



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, May 13, 2025

Board Chambers

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call and Introductions

Present: 7 - Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Gene Barber, Craig Hagin, Kathy Muskrat, Sonja Schneider, Trevor Swanson
Absent: 2 - Ben Buie, Lisa Ford

3. Presentations

4. General Visit Broken Arrow Business

A. 25-579 Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the meeting minutes from the April 8, 2025, Visit Broken Arrow meeting

MOTION: A motion to approve was made by Tommy Yardy, seconded by Kathy Muskrat
Move to Approve Item 25-579 meeting minutes from the April 8, 2025, Visit Broken Arrow meeting

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Gene Barber, Craig Hagin, Kathy Muskrat, Sonja Schneider, Trevor Swanson

B. 25-666 Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the Chalk it Up sponsorship request in the amount of \$7500, pending the required follow-up report submitted by the deadline and the required receipts submitted to be approved by Visit Broken Arrow for reimbursement

Tourism Director Makala Barton explained that three event funding requests—Chalk It Up, the Rose Festival, and Tuesdays in the Park—were scheduled for discussion, but no representatives were present. The first two are recurring events with previously approved \$7,500 amounts. The third is a new request, and Hill suggested the group appear in person to present. She left it to the board to decide whether to approve the items now or table them for next month.

MOTION: A motion to approve was made by Tommy Yardy, seconded by Brian Dean
Move to Approve Item 25-666 Chalk it Up sponsorship request in the amount of \$7500, pending the required follow-up report submitted by the deadline, and the required receipts submitted to be approved by Visit Broken Arrow for reimbursement

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 -

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

C. 25-667

Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of The Rose Festival sponsorship request in the amount of \$7500, pending the required follow-up report submitted by the deadline and the required receipts submitted to be approved by Visit Broken Arrow for reimbursement

MOTION: A motion to approve was made by Brian Dean, seconded by Craig Hagin

Move to Approve Item 25-667, The Rose Festival sponsorship request in the amount of \$7500, pending the required follow-up report submitted by the deadline, and the required receipts submitted to be approved by Visit Broken Arrow for reimbursement

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 -

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

D. 25-668

Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the Tuesdays in the Park sponsorship request in the amount of \$10,000, pending the required follow-up report submitted by the deadline and the required receipts submitted to be approved by Visit Broken Arrow for reimbursement

MOTION: A motion to table was made by Brian Dean, seconded by Kathy Muskrat

Move to Table Item 25-668 approval of the Tuesdays in the Park sponsorship request in the amount of \$10,000, pending the required follow-up report submitted by the deadline and the required receipts submitted to be approved by Visit Broken Arrow for reimbursement

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 -

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

MOTION: A motion to open the discussion was made by Brian Dean, seconded by Tommy Yardy

Move to Open Discussion on Item 25-668, Tuesdays in the Park sponsorship request in the amount of \$10,000, pending the required follow-up report submitted by the deadline and the required receipts submitted to be approved by Visit Broken Arrow for reimbursement

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 -

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

Ms. Jennifer Deal apologized for the scheduling confusion and explained that more attendees were expected shortly due to a miscommunication. She spoke on behalf of Tuesdays in the Park, a well-loved weekly June concert series that has faced recent challenges securing sponsorships. ArtsOK recently hired a new part-time development director with promising fundraising ideas, and Deal expressed optimism that with financial help this year, the series could become self-sustaining. Despite previously underreporting attendance, recent data show the concerts draw between 1,300 and nearly 2,000 people weekly, totaling 7,000 to 8,000 over the season and attracting attendees from across the region. She emphasized the event's role in

fostering a small-town atmosphere and encouraged support for its continued success.

Ms. Janie Green elaborated on the success and growing popularity of Tuesdays in the Park, noting increased attendance, including many newcomers and out-of-town visitors. The event's current budget is around \$17,000, made possible through generous discounts, city fee waivers, and in-kind contributions, but there remains a funding shortfall of about 50%. Current fundraising is projected at \$8,300, including estimates from food trucks and raffles. Green highlighted the addition of a new band with popular local musicians debuting this year, expected to draw a large crowd. Efforts are underway to secure a naming sponsor to cover the shortfall and allow for further program enhancements, including children's and community art activities led by Oklahoma Central Credit Union and Arts at 302. These additions aim to deepen engagement and support local artists, making the concert series more enriching and accessible.

