



City of Broken Arrow

Minutes Visit Broken Arrow

City Hall
220 S 1st Street
Broken Arrow, OK
74012

Chairman Brian Dean
Vice Chair Tommy Yardy
Gene Barber
Ben Buie
Lisa Ford
Craig Hagin
Kathy Muskrat
Sonja Schneider
Trevor Swanson

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

Board Chambers

1. Call to Order

Chairman Brian Dean called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call and Introductions

Present: 9 - Gene Barber, Sonja Schneider, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Trevor Swanson, Craig Hagin, Kathy Muskrat
(*Sonja Schneider arrived at 3:34 - Ben Buie arrived at 3:38*)

3. Presentations

A. 25-1138 Presentation of post-event update for the 2025 Rooster Days Festival

Tiffany Shepard, Vice President of Events and Communication for the Broken Arrow Chamber of Commerce, presented Item 25-1138. Rooster Days 2025 saw over 41,000 attendees, the highest in five to six years, with visitors spending an average of 95 minutes at the festival. Saturday drew the largest crowd at 19,000, boosted by a well-attended parade, and run participation was the strongest in years. Marketing efforts included the usual partnership with Griffin Communications for media coverage, social media posts, and on-air promotions, plus distribution of bilingual posters. A new initiative partnered with three social media influencers to broaden reach across different platforms. Additional outreach included reading a custom Rooster Days history book to elementary students and giving them promotional stickers, with plans to expand to more schools. Dates for the 2026 event are set for May 14–17, with a planned three-year carnival contract to maintain consistency.

4. General Visit Broken Arrow Business

A. 25-1135 Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the meeting minutes from the June 10, 2025, Visit Broken Arrow meeting.

MOTION: A motion was made by Tommy Yardy, seconded by Lisa Ford

Move to Approve Item 25-1135 meeting minutes from the June 10, 2025, Visit Broken Arrow meeting.

Aye: 9 - The motion carried by the following vote:
Gene Barber, Sonja Schneider, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Trevor Swanson, Craig Hagin, Kathy Muskrat

B. 25-1137 Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the meeting minutes from the July 1, 2025, Visit Broken Arrow meeting

MOTION: A motion was made by Tommy Yardy, seconded by Lisa Ford

Move to Approve Item 25-1137 meeting minutes from the July 1, 2025, Visit Broken Arrow meeting

Aye: 9 - The motion carried by the following vote:
Gene Barber, Sonja Schneider, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Trevor Swanson, Craig Hagin, Kathy Muskrat

C. 25-1144 Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the 2nd Annual Pretty Good at Drinking Beer-n-BBQ sponsorship rebate in the amount of \$5000, pending the required follow-up report and the required documentation to be approved by Visit Broken Arrow Board for reimbursement

Jason Rains presented Item 25-1144. The event, previously held at a brewery, has been moved to Central Park this year to allow for growth, with The Bison from Claremore headlining. Organizers expect 2,000–3,000 attendees, with expanded features including a People's Choice competition, food trucks, vendors, and all-day live music. Costs have increased significantly due to stage rental, extra police, and park fees, while sponsorship funding has dropped to about \$2,000. The organizer emphasized the event's community focus rather than profit, noting strong participation from 35–45 professional barbecue teams and a goal of adding about 10 People's Choice teams, potentially matching the size of Bixby's competition. Posters are ready pending Visit BA's logo, and the promotion will include fun videos to boost engagement.

Participation costs are about \$350 for Pro teams and \$125 for People's Choice teams, with the latter receiving two pork shoulders and competing for a \$1,000 first prize. The event is structured as a two-day competition, with Friday reserved for the Pro contest to encourage overnight stays, supported by a hotel block at the Hilton Garden Inn. Pro teams will not serve tastings; only People's Choice teams will, with about 10 teams expected and 400 tickets to be sold. Sponsors like Hasty Bake will provide giveaways and samples, but organizers are limiting serving sizes to avoid overburdening teams until the event grows larger.

MOTION: A motion was made by Ben Buie, seconded by Tommy Yardy

Move to Approve Item 25-1144 the 2nd Annual Pretty Good at Drinking Beer-n-BBQ sponsorship rebate in the amount of \$5000, pending the required follow-up report and the required documentation to be approved by Visit Broken Arrow Board for reimbursement

Aye: 9 - The motion carried by the following vote:
Gene Barber, Sonja Schneider, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Trevor Swanson, Craig Hagin, Kathy Muskrat

D. 25-1158 Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the vinyl wrap design concept for the new VBA truck

Makala Barton, Tourism Manager, presented Item 25-1158. Visit Broken Arrow purchased a Chevy Colorado from its reserve fund to use for event transportation and local travel, and plans to wrap it as a marketing tool. The wrap design has gone through multiple revisions, with images updated and the bullseye logo added. The only planned change before finalizing is

updating the “where families find fun” text with a different font and an exclamation point. The wrap will cost \$3,500–\$4,000, already budgeted as part of the truck’s purchase. The team is seeking any final feedback before submitting the design.

