

CITY OF IMPERIAL CITY COUNCIL

April 20, 2026

A Regular meeting of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Imperial was held in the Council Chambers, City Council Chambers, 740 Court Street, Imperial, NE 69033 on April 20, 2026 at 6:00 PM. Notice of this meeting was given in advance thereof by notice of meeting being published in the Imperial Republican and posted at the Imperial Lied Library, City Office and Imperial Post Office and on the City of Imperial's website at <http://www.Imperial-NE.com>. Notice of this meeting was communicated in advance notice to the Mayor and Council. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the public.

Mayor Craig Loeffler called the meeting to order and instructed the Administrator to call the roll, with the following results:

Present: Nick Colton (Council President), Jan Elliott (Council member), Julie Gockley (Council member), John Miller (Council member). Others present: Mayor Craig Loeffler, Marge Steuben, Anne Strand, Dan Leibhart, Stacy Leibhart, Nursing Home Administrator Shane Filipi, Ron Berry, Gina Blocher, Scott Clements and Linda Clements, Chief Chad Ostmeyer, Public Works Superintendent Pat Davison, City Attorney Josh Wendell, City Administrator Tyler Pribbeno, and City Clerk Sarah Hoskovec recording the minutes.

A quorum was declared present, and the meeting continued.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

The Mayor announced this meeting is being conducted pursuant to the Nebraska Open Public Meetings Act and that a copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted on the east wall of the Chambers.

Council member Jan Elliott arrived at 6:01 pm.

Norma Hickman arrived at 6:02 pm.

Motion by Julie Gockley: To approve the consent agenda as presented and file the Treasurer's report for audit, second by John Miller. On call for the vote, the following votes were shown on the voting lights: Nick Colton: Yea, Jan Elliott: Yea, Julie Gockley: Yea, John Miller: Yea. Motion Carried.

Mayor Loeffler opened the live auction for the light dam lease at 6:05 pm.

Scott Clements has leased the property for over 20 years. The lease agreement is for two years, which Clements would like the Council to consider changing it in the future to a five year lease. Clements' bid is for \$12,000.00 a year. Clements states it would make management of cattle easier to budget for if it were for a longer term. Council member Jan Elliott states the City wants good a renter who takes good care of the land. Clements is trying to do that. Council member John Miller would like the Council to consider adjusting the lease to a five-year term. Attorney Josh Wendell states the adjustment can be made but not at this meeting since it was advertised as a two year lease. Elliott would like a reminder sent to the Administrator to adjust the lease by the end of the lease period. Clements would like the lease ending date to end and begin earlier in

the year because he is already ready to put cows out on grass. Discussed ending the lease January 31st instead of April 30th.

Motion by Nick Colton : To amend the Frenchman Valley Ranch, LLC lease two-year agreement in the amount of \$12,000.00 per year, ending January 30, 2028 and authorize the Mayor to sign, second by John Miller. On call for the vote, the following votes were shown on the voting lights: Nick Colton: Yea, Jan Elliott: Yea, Julie Gockley: Yea, John Miller: Yea. Motion Carried.

Scott and Linda Clements left the meeting at 6:12 pm.

Mayor Craig Loeffler read the Arbor Day Proclamation in its entirety.



Motion by Nick Colton: To proclaim April 24, 2026 as Arbor Day, second by Julie Gockley. On call for the vote, the following votes were shown on the voting lights: Nick Colton: Yea, Jan Elliott: Yea, Julie Gockley: Yea, John Miller: Yea. Motion Carried.

Attorney, David Dudley joined the meeting via ZOOM at 6:14 pm.

City Attorney Josh Wendell recommends the Council go into executive session to receive an update from David Dudley regarding the City of Imperial group health plan with possible litigation, and unpaid claims with the Mayor, Council, Administrator, Attorney David Dudley and City Clerk.

Dan Leibhart questioned whether there would be any resolution after the executive session. Wendell will be contacting Leibhart following the meeting to discuss the outcome since there have been extensions regarding the inquiry with an agreement from the claimant.

Motion by Jan Elliott: To Enter executive session with the Council, City Attorney, Attorney David Dudley, Administrator, and City Clerk at 6:17 pm for an update from Attorney David Dudley, pending litigation and unpaid claims regarding the City group health insurance for the protection of the needless injury to the reputation of individuals, second by John Miller. On call for the vote, the following votes were shown on the voting lights: Nick Colton: Yea, Jan Elliott: Yea, Julie Gockley: Yea, John Miller: Yea. Motion Carried.

