

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS  
OF THE CITY OF AUBURN, NEMAHA COUNTY, NEBRASKA  
HELD JULY 16, 2025**

**THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS (BPW) OF THE CITY OF AUBURN, NEMAHA COUNTY, NEBRASKA**, met in regular session on July 16, 2025, at 1600 O Street at 11:30 a.m. This meeting was held in open session as required by Chapter 84, Article 14 of Nebraska State Statutes.

Chairman Knipe called the meeting to order. Roll call: Members present –Shaw, Grant, Knipe, Wilson. Absent – Zaruba

Chairman Knipe announced that this was an open meeting, and a copy of the Open Meetings Act is available on the conference table in the Board room.

Member Zaruba present at 11:33 a.m.

Chairman Knipe acknowledged the following guests: Leslie Clark – Auburn Chamber of Commerce, Chris Miller – Miller & Associates Consulting Engineers, Tim Fasel – JEO Construction Manager, John Mooberry - JEO Project Manager via Zoom, Joel Kelsay – Property Owner, Darren Oestmann – BPW IT support, and Crystal Dunekacke – City Administrator/Economic Developer.

Chairman Knipe introduced Leslie Clark representing the Auburn Chamber of Commerce. Clark requested permission to plan a children's foam party for an inaugural Bee Festival being held September 13, 2025. It is estimated that 345 – 500 gallons of water will be needed for the activity. After discussion, the Board agreed to allow the Chamber to move forward with the plan. No action taken.

GM Luhning introduced Darren Oestmann to present a request for permission to solicit proposals for new IT support. Oestmann noted service deterioration following multiple changes in ownership of our current IT company. After discussion, Member Grant made a motion to request proposals for IT support. Member Shaw seconded the motion. Members voting aye – Knipe, Wilson, Zaruba, Shaw, and Grant. Motion carried.

Chairman Knipe introduced Joel Kelsay, owner of property at 612 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Kelsay requested reimbursement of cost to install sewer infrastructure at the property. After discussion, the Board requested more research into the project documentation during the April 2010 activity. Item tabled.

Chairman Knipe introduced Tim Fasel, JEO Construction Manager for the Westgate project. A review of the project was provided and a request for approval for water main flushing and testing was presented. Three options were discussed with pros and cons outlined. Discussion noted public health and safety, and financial and legal concerns for Options B and C. Member Zaruba made a motion to approve Option A – flushing and testing using existing active distribution system as presented with testing limited to 1.5 to 2 times the minimum total gallon threshold, or 114K to 152K gallons of water, at no additional cost to the contractor. Member Grant seconded the motion. Members voting aye – Zaruba, Shaw, Grant, Knipe, and Wilson. Motion carried.

GM Luhning provided updates on the Westgate addition, noting that utility locates have been called in and electrical infrastructure is projected to begin the week of July 21<sup>st</sup>. City Administrator/Economic Developer Crystal Dunekacke noted the project is ahead of schedule and they are working toward being able to list the properties with realtors.

Chairman Knipe introduced Chris Miller from Miller & Associates Consulting Engineers. Miller presented bids for the pre-clarification equipment rental for the Longs Creek Project. Two proposals were received and reviewed. WesTech provided the only proposal that met bid specifications and was recommended for approval at a fixed 6-month rental cost of \$259,110.00 and a \$20,000.00

deposit to reserve equipment. After discussion, Member Zaruba made a motion to submit the deposit and approve moving forward with a contract for six months rental of equipment contingent on Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment's (NDWEE) approval of project and installation of required UV system. Member Grant seconded the motion. Members voting aye – Knipe, Wilson, Zaruba, Shaw, and Grant. Motion carried.

Chris Miller from Miller & Associates Consulting Engineers provided information on UV Equipment bids received for installation in the water plant, which is required by the State of Nebraska on water systems pulling water from open bodies of water. After discussion, Member Grant made a motion to reject the bids submitted and rebid using the same specifications as previously requested. Member Zaruba seconded the motion. Members voting aye – Grant, Knipe, Wilson, Zaruba, and Shaw. Motion carried.

