



# 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**

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**Tuesday, September 9, 2025**

**Board Chambers**

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### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:37 p.m.

### 2. Roll Call and Introductions

**Present: 5 -** Gene Barber, Sonja Schneider, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Tommy Yardy  
**Absent: 4 -** Brian Dean, Trevor Swanson, Craig Hagin, Kathy Muskrat

### 3. Presentations - NONE

### 4. General Visit Broken Arrow Business

#### A. 25-1294 **Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the meeting minutes from the August 12, 2025, Visit Broken Arrow meeting**

MOTION: A motion was made by Ben Buie, seconded by Lisa Ford  
**Move Approve Minutes**

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye: 5 -** Gene Barber, Sonja Schneider, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Tommy Yardy

#### B. 25-923 **Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the FY '26 marketing services contract with InHouse Advertising**

Mark Moore, InHouse Advertising, presented Item 25-923, an update on Broken Arrow's promotional strategy, now in its third year of collaboration. He emphasized the continued use of Bullseye, the city's superhero mascot, which has won awards and differentiated Broken Arrow from other communities. Plans include cautious but creative use of Bullseye, with potential expansion into animation, thanks to a new hire with specialized skills.

Budget allocations outlined include about \$12,000 for Bullseye marketing, \$10,000 for general branding and the quarterly guide, \$10,000 for Rose District promotions, and significant emphasis on the Christmas campaign, described as the city's "Super Bowl" for attracting visitors from outside areas, particularly Northwest Arkansas. The block party promotion is

being scaled back slightly in favor of more targeted geographic marketing. Future adjustments will be informed by data from the city's "Grow Broken Arrow" project.

Other initiatives include promoting Broken Arrow as a destination for conferences and events, leveraging free parking, accessibility, and accommodations as competitive advantages over Tulsa. Veterans-focused messaging is also being developed to attract and support veterans and their families. Email marketing funds have been reallocated to digital and broadcast outreach. Website maintenance will continue at \$5,500, with \$11,000 devoted to SEO to ensure Broken Arrow remains visible in changing online search and AI-driven results.

Mr. Moore concluded by praising the partnership with the city, calling Broken Arrow's marketing efforts some of the most enjoyable and impactful of his career, and expressed excitement for another successful year.

Further discussion centered on marketing strategies tied to Broken Arrow's tourism efforts, especially around Christmas and leveraging Rhema's large visitor draw. Mr. Moore explained that while the city cannot market to visitors before they arrive, geofencing allows ads to be sent directly to cell phones once people are at Rhema, encouraging them to visit Broken Arrow. He also emphasized that future geographic targeting will be refined based on research and visitor data rather than broad radius-based campaigns.

The discussion shifted to airport advertising. Currently, Broken Arrow pays about \$10,000 annually for a large mural ad placed on the American Airlines baggage claim side at Tulsa International Airport, along with rotating digital signage throughout the terminal. Some council members noted the missed exposure on the Southwest Airlines side, which has higher passenger traffic, and suggested considering a second \$10,000 placement to double the reach. They agreed that the current ad is eye-catching and reinforces the city's brand not only for visitors but also for residents.

Board members expressed appreciation for the marketing team's work, with consensus that exploring a second airport ad would be worthwhile, provided tracking data shows it is generating engagement.

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

**Move to Approve Item 25-923, FY '26 marketing services contract with InHouse Advertising**

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye: 5 -** Gene Barber, Sonja Schneider, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Tommy Yardy

**C. 25-1286**

**Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of a sponsorship request for the 2025/26 Spotlight Series at Broken Arrow Performing Arts Center**

Kim Vento, Executive Director of the Broken Arrow Performing Arts Center, presented Item 25-1286. Ms. Vento highlighted the impact of their programming and partnerships. The PAC hosts about 320 performances annually, totaling 1,800 hours, with many events attracting visitors from across Oklahoma, the U.S., and even internationally. The Kristin Chenoweth Arts & Education Fund, especially the Broadway Boot Camp, has drawn attendees from as far away as Australia and England, while also elevating Broken Arrow's profile through Chenoweth's global presence.

Central to the PAC's identity is the Spotlight Series, now entering its 17th season. It brings A-list Broadway shows and artists to Broken Arrow, a unique feature for a school district-owned venue. The series not only boosts tourism and local spending but also connects directly with

students. Recent examples include special-needs students performing with Chenoweth, master classes with Grammy-winning directors, Q&As with touring casts, and backstage internships. Ticket data shows audiences from dozens of Oklahoma cities and multiple states, reinforcing the economic impact.