David Dudley left the meeting at 7:27 pm.

The meeting opened back to the public and Shane Filipi, Marge Steuben, Norma Hickman, Gina Blocher, Chief Ostmeyer, Ron Berry and Dan and Stacy Leibhart returned.

Jan Elliott made a motion: To exit executive session at 7:27 pm. Nick Colton seconded. On call for the vote, the following votes were shown on the voting lights: Nick Colton: Yea, Jan Elliott: Yea, Julie Gockley: Yea, John Miller: Yea. Motion Carried.

Wendell, Pribbeno and Leibhart's left at 7:30 pm and the meeting took a short recess. Wendell and Pribbeno returned at 7:34 pm.

Chief Chad Ostmeyer discussed the Imperial Police Department impounded a vehicle in September of 2020, which has been parked at Triple O, Inc. Ostmeyer states there has been no response from the owners of the vehicle after multiple attempts, and would like to transfer ownership of the vehicle to Triple O, Inc. in lieu of storage fees. Owner is not in Imperial anymore and the vehicle has a clean title.

Mayor Craig Loeffler introduced Resolution R26-04-01.

**CITY OF IMPERIAL
RESOLUTION NO R26-04-01**

A Resolution by the City of Imperial, Nebraska, to authorize the trade of a vehicle which was towed by the City of Imperial from a public roadway which the City of Imperial later obtain the title to said vehicle to the tow operator in exchange for the tow costs and fees associated with the towing of said vehicle.

WHEREAS, the City of Imperial is in possession of a 2016 Ford Expedition which was towed from the public ways of the City of Imperial after said vehicle was determined to have been abandoned on said public ways of the City of Imperial; and

WHEREAS, the vehicle towed and currently in the possession of the City of Imperial is described as a 2016 Ford Expedition VIN #1FMJK1JT1GEF5056 hereinafter referred to as the "Subject Vec

WHEREAS, the City of Imperial caused the Subject Vehicle to be towed from the public ways as required by applicable law; and

WHEREAS, the City of Imperial has given all necessary notices to the interested parties and has obtained title to the Subject Vehicle; and

WHEREAS, Triple O, Inc towing provided the tow service to the Subject Vehicle and impounded the Subject Vehicle on behalf of the City; and

WHEREAS, Triple O, Inc has not been compensated by the City of Imperial for the towing and impound costs; and

WHEREAS, Triple O, Inc desires to take title to the Subject Vehicle in exchange for forgiveness of the costs of towing and impound that the City of Imperial owes to Triple O, Inc.

THEREFORE be is resolved the following:

1. The City of Imperial shall transfer the Subject Vehicle to Triple O, Inc in exchange for Triple O, Inc extinguishing all debts owed by the City of Imperial regarding or relating to the Subject Vehicle.
2. The Mayor of the City of Imperial is authorized to execute all documents necessary or reasonably convenient to transfer the Subject Vehicle to Triple O, Inc upon satisfaction that Triple O, Inc has agreed to accept title to the Subject Vehicle in exchange for all debts and fess associated with the Subject Vehicle being extinguished in consideration for the Subject Vehicle being transferred to Triple O, Inc.

CITY OF IMPERIAL, NEBRASKA.
Passed this 20TH day of APRIL, 2026.

Motion by Nick Colton: To adopt Resolution R26-04-01 as presented, second by Jan Elliott. On call for the vote, the following votes were shown on the voting lights: Nick Colton: Yea, Jan Elliott: Yea, Julie Gockley: Yea, John Miller: Yea. Motion Carried.