GM Luhring provided information on the Power Plant's engine # 7 intercoolers, noting that updates in 2008 provided temporary maintenance. Luhring noted this unit provides one third of the Power Plant's capacity, therefore the failure of this engine would result in substantial revenue loss. Luhring recommended the purchase of two reconditioned intercoolers that have been located by Electric Operations Manager Kuhlmann, noting they are no longer in production. After discussion, Member Grant made a motion to purchase the units at the present quote of \$85,000.00 with core replacement or \$105,000.00 if the core is not reusable after inspection. Member Zaruba seconded the motion. Members voting aye – Wilson, Zaruba, Shaw, Grant, and Knipe. Motion carried.

GM Luhring provided an update from the Small Modular Reactor Public Outreach Meeting held June 25<sup>th</sup> at Arbor Manor. GM Luhring received positive feedback from participants. No action taken.

GM Luhring updated the Board on the Power Plant generation capacity test required by NPPD. The test went well and provided 16.8 MW generation, which is well over capacity. No action taken.

General Manager Luhring provided an update on CD's that matured on July 8, 2025. Auburn State Bank was awarded the CD's with a 4.05% 12-month term. No action taken.

GM Luhring provided information on the LARM Insurance renewal noting an increase of 12%. Approving a three-year contract would provide a 5% discount. Concerns were raised about the rising cost. After discussion, Member Shaw made a motion to approve the three-year renewal to take advantage of the 5% discount. Member Zaruba seconded the motion. Members voting aye – Knipe, Wilson, Zaruba, Shaw, and Grant. Motion carried.

GM Luhring requested approval of contracts with Point C to administer HRA and COBRA benefits. Member Grant made a motion to accept the contracts as presented. Member Wilson seconded the motion. Members voting aye – Wilson, Zaruba, Shaw, Grant, and Knipe. Motion carried.

GM Luhring provided updates on the Drought Contingency Stage 3 Water Emergency, noting that there have been slight changes in the status of our wells. Wells are stable but not recharging quickly with recent rains. Monitoring will continue. No action taken.

GM Luhring discussed the Long's Creek project as a short-term water source noting that the project is moving forward but continues to need State agency approval at each stage. A permit to draw water has been approved and equipment specifications are being reviewed for approval. The projected date of implementation is Spring 2026, due to lead times of materials. No action taken.

GM Luhring updated the Board on progress of the NPPD Capacity Purchase agreement noting he has received a red line copy. He is expecting to be able to present a finalized agreement for approval to the Board in August or September. No action taken.

GM Luhring provided updates on progress of the NPPD Wholesale Power contract. Redlines and executable copies are expected at the meeting on July 24<sup>th</sup> with minimal language updates to be discussed. GM Luhring is expecting to present the contract to the Board in August or September. No action taken.

Chairman Knipe requested a motion to enter closed session. Member Grant made a motion to enter closed session at 1:01 p.m. per the Nebraska Open Meetings Act. The purpose of the session is to review and discuss personnel matters, and recommendations from the hiring committee. Member Shaw seconded the motion. Members voting aye – Wilson, Zaruba, Shaw, Grant, and Knipe. Motion carried.

Member Zaruba made a motion to end the closed session at 1:29 pm. Member Shaw seconded the motion. Members voting aye – Zaruba, Shaw, Grant, Knipe, and Wilson. Motion carried.

Member Grant made a motion to offer a contract to Paul Erickson, subject to approval from the Auburn City Council, as full-time General Manager with a salary of \$170,000.00, standard benefits and a relocation package reimbursing expenses up to \$10,000.00, effective October 1, 2025. Member Zaruba seconded the motion. Members voting aye – Zaruba, Shaw, Grant, Knipe, and Wilson. Motion carried.

Member Zaruba exited the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

AFM Westhart presented the standard financial reports to the Board. Member Grant made a motion to accept the financial reports as presented. Member Wilson seconded the motion. Members voting aye – Shaw, Grant, Knipe, and Wilson.

AFM Westhart asked for any objections or exceptions to the General Consent Items listed under Agenda Item #23.

Approve the previous meeting minutes and dispense with the reading of the same.

