



**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BARTLESVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

**Monday, March 2, 2026  
5:30 p.m.**

City Hall, Council Chambers  
401 S. Johnstone Avenue  
Bartlesville, OK 74003

**James S. Curd, Jr., Mayor  
918-338-4282**

**MINUTES**

(The Notice of Meeting was posted December 12, 2025 and  
the Agenda was posted February 24, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.)

**City Council in attendance was Mayor James S. Curd, Jr., Vice Mayor Trevor Dorsey, and Councilmembers Tim Sherrick, Larry East and Aaron Kirkpatrick.**

**City staff in attendance was Laura Sanders, Assistant City Manager, Jess Kane, City Attorney; Jason Muninger, CFO/City Clerk; Terry Lauritsen, Director of Water Utilities; Micah Siemers, Director of Engineering; Kelli Williams, Chief Communications Officer; Acting Police Chief Troy Newell; Deputy Police Chief Andrew Ward; Police Captain Daniel Elkins; Fire Chief H.C. Call; Robin Betts, Director of Human Resources; Matt McCollough, IT Director; Larry Curtis, Director of Community Development; Steve Roper, Engineer; Alicia Shelton, Accounting; Officer Coleman, Security; and Elaine Banes, Executive Assistant.**

- 1. The business meeting of the Bartlesville City Council was called to order by Mayor Curd at 5:30 p.m.**
- 2. Roll Call was conducted a quorum established.**
- 3. Invocation by Chuck McCarthy, Pastor, The Bible Church.**
- 4. Public Comments on Agenda Items.**

Carlos Schultz -Agenda Item 9 – spoke in favor of approving the property owner's request for additional time to bring their property up to code. He is a neighbor and has witnessed the clean-up work that is being accomplished.

Alyssa Lewis – Agenda Item 9 – spoke in favor of approving the appeal and provided information about how the family has made considerable improvements to the property. She asked that the City Council allow them additional time to bring the property up to code.

- 5. City Council Announcements and Proclamations.**
  - People with Disabilities Awareness Day Proclamation – March 10, 2026, presented by Councilman Kirkpatrick.
  - Oklahoma Cleaning Week Proclamation - March 22-28, 2026, presented by Councilman East.
  - Northeast Oklahoma Crimestoppers Month – January 2026, presented by Vice Mayor Dorsey.
  - Meritorious Conduct Award to Officer M. Scott, Officer G. Askew, and Officer T. Heck presented by Acting Police Chief Troy Newell and Captain Elkins.

## 6. **Authorities, Boards, Commissions and Committees**

- One opening on the Bartlesville Area History Museum Board of Trustees
- Four openings on the Tree Committee
- Two openings on the White Rose Cemetery Board

Mayor Curd read the openings and encouraged citizens to volunteer. Applications can be found on the City website and in the City Manager's office.

## 7. **Consent Docket**

### a. **Approval of Minutes**

- i. The Regular Meeting Minutes of February 2, 2026.

### b. **Approval and/or Ratification of Appointments and Reappointment to Authorities, Board, Commissions, and Committees.**

- i. Reappointment of Ms. Denise Parks and Mr. Lucas Nettles to additional three-year terms each on the Bartlesville Area History Museum at the recommendation of Councilmember Sherrick.
- ii. Reappointment of Mr. Martin Patzkowski to an additional three-year term to the Bartlesville Library Board at the recommendation of Mayor Curd.

### c. **Approval of Resolutions**

- i. Accepting a grand award from Carnegie Corporation of New York in the amount of \$10,000 to develop an educational technology space called a Maker Space, and amending the budget of the City of Bartlesville, Oklahoma for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 appropriating unanticipated revenue in the Restricted Library Donations Fund of the Library Department.
- ii. Accepting a grant award from Phillips 66 in the amount of \$4,000 to develop a new STEM programming and a Maker Space in the Library, and amending the budget for the City of Bartlesville, Oklahoma for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 appropriating unanticipated revenue in the restricted Library Donations Fund of the Library Department.
- iii. Amending the Budget of the City of Bartlesville for fiscal year 2025-26 appropriating donations funds or the Golf Course Memorial Fund.

