

January 21, 2025

ALLIANCE CITY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING, TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2025

STATE OF NEBRASKA)
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 COUNTY OF BOX BUTTE) §
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 CITY OF ALLIANCE)

The Alliance City Council met in a Regular Meeting, January 21, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Alliance Learning Center Community Meeting Room, 1750 Sweetwater Avenue. A notice of meeting was published in the Alliance Times Herald on January 15, 2025. The notice stated the date, hour and place of the meeting, that the meeting was open to the public, and that an agenda of the meeting, kept continuously current, was available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk in City Hall; provided the Council could modify the agenda at the meeting if it determined an emergency so required. A similar notice, together with a copy of the agenda, also had been provided to each of the City Council Members. An agenda, kept continuously current, was available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk during regular business hours from the publication of the notice to the time of the meeting.

Mayor McGhehey opened the January 21, 2025 regular meeting of the Alliance, Nebraska City Council at 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor McGhehey, Vice Mayor Mashburn and Council Members Weisgerber, Liptack, and Turman. Also present were City Manager Sorensen, City Treasurer Baker, City Attorney Selzer and City Clerk Pitt.

- Mayor McGhehey read the Open Meetings Act Announcement.
- Council Proclaimed the week of January 26th – February 1st as National Lutheran Schools Week.

The Immanuel Evangelica Lutheran School was in attendance to receive the proclamation for National Lutheran Schools Week. Vice Mayor Mashburn read the following proclamation:

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, teaching the young in full-time Lutheran schools has been an integral part of the heritage and the life of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod from its 1847 beginning; and

WHEREAS, Congregations of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod maintain the largest Protestants school system in the United States, enrolling over 160,000 students in over 1,800 preschools, elementary, secondary schools, and college, served by over 21,000 teachers and professors with a support system of over 6,000 congregations; and

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WHEREAS, The purpose and mission of Lutheran schools is to equip children, young adults, and their parents to prepare for service and leadership in Lutheran congregations; and

WHEREAS, Graduates of Lutheran schools have gone on to distinguish themselves through service and leadership in community, government and the church; and

WHEREAS, Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran School has been in existence since 2014 and is located at 1312 E. 10th Street with an enrollment of approximately 120 students; and

WHEREAS, During the week of January 26 – February 1, 2025, there will be several activities with student involvement in recognition of National Lutheran Schools Week;

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of Alliance, Nebraska, does hereby proclaim:

The week of January 26 – February 1, 2025 as:

NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK

In the City of Alliance, Nebraska, and urge all citizens to recognize Lutheran Schools for their commitment to proclaim the Gospel to children, young people, and their parents, and for their commitment to excellence in quality Christian education.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the City of Alliance to be affixed on this 21st day of January in the year of the Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Five.

- A motion was made by Councilman Turman, seconded by Councilman Liptack to move Item I. Resolution No. 25-14 – Jelinek Custom Cleaning LB840 on the agenda to Item B.

Roll call vote with the following results:

Voting Aye: Weisgerber, Liptack, Turman, Mashburn and McGhehey.

Voting Nay: None.

Motion carried.

Council now had before them was Resolution No. 25-14 which will approve the Jelinek Custom Cleaning for Economic Development Assistance in the amount of \$250,000. The following information was provided:

[RESOLUTION – JELINEK CUSTOM CLEANING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE LOAN

Jelinek Custom Cleaning has applied for an Economic Development Assistance loan from the City's Economic Development Program. The Applicant is expanding its edible bean processing facility near Alliance. The proceeds of the Loan will be

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used primarily for a new warehouse for storage. The City Economic Development Application Review Committee has reviewed the application and recommended a loan of \$250,000.00, with interest at the Federal Mid-Term Rate, payable over 5 years. The Applicant is eligible for job credits to be applied to the note for up to 6 full time employees residing within 50 miles of Alliance. The job credits are generally equal to \$2,000.00 per full time employee, per year with the maximum annual job credit of \$12,000.00 and the maximum total job credit of \$60,000.00. The Resolution approves the loan and authorizes the City Manager and Finance Director to issue and administer the loan.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO JELINEK CUSTOM CLEANING.]

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Mashburn, seconded by Councilman Turman to approve Resolution No. 25-14. Which follows in its entirety:

RESOLUTION NO. 25-14

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA:

Recitals:

- a. The City has adopted an Economic Development Program (the “Program”) according to the Nebraska Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act.
- b. Jelinek Custom Cleaning Inc. (the “Applicant”) has made application for assistance from the Program (the “Application”).
- c. The Administrator of the Program and the City Economic Development Application Review Committee (the “Committee”) have reviewed the Application.
- d. The Committee recommended to the City Council that a loan (the “Loan”) be made to the Applicant from the City of Alliance Economic Development Fund as provided for in the proposed Economic Development Assistance Agreement with the Applicant (the “Agreement”).

