MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NELIGH, NEBRASKA
August 11, 2026

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Neligh was held at the City Council Chambers on August 11, 2026 at 7:00 PM. Present was Council Members Ted Hughes: Present, Steph Lundgren: Present, Leonard Miller: Present, Tyler Pedersen: Present. Mayor Joe Hartz was absent. Also in attendance were City Attorney James McNally, City Supt. Dan Donaldson, City Clerk Danielle Klabenes, Police Chief Logan Lawson, News Reporter Hannah Bruning, Library Board member Josh Thoendel, Harv Ofe, Keith White, Lee Wilkinson, Ray & Lori Connot, Tyler Griffe, Joe Funk, Zach Miller, Brett Branstiter and Austin Miller. Notice of this meeting was given in advance by publication in the Antelope County News on August 5, 2026. Notice of this meeting was given to the mayor and all members of the Council and a copy of their acknowledgment of receipt of notice and the agenda is attached to the minutes. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice and in the notice to the Council of this meeting. All proceedings thereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public. Council President Ted Hughes presided over the meeting and noted that a copy of the Open Meetings Law was located on the table in the City Council Chambers and available to the public. City Clerk Danielle Klabenes recorded the minutes. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council member Pedersen moved to approve the July 14th regular meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Ted Hughes: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Leonard Miller: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

TREASURER REPORT

Clerk Klabenes reported the Electric Generation spinning reserves were lower last month due to shorter scheduled hours and the electric power bills were higher with the hot summer weather in recent weeks. She reported one contractor payment on the pickleball project was paid last month as the project was progressing forward. *Council member Pedersen moved to approve the July treasurer's report as presented.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Ted Hughes: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Leonard Miller: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

City Supt. Dan Donaldson reported that some solid waste and street equipment sold at an auction last fall was used to pay back the interfund loan from the electric department to the street department. He reported the council had previously agreed to have the street department make annual payments to the electric department over five years. He reported that in reviewing the current fiscal year expenses, that the street department could pay the loan balance due to the Electric fund in the current fiscal year. *Council member Lundgren moved to approve the Street pay off of the inter fund loan from the Electric Department from December 2025 purchase of a Backhoe Loader.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Leonard Miller: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Zach Miller requested information on the installation of the flock cameras. He reported he understood that discussion and answers would need to be addressed at next month's meeting since his request was not listed on the agenda. Miller requested information on the flock cameras for the data limits and data storage, the number of days information was retained, if public records were exempt, if the public were allowed to view, and if usage was restricted to law enforcement. Miller reported as a veteran he felt the cameras were a violation of rights to serve and protect. No action was taken.

NELIGH INCOME SURVEY

Jordan Duffin Wong of Five Rule Rural Planning reported on a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) compliant survey distributed in April for Neligh. He reported the survey was successfully executed with the goal to determine if residents were 51% of low to moderate income (LMI). He reported the results indicated that Neligh is considerably lower at 37.2%, and not close to the 51% needed to be eligible for applying for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). He reported the short survey asked if residents would share the number of people in the household and household income. He reported the survey was sent to 350 randomly selected households, which the random selection was part of HUD guidelines, and recipients could not be a targeted selection. He reported a second round of surveys were sent to non-respondents with surveys tabulated as provided by HUD to track families in the service area. He reported HUD required a minimum return of 118 surveys and Neligh received 175 responses to represent a 50% outstanding response rate. He reported that the tabulated number of household persons showed 144 of the 387 total responses received were below the LMI for a rate of 37.21%. He reported the 37.21% meant the City of Neligh cannot apply for CDBG grants.

Duffin Wong also reported that Five Rule hosted a community workshop to generate a community wide survey to be used when the city was ready to update the comprehensive plan. He reported three workshops were held and presented a summary of feedback from the workshops. He reported feedback included work to be done on streets and infrastructure. He reported a draft of the community wide survey was available for Neligh to use in paper form at businesses or digitally online. The Council thanked Jordan for his efforts. No action was taken.