The LIGHT Health Insurance renewal agreement is discussed. The City had transferred to LIGHT April of 2025. Pribbeno discussed the rates increased by 15-16% and would like the Council to consider not changing coverage options and leave coverage at Option 1 \$1,000/\$2,000 deductible. The City has offered a fully employer paid insurance to retain employees and use as a recruitment tool. Pribbeno presents a side by side comparison to show the prices from 2025 to 2026. The City employees increased in 2025 from nineteen to twenty-one. Even with Option 1, the max out of pocket doubles and the prescription prices have gone up. In order to be on the LIGHT insurance, the City has to have Basic Life/AD&D for employees. Elliott questions if the City offers something that they would not have to offer, like the dental policy. Pribbeno states the current personnel policy indicates the City pays for dental, vision and health insurance. When the City changed insurance plans in 2025, it was a savings of around \$100K. John Miller states the increase is better than what they were told in February at the Mid Winter Conference of 18-20%, which is still high. Jan Elliott questions if the City has ever had to use the life insurance. Elliott discussed how the City has paid the premiums for all these years and that is just a way of the insurance companies getting money. You either have to die on the job, or you retire, or on medical leave so it doesn't qualify, so it never pays out. Pribbeno states the City is very fortunate not to ever have to pay this out, you don't want it until you need it, then it's too late if you don't have it. City Clerk Sarah Hoskovec states the Basic Life AD&D, the City is required to pay as a part of being on LIGHT, which is offered through Guardian. Cost is around \$.31 per thousand dollars of coverage. Any additional voluntary coverage for spouse or family coverage, the employee pays for themselves. Elliott states it costs \$19.24/hour for insurance per employee. Elliott spoke with surrounding areas like Sidney, Ainsworth, Lexington, Valentine, and Ogallala. The Coop is 50/50, Chase County Schools pays the full premium but they have a \$3,800 deductible and an HSA. Elliott discussed how the premiums keep going up and is not sure why the City does not make the employee pick up part of the cost or go to a higher deductible. There are HSA policies offered through LIGHT but is not traditionally chosen per Pribbeno. Pribbeno discussed the City is not set up for that and would need to get the correct calculations and what funds to go toward each employee. Elliott states the City needs to give employees enough time to let them know their plan is going to change. Pribbeno agrees, which is why he would like to have the same plan as this year, so we give the employees enough time if the Council plans to make more drastic changes to future years. The City does budget for the rise in healthcare for the next year, which is paid through the utility and general funds into the health savings account to pay the premium. Nick Colton discussed the increase is a lot of money and the City needs to look at different options for paying

premiums, even if pushing on employees, in late April of the following year. Attorney Josh Wendell discussed that insurance companies do not send out the information till the end of March/beginning of April.

Elliott discussed that most places pay 85% and there are multiple ways to look at things. Elliott agrees the City needs to take care of their families, but not at 100%, especially family, but did not ask the other surrounding areas if it was just employee or employee and family. Elliott stated most people have higher deductibles and they are paying part of their premium. Ron Berry discussed that at one time the school paid the deductible for the employee and wondered if that had changed. Elliott discussed they have a \$1450 deductible or a \$3800 deductible if they choose an HSA, and did not find anywhere else beside the school that pays 100%, and certainly not at a \$1000 deductible. Allo pays 100% for the employee only, per Colton. From the 2025 Nebraska Pay Survey of 20 Nebraska municipalities, eleven pay 100% for employee only and six municipalities pay 100% for the family. Al Vicanti, past interim Administrator in Grant, collected a survey of municipalities also, and several paid 100% of the employee but no further breakdown as to if they paid for family. With everything going on, Elliott believes the City cannot keep paying for this, in her opinion. The Mayor believes the City should not drop their coverage all of a sudden and use a year to let the employees know, it is something they depend on. Loeffler agrees insurance is getting expensive but just cannot drop overnight. Elliott discussed moving to a higher deductible, since some people don't even use their insurance. Loeffler believes the Council should give the employees more warning, but it is the decision of the Council. The employees are still going to be hard pressed even changing the deductible, not just moving to an HSA, per Pribbeno. The employee may have to find different employment if not able to pay their out of pocket max at \$12,000.

Marge Steuben states that people need insurance and with everything going up, employees have to increased cost too. Elliott believes that is true but no employer pays for a \$1000 deductible. Steuben would like to point out what kind of jobs the City employees do and are important. Elliott points out what Gina Blocher and Norma Hickman do are important as well, and questions them on what their cost of their deductible is. Loeffler discussed this is an uncomfortable conversation but will need to eventually have. Elliott states the City strives to have good wages and believes we are comparable, some are higher than others, \$20/hour plus your benefits is a lot. Pribbeno discussed, if the employees paychecks are affected by having to pay part of their deductible this year without any notice, it may not go well. Even the higher deductible may not go well and the City may lose some employees. Hoskovec states that some of the employees only make \$18-20/hour. Loeffler said if the City gives an employee \$11,000 a year through benefits, plus a 3-4% raise every year on top of that, the City cannot continue to do that. That is essentially an \$11,000 pay raise we are giving our employee. Elliott discussed the insurance coming out of the employees paycheck is going to hit them harder but some of them don't even use it. Colton does not sense the Council wants to change from 100% employer paid insurance this year, but understands that the City may have to change next year. Colton discussed going to a higher deductible this year but it's not a huge change, then look at next year at possibly moving to an HSA and what that cost is. Colton would like to gather employee feedback because he does not want to change without asking employees and allowing them to have a voice. Wendell believes if you are going to give the employee options of paying or not, they are always going to say they want 100% paid. Colton would like to start the discussions internally earlier.

