



**City of Broken Arrow**  
**Minutes**  
**Special City Council Meeting**

City Hall  
220 S 1st Street  
Broken Arrow OK  
74012

*Mayor Debra Wimpee  
Vice Mayor Christi Gillespie  
Council Member Johnnie Parks  
Council Member Lisa Ford  
Council Member Justin Green*

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**Tuesday, April 16, 2024**

**Time 5:00 p.m.**

**Council Chambers**

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Debra Wimpee called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

**Present:** 5 - Justin Green, Lisa Ford, Johnnie Parks, Christi Gillespie, Debra Wimpee

**3. Public Hearings, Appeals, Presentations, Recognitions, Awards**

**A. 24-490 Presentation and discussion of the results of the 2024 Citizen Survey and possible acceptance of the results**

Director of Communications Aaron McColloch stated the Citizen Survey was open for approximately 30 days, throughout the month of February, and the Survey got amazing results. He stated Mr. Brandon Barnett was the data scientist and was fantastic to work with. He indicated Mr. Barnett would make the presentation of the results. He introduced Mr. Barnett.

Mr. Brandon Barnett with Polco stated he was happy to present the results of the Survey and he thanked Mr. McColloch who served as his primary contact during the survey development and implementation process. He reported Polco's online community engagement polling platform provided information tools local governments and other public sector leaders needed. He stated hundreds of organizations nationwide used Polco for strategic planning, budgeting, and empowering resident voices. He indicated Polco made civil, verified community engagement online not only possible, but accessible. He explained the National Research Center (NRC) at Polco gave local governments, and other public sector organizations, the data needed to make more informed decisions. He stated since 1994, the NRC worked with hundreds of jurisdictions nationwide. He noted NRC was best known for its national benchmarking surveys, such as The National Community Survey (The NCS), the National Employee Survey, and the Community Assessment Survey for Older Adults, among others. He stated the NRC benchmark database was the largest of its kind in the United States. He indicated Polco and NRC merged in 2019 to more effectively serve local government and project resident voices. He stated Polco was also exclusive partners with International City/County Managers Association (ICMA) and the National League of Cities (NLC); Polco also worked closely with Engaged Local Government Leaders (ELGL), Alliance for Innovation (AFI), and many academic partners, including the American Association for Public Opinion Research, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the Hoover Institute at Stanford University, and the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Mr. Barnett stated there were a variety of ways the results could be used. He noted most commonly, the jurisdictions he worked with used the survey data to monitor trends in resident opinion over time, to measure government performance and ratings of public trust, and to inform budgeting processes and strategic plans. He stated the results would also allow the City to benchmark its community's specific characteristics and services against those same characteristics within other communities in Polco's benchmark database. He stated he hoped as these findings were presented, it would spur ideas regarding what could be done with these results, or where the City might want to dig deeper. He reported the National Community Survey, or The NCS, was a standardized five-page comprehensive survey that allowed municipalities to assess resident opinion about their community and local government. He stated the NCS focused on the "livability" of Broken Arrow by categorizing survey questions into 10 main "facets" of community livability. He stated these facets were identified through extensive survey research as those that were most impactful to residents' quality of life. He stated the NCS included items within each of the ten facets, to provide a full picture of how residents felt about their community. He stated finally, these facets also tended to align with municipal departments, making it easy for City staff to quickly find the information that was of the most importance to them in the final report of results.

Mr. Barnett reported this was the first time conducting the NCS Survey in Broken Arrow. He stated all residents within Broken Arrow were eligible to participate in the survey. He noted

links to the survey were publicized by the City beginning on January 29, 2024, and the survey remained open for 5 weeks. He stated the links were publicized using various methods, including emails to City subscribers, social media posts, and push notifications, among others. He indicated the online survey was hosted on Polco and was available in both English and Spanish. He reported a total of 3,938 completed surveys were received, with 92% of respondents reporting living in Broken Arrow. He stated if this were a true scientifically sampled survey, the margin of error would be closer to 1.5%, however, since this was a non-probability survey, Polco suggested using the industry standard margin of error of plus or minus 5 percentage points. He explained Polco then compared the demographic profile of survey respondents to that of adults in Broken Arrow using the most recent Census and American Community Survey data and “weighted” the survey results. He explained weighting was a survey research best practice and helped to improve the representativeness of survey results. He stated one of the advantages to a local government of participating in community surveys was the opportunity to compare ratings given by the local residents to those from communities across the nation. He stated NRC was the first organization to conceive of the idea to create benchmarks of public opinion which allowed jurisdictions to compare ratings of services to ratings of similar services from other communities. He stated there were currently about 500 communities in Polco’s database.