TRANSFER OF NELIGH MILL HISTORIC SITE STATE PROPERTY

City Supt. Donaldson reported the city was approached by the State of Nebraska about a transfer of the Neligh Mill and property adjacent to the mill. He reported the Historical Society was asked to do a 10% decrease in their budget. He reported that some other towns have taken on some of the State Historic properties operating expenses. He reported currently the State of Nebraska is paying $5,000 for insurance with a policy for up to $1 million of losses, and an amount of protection for wind and hail. He reported that in comparison to the city's insurance carrier, LARM stated that if the mill were destroyed, the history would be lost so replacement cost was not an option. He reported that the state had assisted other historic properties with part of the budget which may be an option, and the Neligh Mill would not close. The Supt reported this news was in response to the city's efforts to get the Elkhorn River bypass opened for the river and future floods. He reported conversations have come close to a resolve but changes in administration delayed a final resolve. Harv Ofe shared the Historical Society's mission statement and noted that the Neligh Mill was the only 19th century flour mill in Nebraska with the original equipment intact. Keith White reported on the long history and significance of the Neligh Mill to all western expansion and the request of the state to ask Neligh to take over the property was unfair. Discussion was held for financial concerns if the city did not take on the property, why the historical property was asked to be absorbed by the city, and the concern for an answer by the end of the year. Discussion was held to continue discussions about the property west of the Neligh Mill. It was the consensus of the City Council to set up a special meeting with a State Historical Society representative. No action was taken.

AMERICAN LEGION POST 172 SPECIAL DESIGNATED LIQUOR LICENSE FOR SEPTEMBER 3RD

Clerk Klabenes reported the American Legion requested a special designated liquor license for an event at the State Farm parking lot for an end of summer block party. She reported the Old School Eatery food truck was planning to serve food with live music from Mary and Jacob Oakes, with a beer garden, kid's games and a bouncy house on Thursday, September 3rd. *Council member Pedersen moved to approve the special designated liquor license for the American Legion Post 172 for the September 3rd event at State Farm.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Leonard Miller: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

RESOLUTION 2026-7 FOR CITY INSURANCE RENEWAL WITH LARM FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027

Discussion was held to consider raising the deductible on the general liability from a zero deductible to $2,500, and to consider raising the deductible on the buildings in the commercial property from $2,500 to $5,000. Clerk Klabenes reported that following the insurance bid received last month, the 3-year commitment with the 5% discount from LARM was used for budget planning prior to budget workshop later that week. Discussion was held for renewing the insurance to confirm an annual premium while deductible changes are inquired for possible additional reductions. *Council member Miller moved to introduce and move for passage Resolution 2026-7* *approving a 3 -year commitment with a 5% discount for an annual premium of $176,989 for the city insurance policy for the 2026-2027 fiscal year.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Leonard Miller: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

ONE-AND-SIX-YEAR STREET PLAN

Discussion was held to consider priority street projects to update cost estimates for the One-and-Six-Year Street Plan. City Supt. Donaldson requested advisement on intersections and gap paving, curb and gutter, asphalt or milling asphalt overlays, or some combination. He reported Baker Road was difficult to patch potholes that would stick or remain in the pothole. He reported one option to repair Baker Road was to mill off the asphalt and return the road back to gravel. Discussion was held about whether Baker Road could have an asphalt repair similar to Wylie Drive with a layer of patching potholes and another thicker layer to place on top. Discussion was held for advising the City Engineer to provide cost estimates for Q Street as possibly curb and gutter for storm drain purposes with asphalt, Baker Road with a thicker asphalt application, storm drains for streets West of Highway 14, two concrete intersections and to be mindful if the underneath sewer line would need replaced, and to review the cost difference for asphalt with and without concrete curbs. Discussion was held for researching where the asphalt plant will be located for the highway project between Neligh and Tilden estimated to begin in the Spring 2027. *Council member Lundgren moved to set a public hearing for the One-And-Six-Year Street Plan for September 8th at 7:30PM and authorized the city clerk to advertise the hearing.* Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Steph Lundgren: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea, Leonard Miller: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

BUDGET HEARING DATE SET

Clerk Klabenes reported a separate budget hearing is required by statute and could be held on the same day as the regular meeting or on a different day but could not be limited by time. *Council member Lundgren moved to set a budget hearing date of September 8th at 6:30PM.* Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Leonard Miller: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

JOINT PUBLIC HEARING REPRESENTATIVES

City Clerk Klabenes reported one city representative and one voting member of the governing body should be appointed to attend a joint public hearing, also referred to as the pink postcard public hearing, with all other political subdivisions if the city budget proposed an increase in property tax above the 2% plus allowable growth. She reported the joint public hearing date was set for September 15th at 6:01PM. *Council member Pedersen moved to designate Council Member Hughes and City Clerk Dana Klabenes as city representatives to present the city property tax request at a joint public hearing for fiscal year 2026-2027, if applicable.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Steph Lundgren: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Leonard Miller: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

