

PROCEEDINGS OF CITY COUNCIL  
March 16, 2026

A regular meeting of the mayor and council of the City of Columbus, Nebraska, was convened in open and public session on March 16, 2026, at 6 p.m. in the Columbus Community Building, Community Room, 2500 14 Street, Columbus, Nebraska. Notice of this meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Columbus Telegram on February 25, 2026, with a copy of the proof of publication being on file in the office of the city clerk. Notice of this meeting was given simultaneously to the mayor and members of the city council, with a copy of the acknowledgment of receipt of notice being on file in the office of the city clerk. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice and in the notice to the mayor and city council of this meeting. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the public.

1. **STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN MEETINGS ACT:** Mayor Bulkley announced that a copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted in the meeting room. Present were Mayor James Bulkley and Council Members Cynthia Alarcón, Charlie Bahr, Troy Hiemer, Kat Lopez, AJ Palensky, Prent Roth, and Ron Schilling. Council Member Rich Jablonski was absent and excused. City staff members included City Attorney Neal Valorz, City Administrator Tara Vasicek, Director of General Services Betsy Eckhardt, City Clerk Shuraya Choat, City Engineer Rick Bogus, Public Works Director Chuck Sliva, Police Chief Bret Strecker, Chief Building and Code Official Andy Woehrer, Planning and Economic Development Coordinator Jean Van Iperen, Communications Manager Matt Lindberg and Police Officer Jason Romshek.
2. **PRAYER:** Hiemer led in prayer.
3. **NATIONAL ANTHEM AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The National Anthem was played and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
4. **CONSENT AGENDA:** The following items are considered to be routine by the city council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a city council member or citizen so requests, in which event the item will be removed from consent status and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda. The items on the consent agenda were approved as presented with a motion by Hiemer and a second by Schilling. Alarcón, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”. Jablonski was absent.
  - 4.A. **Minutes of March 2, 2026, City Council meeting.**
  - 4.B. **Resolution No. R26-41 approving request of Columbus Havoc 18U Softball to camp overnight in Gerrard Park, June 4, 5, 6, and 7, 2026. (Board of Parks Commissioners recommends approval.)** Resolution No. R26-41 is entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, APPROVING USE OF GERRARD PARK TO CAMP OVERNIGHT ON JUNE 4, 5, 6, AND 7, 2026, FOR THE DIAMOND CLASSIC SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT.