Mr. Barnett stated in the survey, there were two questions which asked directly about the 10 facets of community livability. He stated the first question asked residents to rate the quality of each. He displayed a chart which illustrated the resulting comparison to the national benchmark. He stated the second question asked about the same facets of livability but was centered on how important residents thought it was for the community to focus on each facet in the coming two years. He explained Polco asked about both the quality and importance of each of these facets and used those answers to create the quality/importance matrix. He displayed and discussed a chart illustrating the quality/importance matrix. He stated this chart was used to help determine which areas were of relatively higher importance and lower quality to residents (these were located in the lower-right quadrant of the chart). He stated this chart was one of many ways to interpret the data and could be used to identify key findings and help a community determine which areas may need additional focus or resource allocation in the coming years, and which others were performing well by comparison. He noted utilities was an example of an area where the relative quality, at 60% overall, and importance, at 92% overall, indicated a potential area of opportunity; whereas, Safety, which received 83% positive for overall quality, and 93% importance, indicated it was a major strength of Broken Arrow. He noted further, ratings for safety related items and services were incredibly positive, reinforcing that Broken Arrow was a safe community and well taken care of. He reported of the 123 survey items for which residents provided evaluative ratings, 19 received ratings higher than the national benchmark, 2 of which were much higher, 84 received similar ratings, and 3 received lower ratings. He noted ratings were considered similar if the ratings were within 10 points of the national average, and higher or lower if more than 10 points different from the average. He noted the much higher rated items, more than 20 points above the benchmark, included recommending living in Broken Arrow to someone who asked and the vibrancy of the downtown/commercial area. He noted the lower rated items were the drinking water and bus or transit services.

Mr. Barnett reported there was a lot of data in the full report which he would not cover today, but today’s presentation would focus on a few areas found to be most noteworthy within Broken Arrow’s survey results. He stated the survey determined the economy in Broken Arrow was an asset and a priority. He stated the economy in Broken Arrow received praise from residents, with many items scoring higher than national averages, and residents indicated it was a top priority for the City, with nearly 9 in 10 labelling the economy as essential or very important for Broken Arrow to focus on in the coming two years. He stated the vibrancy of the downtown/commercial area, which scored much higher than comparison communities, and the overall quality of business and service establishments were given high marks from roughly 8 in 10 residents. He noted about three-quarters positively rated Broken Arrow as a place to work, while a slightly smaller proportion gave similar ratings to the variety of business and service establishments, economic development, and Broken Arrow as a place to visit. He noted both shopping and employment opportunities were given ratings higher than national averages, as well as cost of living, each receiving praise from more than half of residents. He reported in a question unique to Broken Arrow’s survey, residents were asked whether they would support a 3% increase on the lodging tax levied on rent received from guests staying in hotels and motels in Broken Arrow. He noted the funds received from this increase would be used for marketing and advertising to promote Broken Arrow. He indicated responses were mixed, with 51% reporting they would strongly or somewhat support the increase, while roughly 49% would strongly or somewhat oppose. He noted the second key finding was while ease of travel in Broken Arrow was generally viewed favorably, residents had concerns around public transportation. He stated in general, ratings for the ease of travel within Broken Arrow were on par with national averages. He indicated roughly two-thirds of respondents gave high marks to the ease of travel by car, while about half gave similar ratings to ease of public parking, and ease of walking. He stated around 4 in 10 considered the traffic flow on major streets excellent or good, and about one-third gave

similar ratings to the ease of travel by bicycle. He stated, however, ratings around public transportation indicated a potential area of opportunity. He noted roughly 2 in 10 residents praised the City's bus or transit services, and the ease of travel by public transportation, further, just 3% reported using public transportation instead of driving over the past 12 months. He reported in a series of questions unique to Broken Arrow's survey, residents were first asked how important they felt it was for the city to continue to focus efforts on increasing connectivity by making improvements to existing sidewalks and adding new sidewalks where none existed. He stated residents reported strong support, with 44% reporting it as essential, and an additional 32% rating it as very important. He noted in the next question, residents were asked how important it was for the city to continue expanding the trail system around Broken Arrow, as well as enhancing mobility for modes of travel other than motor vehicle, and this received strong support as well, with 37% of residents rating it as essential, with an additional 30% giving very important ratings.

