

April 28, 2025

ALLIANCE CITY COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING, MONDAY, APRIL 28, 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 Special Meeting, April 28, 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 April 23, 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 April 28, 2025 special 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 Hadenfeldt and City Clerk Pitt.

- Mayor McGhehey read the Open Meetings Act Announcement.
- First item on the agenda for Council was to discuss and take action or provide guidance for staff on process for filling City Clerk vacancy.

Vice Mayor Mashburn asked for a statement she had written to be on the record:

“I would like to state my appreciation again to Shelbi for the work she has done as our city clerk. Her 13-year career within city hall grew her knowledge base and skill level giving her the opportunity with hard work to advance to the position City Clerk. Starting as an administrative secretary in the clerk's office before becoming the administrative assistant to the city clerk provided several years of learning state statues, recording procedures and proper organization processes to be within the laws of requirements for city government. You have taken pride in understanding, being prepared, furthering your education and executing your duties. I feel as a city organization we were extremely fortunate you had years of experience to help make the transition from the prior clerk the least disruptive to the city as possible.

With 9 departments and a dozen additional branches with these to help be compliant and

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provide support for, I understand the desire to have a smooth transition for the city with a well-trained successor. It was responsible of you and shows your commitment to our city that you offered your expertise, training, and guidance to prevent any funding loss, not slow RFP (request for proposal) process for projects or needed equipment, transition critical relationships with other governmental agencies, and grow employee support to name a few. A proposal of a temporary nature to help ensure departments and services were not greatly impacted is a valid idea for council consideration for long-term benefits to the city.

I would have liked to have been able to read and review this consideration before our citizens. I would have liked for the council to have had a conversation together about the possible negative or needed benefits a consultant agreement could provide. Unfortunately, the council was not allowed that consideration. A few citizens have expressed their concerns to me directly and I thank them for that. They have valid concerns. Concerns that I too have and wanted to discuss as a collective council body. This was a first draft, a possible temporary solution, and was not a done deal, as it has been rumored.

I am hopeful that the best solution will prevail, and I am grateful for your dedication to the city and willingness to still be a resource if that direction is in the best interest of the city's health.”

Tearza L Mashburn, Vice – Mayor

Councilman Weisgerber stated, “what was leaked was only a proposal, the council was not hiding anything we were only following protocols.”

Mayor McGhehey stated “City Clerk has submitted her resignation. We need to open the City Clerk position to the public and internally.

A motion was made by Mayor McGhehey, seconded by Councilman Turman to open the City Clerk position vacancy to the public and internally.”

City Manager Sorensen asked Council to which pay scale council would like this to be advertised at. Vice Mayor Mashburn would like it at 107-1 – 107-9.

Mayor McGhehey would like the opening to start as April 29, 2025 with the posting position for 2 weeks. City Manager Sorensen asked Council if they would like the applications to be sent to them as they came in or how would they to proceed with that. Council replied they would like to see the applications as they came in.

Roll call vote with the following results:

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

Voting Nay: None.

Motion carried.

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Mayor McGhehey opened the floor to the citizens of the City of Alliance.

Randy Hitchcock, 315 Grand Avenue Alliance, Nebraska, came before the Council stating he felt what the Council has chosen to do is an excellent idea, and that having a interim clerk for the time being until vacancy is filled.

- The next agenda item for Council was to discuss and possibly take action on conducting an internal investigation of who publicly shared an email that disclosed private personal information of City Clerk.

Vice Mayor Mashburn asked for a statement she had written to be on the record:

“First, I will start by stating that the lack of consideration shown to fellow council members and city staff on this matter is appalling. To purposefully and with malice damage councils direct employee, the faith of other city employees, gather no information regarding a proposal, or allow council members the opportunity to read it before believing it was necessary to forward or give it to outside members, was wrong! This has damaged my ability to trust that ideas or scenarios will remain confidential until appropriate conversations have had the opportunity to take place. I want the council to work together towards the priorities we set, but when a breach of confidentiality occurs it negatively impacts my trust, respect, and patience with the said person. I think a body works better together with a level of consideration and esteem, which has not been demonstrated with three breaches of information.

The council gives directions, and in this role, we are the leaders of our organization. Therefore, we have a higher standard to uphold. We are not to purposefully cause damage to our ability to work together. We are not to damage the faith and trust of city employees. We are to respect the process of how we reach our decisions. This process is through the initiation of ideas, inquiries, acquiring of information, review, and finally discussion.

Now, I would like us all to think about bigger damage or consequences that could happen to the city. What if the next time confidentiality is broken a prospective employer backs out? What if we miss out or lose funding that is valuable to keeping needed programs or facilities? What if it breaks the law, possibly causes a lawsuit? Will we then see the value of confidentiality and a council code of conduct?”

Tearza Mashburn - Vice Mayor

Kevin Horn, 1016 Platte Avenue, Alliance, Nebraska, a citizen came before the Council stating his disgust of there being good media coverage in the City which in return causes issues withing the community.

Denise Yocum, a City of Alliance resident came before the Council asking what the 3 breaches were that Vice Mayor Mashburn was referring to. Vice Mayor Mashburn responded to Ms. Yocum’s question with the three sites of the safety communications center, personal information and this issue at hand.

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Vice Mayor Mashburn made a motion to have third party investigation of the breach of emails, with the lack of a second the motion dies.

Karen Trussell, 1117 Meadowlark Avenue Alliance, Nebraska, came before the Council with concerns she had when she went into the City Clerk's office looking for City Clerk Pitt who was not in the office and never received a phone call back, and had asked for a copy of the upcoming agenda and was refused copy of agenda.

Shelia Walker, 1031 Sweetwater Alliance, Nebraska, came before the Council stating playing the what if does no good. All of this needs put to rest.

Denise Yocum, a City of Alliance resident came before the Council with her sadden concerns that the Council is dismissing an investigation and will lose trust in the Council and so will others.

Larry Bolinger, 507 Niobrara Avenue Alliance, Nebraska, came before the Council showing his support of Vice Mayor Mashburn's request for an investigation, if nothing is done this will continue happening.

Councilman Turman gave his reasoning of not supporting the investigation as it is too expensive to do an investigation to look into personal emails used by Council and is not comfortable with the costs. But feels that there should be a policy in place that only City Emails should be used by Council not personal emails.

The Alliance City Council adjourned the April 28, 2025 City Council Meeting at 7:55 p.m.

(SEAL)



John McGherey, 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