



# 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**  
**Ben Buie**  
**Lisa Ford**  
**Craig Hagin**  
**Sarah Lopp**  
**Kathy Muskrat**  
**Sonja Schneider**  
**Trevor Swanson**

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**Tuesday, December 9, 2025**

**Board Chambers**

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### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 3:32 p.m. by Chairman Brian Dean.

### **2. Roll Call and Introductions**

Present: 7 - Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Sarah Lopp, Sonja Schneider, Kathy Muskrat

Absent: 2 - Craig Hagin, Trevor Swanson

### **3. Presentations - NONE**

### **4. General Visit Broken Arrow Business**

#### **A. 25-1713 Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the meeting minutes from the November 18, 2025, Visit Broken Arrow meeting**

MOTION: A motion was made by Ben Buie, seconded by Kathy Muskrat  
**Move Approve Minutes from the November 18, 2025 Visit Broken Arrow meeting.**

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye: 6 -** Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Ben Buie, Sarah Lopp, Sonja Schneider, Kathy Muskrat

**Abstain: 1 -** Lisa Ford

**B. 25-1714      Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the American Junior Golf Association (AJGA) Junior at Indian Springs hotel rebate request in an amount not to exceed \$15,000**

Makala Barton, Tourism Manager, introduced James O'Brien with the American Junior Golf Association, who joined virtually from his office in Atlanta. Mr. O'Brien presented an overview of the AJGA Junior at Indian Springs event, scheduled for August 3–6, 2026. The event is expected to generate an estimated 300–500 hotel room nights in Broken Arrow, and AJGA requested a hotel rebate in an amount not to exceed \$15,000.

During the presentation, Ms. Barton asked whether AJGA anticipated the event becoming a multi-year event in Broken Arrow or if it would rotate between cities. Mr. O'Brien stated that their goal is to raise approximately \$50,000 per event, and that, if fundraising goals are met, the organization would like to continue hosting the tournament in Broken Arrow.

Lisa Ford asked why AJGA chose Broken Arrow as the host location. Mr. O'Brien responded that AJGA has a significant number of members in the area, and he has a previous working relationship with Lance Allen, General Manager at Indian Springs, from Mr. Allen's prior role in Joplin, Missouri. He also noted that learning about Visit Broken Arrow's incentive and rebate program further encouraged AJGA to pursue Broken Arrow as the host community.

MOTION: A motion was made by Lisa Ford, seconded by Sonja Schneider

**Move to Approve Item 25-1714, AJGA Junior at Indian Springs hotel rebate request in an amount not to exceed \$15,000**

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye: 7 -**      Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Sarah Lopp, Sonja Schneider, Kathy Muskrat

**C. 25-1720      Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of proposed updates to the Visit Broken Arrow Community Event Sponsorship Rebate Program**

Tourism Manager Makala Barton presented proposed updates to the Visit Broken Arrow Community Event Sponsorship Rebate Program. Ms. Barton reminded the board that at the October 14, 2025 Visit Broken Arrow board meeting, a temporary working committee was formed to review the program, comprised of board members Lisa Ford, Sonja Schneider, and Trevor Swanson. The committee met to discuss possible updates and developed the proposed program brought forward at this meeting.

Key changes include a tiered rebate system based on verified event attendance using Placer software. The four tiers are:

- Tier 1 – Signature Event (10,000+ attendees): \$7,500 rebate
- Tier 2 – Regional Event (5,000–9,999 attendees): \$5,000 rebate
- Tier 3 – Community Event (1,000–4,999 attendees): \$2,500 rebate
- Tier 4 – Emerging Event (300–999 attendees): \$1,000 rebate

Ms. Barton explained that a 1:1 match will be required, and that events receiving sponsorship through this program will not be eligible for in-kind services from the City. Likewise, events receiving in-kind City services will not be eligible for sponsorship under this program, in order to prevent double-dipping of City resources.

The program also introduces multi-year step-down funding to encourage events to grow and develop additional funding sources. Under this structure, eligible events may receive 100 percent of their tier amount in Year 1, 75 percent in Year 2, and 50 percent in Year 3. After Year 3, an event must sit out one full cycle, unless it demonstrates at least 20 percent verified attendance growth or significant program expansion, in which case it may re-enter at Year 1.

Events will still be required to submit a post-event report within 60 days and must demonstrate that all reimbursed spending occurred in Broken Arrow. Ms. Barton also noted that Visit Broken Arrow has \$90,000 budgeted annually for this grant program, and under the proposed changes, no more than 40 percent of those funds may be awarded to non-hotel or non-branding events. Additionally, Visit Broken Arrow funding may not exceed 30 percent of an event's total operating budget, and applicants must demonstrate that the remaining 70 percent is secured through other cash or in-kind sources.

Ms. Barton shared that these changes are intended to create clearer guidelines and safeguards for the board, ensuring that events coming forward have already undergone initial vetting and are not relying solely on City funding. The updates provide structure and consistency for future sponsorship decisions.

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

**Move to Approve Item 25-1720, proposed updates to the Visit Broken Arrow Community Event Sponsorship Rebate Program**

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye: 7 -** Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Sarah Lopp, Sonja Schneider, 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)**

Board Member Comments:

Ben Buie asked whether Visit Broken Arrow was still using an influencer for marketing. Staff reported that the City had completed a three-month trial and is no longer under contract with an influencer at this time.

**6. Tourism Manager Report**

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

Tourism Manager Makala Barton presented the Tourism Manager's Report. Ms. Barton reviewed key expenditures, including membership with the Oklahoma Society of Association Executives (OSAE), the rebate for the film "Horried," and the wedding officiant fee. She provided an update on remaining grant funds and film incentive funds for the fiscal year and noted that hotel/motel tax collections are trending upward compared to the prior year.

Ms. Barton also highlighted ongoing tourism initiatives, including preparation of a board orientation book, recruitment and hiring plans for tourism support, progress by the Film Festival Committee, and upcoming events such as the State of the City, a presentation for Leadership Broken Arrow Government Day, the Carols & Cocoa event, and the quarterly hotelier luncheon.

**7. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:11 p.m.

MOTION: A motion was made by Brian Dean, seconded by Ben Buie

**Move to Adjourn**

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye: 7 -** Brian Dean, Tommy Yardy, Ben Buie, Lisa Ford, Sarah Lopp, Sonja Schneider, Kathy Muskrat

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Chairperson

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City Clerk