a motion to approve Resolution 2024-9.4, a resolution setting the property tax request. Roll call vote: Simmons, Zieg, Bettendorf voted YES. Dorn voted NO. Motion carried. Simmons moved and Dorn seconded a motion to approve Resolution 2024-9.5, a resolution approving the fiscal year 2024/2025 Budget for the City of Bennet. Roll call vote: Simmons, Zieg, Bettendorf, Dorn voted YES. Motion carried.

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The Council discussed the existing 20' curb cut maximum and whether they wanted to maintain the 20' or increase it. Engineer Brian Schuele thought that 20' was adequate and that it made the street frontage nicer, allowing more street parking.

The Council discussed the condition of the City Office and what to do moving forward. The City Clerk's office required termite mitigation in the south office, so the staff had been moved to City Hall. The building leaks during significant rain and has mold issues. Mayor Cheney suggested they consider moving City Hall to the south office area, which is not quite as long as the old City Hall, but wider and could be set up to accommodate more people. The south office needs gutted due to the termite infestation, the bathroom needs revamped as the potential source of the water infiltration, and we could look at redoing the storage area to add additional storage space and/or break room. The Council agreed to start getting bids for the remodel/repair of the City Office.

The Council discussed whether they should change the November 11th (Veterans Day) meeting date since the Lancaster County Rural Water District #1 is closed that day or change the location of the meeting. The Council preferred to leave the meeting date and request permission to hold the meeting at the Bennet Elementary School.

Simmons moved and Bettendorf seconded a motion to approve the bid proposal from Arrow Striping of \$800.00 for Bennet Downtown Striping. Roll call vote: Simmons, Zieg, Bettendorf, Dorn voted YES. Motion carried.

Kristi Sittner, Emilie Long, Kristin Nelson, Lora Rhodes and Lillie Chambers presented the Bennet Community Economic Development Board's (BCEDB) Strategic Plan to the City Council. This Board emerged as a result of the City's participation as the flagship community in Southeast Nebraska Development District (SEND)D's new Economic Development Lite Program. The program was developed to provide communities with the tools and resources to address economic development opportunities. The BCEDB representatives shared their vision and mission along with their three main pillars, with established goals for each pillar: Bennet Beautification, Marketing & Advocacy, and Capital Investments for Community Growth.

Zieg moved and Bettendorf seconded a motion to adjourn at 7:23 p.m. Roll call vote: Simmons, Zieg, Bettendorf, Dorn voted YES. Motion carried.



City Clerk Michele Lincoln
City of Bennet, NE



Mayor, Ryan Cheney
City of Bennet, NE