Visit Broken Arrow plans to add a QR code linking to its visitor’s guide on the wrapped Chevy Colorado, likely on the tailgate for visibility in traffic and possibly on the hood for use at events. The wrap is being designed by Kryptonite Customs, which offered the best quote and has worked on other city projects. The vehicle’s sides feature slightly different images, such as a girl running on one side, with the rest of the design remaining consistent.

There was discussion about adjusting the truck wrap design to address the grain elevator image, since the City Council is in the process of branding the structure. Suggestions included removing existing logos from the image, using a different or more distant shot of the silo, or replacing it with a version that incorporates the new Rose District branding once finalized. The goal is to avoid promoting the current Hanson-Mueller branding and prevent the wrap from looking outdated shortly after installation.

MOTION: A motion was made by Ben Buie, seconded by Lisa Ford

Move to Approve Item 25-1158 vinyl wrap design concept for the new VBA truck

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 9 -

Gene Barber, Sonja Schneider, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Trevor Swanson, Craig Hagin, Kathy Muskrat

E. 25-1139 Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the 2025 Tuesdays in the Park Event Series grant request

Janie Green presented Item 25-1139. Tuesdays in the Park faced weather challenges this year, with two early concerts canceled due to storms, one of which struck mid-setup with 70 mph winds and heavy rain. The season was extended into July, allowing the scheduled bands to perform, but later dates saw reduced attendance—around 600–700 people compared to higher usual turnouts—likely due to summer vacations and competing events. Food truck sales suffered, though the event remains seen as viable and valued. Additional sponsorships totaling \$3,000 reduced the need for the full \$10,000 grant initially requested, leaving a possible surplus for future promotional efforts. Organizers stressed the venue’s natural amphitheater setting and the importance of continuing the tradition.

Council members expressed strong support for Tuesdays in the Park, attributing lower attendance solely to weather disruptions and noting confidence that the event will rebound next year if conditions improve. They acknowledged that June is the traditional time for the concerts, and July dates likely conflicted with other plans.

MOTION: A motion was made by Lisa Ford, seconded by Tommy Yardy

Move to Approve Item 25-1139 2025 Tuesdays in the Park Event Series grant request

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 9 -

Gene Barber, Sonja Schneider, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Trevor Swanson, Craig Hagin, Kathy Muskrat

5. Board members' Opportunity to Address Visit Broken Arrow on General Topics Related to City Business or Services (no action may be taken on matters under this item) - NONE

6. Tourism Director Report Including Updates on the Following:

A. 25-1133 Presentation and discussion of the Tourism Manager's Report, including most recent

budget report and hotel/motel tax report

Makala Barton, Tourism Manager, presented Item 25-1133. The July tourism report highlighted key expenditures, including a second payment to Clarity of Place for the strategic plan, \$8,600 for in-house marketing, \$400 for a new Wedding Wednesday officiant, and a \$4,100 spike in Uber use tied to weddings and airport trips. Hotel-motel tax revenue for June was up year-over-year, July was slightly down, and the fiscal year ended \$17,000 lower than the previous year, though the calendar year-to-date total is up \$16,000. Occupancy rates in May were 60.1% in Broken Arrow, slightly above the state average but below the national average, with local hotels priced above the Oklahoma average but below the national rate.

Makala shared that Pam Carlson of Hilton Garden Inn represented Visit Broken Arrow at the Oklahoma Society of Association Executives conference, promoting the city's conference facilities for \$1,100, which generated interest and plans for a future familiarization visit. In July, Clarity of Place conducted multiple focus groups and site visits, with a strategic plan draft expected by late August, preceded by a community survey.

Event updates included the cancellation of Scotfest, with possible council consideration of combining this year's and next year's funding if the event expands. Upcoming events and activities include Chalk It Up and Rose Festival (Sept. 19), a site visit to the Colorado Springs Amp, attendance at the ESTO tourism conference, the quarterly hoteliers meeting (Aug. 27), and future VBA meetings on Sept. 9 and 14. Term expirations will be addressed at the Sept. 16 council meeting, and members were invited to volunteer as future VBA podcast hosts.

Ms. Barton reassured board members that participating in the VBA podcast is informal and conversational, with prepared topics they already know from board work. She explained it's typically recorded immediately after the meeting in the city manager's area, with videographer Mike Godfrin assisting. Members were invited to stop by to see the setup, which simply recaps meeting discussions in a relaxed format. Despite initial reluctance to be on camera, participants have found it easy and effective.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:10 p.m.

MOTION: A motion was made by Brian Dean, seconded by Lisa Ford

Move to adjourn

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 8 -

Gene Barber, Sonja Schneider, Lisa Ford, Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Trevor Swanson, Craig Hagin, Kathy Muskrat

(Ben Buie left early)

Chairperson

City Clerk