- 4.C. Resolution No. R26-42 approving Lease to Hangar Aircraft with Loren F. Loerzel. (Board of Airport Commissioners recommends approval.)** Resolution No. R26-42 is entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, APPROVING LEASE TO HANGAR AIRCRAFT WITH LOREN F. LOERZEL FOR HANGAR NO. 1240NE AT COLUMBUS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT.
- 4.D. Resolution No. R26-43 authorizing payment of various improvement projects.** Resolution No. R26-43 is entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, TO AUTHORIZE AND DIRECT THAT A CHECK BE ISSUED AND MADE PAYABLE TO THE RESPECTIVE CONTRACTOR(S) FOR LABOR, EQUIPMENT, AND MATERIALS FURNISHED FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN THE FOLLOWING DESIGNATED DISTRICTS AND PROJECTS WITHIN THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, ALL AS SET FORTH ON THE ATTACHED CERTIFICATES OF PROGRESS PREPARED BY THE RESPECTIVE SPECIAL ENGINEER TO WIT: B-D CONSTRUCTION, INC., ROSELAWN CEMETERY MAINTENANCE BUILDING ADDITION, \$5,472.41.
- 4.E. Payroll and bills on file.** B=Bnd Pymnts; CP=Capt'l Proj; E=Expns; G=Grnts; I=Insrnc; L=Lic; M=Mbrshp; P=Pymt; R=Rfnd; RT=Rent; S=Srvc & Supp; T=Trng; 3/27/26 payroll 894,474.36; 7 M Cleaning 400.00 S; 911 Custom 1,020.00 S; A to Z Msgng 148.50 S; ABDO Books 8,591.65 S; Ace Hdwr 284.12 S; Ameritas 750.00 S; Aqua-Pure 7,761.95 S; Armor Equip 145.80 S; Arnold Mtr Sup 1,855.62 S; AT&T 3,270.55 S; Auxiant 171,734.86 I; Baird Holm 324.00 S; B-D Const 5,472.41 CP; Behlen Twng 600.00 S; Benchmark Gvrnmt 529.85 S; BergankDV 30,000.00 S; Black Hills 6,329.47 S; J Bloebaum 125.00 R; Bound Tree Med 1,957.94 S; J Bulkley 105.25 E; Casey's Mail Serv 6,233.07 S; Cengage Lrning 56.23 S; Cntrl Prog 1,774.62 S; Chstrmn Co 86.17 S; S Choat 114.55 E; Chrome N Steel 1,550.00 S; City of Col 4,398.59 S; Club Prpht 517.00 S; CNC Rpr 5,480.51 S; CCH 2,292.66 S; Col Crdt Ser 500.68 S; Col Cstm Emb 370.00 S; Col Fam Rsrc Ctr 11,716.62 RT; Col Motor Co 2,898.55 S; Conner Psych Serv 1,568.90 S; Core & Main 25,985.40 S; CPPD 489.63 S; Culligan 113.50 S; Drain Srgn 650.00 S; D Dunbar 18,638.47 P; DWEE 115.00 S; Eakes 412.65 S; B Eckhardt 101.50 E; Edison Lghtng 506.55 S; Egan Sup 559.48 S; Elctrcl Engrng 1,173.19 S; Envisionware 4,473.50 S; M Eyrich & J Horne 43.40 R; FNBO 26,256.47 S; Frontier 2,314.05 S; Frontline Cnslng 1,805.00 S; Gaver Tire 62.75 S; Gehring Const 7,791.88 CP; G Steffy Ford 125.30 S; Gen Trffc Cntrls 4,709.00 S; Granville Cstm Hms 372.32 R; Grt Plns Bldg Sup 736.11 S; Grt Plns Comm 1,568.67 S; Hrtlnd Ntrl Gas 17,259.01 S; Hrtlnd Offc Clnrs 535.00 S; Hobby Lobby 73.58 S; M Howerter MD 1,303.75 S; IALEFI 60.00 M; Indstrl Rpr 505.88 S; Jackson Serv 2,162.11 S; Johnson Serv 1,625.00 S; Kelly Sup 148.81 S; Kidwell 930.00 S; Koch Excvtnng 3,815.97 CP; Language Ln Serv 167.32 S; Lawson Prod 233.14 S; Lbry Mrkt 1,500.00 S; Lincoln Jrnl Str 252.62 S; Lncln Wnwtr Wrks 3,519.20 S; Locable 1,188.00 S; Logan Cntrctrs 1,829.55 S; Loup 100,901.49 S; Lower Loup Ntrl Rsrcs 935.08 S; Mailbox 59.51 S; MD Sol 1,670.00 S; Menards 2,385.38 S; Metro CC 1,618.76 T; Mdwst Lab 188.59 S; Mdwst Machine 1,237.50 S; Mdwst Tape

