

PROCEEDINGS OF CITY COUNCIL
July 20, 2026

A regular meeting of the mayor and council of the City of Columbus, Nebraska, was convened in open and public session on July 20, 2026, at 6:00 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 July 1, 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 available in the meeting room at the agenda table. Present were Mayor James Bulkley and Council Members Cynthia Alarcón, Charlie Bahr, Troy Hiemer, Rich Jablonski, Kat Lopez, AJ Palensky, Prent Roth, and Ron Schilling. 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, Parks and Recreation Director Sydney Mroczek, Library Director Jeri Kay Hopkins, Planning and Economic Development Coordinator Jean Van Iperen, and Communications Manager Matt Lindberg.
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 Bahr. Alarcón, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay".
 - 4.A. **Minutes of July 6, 2026, City Council meeting.**
 - 4.B. **Minutes of July 6, 2026, Community Development Agency meeting.**
 - 4.C. **Resolution No. R26-89 authorizing payment of various improvement projects.** Resolution No. R26-89 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: GEHRING CONSTRUCTION AND READY MIX CO., INC., CONCRETE PAVING IMPROVEMENTS 2026, \$356,933.70.

4.D. Payroll and bills on file. B=Bnd Pymnts; CP=Capt'l Proj; E=Expns; G=Grnts; I=Insrnc; L=Lic; M=Mbrshp; P=Pynt; R=Rfnd; RT=Rent; S=Srv & Supp; T=Trng; 7/31/26 payroll 799,507.35; 6 S Prop 87.30 R; 7M CIng Sol 450.00 S; 911 Custom 436.00 S; A to Z Msgng 148.50 S; Ace Hdwr 916.10 S; A-Dub C&R 3,307.96 CP; Altec 132.41 S; Amer Legal 136.50 S; Aqua-Chem 5,833.80 S; Aqua-Pure 14,627.84 S; Armor Equip 193.55 S; Arnold Mtr Sup 615.32 S; AT&T 1,698.20 S; Auxiant 276,810.12 I; Baird Holm 3,568.00 S; Barcel Lndscp Prod 13,917.75; Behlen Twng 1,050.00 S; Benchmark Gvrnmt 572.75 S; Berens-Tate 3,000.00 S; Black Hills 3,930.69 S; BCBSNE 613.88 R; Bound Tree Med 581.96 S; Broken Glass Creations 400.00 S; Carolina Sftwr 600.00 S; Casey's Mail Serv 5,732.81 S; CBS Rprtn 9.70 S; CDW Gvrnmnt 24,283.11 S; Chad's Collision 1,178.97 S; Clay Hills Ag 491.25 S; CNC Rpr 1,452.49 S; Col Chmbr 860.00 S; Col Crdt Ser 56.45 S; Col Fam Rsrc Ctr 11,491.30 RT; Col PD FOP Ldg 72.00 S; Col Tire 957.00 S; Confluence 2,913.00 CP; Core & Main 33,196.25 S; CPPD 512.62 S; M Cntry Lane Gardens 3,034.68 S; Creative Plnng 1,187.00 S; Culligan 1,590.13 S; D & K Prod 4,384.84 S; Dnls Prod 8,835.20 S; Dept of the Trsry 1,044.47 P; D Dunbar 45,972.74 P; DWEE 150.00 T; Eakes 1,489.06 S; Egan Sup 67.00 S; FNBO 13,895.05 S; Frontier 820.04 S; Galls 1,121.05 S; Gehring Const 357,882.81 CP; Grt Plns Comm 1,713.70 S; Gunslingers 29.00 S; Hawkins 11,445.46 S; HDR 21,085.22 CP; Hrtlnd Ntrl Gas 5,364.73 S; Hrtlnd Clnrs 535.00 S; Heiman 15,682.80 S; Hotsy Equip 505.92 S; M Howerter MD 1,303.75 S; HR Direct 98.95 S; Hy-Vee 236.25 S; Image Tech 709.00 S; Indstrl Systms 120.69 S; Jackson Serv 2,377.43 S; JEO 13,161.50 CP; J Deere 98.25 S; Jones Auto 23.90 S; Kelly Sup 369.06 S; Kirkham Michael 19,538.42 CP; Koch Excvtn 7,511.46 CP; Labor Relations 175.00 S; Language Ln Serv 236.25 S; Lawson Prod 396.36 S; Lncln Jrnl Str 573.27 S; Lncln Wnwtr Wrks 954.00 S; Loup 147,912.36 S; M & O Door 16.95 S; Mailbox 104.57 S; Malloy Elect 279.46 S; E Marino 100.00 R; McMaster Carr 632.29 S; MD Sol 900.00 S; Mech Sales 726.75 S; Menards 420.89 S; MARC 5,235.00 S; Mdwst Ctngs 3,022.00 S; Mdwst Lab 3,600.83 S; Mdwst Tape 697.36 S; Mdwst Turf 967.70 S; Mike's Twng 1,200.00 S; Napa Auto 646.76 S; NE Golf & Turf 62.98 S; NE Law Enf 144.15 S; NE Pheasants Frvr 240.00 S; Newman Sgns 2,406.06 S; NE NE Econ Dev 190.00 S; NE NE Sld Wste 79,470.29 S; NoSwett 905.00 S; Novicki Fire Prvntn 385.00 S; NWEA 100.00 T; Occ Health 1,338.00 S; OCLC 13,792.28 S; Olson's Pest 578.00 S; One Call Cncpt 319.73 S; One Source 154.50 S; O'Reilly 41.11 S; Paper Tiger 38.00 S; Pete Lien 7,298.89 S; Pioneer Mfg 106.20 S; Platte Cnty 4,267.54 S; Platte Cnty Reg of Dds 19.00 S; Port-A-Johns 450.00 S; Prestox 182.78 S; Principal Life Ins 7,873.50 I; R & R Prod 298.32 S; Reardon Lawn 553.88 S; Rvrsd Prtbls 110.00 S; R Young 100.00 R; R Nadrchal 609.00 S; Rutt's 1,133.41 S; Sacket Elect 122.50 S; Sapp Bros 36,473.79 S; Schieffer Sgns 290.00 S; School Dstrt 1 5,605.00 P; Sherwin-Wilms 2,024.38 S; Shvln Sup 843.44 S; A Speicher