RECOMMENDATION TO HIRE LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Library Board member Josh Thoendel reported upon the resignation of Library Director, Amy Baker, that the board held interviews and recommended the hire of Cedrela Bennett as the new Library Director. He reported that Bennet had previous experience at the library, a bachelor's degree, and various classes. He reported that the board recommended a starting wage of $27.00 per hour upon the Council's approval. Discussion was held to move the Library Director position into a salaried position to align with other city department heads. Discussion was held for the higher wage compared to the previous Director, the family health insurance per month benefit, the health savings account, and for consideration of a pay increase upon earning the Nebraska Library Commission Level 3 certification. Discussion was held to convert an hourly wage of $24.00 to a salary of $49,920 with an increase upon the Level 3 certificate to a salary of $50.960. *Council member Miller moved to approve the hire of Cedrela Bennett for Library Director at a salary of $49,920 with raise to a salary of $50,960 upon* *attainment of the Level 3 certification.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Leonard Miller: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Hartz was absent, so appointments were tabled to next month. No action was taken.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORS REPORT

Economic Development Director Lauren Sheridan was absent. Discussion was held for certifications earned on company time compared to after hours and to consider obtaining permission before taking certification classes for any pay increases. Clerk Klabenes reported for the Economic Development Director that the 6-plex apartment was anticipating occupancy for September 1. City Supt. Donaldson reported the 6-plex owner was open to creating additional parking for 8 to 10 parking spaces. *Council member Pedersen moved to approve the Economic Development Director's report.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Leonard Miller: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

POLICE REPORT

Police Chief Lawson reported of the two busiest two weeks in July that the department had few issues. He reported Old Mill days brought a few fireworks complaints, and an inspection of a fireworks stand after someone tampered with a lock. He reported no issues during the county fair but noted the increased presence of electric bikes and scooters. He reported he would be working with the Police Chiefs Association and the City Attorney to start looking at an ordinance for electric bikes, scooters, speed, and lack of helmets for youth riders. He reported service calls included welfare checks that all resulted with positive outcomes, a fraud issue, minor accidents, and a stalking case. He reported as part of compliance with a grant on in-car cameras and computers, that the department participated in an educational speed campaign with the results to be reported on a later date. He reported the city's flock cameras were installed in July and at the same time, the technology was focused more in the media. He reported he would like clarification and use case law for re-evaluation of the cameras in the future, but the city would not be continuing with the flock cameras. He reported the child involved in a July pool incident was home and appreciated the heroes that stepped up at the right time. He reported the loss of Chief Gary Young of the Crete Police Department. *Council member Pedersen moved to approve the written July Police report as presented.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Leonard Miller: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

CITY SUPT. AND ELECTRIC REPORT

City Supt Donaldson reported that street personnel would work on patching potholes with the addition of park personnel as the park duties would decline. He reported dust control on the gravel streets was working well and the chip and seal on D Street was scheduled. In the Park, he reported repairs and painting were made on grandstands seating, and a repair to a hole in the roof with new tin in preparation of the county fair. He reported he would attend the next fair board meeting to review the recent fair and what to improve on. He reported the Pool was closed for the season with a dog swim planned for the upcoming Saturday. He reported that next year the dog swim may be used as a fundraiser for the new dog park. He reported the pickleball courts progress with the fence installed, electrical setup to get the lighting finished, cameras for surveillance and Wi-Fi locking system on the doors to open and close at a set time. He reported the concrete needed to be cured before painting with acrylic paint and line. In the Solid Waste, he reported one employee had quit, so an inmate has helped with solid waste which gave street personnel an opportunity to work on streets. He reported 118 tons of solid waste were hauled to the landfill last month and another cardboard load was ready to ship. He reported a total of 70 tons of cardboard has been shipped since November. He reported the Antelope County Commissioners approved a 3.5% increase in the recycling agreement for the next budget year. He reported on the aged forklift repair for a blown head gasket. In the sewer department, the Superintendent reported 3.1million gallons were processed at the sewer plant last month. The Supt. reported 15.5 million gallons of water were pumped with the dry heat of July. He reported the electric generation automatic control tests showed increased capacity and the spinning reserves were back on regular schedule. He reported generation ran twice last month and the annual tests for one hour at ambient temperature indicated capacity requirements were met. Discussion was held that if additional capacity were needed, a load test on the small sewer plant back-up generator would be used to measure megawatts. The City Supt. reported preparations to set pedestals on the 5th street project were underway. He also reported that Tallgrass Retreat glamping was awaiting final electrical work to be completed before the city could do a final inspection and issue a certificate of occupancy. *Council member Lundgren moved to approve the City Supt. report as presented.* Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Steph Lundgren: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea, Leonard Miller: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