### d. **Approval and Ratification of Agreements, Change Orders, Contracts, Donations, Easement Requests, Engagement Letters, Grant Applications, Leases, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and Proposals.**

- i. Business Associate Agreement between Psych Select Software, LLC and the Bartlesville Police Department for documentation and scheduling services to support the department and wellness unit, in the amount of \$708 annually for unlimited clinical session scheduling.
- ii. Agreement for Sale of Real Estate between RDA, Inc. and the City of Bartlesville to purchase property at 1001 SW Frank Phillips Blvd. for the future site of a Fire Station #2, in the amount of \$60,000.
- iii. Ratify the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Emergency Facilities & Land Use Agreement with the City of Bartlesville/Bartlesville Municipal Airport to provide air attack and support with 3-4 single engine air tankers and supporting tanking operations to assist fire-fighting operations on the ground, agreement generating \$270.00 per day; and to authorize the City Manager or his designee to approve and sign all future LUA's with the BIA to stream-line the emergency response process.
- iv. Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Bartlesville and the IAFF Local 200 regarding the current Training Officer returning to the rank of Firefighter at his request.

- v. 2025 Addendum to the Administrative Services Agreement between the City of Bartlesville and RxBenefits that includes refreshed pricing for all clients, rate changes specific to regulatory changes.
  - vi. Professional Services Agreement with John Streachek Agronomic Consulting for agronomy consulting services for Boots Hollow Golf Course with estimated cost between \$15,000 and \$20,000.
  - vii. Service Contract with Glenn Security Systems, Inc. for access control work associated with the City Hall Remodel project, in the amount of \$43,265.
  - viii. Rental Agreement (2-year agreement) with Bottleless Nation with City of Bartlesville/Boots Hollow Golf Course to provide filtered water to customers, in the amount of \$50 per month.
  - ix. Letter of Agreement with Holloway, Updike and Bellen, Inc. for engineering design of the Choctaw Drainage Improvements project, in the amount of \$32,000.
  - x. Amendment 1 to Task Order No. 5 to the Master Services Agreement with Parkhill, Smith and Cooper for Airport Consulting Services, with no impact to the budget.
  - xi. Amendment 1 to Task Order No. 6 to the Master Services Agreement with Parkhill, Smith and Cooper for Airport Consulting Services, with no impact to the budget.
- e. Receipt of Bartlesville NEXT Progress Report**
- i. Bartlesville NEXT Progress Report February 2026
- f. Receipt of ALPR (Flock Cameras) Report**
- i. ALPR Report for February 2026
- g. Receipt of Financials**
- i. Interim financials for seven months ending January 31, 2026.
- h. Receipt of Bids**
- i. Bid No. 2025-2026-012 New Paint Striper
  - ii. Bid No. 2025-2026-013 Water Treatment Plant Polymer Blending Skid Replacement

Mayor Curd provided the consent docket on a PowerPoint slide and referred citizens to the agenda where every item was listed. He asked the Council if there were any items to be pulled for discussion. Mr. Kirkpatrick pulled Items 7.c.i., ii. and d.vi., and Mr. East pulled item 7.d.iii. and 7.g.i.

Vice Mayor Dorsey moved to approve the Consent Docket with the exception of Agenda Items 7.c.i., ii., d.iii., d.vi., and g.i., seconded by Mr. Kirkpatrick.

Voting Aye: Mr. Sherrick, Mr. East, Mr. Kirkpatrick, Vice Mayor Dorsey, Mayor Curd  
 Voting Nay: None  
 Motion: Passed

**7.c. Approval of Resolutions**

- i. Accepting a grand award from Carnegie Corporation of New York in the amount of \$10,000 to develop an educational technology space called a Maker Space, and amending the budget of the City of Bartlesville, Oklahoma for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 appropriating unanticipated revenue in the Restricted Library Donations Fund of the Library Department.
- ii. Accepting a grant award from Phillips 66 in the amount of \$4,000 to develop a new STEM programming and a Maker Space in the Library, and amending the budget for the City of Bartlesville, Oklahoma for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 appropriating unanticipated revenue in the restricted Library Donations Fund of the Library

Councilman Kirkpatrick explained that Items C1 and C2 both related to the acceptance of grants for a project the library is developing called a Makerspace. He asked Library Director Kylie Roberson to provide additional information so that the Council and the community could better understand the initiative. Mr. Kirkpatrick stated that the project sounded exciting and noted that the grants represented additional funding coming into the community. He said he thought it would be beneficial for the public to hear more about what the library was planning.