Makala Barton, Tourism Director, clarified that if Tuesdays in the Park receives a Visit Broken Arrow (VBA) grant, it would no longer qualify for the waived city fees—approximately \$3,000—for the stage, police, and barricades, which are currently covered. Instead, those costs would need to be paid upfront from the \$10,000 grant and then reimbursed through the VBA fund, since the grant and fee waivers come from separate departments.

Ms. Barton recommended awarding Tuesdays in the Park \$7,500, matching the amounts given to the Rose Festival and Chalk It Up. However, she noted the board could consider a higher amount to offset the \$3,000 in city services that would no longer be waived if the event receives a grant, suggesting \$2,000 more could help cover those newly incurred costs.

MOTION: A motion was made by Brian Dean, seconded by Tommy Yardy

Move to Approve Item 25-668 approval of the Tuesdays in the Park sponsorship request in the amount of \$10,000, pending the required follow-up report submitted by the deadline and the required receipts submitted to be approved by Visit Broken Arrow for reimbursement

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 -

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

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. 25-571 - Presentation and discussion of the year-to-date available budget report

Tourism Director Makala Barton noted the meeting was brief due to absent presenters and introduced a new monthly summary report highlighting key budget and tourism updates. Major April expenses included \$25,000 to Bass Pro for annual marketing, \$1,050 for an OSAE conference sponsorship to promote Visit Broken Arrow, and the first payment to Clarity of Place for the tourism strategic plan. March hotel/motel tax collections were up compared to last year, though year-to-date totals remain lower. She reported strong turnout at Fiesta de Mayo and Bounce BA despite weather interruptions and mentioned the upcoming Block Party on June 27–28, with collaborative marketing efforts underway.

Ms. Barton shared updates on several upcoming and ongoing initiatives. Block Party preparations are underway, coinciding with Scotfest, Chalk It Up, and the Rose Festival for a packed weekend. She noted the Scotfest contract will go directly to the council. Marketing highlights included Erin Hofener, Marketing & Communications Coordinator, completing

Leadership Broken Arrow, the release of a new digital summer guide, and a Bullseye-themed coloring book distributed to various community outlets. In-house marketing will present a 2024 recap soon. Ms. Hill and Ms. Hofener also completed an annual tourism report tracking key metrics, which will be shared via email and possibly published online. The quarterly hoteliers meeting is scheduled for May 28 at Hampton Inn, featuring a Zoom introduction to the strategic planning consultants. The next board meeting on June 10 will be held at Holiday Inn Express to celebrate its renovation and participate in a ribbon cutting.

Ms. Barton shared that Clarity of Place will conduct in-person focus groups and site visits the week of July 21 as part of the strategic planning process, with each board member assigned to a specific group. Participation is encouraged, with Zoom options available. For the OSAE conference, since she and Erin are unavailable, hoteliers Trevor and Pam Carlton will represent Visit Broken Arrow, promoting the city and sponsoring a lunch session. Hill also discussed a creative strategy to attract conferences despite the lack of a convention center by collaborating with local hotels to host breakout sessions and manage transportation. A promotional video highlighting this approach is being produced for use at events and on the city's website.

B. 25-665 - Presentation and discussion of updated hotel/motel tax collection report

Makala Barton, Tourism Director, concluded her budget and hotel/motel tax update by addressing the longstanding Bass Pro marketing agreement, noting its outdated terms from 2004 leave little room for adjustment. The current contract allows Bass Pro to use the \$25,000 marketing funds at its discretion, originally tied to a now-defunct hunting guide. Although the city has managed to update the ad to include the Visit Broken Arrow logo, the broader goal is to renegotiate the terms to allow annual collaboration on how the funds are used. However, Bass Pro is not contractually required to agree to any changes.

Ms. Barton explained that the current 20-year Economic Development Agreement with Bass Pro, which includes the \$25,000 annual marketing allocation, expires this November. The agreement allows for nine one-year renewals followed by three three-year extensions, but its structure is convoluted and unfavorable primarily to the city. Since there's no explicit exit clause, the city plans to request more collaborative use of the funds, such as joint planning or updated ad placements. Although corporate (now Cabela's) redirected her to the local general manager, who has been less responsive lately, she hopes to engage him in discussions about potential event partnerships and better value from the annual expenditure.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:01 p.m.

MOTION: A motion was made by Brian Dean, seconded by Trevor Swanson

Move to adjourn

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 -

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

Chairperson

Secretary