- a) Approve monthly compensation of officers, management, and employees as previously fixed by the Board.
- b) Approve, ratify, and allow the following checks, recommended transfers and claims submitted for payment during the month.
- c) Transfer funds from E-W-WW Revenue funds into the checking fund for expenses plus the routine interdepartmental transfers in the amount of \$677,000.00.
- d) Approve the City Free Services Report.

Checks written during the month of June.

Airstream	255.53
Altec Industries Inc	1,411.52
American Recycling	20,965.69
Anderson, Aracelly	1,050.00
Andrew, Jordan	197.82
Atkinson, Mitchell	210.74
Auburn Auto Center	109.35
Auburn Family Health	140.00
B 103	152.00
Beard's Salvage	54.21
Board Of Public Works	17,411.52
Border States Industries Inc	4,771.56
Bulldog Auto Supply	112.53
Capital Business Systems	388.20
Capital One Spark Business	1,061.36
Caselle Inc	2,267.00
City of Auburn	13,612.03
Concrete Industries Inc	46.50
County Publications	994.04
Credit Information Services	134.50

Dettman, Naomi	30.00
DHHS State of Nebraska	397.25
Eggers Brothers Inc	15.60
Erickson, Paul	1,437.06
Estrand, Sherri	407.91
Fausti, Joseph	116.98
Filter Care of Nebraska	24.55
Gardner, Barbara	30.00
Gerdes Construction LLC	13,824.70
Glenn's Corner Market	53.54
Grainger Inc	118.07
Great Plains Lawn Care	1,710.00
Green Care Lawn Service	1,120.00
Hawkins Inc	1,509.75
HireRight Solutions LLC	541.20
Husker Electric	473.56
Jackson Services Inc.	2,140.98
Kaelin, Ronald	64.97
Kansas Municipal Utilities	600.00
Lavigne Construction Inc	12,646.52

LONM	270.00
Lincoln Winwater	929.08
Lynch's Hardware & Gifts	96.51
McConnaughey, Jodie	30.00
Meyer-Earp Auto Center LLC	262.35
Midwest Laboratories Inc	110.35
Miller & Associates	8,380.39
Nemaha County Clerk	40.00
Omaha Winwater	398.26
One Call Concepts Inc	147.23
Petty Cash	175.00
Pinpoint Auburn, Inc	433.93
PIP Marketing Signs & Print	3,350.08
RESCO	312.18
Sack Lumber Company	26.59

SECUR-SERV	1,295.36
Siebold, Gabrielle	237.78
SKJ Enterprises LLC	1,200.00
State of NE - DHHS	869.45
Subsurface Technologies	125,590.00
Truck Center Companies	872.80
US Cellular	726.17
Utility Equipment Company	27,809.28
Village of Brownville	8,168.44
Village of Nemaha	4,834.42
Water Engineering Inc	432.11
Wesco Distribution Inc	3,241.07
WAPA	39,958.95
Zoro Tools Inc	67.71

Following discussion, Member Grant made a motion to approve the General Consent Items as presented. Member Wilson seconded the motion. Members voting aye – Grant, Knipe, Wilson, Shaw. Motion carried.

Reports: Electric, Power Plant, Water/Wastewater, Office.

There being no further business to come before the Board, and by unanimous approval the Board adjourned to the next regular Board meeting to be held Wednesday, August 20, 2025, at the hour of 11:30 a.m. at the Board of Public Works Board Room. Chairman Knipe declared the meeting adjourned.

ATTEST:

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Chairman

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Secretary

### CERTIFICATE

I, Tamara L Westhart, Notary Public for the State of Nebraska, do hereby certify the attached and foregoing minutes is a true, correct and conformed copy of proceedings had and done by the Board of Public Works at their July 16, 2025 meeting; all of the subjects acted upon in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and available for public inspection at the Office of the Board; such subjects were contained in the agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to said meeting; at least one copy of all reproducible material discussed at the meeting was available at the meeting for examination and copying by members of the public; the said minutes were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days and prior to the next convened meeting of said body, all in accordance with Chapter 84, Article 14 of Nebraska Statutes.

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Tamara L. Westhart, Notary Public in and for the State of Nebraska.  
My Commission Expires October 4, 2027.