Ms. Roberson thanked Councilman Kirkpatrick for the opportunity to highlight the project. She explained that the Bartlesville Public Library had been selected by the Carnegie Foundation to receive a special grant. Because the library was originally established as a Carnegie library, it qualified for a \$10,000 grant awarded to original Carnegie libraries in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the United States. She further reported that the library also received a grant from Phillips 66 to support innovation, ingenuity, and programming. The combined funding totals approximately \$14,000. Ms. Roberson explained that the library intends to use these funds to begin developing a Makerspace pilot project. Makerspaces are becoming common in public libraries and many academic libraries and typically include equipment such as 3D printers, laser engravers, soldering equipment, crafting tools, sublimation machines, and other hands-on technology. She noted that these spaces allow community members and students to use equipment free of charge to create projects, learn new skills, and explore new technologies. The library believes these opportunities support important community values such as innovation, creativity, and hands-on learning. Because the grant funding is not sufficient to build a full Makerspace, the library plans to begin with a pilot program. Initial equipment will be purchased and placed in the library so the public can begin using it. Staff will then evaluate community interest and demand. If there is strong participation, the library may pursue additional donations or grant opportunities in the future to expand the program and potentially establish a permanent Makerspace within the facility. Ms. Roberson concluded that the library hopes to launch the pilot project during the summer in connection with the nation's 250th anniversary celebration, using the program to highlight the history of American innovation, ingenuity, and technological advancement while encouraging community members to participate in creative and entrepreneurial activities.

Councilman Kirkpatrick commended Kylie and the library staff for their continued efforts to secure grant funding throughout the year. He noted that the team consistently seeks outside resources to enhance library services and ensure the facility remains a valuable community asset. Ms. Roberson thanked the Council for its support and said the library staff is pleased to pursue initiatives that benefit the community.

**7.d.vi. Professional Services Agreement with John Streachek Agronomic Consulting for agronomy consulting services for Boots Hollow Golf Course with estimated cost between \$15,000 and \$20,000.**

Councilman Kirkpatrick requested an update regarding the municipal golf course following its reopening in late August. He noted that significant improvements had been made to the course and that fee adjustments had recently been implemented. He asked staff to provide an overview of how the course has been performing and how the community has responded to the changes.

Dee Roadman, Director of Golf, reported that the course reopened on August 23, 2025 near the end of the traditional golf season. As a result, the initial months of operation of November through February are typically the slowest months for golf activity, making early performance comparisons somewhat difficult. Despite the timing of the reopening, the course has recorded 12,236 rounds played and approximately \$621,000 in revenue during the six-month period from reopening through the end of February. He explained that the fiscal year budget projected approximately \$930,000 to \$960,000 in revenue, accounting

for the fact that the course would not reopen at the beginning of the fiscal year. Because the course missed two of the stronger revenue months—July and August—he estimates that total revenue could still exceed \$1 million over the ten months of operation. Based on current data, he projects that the course will host approximately 30,000 rounds per year, which is slightly lower than the 35,000 rounds estimated in the JJ Keegan report. However, he noted that reliable historical comparisons are limited. In 2024, the course was not open for the entire year, and tee times were frequently restricted due to poor golf cart conditions. Many carts were inoperable because of battery issues, which significantly limited the number of players who could be accommodated each day. Overall, Mr. Roadman concluded that the course appears to be performing in line with expectations following its reopening.

Further discussion covered how the greens had weathered the winter months with Mr. Roadman reporting that the greens are currently in very good condition. He explained that they were somewhat thin immediately after reopening, largely because the course reopened earlier than staff would have preferred in order to accommodate a United Way tournament scheduled shortly afterward. However, the greens filled in significantly during September and October are now approximately 95 percent fully covered, with only minor thin areas around the perimeter and on some slopes. He added that the course is entering the spring season in strong condition. Council members expressed satisfaction with the course conditions and thanked Mr. Roadman for the update.