City Supt. Donaldson reported he would like to hire one full-time person to replace one full-time employee that left early in August to work in both solid waste and street departments with 20 hours a week in each department. *Council member Pedersen moved to approve the hire of Robert Carnes for the Solid Waste and Street Departments at $18.00/hour with $.50 per hour raise after 90-day probationary period.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Leonard Miller: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

City Supt Donaldson reported that the city council had approved last winter to extend the sidewalk on 8th street to Highway 14 in front of two houses. He reported that state had informed him that the project was removed for lights and push button. He reported he was recently informed that the project was removed from the road reconstruction between Neligh and Elgin but added to the maintenance project of Highway 275 through town. He reported he would like to complete the project as an evacuation procedure for the school by installing the sidewalks in the front yard of residents on 8th Street to be paid by city. *Council member Lundgren moved to approve the installation of the sidewalk on 8th Street to Highway 14, across the highway on the north side of 8th Street and Highway 14 West to the approach of The Willows Assisted Living.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea, Leonard Miller: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

The Superintendent reported the interior inspection on 301 J Street was made the day before. He reported the home owner was working on the flooring, windows and painting to be completed by September 1st. Home owner Tyler Griffe was in attendance and requested two more weeks after Sept 1st. Discussion was held that the city council was firm on the September 1st dead line last month. No action was taken.

NEW MOON THEATER REPORT

Theater Liaison Lundgren reported the Theater Board members with the City Supt.; City Clerk and herself met with the architect in July. She reported the preliminary plans previously drawn were used to discuss the next phases to move forward with the architect's recommendation to do HVAC, electrical and then plumbing. She reported a few questions were discussed on the layout of the concessions stand, the sprinklers eliminating some seating, flanked sides for a dinner theater, fire code of square footage, and storage of tables and chairs. She reported the architect grew up going to the New Moon Theater with his grandmother. She reported a fundraiser for the Ultimate Tailgate that was started last year was to be repeated this year on September 26th at the American Legion. She reported work with the grant writer continued and the Theater received another operating grant from Sherwood for $30,000 to help with events and architecture fees. Liaison Lundgren extended a thank you to Joe funk for his continued help with the project. *Council member Pedersen moved to approve the New Moon Theater Liaison report as presented.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Ted Hughes: Yea, Leonard Miller: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Council member Lundgren moved to approve the current claims except the Blackstrap and Boyd's Electrical invoices as presented. Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Steph Lundgren: Yea, Leonard Miller: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

Council member Lundgren moved to approve the Blackstrap invoices of $60 for weigh tickets and $1,324.51 for dust control. Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Leonard Miller: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Ted Hughes: Abstain, Tyler Pedersen: Yea Yea: 3, Nay: 0, Abstain: 1. Motion Carried.

Council member Lundgren moved to approve Boyd's Electrical Service invoices of $1,975.00 for the bowling alley booster station and $1,300.10 for the street light bulbs. Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Leonard Miller: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Abstain, Steph Lundgren: Yea. Yea: 3, Nay: 0, Abstain: 1. Motion Carried.

Council member Lundgren moved to approve the OnSolve/ CodeRed renewal for a 3-year term for a total of $11,098.16. Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Leonard Miller: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried.

There being no further business to conduct, *Council member Miller moved to adjourn the meeting.* Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Leonard Miller: Yea, Steph Lundgren: Yea, Tyler Pedersen: Yea, Ted Hughes: Yea. Yea: 4, Nay: 0. Motion Carried. Time adjourned 9:26 P.M.

City of Neligh

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Ted Hughes, Council President

ATTEST

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Danielle Klabenes, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, City Clerk of the City of Neligh, Nebraska, hereby certify that on August 11, 2026; that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and readily available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk; that such agenda items were sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting; that such subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to said meeting; that at least one copy of all reproducible material discussed at the meeting was available for public inspection at least twenty-four hours before the meeting; that the said minutes from which the foregoing proceedings have been extracted were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days and prior to the next convened meeting of said body; that all news media requesting notification concerning meetings of said body were provided advance notification of the time and place of said meeting and the subjects to be discussed at said meeting; and that a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available and accessible to members of the public, posted during such meeting in the room in which such meeting was held.

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(SEAL) City Clerk