15.00 E; Standard & Assoc 183.21 T; State Fire Mrshl Trng 600.00 T; State Dept of Rev 72,855.93 P; Super Svr 86.40 S; Swank Motion Pctrs 390.00 S; Sysco 20,350.95 S; The Glf Shp 5,280.44 S; The Pttshrgh Pnts 2,996.00 S; Tire Outlet 1,949.00 S; TK Elevator 272.17 S; R Tonniges 79.35 S; Tooley Drug 71.36 S; Tritsch Sftwr 1,125.00 S; Truck Cntr 219.87 S; Twin Rvrs Vet 894.91 S; UPRR 3,431.61 S; Utility Svc 23,497.38 S; C Van Dyke 175.00 S; Van Wall 1,573.60 S; Vandenberg Elect 3,706.12 S; Waste Conn 691.53 S; Zimco 335.00 S. Total \$2,237,831.85.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Included in Consent Agenda

6. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS: None

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

7.A. Public hearing - Citizen's Advisory Review Committee report of activities in accord with the Columbus Economic Development Plan. The public hearing closed with a motion by Hiemer and a second by Lopez. Alarcón, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay".

7.B. (Not a public hearing) - Application from Clark J. Grant on behalf of CRH, Limited Company for preliminary plat of Halls Culligan Subdivision (southeast corner of East 23rd Street and East 12th Avenue). (Planning Commission recommends approval.) The preliminary plat of Halls Culligan Subdivision was approved with a motion by Hiemer and a second by Bahr. Alarcón, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay".

7.C. Public hearing - Application from Clark Grant on behalf of CRH, Limited Company for final plat of Halls Culligan Subdivision (southeast corner of East 23rd Street and East 12th Avenue). (Planning Commission recommends approval.) Paige Ritz, owner of Life is Golden, LLC and purchaser of the proposed third lot to be created within this subdivision, was available to answer questions. The public hearing closed with a motion by Bahr and a second by Lopez. Alarcón, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay".