- 7.d.iii. Ratify the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Emergency Facilities & Land Use Agreement with the City of Bartlesville/Bartlesville Municipal Airport to provide air attack and support with 3-4 single engine air tankers and supporting tanking operations to assist fire-fighting operations on the ground, agreement generating \$270.00 per day; and to authorize the City Manager or his designee to approve and sign all future LUA's with the BIA to stream-line the emergency response process.

Councilman East requested additional clarification regarding the proposal to authorize the City Manager, or his or her designee, to approve and execute emergency Land Use Agreements (LUAs) with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to streamline emergency response situation. He believes the proposal was a good idea and supported having a process in place for emergency situations. However, he asked whether agreements executed under this authority could later be reported back to the Council so they remain informed. Assistant City Manager Sanders explained that emergencies require immediate action, which is why the authority is being delegated. However, she confirmed that executed emergency LUA's could be reported back to the Council at a later date, such as through the consent docket or an informational update. Councilman East indicated that such an informal report would be sufficient.

**7.g.i. Interim financials for seven months ending January 31, 2026.**

Councilman East also inquired as to the Financial Statement Revenue Highlights, specifically the chart related to water fees. He noted that the chart showed revenues at roughly 30 percent of the annual budget while approximately 60 percent of the fiscal year had passed, which appeared concerning. CFO/City Clerk Jason Muninger explained that the chart includes budgeted debt proceeds that have not yet been recognized, which affects the percentage displayed in the graphic. He also noted that water fee revenues have declined somewhat compared to previous years due primarily to reduced water usage. The decrease is largely attributed to conservation efforts during recent drought conditions, followed by significant rainfall during the past summer and continuing into the current year, which reduced demand for water usage. Mr. Muninger added that while the revenue decline is noticeable, the conservation measures were necessary during the drought period, and he expects water usage and corresponding revenue to return closer

to normal levels during typical summer conditions. Councilman East indicated that the explanation addressed his questions.

Mr. East moved to approve Agenda Items 7.c.i., c.ii., d.iii., d.vi., and g.i. with the Council directive to present an informal report on future Land Use Agreements between the City/Airport and Bureau of Indian Affairs approved by the City Manager, seconded by Mr. Kirkpatrick.

Voting Aye: Mr. East, Mr. Kirkpatrick, Vice Mayor Dorsey, Mr. Sherrick, Mayor Curd  
Voting Nay: None  
Motion: Passed

**8. Discuss and take possible action to award Bid o. 2025-2026-013 for Water Treatment Plant Polymer Blending Skid Replacement. Presented by Councilmember Kirkpatrick.**

Mr. Kirkpatrick provided the report and moved to award Bid No. 2025-2026-013 to Civil Builders, Oklahoma, OK, in the amount of \$206,000 as presented, seconded by Mr. East.

Voting Aye: Mr. Kirkpatrick, Vice Mayor Dorsey, Mr. Sherrick, Mr. East, Mayor Curd  
Voting Nay: None  
Motion: Passed

**9. Discuss and take possible action on an appeal by Irma Guevara of the Hearing Examiner's Order of Abatement for demolition and removal of a dilapidated structures at 329 NW Cass Avenue, legally described as Lot 5, Block 2, Bruce Cass Addition, Bartlesville, Washington County, Oklahoma (Code Enforcement Case Number DS-1125-0457). Presented by Larry Curtis, Director of Community Development.**

Mr. Curtis reported that the hearing examiner conducted a hearing on January 14, 2026. The property owner did not appear at the hearing. Based on the code enforcement officer's report and photographic evidence, the examiner determined that both the primary structure and accessory buildings were seriously deteriorated and constituted a public nuisance. An order was issued requiring demolition of the structures within 30 days. Staff recommends that the City Council affirm the order for several independent reasons as follows:

1. Dilapidated Structure – The buildings meet the statutory definition of dilapidated, as they are unfit for occupancy, in a state of decay, and pose a hazard to public health and safety.
2. Dangerous and Deteriorated Structures – Under the municipal code, the buildings qualify as dangerous and deteriorated structures, which constitute a nuisance.
3. Attractive Nuisance and Safety Hazard – The condition of the property creates an attractive nuisance and dangerous condition, including potential structural instability and negative impacts on surrounding properties.