567.54 S; Mike's Twng 1,200.00 S; Mission Comm 2,779.20 S; Napa Auto 799.61 S; NAPE 90.00 M; NE Arborist Assoc 290.00 S; NE Hrvstr Systms 892.60 S; NE Pblc Hlth 106.00 S; NE State Ptrl 1,612.50 S; Nelson Systms 6,540.88 S; Newman Sgns 1,524.76 S; R Niedbalski 165.30 E; NE NE Econ Dev Dstrct 356.25 S; NE NE Sld Wste 55,360.05 S; NW Elctrc 2,355.71 S; NoSwett 2,640.00 S; Occ Health 2,545.00 S; Oliver Pckgng & Equip 91.92 S; Olson's Pest 503.00 S; One Source 59.00 S; O'Reilly 1,117.76 S; Otte Elctrc 3,977.35 S; Paper Tiger 298.16 S; Pete Lien 15,232.29 S; Pinnacle Oprtns Cntr 10.00 S; Platte Cnty 4,267.54 S; Platte Vily Comm 4,083.75 S; Prncpl Life Ins 8,724.80 I; R & R Prod 713.85 S; RDO Truck 175.00 S; P Roth 141.55 E; D Rowe 168.00 P; Sapp Bros 21,718.56 S; SCP Dist 1,999.00 S; Srvcstr by Shvln 2,661.00 S; Settje Plmbng 271.19 S; Shrwn Wllms 154.35 S; State Dept of Rev 59,789.06 P; Super Svr 78.06 S; Syncretic Press 519.40 S; Sysco 8,555.40 S; T-Bone 9,644.50 S; Terracast Prod 8,086.05 S; The Glf Shp 1,425.05 S; Tire Outlet 1,065.00 S; TK Elevator 272.17 S; Tractor Sup 114.99 S; Twin Rvrs Vet 363.00 S; Uline 149.50 S; UPS 15.16 S; C Van Dyke 175.00 S; J Van Iperen 177.83 E; Vandenberg Elec 2,415.05 S; Vander Haags 1,305.17 S; T Vasicek 487.20 E; C Wagner 48.00 S; Waste Conn 691.53 S; Westmoor Fluid Sol 475.02 S; Winter Equip 926.15 S; Woodriver Energy 1,799.84 S. Total \$1,665,320.15.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Included in Consent Agenda

6. **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:**

6.A. **Proclamation declaring March 2026 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month.** Bulkley read the proclamation and presented it to Mike Sciandra, on behalf of the Nebraska Council on Problem Gambling. Sciandra thanked the Mayor, City Council, and City of Columbus for supporting Problem Gambling awareness, prevention, and treatment. He explained that the Nebraska Gamblers Assistance Program provides free treatment to gamblers and their families and noted that the local Choices Treatment Center is located inside the former hospital building.

6.B. **Proclamation declaring week of March 16, 2026, as Youth Appreciation Week.** Bulkley read the proclamation declaring the week of April 14, 2025, as Youth Appreciation Week and presented it to Breanna Flaherty on behalf of the Optimist Club.

7. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

7.A. **Public hearing - Redevelopment Plan for Keyes Development, LLC, Redevelopment Project (Redevelopment Area No. 3) located southeast of the intersection of 15th Street and 45th Avenue. (Continued from February 17, 2026, meeting.) (Planning Commission recommends approval.)** Andrew Willis, attorney on behalf of the applicant, explained that the proposed redevelopment plan will consist of approximately 18 single family homes and the development will occur in two phases with the first phase expected to begin this year. He noted that the total project is estimated at \$7.4

million dollars with a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) request of \$918,000 which will support infrastructure improvements, including water, sewer, and street construction. The public hearing closed with a motion by Hiemer and a second by Bahr. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Jablonski was absent.

**7.A.1. Resolution No. R26-44 approving redevelopment plan.** Resolution No. R26-44 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, APPROVING A REDEVELOPMENT PLAN ENTITLED, "REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR KEYES DEVELOPMENT, LLC REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT" was adopted with a motion by Lopez and a second by Palensky. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Jablonski was absent.

**8. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:** None

**9. REPORTS OF CITY OFFICES:**

**9.A. Update on Nebraska Department of Transportation Loup River South Bridges project.** Bogus reported that the project remains on schedule for fall 2027 completion and crews are currently working on the south three piers as well as the north abutment at the levee. He also noted that the NDOT is discussing options to include the removal and replacement of the traffic bump on the north end of the east bridge structure.

**9.B. Columbus in Focus – Building & Infrastructure.** Bogus noted that the Building & Infrastructure team consisted of himself, Vasicek, Woehrer, and Sliva. He presented the group's mission and vision statements as well as providing an overview of 2026 action goals. Bogus, Sliva, and Woehrer each presented individual department updates.