7.C.1. Resolution No. R26-90 approving final plat and development agreement. Resolution No. R26-90 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, ACCEPTING THE DEED OF DEDICATION TO A PARCEL OF LAND LEGALLY DESCRIBED AS: LOTS 2 AND 3 OF SAND BAR SUBDIVISION TO THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, PLATTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA, A MINOR SUBDIVISION OF LOT 2, BLOCK C, SAND SUBDIVISION, PLATTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA, CONTAINING 3.69 ACRES MORE OR LESS; HEREINAFTER TO BE KNOWN AS HALLS CULLIGAN SUBDIVISION TO THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, PLATTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA; APPROVING THE PLAT THEREOF; AND APPROVING AND ACCEPTING THE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, AND

LIFE IS GOLDEN, LLC A NEBRASKA LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY, AND CRH, LIMITED COMPANY, A KANSAS LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY, WHICH SETS FORTH THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES INCLUDING THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SAID OWNER/SUBDIVIDER WITH RESPECT TO SAID ADDITION AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN THE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT PROVIDING FOR PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS TO SERVE THIS ADDITION was adopted with a motion by Bahr and second by Schilling. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”.

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 concrete decking has been poured on the southbound bridge, the south side has been connected from the road and the project is several months ahead of schedule. He added that the crews are aiming to move traffic to the other side of the bridge close to Thanksgiving and remove the temporary bridges.

9.B. Columbus in Focus - General Services. The General Services team included Eckhardt, Van Iperen, Lindberg, Mroczek, and Hopkins. The team highlighted individual department accomplishments from the past 90 days. Roth commended city staff for all the programs currently being offered and that are available to the public.

10. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES:

10.A. Public Property, Safety, and Works Committee - July 20, 2026.

10.A.1. Request from Keyes Development, LLC to vacate the 10-foot utility easement abutting the north right-of-way line of 14th Street within Lots 1 and 2, Block A, Sock Pond Addition to the City of Columbus, Nebraska (14th Street west of 48th Avenue and west of existing houses). The committee recommended approval. The report was adopted with a motion by Bahr and second by Schilling. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”.

10.A.2. Request from CRH, Limited Company to vacate the 25-foot access easement in Lot 2, Sand Bar Subdivision to the City of Columbus, Platte County, Nebraska, a minor subdivision of Lot 2, Block C, Sand Subdivision, Platte County, Nebraska (southeast corner of 23rd Street and East 12th Avenue). The committee recommended approval. The report was adopted with a motion by Schilling and second by Lopez. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”.

10.A.3. Minutes of the January 21, 2026, Americans with Disabilities Compliance Committee meeting. The committee recommended approval. The report was

adopted with a motion by Lopez and second by Schilling. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”.

- 10.A.4. Traffic Control Device Committee report for 2nd Quarter 2026.** The committee recommended approval. The report was adopted with a motion by Schilling and second by Bahr. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”.

11. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES: None

12. REPORTS ON LEGISLATION: None

13. NEW BUSINESS:

- 13.A. Appointment of Christopher Mcelwain as police officer.** The mayor's appointment of Christopher Mcelwain as police officer was ratified with a motion by Schilling and second by Bahr. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”. Mcelwain thanked the mayor, city council, and Chief Strecker and said he looks forward to serving Columbus with professionalism, integrity, and respect.

- 13.B. Request from Bucher Saloon LLC dba Glur's Tavern for a lottery sales outlet location at 2301 11 Street.** The request from Bucher Saloon LLC for a lottery sales outlet location was approved with a motion by Palensky and second by Lopez. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”.

- 13.C. Quote and Field Order No. 1 from Great Plains Nursery in the amount of \$26,657 for tree replacement within city parks. (Full amount to be reimbursed through the Nebraska Inflation Reduction Act Community Forestry Program Grant.)** The quote and field order no. 1 from Great Plains Nursery for tree replacement was accepted with a motion by Roth and second by Alarcòn. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”.

- 13.D. Quote from Pro Track and Tennis in the amount of \$47,200 for resurfacing of Centennial Park tennis courts. CIP# 26-26** The quote from Pro Track and Tennis for Centennial Park tennis court resurfacing was accepted with a motion by Alarcòn and second by Bahr. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”.

- 13.E. Comments from mayor and city council members.** Schilling commended the police officers who took time at Hy-Vee recently to visit with a group of residents. Bulkley announced that he will be at the Columbus Public Library on Saturday, July 25, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., as part of “Open House with the Mayor”.