Resolved:

1. The Committee’s recommendations are approved by the City Council.
2. The Agreement between the City and Applicant as presented is approved. The City Manager is authorized to sign the Agreement on behalf of the City with any such changes and amendments to the Agreement which are consistent with the Committee’s recommendations and which the City Manager deems in the best interest of the City and the Program.

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3. The City Manager and City Finance Director are authorized to take all necessary actions and sign all necessary documents to make and administer the Loan according to the terms of the Agreement.

This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

Brain Jelinek, 7006 Madison Rd. Alliance, Nebraska, came before the Council giving them an overview of this LB840 request and answering any questions from the Council.

Roll call vote with the following results:

Voting Aye: Liptack, Turman, Weisgerber, Mashburn and McGhehey.

Voting Nay: None.

Motion carried.

- The Consent Calendar was the next item on the agenda. A motion was made by Councilman Liptack, seconded by Councilman Weisgerber to approve the Consent Calendar as follows:

CONSENT CALENDAR – January 21, 2025

1. Approval: Minutes of the Regular Meeting, January 7, 2025 and Strategic Planning Meeting, January 9, 2025.
2. Approval: Payroll from January 10, 2025 in the total amount of \$395,171.87.
3. Approval: Claims against the following funds: General, General Debt Service, Trust and Agency, Street, Electric, Refuse Collection and Disposal, Sanitary Sewer, Water, Golf Course, Downtown Improvement Districts, R.S.V.P., Keno, and Capital Improvement; \$1,340,133.74.
4. Approval: Cemetery Certificates for Hulquist, Brian and Foster, Robert D. & Cynthia and Foster, Brandon and Foster, Joshua.
5. Approval: Resolution No. 25-08 which will authorize a budget transfer in the amount of \$3,600 from CAPITAL OUTLAY – Mach, Equip #21-71-75-59-950 to NRCNTSVC-Building # 21-71-75-44-483 to cover the repair costs needed for the gas line and golf maintain shop HVAC.
6. Approval: Resolution No. 25-09 which will accept the donation of plant identification tags including both scientific names and common names for each perennial in the Central Park Sunken Gardens from the Alliance Park Foundation.

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7. Approval: Resolution No. 25-10 which will authorize the use of Electric Fund cash reserves may be used for an interim interdepartmental loan to the Airport Fund at the interest rate of 5.15% in an amount not to exceed \$850,000 for a period of 120 months budget authority is being transferred from the Electric Loan to Other Funds Account No. 05-51-50-38-864 to Airport Loans from Other Funds Account No. 22-41-43-38-863.

NOTE: City Manager Sorensen and City Treasurer Baker have reviewed these expenditures and to the best of their knowledge confirm that they are within budgeted appropriations to this point in the fiscal year.

Any item listed on the Consent Calendar may, by the request of any single Council Member, be considered as a separate item in the Regular Agenda.

Roll call vote with the following results:

Voting Aye: Mashburn, Turman, Liptack, Weisgerber and McGhehey.

Voting Nay: None.

Motion carried.

- The next item on the agenda for Council was Ordinance No. 2994, which will accept and amend the City of Alliance Municipal Code Section 2-132 regarding the General Employee's Retirement Committee. The following information was provided:

[ORDINANCE – RETIREMENT COMMITTEE

Request: Update Ordinance Governing Employee Representative Selection for Retirement Committees

The City of Alliance Municipal Code currently outlines the process by which employee representatives are selected for the General, Police, and Fire Retirement Committees. Under the existing system, the City Clerk is required to conduct a secret ballot election and certify the results to the City Council. However, no laws or policies mandate the use of a secret ballot for these elections.

The proposed change would allow the City Clerk to manage elections using a fair, transparent, and efficient method while maintaining integrity in the selection process. For example, the process could begin by soliciting volunteers to serve on the committee, followed by notifying the employee group being represented (General, Police, or Fire) and providing a timeframe for objections. The City Council will be updated with retirement committee membership changes.

Section (e) regarding compensation is also being updated to reflect statutory language in the Firefighters Retirement Plan to allow reimbursement for expenses under certain circumstances. This language was also incorporated into both the General and Police Ordinance. (Neb. Rev. Stat. 16-1035).