Mr. Barnett reported the third key finding was the City's parks and recreational opportunities were highly valued by residents. He stated parks and recreation received strong ratings from residents, with all items scoring on par with national averages. He stated roughly three-quarters praised the City parks, while a slightly smaller proportion gave high marks to the overall quality of the parks and recreation opportunities and recreation centers or facilities. He noted around 6 in 10 positively rated the recreation programs or facilities, as well as fitness opportunities; a little more than half gave excellent or good ratings for both recreational opportunities, and the availability of paths and walking trails. He indicated in another custom question for Broken Arrow's survey, residents were asked to rate how important various potential improvements were to them. He stated a new aquatic center received the most support, with 8 in 10 providing strong or somewhat support. He stated new mountain bike trails and new dog parks received similar support from about two-thirds of residents while pickle ball courts received support from a little more than half, and more sand volleyball courts received the least support, with just half reporting positive ratings. He stated in the next series of custom questions related to parks and recreation, residents were first asked to rate how important it would be to install artificial turf baseball fields at the Indian Springs Sports Complex, and new artificial turf softball fields at Arrowhead Sports complex for youth leagues as an attraction to host regional tournaments, minimize cancellations due to inclement weather, and reduce maintenance costs. He reported residents did not provide strong support for this item, with only about one-third responding that they would strongly or somewhat support the turf fields. He noted in the next question, residents were asked how important it would be to have a community center in the southwest part of Broken arrow in Elam Park and this idea received slightly better support than the turf fields, with about 46% strongly or somewhat supporting the idea.

Mr. Barnett indicated the fourth key finding was residents give high marks to aspects of Broken Arrow's community design. He reported Broken Arrow's community design received high praise in many areas, with more than a few receiving ratings higher than national averages. He stated more than 8 in 10 gave high marks to their neighborhood as a place to live, while about three-quarters applauded the overall appearance, the latter of which scored higher than comparison communities. He stated about two-thirds positively rated the preservation of the historical or cultural character and public places where people want to spend time. He stated the overall design or layout of residential and commercial areas, and the overall quality of new development received excellent or good ratings from around 6 in 10 residents, both surpassing national benchmarks. He noted around half of residents provided positive reviews for well-designed neighborhoods, the variety of housing options, and well-planned commercial growth, while a slightly smaller proportion gave similar ratings to well-planned residential growth. He indicated the availability of affordable quality housing received strong ratings from just 4 in 10 residents, however, it was still higher than current national averages. He stated later in the survey, residents were asked how much they would support improvements to various facilities in Broken Arrow. He stated the Senior Center, Senior Center Annex, and Veteran's Center received the most support, with about 9 in 10 reporting they would strongly or somewhat support improvements. He stated the Military History Center was next with 86% providing similar ratings, followed by the Museum Broken Arrow, the Community Playhouse, and then the Brown-Kimbrough Center for Arts, Innovation, and Creativity.

Mr. Barnett reported the next key finding was while ratings for utilities were strong, residents pointed to drinking water as an area of opportunity. He stated most items related to utilities in Broken Arrow received scores on par with national averages, however drinking water fell below. He stated roughly 8 in 10 praised Broken Arrow's garbage collection, while around 7 in 10 provided similar ratings for sewer services, power utility, and stormwater management. He reported about 6 in 10 gave high marks for the overall quality of the utility infrastructure, and utility billing. He noted while drinking water received ratings from a similar proportion, it fell below national averages, indicating a potential area of opportunity. He stated in a set of questions unique to Broken Arrow's survey related to utilities, residents were first asked how much they would support spending tax dollars to relocate overhead power lines underground. He stated this idea was strongly supported by residents, with 57% reporting they would

strongly support this, and an additional 32% would somewhat support. He stated the next question asked residents how important it would be for the city to continue to invest in projects to improve stormwater management and drainage issues. He indicated much like the previous item, this received strong support from residents as well, with 54% reporting they would strongly support continuing the investment, with an additional 33% somewhat supporting. He stated the last key finding was ratings for governance were strong in Broken Arrow, contributing to the high quality of life experienced by residents. He reported residents applauded the leadership in Broken Arrow with all items either on par or higher than comparison communities. He indicated more than 8 in 10 praised the overall customer service by Broken Arrow emergency dispatch employees, and around three-quarters gave similar ratings to the overall customer service by Broken Arrow employees. He reported roughly 7 in 10 gave high marks to the public information services and treating residents with respect. He stated the overall direction Broken Arrow was taking received excellent or good scores from about two-thirds of residents, scoring higher than national averages. He noted a slightly smaller proportion applauded the City for treating all residents fairly, being honest, generally acting in the best interest of the community, informing residents about issues facing the community, and being open and transparent to the public, the latter two surpassed the national benchmarks. He indicated more than half of residents positively rated their overall confidence in Broken Arrow government, on par with comparisons communities. He stated the strong leadership in Broken Arrow likely contributed to the high quality of life experiences by residents. He reported at least 8 in 10 praised Broken Arrow as a place to live, the overall quality of life, and the overall image or reputation, which the latter scored higher than comparison communities. He stated also surpassing the national benchmarks, roughly 9 in 10 residents reported they planned to remain in Broken Arrow for the next five years and would recommend living in Broken Arrow to someone who asked.