Motion by Nick Colton: To accept the renewal participation agreement and subgroup application with the League Insurance Government Health Team for 2026-2027 fiscal year moving from PPO Option 1 to PPO Option 2 fiscal year and authorize the City Clerk to sign on behalf of the City, second by John Miller. On call for the vote, the following votes were shown on the voting lights: Nick Colton: Yea, Jan Elliott: Yea, Julie Gockley: Yea, John Miller: Yea. Motion Carried.

Discussion was held regarding the renewal of the local option sales tax. Pribbeno stated he spoke with Mike Rogers, bond attorney, regarding the matter. Rogers agreed to a meeting to visit about potential changes to meet the community needs. Pribbeno suggested the Mayor, Council President, Nick Colton and Council member Jan Elliott, along with himself, meet with Rogers to receive information to discuss later with the other Council members. This meeting would give a broad overview of what the process is. The sales tax ends December 31, 2026. The State of Nebraska requires 120 day notice to be increased in order for it to go into effect. Mayor Loeffler would like to wait until the general election. Attorney Wendell questioned if the City has bonds due prior to this. Pribbeno states there are bond payments due for the fire hall, swimming pool, and interest payment on the City Square project. Loeffler states if the City puts it on the ballot in September or November, we need the time to do this right. Elliott cannot believe the City has put themselves in a position putting bond payments out of sales tax since it is not a sure thing and it is a very vulnerable position the City has put itself into. Pribbeno states those decision were from prior City Council. Elliott would like to see this change moving forward since the City will be leaving itself wide open for disaster. Wendell states there is a lot of infrastructure based on sales tax. Elliott wants to make sure that any further projects are within the window of the sales tax, otherwise the City is spending money they don't have. Hoskovec states if the sales tax does not pass on the ballot, the City cannot put it back on the ballot for two years.

Statutory Review and Process Clarification for Appointed Officials was not discussed.

No action taken on the authorization to purchase audio and video recording and broadcasting equipment for Council Chambers.

Motion by Nick Colton: To approve general checks 26830-26873 and 26875-26889 in the amount of \$181,553.35, and utility checks 25824-25861 in the amount of \$150,319.63, second by Julie Gockley. On call for the vote, the following votes were shown on the voting lights: Nick Colton: Yea, Jan Elliott: Yea, Julie Gockley: Yea, John Miller: Yea. Motion Carried.

Motion by Nick Colton: To approve general check 26874 to Prairie States Communications in the amount of \$106.25, second by Julie Gockley. On call for the vote, the following votes were shown on the voting lights: Nick Colton: Yea, Jan Elliott: Abstain (Without Conflict), Julie Gockley: Yea, John Miller: Yea. Motion Carried.

Superintendent Reports:

Imperial Manor/Parkview Heights Administrator, Shane Filipi, discussed the Manor census in March, which was 28. Several residents passed away the last week. Brandy Wallin and Nicole Havel will start seeing residents in the next few weeks. The assisted living census is 31, with three referrals. The CNA class will be ending and would hope some of the students will be working at the facility. There was one resident who transferred to Grant and two employees. Ogallala lost a lot more.

Chief Chad Ostmeyer reports three of the Imperial Police Department attended a drone training class, hosted in Imperial, along with two others from Holyoke and Dundy County, and four others from Lincoln County and Kearney Police Department. All three of the IPD passed their test. On Saturday, April 18th, the IPD hosted a women's self-defense class that was well attended. Ostmeyer states the IPD plans to hold further informational classes in Imperial.

Motion by John Miller: To adjourn the meeting at 8:39 pm, second by Nick Colton. On call for the vote, the following votes were shown on the voting lights: Nick Colton: Yea, Jan Elliott: Yea, Julie Gockley: Yea, John Miller: Yea. Motion Carried.

SEAL:

Mayor

Attest: City Clerk