Mr. Curtis further noted that the structures do not meet the standards of the International Property Maintenance Code or the International Residential Code, and therefore would not qualify for legal occupancy. From a feasibility standpoint, staff determined that rehabilitation was not a realistic option.

In addition, the Washington County Assessor values the structure at approximately \$18,105. Any renovation exceeding 50 percent of the structure's value would trigger FEMA substantial improvement requirements, because the property is located within the 100-year floodplain. These requirements would necessitate elevating or floodproofing the structure to at least one foot above the base flood elevation, creating significant additional costs.

In conclusion, Mr. Curtis recommends that the City Council deny the appeal, declare the structures a public nuisance, and uphold the hearing officer's demolition order. If the property owner fails to comply, the City would be authorized to proceed with demolition and assess the associated costs to the property.

Mr. Kirkpatrick asked whether staff had conducted a recent inspection, noting that some citizens had spoken earlier on behalf of the property and that the photos in the record appeared to have been taken in January. Mr. Curtis stated that no additional inspections had been conducted since the January 14 hearing.

Discussion ensued regarding a key concern that repairs exceeding 50 percent of the structure's value would trigger FEMA requirements, which could significantly increase the cost of rehabilitation. Mr. Curtis confirmed that if repairs exceed that threshold, the structure must be brought into compliance with current floodplain standards, including elevation at least one foot above the floodplain. He added that should there be failure to comply with floodplain regulations, it could jeopardize a community's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. He explained that municipalities participating in the program must adopt and enforce specific floodplain regulations and are subject to periodic inspections, typically on a five-year cycle. If inspectors determine that the City knowingly failed to enforce the regulations, the community could lose eligibility for the federal flood insurance program, leaving residents dependent on private insurance with substantially higher costs.

Mr. Curtis displayed the floodplain map referenced in the presentation, clarifying that if repairs were completed without complying with FEMA elevation requirements, properties throughout the floodplain including portions of downtown Bartlesville, as well as the community as a whole, could face increased flood insurance costs if the City were found out of compliance.

Additional discussion covered why other properties in this area were in similar condition but have not become subject to enforcement. Mr. Curtis explained that code enforcement is primarily complaint-driven, though staff also conducts proactive inspections. When a violation is identified, the City initiates a notification and voluntary compliance process. In this case, staff completed the full process, including notification of violations, opportunity for voluntary compliance, and the hearing before a hearing examiner. The hearing examiner issued the abatement order, it was appealed by the property owner via their construction agent, and the matter is now before the City Council due to the appeal.

Additional discussion covered repair limitations and contractor requirements. Mr. Curtis explained that if the owner occupies the property, certain repairs may be performed by the homeowner under state law. However, structural, foundation, or elevation work must be performed by licensed professionals and often requires engineering design and permits. If the owner does not occupy the property, work generally must be completed by licensed contractors. He added that repairs exceeding 25% of the assessed value (approximately \$4,500) would trigger zoning requirements for installing a concrete driveway, and repairs exceeding 50% of the value (approximately \$9,000) would trigger FEMA floodplain elevation requirements.

Alyssa Lewis, speaking on behalf of the property owner, stated that the property had been cleaned significantly since the earlier photographs were taken. She provided photographs showing improvements and explained that the contractor involved operates his own construction company, is licensed, and plans to complete the repairs himself. She stated that the contractor believed he could complete repairs within the applicable cost limits and that the property currently looked 70–80 percent better than before. The contractor, Eric Bonilla, with Ms. Lewis' assistance translating, explained that a previous occupant had lived on the property for several years and had accumulated significant trash. After the individual passed away, approximately three months later the property owner began cleaning and maintaining the site. He requested additional time to repair the house, and that he felt he could repair it under the amount that would trigger FEMA requirements.

Councilmembers expressed concern that Federal and State regulations could make rehabilitation financially impractical, regardless of the contractor's ability to perform the work. The primary issue was not whether repairs could be completed, but whether the total cost including licensed trades, permits, and potential elevation requirements would exceed regulatory thresholds. It was also

discussed that the property owner may not have fully understood the regulatory implications prior to the meeting, particularly given potential language barriers.

