

City of Blair Regular Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Advisory Board Meeting
Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Agenda Item #1 - The Blair Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Advisory Board met in regular session in the City Council Chambers on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 5:30 PM. with Chairman Anderson presiding.

The Chairman publicly stated to all in attendance that a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available for review and indicated the location of such copy posted in the room where the meeting was being held. Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Enterprise or the Pilot -Tribune as shown by the affidavit of publication filed in the City Clerk's office. Notice of the meeting was simultaneously given to the members of the Blair Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Advisory Board and the agenda is filed in the City Clerk's office. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice and in the notice to the Blair Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Advisory Board of this meeting. All proceedings hereafters shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

Agenda Item #2 – Roll Call of members – The following were present: Betsy Anderson, Sarah Boeka, Corey Hafer, and Dean Thoene. Absent: Joe Burns and Kristi Rounds. Also present were City Administrator Green, Deputy City Administrator of Public Works Heaton, Parks Director Bilslend and Non-Lawyer Assistant Ferrari.

Agenda Item #3 – Approval of minutes from the February 17, 2026, meeting – Motion by Sarah Boeka, second by Corey Hafer to approve the Minutes from February 17, 2026, meeting. Board members voted as follows: Betsy Anderson: Yea, Sarah Boeka: Yea, Joe Burns: Absent, Corey Hafer: Yea, Kristi Rounds: Absent, Dean Thoene: Yea. All Board members voted: Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Chairman Anderson declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #4 – Budget report for February 2026 – The February 2026 budget report was presented to the Board for review. No questions or comments were raised by Board members, and no formal action was taken.

Agenda Item #5 – Request to appear before the Board from Pastor Glen, First Lutheran Church for an update on Potter's Field at the Blair Cemetery - Pastor Glen Thomas of First Lutheran Church, 657 N. 22nd Street, appeared before the Board to provide an update on the Potter's Field project at the Blair Cemetery. Pastor Thomas reported that once weather conditions improve, additional tree removal will resume. He stated that ground cover will be planted to address erosion along the bank, noting the selected plant is Lamium, which has properties suitable for stabilizing the soil. He announced a volunteer planting day scheduled for April 18 and noted the plants have been donated. He further explained that an expert in historic grave markers will be consulted to assist with restoration efforts, with the goal of completing the work this spring. Funding has been secured through a grant from the Community Foundation. Pastor Thomas thanked the Board and City staff for their assistance and support and expressed hope that additional grave markers may be identified during restoration. No action was required or taken.

Agenda Item #6 – Request from Baylor Barrow seeking approval for his Eagle Scout Project - Baylor Barrow, 10738 Oak Park Ln, Blair, with Troop 145 sponsored by Arlington

Community Church, appeared before the Board to request approval for his proposed Eagle Scout Service Project in partnership with the City of Blair. Barrow presented a Downtown Beautification and Recycling Project, to be completed under the guidance of Betsy Anderson. The project involves transplanting overgrown decorative plants from Main Street locations to pocket parks throughout the city, including the Art Alley downtown. He explained that this approach would enhance public green spaces while reusing existing plant materials rather than removing them. Barrow discussed the significance of the project in anticipation of the nation's 250th birthday celebrations and emphasized the benefit of improved community gathering spaces. He noted that he would lead four to eight volunteers, all work locations would be approved in advance, and best practices would be followed to ensure plant survival. Board member Dean Thoene asked whether underground utilities would be identified prior to digging. Chairperson Anderson asked about long-term maintenance concerns due to limited Parks Department staffing. Barrow responded that he would maintain the plantings over the summer and that Art Alley volunteers would assist once the plants are established. Motion by Sarah Boeka, second by Corey Hafer to approve Baylor Barrow's Eagle Scout Project. Board members voted as follows: Betsy Anderson: Yea, Sarah Boeka: Yea, Joe Burns: Absent, Corey Hafer: Yea, Kristi Rounds: Absent, Dean Thoene: Yea. All Board members voted: Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Chairman Anderson declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #7 – Presentation by Brent Fulmer regarding Bicycle Playground location and features - Brent Fulmer, 2810 Westridge Drive, presented information regarding a proposed bicycle playground (pump track) intended for children ages 12 and under. He explained that the Board's guidance was needed to determine a location before engaging an engineer. Mr. Fulmer reviewed four possible locations and identified Steyer Park as the preferred site due to available amenities, sidewalks, restroom access, existing recreational facilities, and natural topography that would allow for elevation changes. Board members discussed compatibility with the nearby skate park, potential expansion, noise considerations, and tree impacts. No trees are expected to be removed. No formal action was taken.

Agenda Item #8 – Presentation by the Blair Historic Preservation Alliance regarding improvements to the Depot - Dawn Nielsen, 102 Courtvue Dr., President of the Blair Historic Preservation Alliance (BHPA), and Jon Stewart, 1029 N. 27th St., presented a Depot maintenance wish list for the historic Train Depot located in Lions Park. She reviewed the building's history, maintenance challenges, recent meetings with City staff, and proposed repairs. Nielsen and Stewart reported that BHPA voted to donate \$5,000 toward priority maintenance items, including refinishing the west room floor and replacing serving tables. They are also requesting matching Keno funds. Discussion was held regarding electrical updates and accessibility concerns. Motion by Dean Thoene, second by Corey Hafer to receive and place on file the bids for the floor repair. Board members voted as follows: Betsy Anderson: Yea, Sarah Boeka: Yea, Joe Burns: Absent, Corey Hafer: Yea, Kristi Rounds: Absent, Dean Thoene: Yea. All Board members voted: Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Chairman Anderson declared the motion carried. Motion by Dean Thoene, second by Corey Hafer to accept donation and approve the scope of work. Board members voted as follows: Betsy Anderson: Yea, Sarah Boeka: Yea, Joe Burns: Absent, Corey Hafer: Yea, Kristi Rounds: Absent, Dean Thoene: Yea. All Board members voted: Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Chairman Anderson declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #9 – Discussion regarding possible E-Bike locations and the City applying for a grant through NRD to offset the costs of the program - Parks Supervisor James Bilsend

presented information regarding a proposed e-bike program and a 50/50 NRD grant application totaling \$50,000 for two stations, tentatively located at Generations Park and near the YMCA. The Board agreed to table discussion to a future meeting. No action was taken.

Agenda Item #10 – Staff Report - Staff provided updates on park improvements, cemetery maintenance, controlled burns at Niehardt Park, and upcoming planning initiatives. City Administrator Green stated the city will soon begin the comprehensive plan process and encouraged the Board members to participate when they can. Non-Lawyer Assistant Ferrari announced her resignation.

Agenda Item #11 – Adjournment – Motion by Dean Thoene, second by Sarah Boeka to adjourn the meeting 6:26 pm. Board members voted as follows: Betsy Anderson: Yea, Sarah Boeka: Yea, Joe Burns: Absent, Corey Hafer: Yea, Kristi Rounds: Absent, Dean Thoene: Yea. All Board members voted: Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Chairman Anderson declared the motion carried.

Brenda Wheeler, Recording Secretary