The upcoming season features four shows: a Michael Jackson tribute (tied to the forthcoming film and multi-generational appeal), Sandy Patty (with potential student choir collaborations), Drumline Live (with percussion students performing pre-show), and the national tour of The Music Man. Each show integrates educational outreach or student involvement.

Beyond the Spotlight Series, the PAC will also host the President's Home Marine Band in October—a rare honor, as they invited Broken Arrow directly. The free concert is already overbooked by 30%, underscoring the community's enthusiasm. The representative closed by expressing gratitude for the city's ongoing support, noting that the PAC's success directly contributes to Broken Arrow's reputation, tourism, and downtown vibrancy.

The board members discussed Broken Arrow's \$20,000 sponsorship of the Spotlight Series, which places the city at the highest partner level alongside AVB Bank. Questions were raised about whether this tier should come with additional benefits beyond those offered at the \$10,000 level, particularly in terms of advertising exposure. Suggestions included incorporating a Visit Broken Arrow feature story in the Center Stage program and exploring creative ways to maximize marketing value.

Ms. Vento confirmed flexibility, noting the PAC could accommodate requests like additional stories or ticket allocations for promotions. Council staff also mentioned how tickets are already leveraged in highly popular holiday giveaways. Members agreed the Spotlight Series creates a substantial economic impact, filling restaurants and businesses downtown on performance nights, and fits the city's vision of promoting a vibrant, destination-style experience.

The conversation closed with a consensus that the partnership is valuable not only for tourism but also for strengthening the identity of downtown Broken Arrow as a safe, walkable "Hallmark movie" destination where visitors can enjoy dinner, a show, and nightlife all in one area.

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

**Move to Approve Item 25-1286, sponsorship request for the 2025/26 Spotlight Series at Broken Arrow Performing Arts Center**

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye: 5 -** Gene Barber, Sonja Schneider, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Tommy Yardy

**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 Manager Report**

**A. 25-1279 Presentation and discussion of the Tourism Manager's Report**

Makala Barton, Tourism Manager, presented Item 25-1279. Ms. Barton reported a strong momentum for August. Key expenditures included the second payment to Clarity of Place for the strategic plan, which is now in draft form and expected to be shared soon, and the approved rebate for Tuesdays in the Park. An \$880 annual fee was also paid to the Oklahoma Department of Tourism's travel trade program, ensuring Broken Arrow materials are promoted at major

trade shows that the city cannot staff directly.

Hotel/motel tax collections in August were up compared to the previous year, with year-to-date revenues about \$10,000 ahead, showing a positive start to FY'26. State and national lodging data from June further confirmed strong performance, with Broken Arrow hotels reporting higher occupancy and slightly higher average rates than the Oklahoma average.

The hoteliers' quarterly meeting was productive, highlighted by feedback on the filming of Horrified at Stoney Creek Hotel. The production fully utilized the property, compensated staff fairly, and left a strong impression of professionalism and respect. Board members visited the set, and the experience was widely praised as a successful first test of the city's film incentive program. The location scout expressed enthusiasm about returning, citing Broken Arrow's variety of filming sites and community support. A final rebate request and formal report are expected from the production soon.

Ms. Barton highlighted the rapid progress of Broken Arrow's film incentive program, noting that less than a year after launching, the city has already hosted its first production. The success has drawn statewide attention, with invitations to present on panels about municipal incentives and economic development. With about \$40,000 left in the pilot fund, the city will soon need to evaluate the program's financial impact and decide whether to continue it as part of the permanent budget.

The draft strategic plan is under review by the city manager and may be ready for presentation at the October meeting, though timing could shift depending on revisions.

Upcoming events include Hops and Bops in New Orleans Square this weekend, Beer & BBQ at Central Park on September 27, Chalk It Up on September 19, Spooktacular on October 25, and Christmas Kickoff on November 13. The next board meeting will be held on October 14, with board appointments scheduled for City Council consideration on October 16.

**7. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

MOTION: A motion was made by Ben Buie, seconded by Lisa Ford  
**Move to Adjourn**

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye: 5 -** Gene Barber, Sonja Schneider, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Tommy Yardy

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Chairperson

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City Clerk