**10. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES:**

**10.A. Public Property, Safety, and Works Committee – March 16, 2026.**

**10.A.1. Permanent Utility and Access Easement in part of NW1/4 NE1/4 of Section 14, Township 17 North, Range 1 West of the 6th P.M., Platte County, Nebraska for Meadow Ridge Properties Addition (34th Street west of 53rd Avenue).** The committee recommended approval. The report was adopted with a motion by Lopez and a second by Roth. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Jablonski was absent.

**10.A.2. Request of Meadow Ridge Properties LLC to vacate a portion of Drainage Easement No. 1 for Meadow Ridge Eleventh Addition (west end of Grayhawk Place located off 43rd Street).** The committee recommended approval. The report was adopted with a motion by Lopez and a second by Bahr. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Jablonski was absent.

**10.A.3. Cost share of Paving and Infrastructure 2026.** The committee recommended approval. The report was adopted with a motion by Bahr and a second by Lopez. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”. Jablonski was absent.

**10.B. Public Finance, Judiciary, and Personnel Committee – March 16, 2026.**

**10.B.1. Financial and Compliance Audit for year-end September 30, 2025.** The committee recommended approval. Bulkley noted that the audit report is available for the public to view at any time. The report was adopted with a motion by Alarcòn and a second by Palensky. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”. Jablonski was absent.

**11. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES:** None

**12. REPORTS ON LEGISLATION:** None

**13. NEW BUSINESS:**

**13.A. Appointment of Jason Romshek as police sergeant.** Hiemer read a brief resume and the mayor’s appointment of Jason Romshek as police sergeant was ratified with a motion by Bahr and a second by Lopez. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”. Jablonski was absent. Romshek noted that he has been with the police department for 26 years. He thanked the mayor and city council for the appointment and he looks forward to continuing to serve the community.

**13.B. Application from Advanced Consulting Engineering Services on behalf of Keyes Development, LLC for preliminary plat of Dubas Addition (extensions and connection of Isaiah Drive and 44th Avenue). (Planning Commission recommends approval.)** The preliminary plat of Dubas Addition was approved with a motion by Palensky and a second by Lopez. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”. Jablonski was absent.

**13.C. Plans, specifications, estimate of cost in the amount of \$175,000, and authorization to advertise for bids for Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation 2026 (plans and specifications on file in the engineering department). CIP #20-94** The plans, specifications, estimate of cost, and authorization to advertise for bids for Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation 2026 were approved with a motion by Roth and a second by Schilling. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”. Jablonski was absent.

**13.D. Comments from mayor and city council members.** Bulkley commended Jablonski, Alarcòn, Lopez, and Roth for filing for re-election to the city council and for their continued commitment to serving the community. He explained that, at the request of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency, six Columbus firefighters and two apparatus were deployed for 48 hours to help assist with the wildfires in western Nebraska and announced there will be an

“Open House with the Mayor” on the last Saturday of each month, starting March 28, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the Columbus Library.