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With the anticipated onboarding of a new Retirement Advisor in 2025, it is crucial for the Retirement Committees to be fully staffed and ready to fulfill their roles. Adopting this change would streamline the election process and help ensure vacant positions are filled promptly, enabling the committees to operate as intended.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE THE ORDINANCES REVISING THE PROCESS FOR SELECTING RETIREMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS ON FIRST READING.]

A motion was made by Councilman Weisgerber, seconded by Vice Mayor Mashburn to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 2994. City Clerk Pitt read the ordinance by title which follows in its entirety:

ORDINANCE NO. 2994

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA AMENDING ALLIANCE MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 2-132 REGARDING THE GENERAL EMPLOYEE'S RETIREMENT COMMITTEE TO PROVIDE FOR THE CITY COUNCIL DESIGNEES TO BE THE CITY MANAGER AND CITY TREASURER, TO CHANGE THE METHOD OF ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE FROM SECRET BALLOT TO A FAIR AND TRANSPARENT METHOD, TO CHANGE THE TERMS OF MEMBERS FROM THREE TO FOUR YEARS, AND TO PROVIDE FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THEIR ACTUAL AND NECESSARY EXPENSES INCURRED IN CARRYING OUT THEIR DUTIES, SUBJECT TO CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL; REPEALING EXISTING PROVISIONS OF THE CITY CODE NOT CONSISTENT WITH THIS ORDINANCE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA:

SECTION 1. Section 2-132 of the Alliance Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 2-132. - General employee's retirement committee.

(a) *General purpose.* There is established a general employees' retirement committee which shall supervise the general operation of the general employee's retirement system.

(b) *Members.* The retirement committee established shall consist of members from both the general city employees and designees of the city council. The committee shall consist of six members, of which four members shall be selected by general city employees, and shall not be from the same department. The employee representative must be a participant in the general employee's retirement fund. Administration shall be represented by the city manager and city treasurer. The plan administrator will be a non-voting member.

(c) *Elections.* Election of members shall be conducted by the city clerk in a fair and transparent method. The city clerk will inform the city council of retirement committee membership changes.

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(d) *Term.* Employee members shall be appointed to four year terms. Vacancies shall be filled by a person with the same representation as his predecessor.

(e) *Compensation.* Members of the retirement committee shall receive no separate salary, but subject to approval by the city council, shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in carrying out their duties.

(f) *Duties.* The retirement committee shall be established to supervise the general operation of the plan; provided, however, the city shall be responsible for the general administration of the plan except for such specific administrative functions that are delegated, by ordinance or plan document, to the retirement committee. It shall be the duty of the retirement committee to:

(1) Provide each employee a summary of plan eligibility requirements and benefit provisions;

(2) Provide, within thirty days after a request is made by a participant, a statement describing the amount of benefits such participant is eligible to receive; and

(3) Make available for review an annual report of the retirement system's operations describing both the amount of contributions to the retirement system from both employee and employer sources and an identification of the total assets of the retirement system.

SECTION 2. All ordinances, parts of ordinances, resolutions, and policies of the City of Alliance in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its approval, passage, and publication according to law.

Roll call vote with the following results:

Voting Aye: Weisgerber, Mashburn, Liptack, Turman and McGhehey.

Voting Nay: None.

Motion carried.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Mashburn, seconded by Councilman Turman to suspend the statutory rule requiring three separate readings of Ordinance No. 2994.

Roll call vote with the following results:

Voting Aye: Turman, Liptack, Weisgerber, Mashburn and McGhehey.

Voting Nay: None.

Motion carried.

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Mayor McGhehey stated, "the passage and adoption of Ordinance No. 2994 has concurred by majority of all members elected to the Council, I declare it passed, adopted and order it published."

- The next item on the agenda for Council was Ordinance No. 2995, which will accept and amend the City of Alliance Municipal Code Section 2-152 regarding the Police Pension Plan Retirement Committee.

A motion was made by Councilman Liptack, seconded by Councilman Weisgerber to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 2995. City Clerk Pitt read the ordinance by title which follows in its entirety:

ORDINANCE NO. 2995

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA AMENDING ALLIANCE MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 2-152 REGARDING THE POLICE PENSION PLAN RETIREMENT COMMITTEE TO PROVIDE FOR THE CITY COUNCIL DESIGNEES TO BE THE CITY MANAGER AND CITY TREASURER AND TO CHANGE THE METHOD OF ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE FROM SECRET BALLOT TO A FAIR AND TRANSPARENT METHOD; REPEALING EXISTING PROVISIONS OF THE CITY CODE NOT CONSISTENT WITH THIS ORDINANCE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA:

SECTION 1. Section 2-152 of the Alliance Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 2-152. - Retirement committee.