Mr. Barnett stated, in conclusion, the economy in Broken Arrow was an asset and a priority; while ease of travel in Broken Arrow was generally viewed favorably, residents have concerns around public transportation; the City's parks and recreational opportunities were highly valued by residents; residents gave high marks to aspects of Broken Arrow's community design; while ratings for utilities were strong, residents pointed to drinking water as an area of opportunity; and ratings for governance were strong in Broken Arrow, contributing to the high quality of life experienced by residents. He stated if Broken Arrow wished to dig deeper to find out more about the opinions and perceptions of its residents, it could continue to engage with the community on Polco. He stated Polco's Engage module was included as a part of Broken Arrow's current subscription. He explained Engage included various resident feedback tools, including customizable polls, surveys, and live events. He noted questions within these tools could include maps, images, videos or links to better inform respondents. He stated the Polco library was also included as part of the Engage module and contained curated surveys and polls created by survey scientists at Polco. He stated Broken Arrow could use these as they were, look around for inspiration, or make a copy of a survey and customize it to fit Broken Arrow's needs. He noted alternatively, if the City had a survey or poll in mind, it could create one from scratch and reach out to subscribers for feedback. He noted Broken Arrow did not have to do this all on its own: the Engage module provided access to a dedicated Customer Success Manager and Survey Researcher who were available to help. He asked if there were any questions.

Vice Mayor Christi Gillespie stated Broken Arrow was awesome.

Mayor Debra Wimpee noted the few things Broken Arrow could make improvements in, it was already working to address and improve.

Mr. McColloch displayed the Polco survey dashboard provided to Broken Arrow which allowed the City to look deeper into the survey results. He discussed how the dashboard worked and how to navigate the dashboard. He noted the dashboard was available to anyone who wished to look into the survey results and would be live on the Broken Arrow website.

City Manager Michael Spurgeon discussed the next steps and how the City would utilize the data collected. He thanked Mr. McColloch and Mr. Barnett. He stated Broken Arrow would implement a public education campaign on the Survey results including what the results were and where to access the results. He stated there were some areas in which Broken Arrow was very strong and some areas where Broken Arrow could improve. He indicated the City Directors were tasked to find ways Broken Arrow could maintain the current level of expectation in the area where the City scored high, and to find ways to make improvements in the areas where the City scored lower and make recommendations about both. He stated he planned to come back after six months with these recommendations. He stated the City Council Members were welcome to make recommendations as well. He stated he felt the City received some excellent responses which could be used to further the bond package and guide project choices. He stated the goal was to present the entire bond package to City Council in June of next year. He stated he believed additional questions to the public were in order regarding some of the responses to obtain more specific feedback with smaller surveys. He discussed the public meetings and how these meetings would be structured to collect

feedback to help build the bond package. He stated he was pleased the public was in favor of continuing to support the facilities with which the City had user agreements (Senior Center, Arts Center, History Museum, etc.). He noted this bond package would be the citizen's bond package. He stated he was pleased to hear the citizens were somewhat in favor of a hotel/motel tax, as he felt support of this tax would only increase as the public became more educated regarding how the tax would be collected, who would be taxed, and how it would be used.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Justin Green, seconded by Christi Gillespie.

**Move to accept the results of the 2024 Citizen Survey**

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 5 - Justin Green, Lisa Ford, Johnnie Parks, Christi Gillespie, Debra Wimpee

#### **4. Remarks and Inquiries by Governing Body Members**

There were no remarks or inquiries by Governing Body Members.

#### **5. Remarks and Updates by City Manager, including Recognition of Recent Accomplishments by Employees and Elected Officials**

There were no remarks or updates by City Manager, including recognition of recent accomplishments by employees and elected officials.

#### **6. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:35 p.m.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Lisa Ford, seconded by Johnnie Parks.

**Move to adjourn**

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 5 - Justin Green, Lisa Ford, Johnnie Parks, Christi Gillespie, Debra Wimpee

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Mayor

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City Clerk