**14. RESOLUTIONS:**

- 14.A. Resolution No. R26-45 approving and accepting permanent utility and access easement with Meadow Ridge Properties, LLC located at 34th Street west of 53rd Avenue.** Resolution No. R26-45 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, APPROVING AND ACCEPTING PERMANENT UTILITY AND ACCESS EASEMENT AGREEMENT WITH MEADOW RIDGE PROPERTIES, LLC, LOCATED IN PART OF NW1/4 NE1/4 OF SECTION 14, TOWNSHIP 17 NORTH, RANGE 1 WEST OF THE 6TH P.M., PLATTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA, A COPY OF WHICH IS ATTACHED HERETO AND INCORPORATED HEREIN; AND TO REPEAL ALL RESOLUTIONS OR PORTIONS THEREOF IN CONFLICT HEREWITH was adopted with a motion by Roth and a second by Lopez. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”. Jablonski was absent.
- 14.B. Resolution No. R26-46 approving five-year contract with Digital-Ally in the total amount of \$227,809.50 for body-worn and in-car camera service.** Resolution No. R26-46 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, APPROVING FIVE-YEAR CONTRACT WITH DIGITAL-ALLY IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF \$227,809.50 FOR BODY-WORN AND IN-CAR CAMERA SERVICE; A COPY OF WHICH IS ATTACHED HERETO AND INCORPORATED HEREIN was adopted with a motion by Bahr and a second by Palensky. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”. Jablonski was absent.
- 14.C. Resolution No. R26-47 approving professional services agreement with Points Consulting, LLC in the amount of \$40,940 for housing needs and supply study. CIP #22-02 & Reallocated CIP #20-70** Resolution No. R26-47 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, APPROVING THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH POINTS CONSULTING, LLC IN THE AMOUNT OF \$40,940 FOR A HOUSING NEEDS AND SUPPLY STUDY, A COPY OF WHICH IS ATTACHED HERETO AND INCORPORATED HEREIN; TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE THE SAME ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS; AND TO REPEAL ALL RESOLUTIONS OR PORTIONS THEREOF IN CONFLICT HEREWITH was adopted with a motion by Hiemer and a second by Bahr. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”. Jablonski was absent.
- 14.D. Resolution No. R26-48 adopting the City of Columbus Safe Streets and Roads for All Comprehensive Safety Action Plan. CIP #25-24** Resolution No. R26-48 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, ADOPTING THE SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY ACTION

PLAN (CSAP) TO GUIDE SPECIFIC STEPS TO ELIMINATE ALL FATALITIES AND SERIOUS INJURIES BY 2050 AND FURTHER ADOPT THE CSAP-CREATED COUNTERMEASURES TOOLBOX TO GUIDE SAFETY MEASURES TO APPLY TO TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS was adopted with a motion by Palensky and a second by Schilling. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Jablonski was absent.

**15. ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING:**

**15.A. Ordinance No. 26-05 vacating portion of existing drainage easement located on the west end of Grayhawk Place off 43rd Street.** The rules were suspended and Ordinance No. 26-05 entitled: AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA TO VACATE A PORTION OF AN EXISTING DRAINAGE EASEMENT LOCATED IN THE NORTHEAST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHEAST 1/4 OF SECTION 11, T17N, R1W OF THE 6TH P.M., PLATTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA, MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF MEADOW RIDGE ELEVENTH ADDITION TO THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, PLATTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA; THENCE S 88°06'59" W ON THE SOUTH LINE OF TEMPORARY DRAINAGE EASEMENT AS RECORDED WITH SAID MEADOW RIDGE ELEVENTH ADDITION, 94.04 FEET; THENCE N 02°13'45" W ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID TEMPORARY DRAINAGE EASEMENT, 288.55 FEET; THENCE N 88°06'27" E, 123.97 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF LOT 8, BLOCK B OF SAID MEADOW RIDGE ELEVENTH ADDITION; THENCE S 02°13'45" E ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID LOT 8, 113.57 FEET TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID LOT 8; THENCE S 88°07'09" W ON THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF GRAYHAWK PLACE, 30.00 FEET; THENCE S 02°15'10" E ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID MEADOW RIDGE ELEVENTH ADDITION, 175.00 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, CONTAINING 0.70 ACRES, MORE OR LESS; TO REPEAL ALL ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS THEREOF IN CONFLICT HERewith; TO PROVIDE FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THIS ORDINANCE IN PAMPHLET FORM; AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE EFFECTIVE DATE was read by number only with a motion by Schilling and a second by Lopez. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Jablonski was absent. Ordinance No. 26-05 was adopted with a motion by Schilling and a second by Palensky. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Jablonski was absent.

**16. ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING:** None

**17. ORDINANCES ON THIRD READING:** None

**18. CONSIDERATION OF PAYROLL AND BILLS ON FILE:** Included in Consent Agenda.

PROCEEDINGS OF CITY COUNCIL

March 16, 2026

Page 8

**19. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None

**20. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

Presented and approved this 6th day of April 2026.

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

: Shuraya Choat