(a) *General purpose.* There has been established police department retirement committee which shall supervise the general operation of the police department's retirement system.

(b) *Members.* The retirement committee established shall consist of members from both the police force and designees of the city council. The committee shall consist of six members, of which, four members shall be selected by active, paid police officers. Administration shall be represented by the city manager and city treasurer. The plan administrator will be a non-voting member.

(c) *Elections.* Election of police officers shall be conducted by the city clerk in a fair and transparent method. The city clerk will inform the city council of retirement committee membership changes.

(d) *Term.* The committee members shall be appointed to four-year terms. Vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the term by a person with the same representation as his predecessor.

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(e) *Compensation.* Members of the retirement committee shall receive no separate salary and shall not be compensated for expenses.

(f) *Duties.* The retirement committee shall be established to supervise the general operation of the plan; provided, however, the city shall be responsible for the general administration of the plan except for such specific administrative functions that are delegated, by ordinance or statute, to the retirement committee.

SECTION 2. All ordinances, parts of ordinances, resolutions, and policies of the City of Alliance in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its approval, passage, and publication according to law.

Roll call vote with the following results:

Voting Aye: Liptack, Weisgerber, Turman, Mashburn and McGhehey.

Voting Nay: None.

Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Liptack, seconded by Councilman Turman to suspend the statutory rule requiring three separate readings of Ordinance No. 2995.

Roll call vote with the following results:

Voting Aye: Mashburn, Turman, Liptack, Weisgerber and McGhehey.

Voting Nay: None.

Motion carried.

Mayor McGhehey stated, "the passage and adoption of Ordinance No. 2995 has concurred by majority of all members elected to the Council, I declare it passed, adopted and order it published."

- The next item on the agenda for Council was Ordinance No. 2996, which will accept and amend the City of Alliance Municipal Code Section 2-172 regarding the Firefighter Pension Plan Retirement Committee.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Mashburn, seconded by Councilman Liptack to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 2996. City Clerk Pitt read the ordinance by title which follows in its entirety:

ORDINANCE NO. 2996

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AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA AMENDING ALLIANCE MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 2-172 REGARDING THE FIREFIGHTER PENSION PLAN RETIREMENT COMMITTEE TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS FROM FOUR TO SIX, FOUR OF WHICH SHALL BE SELECTED BY THE ACTIVE, PAID FIREFIGHTERS, TO PROVIDE FOR THE CITY COUNCIL DESIGNEES TO BE THE CITY MANAGER AND CITY TREASURER, TO CHANGE THE METHOD OF ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE FROM SECRET BALLOT TO A FAIR AND TRANSPARENT METHOD, AND TO PROVIDE FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THEIR ACTUAL AND NECESSARY EXPENSES INCURRED IN CARRYING OUT THEIR DUTIES, SUBJECT TO CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL; REPEALING EXISTING PROVISIONS OF THE CITY CODE NOT CONSISTENT WITH THIS ORDINANCE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA:

SECTION 1. Section 2-172 of the Alliance Municipal Code is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 2-172. - Retirement committee.

- (a) *General purpose.* There is established a fire department retirement committee which shall supervise the general operation of the fire department's retirement system.
- (b) *Members.* The retirement committee established shall consist of members from both the fire department and designees of the city council. The committee shall consist of six members, of which four members shall be selected by active, paid officers from the fire department of the city. Administration shall be represented by the city manager and city treasurer. The plan administrator will be a non-voting member.
- (c) *Elections.* Election of members shall be conducted by the city clerk in a fair and transparent method. The city clerk will inform the city council of retirement committee membership changes.
- (d) *Term.* The committee members shall be appointed to four-year terms. Vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the term by a person with the same representation as his predecessor.
- (e) *Compensation.* Members of the retirement committee shall receive no separate salary, but, subject to approval by the city council, shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in carrying out their duties.
- (f) *Duties.* The retirement committee shall be established to supervise the general operation of the plan; provided, however, the city shall be responsible for the general administration of the plan except for such specific administrative functions which are delegated, by ordinance or statute, to the retirement committee.

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SECTION 2. All ordinances, parts of ordinances, resolutions, and policies of the City of Alliance in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its approval, passage, and publication according to law.

Roll call vote with the following results:

Voting Aye: Turman, Mashburn, Weisgerber, Liptack and McGhehey.

Voting Nay: None.

Motion carried.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Mashburn, seconded by Councilman Turman to suspend the statutory rule requiring three separate readings of Ordinance No. 2996.