14. RESOLUTIONS:

- 14.A. Resolution No. R26-91 accepting Deed of Dedication for Sock Pond Subdivision (eastern lots located on north side of 14th Street west of 48th**

Avenue). (Planning Commission recommends approval.) Resolution No. R26-91 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, ACCEPTING THE DEED OF DEDICATION TO A PARCEL OF LAND MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: LOTS 1 AND 2, BLOCK A, SOCK POND ADDITION TO THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, PLATTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA, HEREINAFTER TO BE KNOWN AS SOCK POND SUBDIVISION TO THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, PLATTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA was adopted with a motion by Lopez and second by Alarcón. Alarcón, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”.

14.B. Resolution No. R26-92 amending By-laws of the Columbus Planning Commission. (Planning Commission recommends approval.) Resolution No. R26-92 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, AMENDING THE BY-LAWS OF THE COLUMBUS PLANNING COMMISSION, A COPY OF WHICH IS ATTACHED HERETO AND INCORPORATED HEREIN; AND TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE THE SAME ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA was adopted with a motion by Jablonski and second by Alarcón. Alarcón, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”.

14.C. Resolution No. R26-93 amending criteria for administrative review of special designated license applications. Resolution No. R26-93 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA AMENDING THE CRITERIA FOR APPROVING OR DENYING A SPECIAL DESIGNATED LICENSE BY MOTIFYING THE DESIGNATED COMMITTEE MEMBERS, REMOVING QUARTERLY REPORTING, AND CLARIFYING NON-ROUTINE EVENTS; AND TO REPEAL ALL RESOLUTIONS OR PORTIONS THEREOF IN CONFLICT HERewith was adopted with a motion by Alarcón and second by Bahr. Alarcón, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”.

15. ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING:

15.A. Ordinance 26-13 vacating 10-foot utility easement abutting the north right-of-way line of 14th Street within Lots 1 and 2, Block A, Sock Pond Addition to the City of Columbus, Nebraska (14th Street west of 48th Avenue and west of existing houses). The rules were suspended and Ordinance No. 26-13 entitled: AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, TO VACATE ALL OF THE 10-FOOT UTILITY EASEMENT WITHIN LOTS 1 AND 2, BLOCK A, SOCK POND ADDITION TO THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, PLATTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA, ALONG THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF PLATTED 14TH STREET WITHIN SAID SOCK POND ADDITION, COLUMBUS, PLATTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA was read by number only with a motion by Roth and second by Lopez. Alarcón, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted “Aye” and none voted “Nay”. Ordinance No. 26-13 was

adopted with a motion by Roth and second by Alarcòn. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay".

- 15.B. Ordinance 26-14 vacating 25-foot access easement in Lot 2, Sand Bar Subdivision to the City of Columbus, Platte County, Nebraska, a minor subdivision of Lot 2, Block C, Sand Subdivision, Platte County, Nebraska (southeast corner of 23rd Street and East 12th Avenue).** The rules were suspended and Ordinance No. 26-14 entitled: AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA, TO VACATE 25 FOOT ACCESS EASEMENT IN LOT 2, SAND BAR SUBDIVISION, TO THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, PLATTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA, A MINOR SUBDIVISION, OF LOT 2, SAND SUBDIVISION, PLATTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA was read by number only with a motion by Schilling and second by Lopez. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Ordinance No. 26-14 was adopted with a motion by Schilling and second by Bahr. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay".

16. ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING: None

17. ORDINANCES ON THIRD READING: None

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

19. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- 19.A. Annual Performance Evaluation of City Administrator Tara Vasicek.** A motion was made by Hiemer and a second by Lopez to go into closed session. The subject matter to be discussed shall be performance evaluation of City Administrator Tara Vasicek. The reason for going into closed session is for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. Mayor James Bulkley and City Attorney Neal Valorz will be included in the closed session. Bulkley announced that the city council made a motion to go into closed session. The subject matter to be discussed shall be performance evaluation of City Administrator Tara Vasicek. The reason for going into closed session is for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. Mayor Bulkley and City Attorney Neal Valorz will be included in the closed session. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Bulkley announced that the city council voted to go into closed session. The subject matter to be discussed shall be performance evaluation of City Administrator Tara Vasicek. The reason for going into closed session is for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. Mayor Bulkley and City Attorney Neal Valorz will be included in the closed session. The city council went into closed session at 6:37 p.m. and exited closed session at 6:53 p.m. with a motion by Hiemer and a second by Lopez. Alarcòn, Bahr, Hiemer, Jablonski, Lopez, Palensky, Roth, and Schilling voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay".

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20. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Presented and approved this 3rd day of August 2026.

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

: Shuraya Choat