

Council Report

City of McAlester

www.cityofmcalester.com

April 9, 2024

Council votes to repeal excise tax for new cancer center

McAlester City Councilors on April 9, 2024 voted to approve an ordinance repealing a one-eighth percent (.125%) excise tax dedicated solely to provide revenues for the McAlester Regional Health Center to construct a modern regional cancer treatment center.

Voters in McAlester approved Feb. 13, 2018 a proposition to create the excise tax of one-eighth percent (.125%) "to provide funding for the McAlester Regional Health Center Authority to construct a modern regional cancer treatment center to provide expanded cancer care and ancillary services for southeast Oklahoma" with the excise tax expiring on July 1, 2033.



Officials in 2018 estimated construction of a new cancer center would cost \$15 million. The original plan was for the sales tax to bring in an estimated \$7.5 million and MRHC committed to funding the rest of the project. The year-to-date excise tax collections totals \$2.9 million after six years, or an average of \$483,333 per year.

Ward 4 Councilor Randy Roden moved to rescind the excise tax to construct a new cancer center. Ward 5 Councilor Billy Jack Boatright seconded the motion. Voting "yes" to repeal the tax were Roden, Boatright, Ward 3 Councilor Chris Stone, and Ward 1 Councilor Levi Gilmore. Voting "no" to keep the tax in place were Mayor John Browne, Ward 2 Councilor Justin Few, and Ward 6 Councilor Kevin Beaty.

The council's action means the tax is no longer assessed and the collected funds will stay in an account that by law can only be used toward construction of a new cancer center.

Upcoming events

April 11
Keep McAlester Beautiful Board of Director's Meeting
— at McAlester Fire Department Administration Building
— Noon

April 13-14
KMB Spring Clean Up
— 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays; noon to 3 p.m. on Sundays
— at the Former National Guard Armory at 301 E. Polk Ave.

April 18
Keep McAlester Beautiful Monthly Lunch Meeting
— at Joe's Yardbird
— Noon

April 20-21
KMB Spring Clean Up
— 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays; noon to 3 p.m. on Sundays
— at the Former National Guard Armory at 301 E. Polk Ave.

Council Report details elements in the latest McAlester City Council meeting as part of the city's efforts to broaden communication with the public. City council meetings are open to the public, with agendas, minutes, packets and more information available at www.cityofmcalester.com. Action reported in these updates is tentative until the Council approves the meeting minutes at the next meeting.

More info

Anyone can view the full agenda and the agenda packet online under City Council Documents. Anyone can watch video from the meeting on the City of McAlester's YouTube account.

Actions reported here are tentative until the council approves the meeting minutes.

Did you know...

Keep McAlester Beautiful's Spring Cleanup is set for all four weekends in April at the McAlester Recycling Center at 301 E. Polk Ave. in McAlester on the corner of North Third Street and East Polk Avenue. Times will be 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays, and from noon to 3 p.m. on Sundays.

McAlester residents can bring bulk trash, metal, tires, electronics, and any other non-toxic items to be discarded. It's not open to commercial businesses.

KMB will also accept donations at the gate, but donations are not required.

New council member

Levi Gilmore was sworn in as the Ward 1 Councilor at the regular city council meeting to start his four-year term. Voters on Feb. 13, 2024 chose Gilmore to represent Ward 1 after former councilor Weldon Smith reached the 12-year term limit. This marks the first seating of a councilor since voters on Sept. 12, 2023 approved propositions to simplify and correct the city's election dates and terms of office.

Proposition 2 asked voters if they want to change the dates for city council elections from March in even numbered years to February in even numbered years, and to adjust candidate filing dates. This proposition ensures that our election dates match requirements of state law; and aligns the city's candidate filing dates with state law.

Proposition 3 asked if voters wanted to change the dates which elected officials take office. The city charter previously stated elected officials assume office at the first regular city council meeting after their election. After voters approved Proposition 3, it allowed for a city charter amendment to change the date to "the first regular meeting of the City Council following their general election whether the same be held or not."

An election cycle includes a primary, a runoff, and the general election. City elections are nonpartisan, but hold a primary because a candidate must get a majority of votes to win the election. Language in the city charter previously allowed the possibility of councilors running in the same election cycle to take office up to six months apart. The new language ensures councilors in the same cycle take office at the same time.

Consent agenda

Council members voted to approve the following under the consent agenda:

- minutes from the March 12 regular meeting;
- claims for March 20 through April 2;
- establish terms to employ adjunct teacher with McAlester Public Schools;
- several members to the Local Economic Advancement and Development committee;
- indefinitely postpone two tort claims.

More council action

Council members also discussed the following agenda items:

- Councilors voted to accept an ordinance that will make several changes to the City Code in creating a Special Events Permit. City administrators said they wanted the events to continue and sought additional input from community stakeholders to work together toward a solution. The approved Special Events Permit establishes procedures and guidelines for events "expected to cause a public gathering not part of the normal course of business at the location."
- Councilors voted to approve an ordinance making several budget amendments.
- Councilors voted to approve an amendment to the Animal Nuisance section of the City of McAlester Code Ordinances.

City council

The McAlester City Council is comprised of six Council members and Mayor elected by the citizens of the city.

The Council is responsible for setting the goals, policies, and laws (ordinances) of the City, and hires and supervises the City Manager, who acts as CEO of the City in managing the day-to-day operations.

The McAlester City Council meets regularly on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. in Council Chambers on the first floor of City Hall at 28 E. Washington Ave., McAlester, OK 74501.

Council meetings are open to the public and can be viewed on the City of McAlester's YouTube Channel.

Citizens can check in which ward they reside on the city wards map, check out how to contact a council member, and view meetings dates and information online at www.cityofmcalester.com by clicking on Government tab and then clicking the City Council page.

Council Members



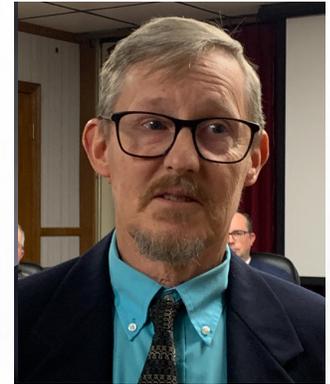
John Browne
Mayor



Levi Gilmore
1st Ward



Justin Few
2nd Ward
Vice Mayor



Chris Stone
3rd Ward



Randy Roden
4th Ward



Billy Jack Boatright
5th Ward



Kevin Beaty
6th Ward