Roll call vote with the following results:

Voting Aye: Liptack, Turman, Weisgerber, Mashburn and McGhehey.

Voting Nay: None.

Motion carried.

Mayor McGhehey stated, "the passage and adoption of Ordinance No. 2996 has concurred by majority of all members elected to the Council, I declare it passed, adopted and order it published."

- The next item on the agenda for Council was Resolution No. 25-11 which will recommend to the Department of Transportation that Contour Airlines provide the Essential Air Service at the Alliance Municipal Airport. Contour Airlines will provide airline services for four years beginning June 1, 2025, if approved by the Department of Transportation. The following information was provided:

[RESOLUTION -AIRLINE RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Transportation solicited proposals from carriers to provide Essential Air Service at Alliance and/or Chadron on October 22, 2024. The current contract with Denver Air Connection expires on May 31, 2025 and a new contract period begins June 1, 2025. The Department of Transportation received seven proposals from four carriers:

- Denver Air Connection
- Boutique Air
- Contour Airlines

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- SkyWest Airlines

In an effort to ensure a comprehensive evaluation during the airline selection process, a core group of ten individuals was assembled to analyze both airline proposals and Alliance community priorities. This group is a diverse collection of individuals selected to represent frequent flyers, small businesses, local industry, and leaders in our community. This group updated the priority list of criteria that was developed in 2015. The updated priority list consisted of the following seven categories with the top of the list being the highest priority:

1. Reliability/Overnight of aircraft
2. Schedule
3. Pricing
4. Simplicity (codeshare, ticket and baggage etc)
5. Communication or responsiveness of the airline
6. Baggage Space
7. Marketing/Tourism/Economic Impact

The airport's air service consultant, Mike Mooney, supplied a list of questions for each carrier, provided a proposal comparison and compared load factor data of all airlines. Alliance invited all airline carriers to come for a visit or meet via zoom meeting as a part of the evaluation process. Each carrier was given time to make a presentation and answer questions from the group.

Boutique Air is based in San Francisco, California. Boutique utilizes an eight-seat, modern, pressurized PC-12 aircraft. Boutique Air has offered the community two different bid options to consider. One bid with service to Denver hub similar to what was provided by them in the past. The other option would be a two-hub approach with service to Denver and Omaha. Boutique does have a ticket and baggage agreement with United. Boutique Air is not currently operating out of Denver. While the Omaha option is interesting, it does not outweigh the concern about Boutique's reliability, on-time performance, and baggage room constraints.

Denver Air Connection (DAC) is based in Englewood, Colorado. Denver Air Connection submitted three different bids for Alliance to consider. The first two choices will continue to fly a Metroliner-23, which is a 9-seat pressurized twin-engine turboprop. DAC did configure this plane with nine seats offering first-class legroom and a cargo bay that can accommodate all of our passengers' luggage. The difference in the two Metroliner-23 bids is one offers an increase in the number of flights operated 8 months out of the year. That option will add an additional flight on Tuesday and Wednesday, giving Alliance 14 roundtrips per week. Denver Air Connection has multiple pricing tiers with the Metroliner-23 with the lowest being \$59 and

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a refundable ticket at \$109. The schedule may be able to be improved by moving the morning flight departure to 30 minutes earlier than its current scheduled time. The final choice is 12 roundtrips per week with a 30-seat and 50-seat jet aircraft. This option could start with current infrastructure but would require a change of class for the Alliance airport. With increased enplanements improvements would be needed. Pricing would start at \$99. The schedule may be able to remain the same for departure times out of Alliance but would likely require final daily departure time out of Denver to be earlier.

All DAC bid options include baggage fees that were added in October for checked bags and are \$15 for the first, \$20 for the second, and \$25 for the third bag. No fees are charged for carry-on or personal items. Denver Air Connection has a ticket and baggage agreement with United, American and Delta. All Denver Air Connection options include the aircraft overnighing in Alliance and are for two, three, or four years of service.

Denver Air Connection currently has been servicing Alliance since 2019. Alliance has experienced a 99.6% completion rate, an 85% on-time performance rate in 2024, and increased enplanements with Denver Air Connection. DAC is the most reliable EAS carrier in the country with an annual flight completion rate of just over 99%. SkyWest and Contour typically complete about 98% of their flights annually. Most cancelled flights related to Alliance are due to extreme weather in either Alliance or Denver.