Mr. Kirkpatrick suggested allowing the property owner one month to evaluate the costs and determine whether rehabilitation would be financially feasible. The proposed purpose of the additional time would be to obtain estimates from licensed contractors, determine whether repairs could remain below the FEMA substantial improvement threshold, and to conduct a cost analysis before making a final decision. He emphasized to Mr. Bonilla that no repairs should begin during that period, as expenditures could trigger regulatory thresholds. Mr. Curtis also noted that surveys and elevation certificates may be required if floodplain exemptions or modifications were pursued, which could add additional costs of approximately \$1,500–\$2,000.

Mr. Kirkpatrick moved to provide the appellate 30 days to obtain cost studies regarding all City, State and Federal requirements the property will need to bring it up to code, including surveys and elevation certificate expenses, and return with a report to the City Council, seconded by Mr. East.

Voting Aye: Vice Mayor Dorsey, Mr. Sherrick, Mr. East, Mr. Kirkpatrick, Mayor Curd  
Voting Nay: None  
Motion: Passed

10. **Discuss and take possible action to adopt an Ordinance amending the Municipal Code by repealing Division 2 of Chapter 13, Sections 13-61 through 13-63 relating to the Adams Municipal Golf Course Operating Committee, providing findings and intent; providing for governance and oversight of the golf course through the City Manager form of government. Presented by Dee Roadman, Director of Golf.**

The Operating Committee was created at a time when the golf course professional was not a City employee and did not report through the City's normal management structure. That model provided valuable guidance during an earlier phase of the course's history. The City engaged an independent firm, JJ Keegan, to conduct a comprehensive study of the course compared to peer facilities locally and nationally. Additionally, a steering committee helped guide the course through reopening and long-term planning. One of the recommendations of the professional study was to move toward professional day-to-day management under a Director of Golf reporting to the City Manager. This approach reflects common and proven practices used by municipal golf courses across the country. This update is intended to support the long-term stability, financial health, and quality of Boots Hollow Golf Club while maintaining transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to the golfing public. This structure mirrors how other City departments and many successful municipal golf courses are managed. In addition, the Director of Golf has established a course advisory board composed of regular players who represent a broad cross-section of user groups. This advisory board provides practical input on course conditions, play experience, and operational matters, ensuring the golfing community continues to have a direct voice in course-related decisions.

Vice Mayor Dorsey expressed his appreciation to those who served alongside him on the Adams Golf Course Operating Committee, stating that those members have approved the changes set out in the proposed ordinance and the City's and Mr. Roadman's path forward.

Vice Mayor Dorsey moved to adopt the ordinance as presented, seconded by Mr. East.

Voting Aye: Mr. Sherrick, Mr. East, Mr. Kirkpatrick, Vice Mayor Dorsey, Mayor Curd  
Voting Nay: None  
Motion: Passed

11. **Discuss and take possible action to accept the Interest Arbitration Panel Award dated February 17, 2025 issued in City of Bartlesville, Oklahoma vs. International Association of Firefighters, Local 200, Federal Mediation & Conciliation Service Case No. 261006-00114,**

**and to approve the execution of the IAFF Collective Bargaining Agreement for FY 2025-2026. Presented by Jess Kane, City Attorney.**

Mr. Kane summarized the outcome of the arbitration proceeding following the January 19, 2026 hearing regarding the firefighters' collective bargaining agreement. He reported that the arbitrator conducted a comprehensive review of testimony, documentary evidence, and arguments presented by both the City and the firefighters' union. He explained that the arbitration process operated under an "all-or-none" last best offer (LBO) framework. Under this structure, the arbitrator was required to accept one party's complete proposal or the other, rather than create a hybrid contract combining elements of both proposals. He stated that the written arbitration decision was issued on February 20, 2026, by neutral arbitrator Glynis Gilder. Mr. Kane noted that the decision was extensive and reflected detailed consideration of the evidence presented.