SkyWest Airlines is based in St. George, Utah and is the largest regional airline in the United States and the largest Essential Air Service carrier. SkyWest utilizes a 50-seat regional jet. SkyWest is currently operating in Scottsbluff, North Platte and Kearney, Nebraska. SkyWest has offered Alliance 12 roundtrips per week with a 50 seat jet aircraft, but the aircraft will come from Denver and not overnight in Alliance. SkyWest has many years' experiences and an outstanding record of growing traffic. The pricing and scheduling would be similar to Scottsbluff with the earliest flight departing around 10:00 a.m. SkyWest service would require certain airport infrastructure improvements along with Alliance changing their class of airport.

Contour Airlines is based in Smyrna, Tennessee and is the second largest Essential Air Service carrier in the United States. Contour submitted a bid for 12 roundtrips with a 30-seat jet aircraft with the aircraft overnighing in Alliance. The carrier will begin operating out of Denver in May of this year. Contour has different pricing tiers with the lowest being \$59 and increasing after that. A personal item, carry-on, and first checked bag are free. The second checked bag would be \$25 fee. The schedule could have a 6:00 a.m. -7:00 a.m. departure from Alliance depending on what time the

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departures needed to be out of Denver for the evening. Contour has ticket and baggage agreements with United, American, Alaska and Airlines. This option would not require a class change for the airport and could start with current infrastructure. As enplanements increase, improvements would be needed.

Contour's jet service is being offered to Alliance operating as a combined FAA Part 135 regulations with the DOT Part 380 Public Charter regulations. Airline operations in the United States are governed by two sets of FAA regulations and two sets of DOT regulations. For FAA, Part 121 regulations govern 50-seat and larger regional jet operations. FAA Part 135 regulations govern smaller scheduled service operations, typically 9-seat but also including 30-seat under select circumstances. The primary difference between Part 123 and Part 135 is pilot qualification requirements, less for Part 135, more for Part 121. For DOT, most airline operations are governed by DOT scheduled service regulations. However, charter flights are governed by a regulation set called Public Charter regulations. Public Charter regulations are more flexible, as they are designed for ad hoc or occasional charter operations.

Contour is one of three domestic carriers that operate daily scheduled service with 30-seat regional jets. They combined the FAA Part 135 regulations with the DOT Part 380 Public Charter regulations. This enables them to offer 30-seat regional jet service in EAS cities without the higher standard Part 121 pilot qualifications. This works well for them with the ongoing pilot shortages. More than 100 regional jets are operated daily by these three airlines under this combined regulation set. 23 of the 111 EAS cities in the nation (21 %) have service provided by FAA Part 135/DOT Part 380 service.

Contour Airlines' bid proposal was submitted under the Alternate Essential Air Service program, while all other bids were as regular Essential Air Service. The main difference in the two programs is this:

- Alternate EAS the contract with the airline is with the City of Alliance instead of the Department of Transportation.
- Alternate EAS requires the City of Alliance to pay the airline directly and be reimbursed by DOT. This reimbursement takes place within 30 days of submittal to the DOT.

Jet service is an exciting growth opportunity for the airport as it provides not only the potential for increased passenger traffic but increased employment opportunities. Bringing jet service into a community has proven time and time again to increase enplanements. This number can not be precisely quantified due to the unknown nature of the number of people unwilling to travel on smaller aircraft. Increased enplanements can also

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increase the annual Airport Improvement Funding levels the airport receives every year through the FAA. While jet service is exciting it comes with the need for improved infrastructure and a possible class change of the airport. With current passenger levels, Alliance is experiencing some parking limitations, so expansion of the current concrete may need to be considered. In addition, the terminal check point is adequate for the 9-seat flights right now, but additional room would be necessary in the future. The terminal has multiple options for reconfiguring the current layout to improve the checkpoint issue. Additional staff, whether TSA, Airline, or airport personnel could create more than just a checkpoint issue. The space constraint of the checkpoint can be worked around until a long-term solution is explored.

This final recommendation has been the most difficult decision regarding airline selection to date. This decision is basically coming down to do we want to grow the airport or maintain what we have. For the selection committee, the answer is growth.

Once that was decided, the committee had to evaluate the growth opportunities presented along with the other criteria from the priority list. The recommendation to City Council is Contour Airlines. Contour Airlines will allow passenger growth while providing the airport the opportunity to manage the challenges of jet service. The schedule and pricing will be close to or better than what we currently have. Pricing and scheduling is out of the airport's control and can change from what has been presented. The class of the airport can remain the same, which will give the airport a chance to explore options for increasing ARFF coverage outside of normal business hours.

The selection committee recognizes that Denver Air Connection has done a great job growing passenger traffic but there is a cap to what we can achieve with a 9-seat operation with the number of flights we are receiving. The next steps in the process are:

- City Council will decide on the recommendation to the Department of Transportation.
- Airport Director will submit the letter of recommendation to DOT by the February 5th comment deadline.
- Department of Transportation makes the final decision for airline service in Alliance, City Council is only making a recommendation not a final decision.

**RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE THE RESOLUTION
RECOMMENDING CONTOUR AIRLINES BID FOR FOUR
YEARS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR
ALTERNATE ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE AT ALLIANCE.]**

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A motion was made by Councilman Weisgerber, seconded by Vice Mayor Mashburn to approve Resolution No. 24-11. Which follows in its entirety:

RESOLUTION NO. 25-11

WHEREAS, The City of Alliance owns and operates the Alliance Municipal Airport which provides commercial air service; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Transportation has solicited proposals from carriers to provide Essential Air Service to Alliance, Nebraska; and

WHEREAS, Our current carrier's contract to provide Essential Air Service ends May 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Four carriers submitted proposals which were evaluated and rated by our Airport Manager and individuals interested in the commercial air service provided to Alliance; and

WHEREAS, Based on the evaluations and interviews with the four carriers the group is recommending the selection of Contour Airlines to the Department of Transportation to provide Essential Air Service for Alliance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Alliance, Nebraska, that Contour Airlines be recommended to the Department of Transportation to provide Essential Air Service to the Alliance Municipal Airport.

Airport Director Placek gave an overview and process of selection of the Airline Services.

Earl Jones, 808 Cheyenne Avenue Alliance, Nebraska, came before Council with his thoughts of selecting a new Airline Services.

Tim Richie, 688 Newberry Street Alliance, Nebraska, came before Council stressing he did not like the language of the pilots of the proposed Airline Service of Contour. Mr. Richie stated he has great luck with current Airline Services of Denver Connect and does not want to lose out on reliability for his Company.

Connie Kirschner, 2829 Lakefield Avenue Alliance, Nebraska, asked if other cities who have used or currently use Contour Airline Services have been contacted for references.

Mariah Pedersen, 907 Laramie Avenue Alliance, Nebraska, came before stating her thoughts and concerns about changing from our current Airline Services.

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Hannah Robinson, 114 W 8th Street Alliance, Nebraska, wanted to come forward and state that the Airport Director and fellow board members involved in the selection process have done a wonderful job.

Roll call vote with the following results:

Voting Aye: Mashburn, Weisgerber, Liptack, Turman and McGhehey.

Voting Nay: None.

Motion carried.

- The next item on the agenda for Council was Resolution No. 25-12 which will accept and enter into agreement with WSKF Architecture for the preliminary design services of a new Public Safety Center, which will not exceed the amount of \$100,000. The following information was provided:

[RESOLUTION – Approve entering into contract negotiations with WSKF for preliminary design services for a new Public Safety Center

Following approval of the 2024-2025 Budget, staff began drafting a request for proposals (RFP) for preliminary design services for a new public safety center. This RFP was advertised from the latter part of October into the first part of November 2024 and resulted in seven (7) design firms submitting a response.

RFP responses were reviewed and scored independently by Troy Shoemaker, Fire/EMS Chief, David Leavitt, Police Chief, and Seth Sorensen, City Manager. Scores were then averaged and ranked, resulting in three companies that exhibited substantial experience with this type of project, with several hundred similar projects completed amongst them. The top three firms: BKV Group, Davis Design, and WSKF Architecture all had extremely close scores following this process and it was decided to request Zoom meeting interviews to differentiate between the firms for best fit for the project.

Interviews were held the third full week of December 2024, with all three reviewers attending. Following these interviews, it was determined that WSKF was the most qualified and best fit for our project for their past projects, communication skills, and team member experience. WSKF is located in Kansas City, Kansas and would complete this work through a combination of remote and on-site visits, working with staff and presenting to the public as necessary.

It is requested of the City Council to authorize the City Manager to enter into negotiations with WSKF for the purposes of establishing a final scope of work, cost and subsequent contract, which will come back to the City Council for final approval. The council approved the sum of \$100,000 for this project. Staff will work with WSKF to ensure that costs stay within this budgeted amount, and it is

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desirable that the final scope will include site selection, rough floorplan, 3D renderings, and estimated opinion of probable costs for the final project. This information will then be used to go to the public to determine the level of support for moving forward with the anticipated project.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve entering into contract negotiations with WSKF for preliminary design services for a new Public Safety Center]

A motion was made by Councilman Turman, seconded by Vice Mayor Mashburn to approve Resolution No. 25-12. Which follows in its entirety:

RESOLUTION NO. 25-12

WHEREAS, The City of Alliance operates the Alliance Police Department and the Alliance Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, The Police Department and Fire Department are a vital asset to the City of Alliance for the safety and well-being of the community; and

WHEREAS, The City put out an RFP in November 2024 for proposals for preliminary design services for a new public safety center; and

WHEREAS, There were seven design firms that responded and submitted proposals; and

WHEREAS, The proposal were reviewed and scored independently by the Fire Chief, Police Chief and City Manager, then averaged and ranked; and

WHEREAS, Interviews were conducted on the top three design firms to determine the most qualified and best fit firm.