Mr. Kane reported that the arbitrator favored the City's proposal regarding promotions. While seniority may be considered in promotion decisions, the arbitrator concluded that seniority should not be the dominant factor in the promotional process. The City's position during negotiations emphasized reforming the promotional system to incorporate merit-based evaluation. He stated that evidence presented during arbitration indicated that Bartlesville remained one of the few cities in Oklahoma that relied primarily on seniority for firefighter promotions and explained that the City's objective was to transition toward a merit-based promotional system, which is consistent with employment practices commonly used in other public and private sector organizations.

Regarding the issue of sick leave abuse, Mr. Kane stated that evidence presented during arbitration supported the City's position that patterns of excessive sick leave usage existed within the Fire Department. The evidence indicated that firefighters used an average of approximately 188 hours of sick leave per year, which was higher than peer-city averages by approximately 85 hours; sick leave usage was significantly higher than comparable departments in several Oklahoma municipalities; firefighters claimed proportionally more sick leave than other City employee groups, including police department personnel; and that a substantial portion of sick leave usage occurred during pay periods where overtime compensation was not automatically triggered. Mr. Kane characterized the pattern as consistent with either coincidence or potential system misuse, although he noted that the arbitrator did not make a finding of intentional misconduct. The City also presented evidence that fire department overtime costs increased by approximately \$200,000 between fiscal years 2023–2024 and 2024–2025. The Arbitrator's determination regarding sick leave policy was that she did not approve the City's proposed method for addressing sick leave usage because it did not guarantee progressive disciplinary protections consistent with the existing contract structure. Mr. Kane noted that she did not state that there was no abuse of sick leave. The arbitrator concluded that the City's proposal could not be adopted because the arbitration panel was required to select one complete last best offer rather than combine provisions from each proposal. Mr. Kane stated that the City accepted this criticism and expressed willingness to continue negotiations with the Union to address sick leave concerns within the framework of progressive discipline requirements in the next negotiation period.

Regarding the City's option to take the issues to vote of the public, Mr. Kane stated that City staff does not recommend placing the issue before voters. He explained that a prolonged federal government shutdown delayed the appointment of an arbitrator through the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service for approximately 41 days during which time the union declined to agree to a neutral arbitrator outside that process. Due to statutory deadlines for calling an election and that union representatives indicated they would not agree to ballot language in the required time frame, a public vote is not feasible without union cooperation.

Based on the above information, Mr. Kane and City Staff is recommending that the City Council accept the final arbitration decision and to also approve the firefighters' union last best offer as contained in the Council packet. The union's last best offer included several provisions that were more favorable than prior contract terms, including corrections to vacation carryover policies;

modifications to overtime compensation rules; and pay increases consistent with those approved for general City employees. He stated that, although the agreement did not address the City's preferred reforms to promotional procedures or sick leave management, the resulting contract was slightly more favorable than the agreement approved in the previous year.

Mr. Kane concluded that the arbitration decision provides a framework for future negotiations, particularly for the 2026–2027 collective bargaining agreement. He expressed the City's willingness to continue working with the Union to address operational concerns within contractual and legal constraints.

Vice Mayor Dorsey moved to accept the Interest Arbitration Panel Award as presented and to approve the execution of the IAFF Collective Bargaining Agreement for FY 2025-206 as presented, seconded by Mr. East.

Voting Aye: Mr. East, Mr. Vice Mayor Dorsey, Mr. Sherrick, Mayor Curd  
Abstaining: Mr. Kirkpatrick  
Motion: Passed

**12. New Business.**

There was no new business to discuss.

**13. City Manager and Staff Reports.**

Ms. Sanders provided information about the recycling center. The current manager will no longer manage recycling after the end of April. Request for proposals (RFP's) have been issued and anyone who meets the criteria will need to submit their bid by 2:00 p.m. on March 16, 2026.

She also provided information on the Park Patrol Survey sponsored by the City's police department. She encouraged everyone to participate.

Information on both the Recycling RFP and the Park Patrol Survey can be found on the City's website [www.cityofbartlesville.org](http://www.cityofbartlesville.org) homepage.

**14. City Council Comments and Inquiries.**

There were no comments or inquiries.

**15. There being no further business to address, Mayor Curd adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.**

  
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Jason Muninger, CFO/City Clerk



  
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James S. Curd, Jr., Mayor