WHEREAS, After interviews City Staff has determined that WSKF Architecture is the best fit firm for the preliminary design services.

WHEREAS, The City Manager requests that the City Council enter into an agreement with WSKF Architecture for the preliminary design services for a Public Safety Center to not exceed One Hundred Thousand and NO/100s Dollars (\$100,000).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and City Council of Alliance, Nebraska, the City Manager is authorized to enter into a contract negotiations with WSKF Architecture.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study should not exceed the authorized budgeted amount of \$100,000.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Manager is authorized to execute the contract associated with this project.

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Roll call vote with the following results:

Voting Aye: Liptack, Mashburn, Turman and McGhehey.

Voting Nay: Weisgerber.

Motion carried.

- The next item on the agenda for Council was Resolution No. 25-13 which will accept and award Farris Engineering the contract to perform the Alternate Feed Line Feasibility Study. The following information was provided:

[ALTERNATE ELECTRIC FEED LINE FEASIBILITY STUDY

The largest concern with the City of Alliance electric system is the fact that there is only one transmission source feeding the whole system. Currently the only source is located on west 10th street. In the event of a major catastrophe, and we were to lose this one source, our entire electric grid would be left de-energized. Looking at the “big” picture, a second alternate feed source would be extremely beneficial to maintain our system’s reliability and resilience. Included in the ’25 budget were funds to have a study performed and a recommendation on where/how to secure and locate an alternate feed source. The study will look into the feasibility and costs associated with an alternate source.

In October of 2024 an RFP was put out asking for proposals. We received one proposal from Farris Engineering. Several reference checks were performed, and staff believes that Farris Engineering will perform the study accurately and economically. Farris Engineering has entered a proposal for \$232,180.00 to perform this study. It is staff’s recommendation to accept the proposal from Farris Engineering and award a contract in the amount of \$232,180.00 for an Alternate Electric Feed Line Feasibility Study. The budgeted funds were in GL # 05-51-54-53-948 Rural Rebuilds

RECOMMENDATION: AWARD CONTRACT TO FARRIS ENGINEERING TO PERFORM ALTERNATE FEED LINE FEASIBILITY STUDY]

A motion was made by Councilman Weisgerber, seconded by Vice Mayor Mashburn to approve Resolution No. 25-13. Which follows in its entirety:

RESOLUTION NO. 25-13

WHEREAS, The City of Alliance owns and operates the Alliance Municipal Electric System; and

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WHEREAS, In order to maintain the quality and efficiency of our distribution system the City is continuously performing upgrades and maintenance; and

WHEREAS, The City put out an RFP in October 2024 for proposals to perform an Alternate Feed Line Feasibility Study; and

WHEREAS, One proposal was received from Farris Engineering; and

WHEREAS, The proposal from Farris Engineering underwent several reference checks and the City believes that Farris Engineering will perform the study accurately and economically; and

WHEREAS, City Staff is recommending to accept the proposal from Farris Engineering in the amount of Two Hundred Thirty-Two Thousand One Hundred Eighty Dollars and NO/100s (\$232,180) and award the contract to perform the Alternate Feed Line Feasibility Study.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and City Council of Alliance, Nebraska, the Mayor is authorized to enter into a contract with Farris Engineering for the Alternate Feed Line Feasibility Study.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study should not exceed the contract amount of \$232,180 which was budgeted funds from *Rural Rebuilds* GL #05-51-54-53-948.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor is authorized to execute the contract associated with this project.

Electric Superintendent Bridge came before the Council giving them an overview and answering whatever questions they had regarding this matter.

Roll call vote with the following results:

Voting Aye: Turman, Liptack, Weisgerber, Mashburn and McGhehey.

Voting Nay: None.

Motion carried.

The Alliance City Council adjourned the January 21, 2025 City Council Meeting at 8:14 p.m.

(SEAL)



John McGhehey, Mayor


Shelbi C. Pitt, City Clerk

Complete minutes of the Alliance City Council may be viewed by the public during regular work hours at the City Clerk's Office, 324 Laramie Avenue, Alliance, Nebraska