

City of Blair Regular Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Advisory Board Meeting  
April 21, 2026

Agenda Item #1 – The Blair Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Advisory Board met in regular session in the City Council Chambers on Tuesday, April 21, 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 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 Mayor and Council of this meeting. All proceedings hereafter 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, Joe Burns, Corey Hafer, Kristi Rounds, and Dean Thoene. Also present were City Administrator Green, Deputy City Administrator of Public Works Heaton, and Park Laborer Kyle Sheets.

Agenda Item #3 – Approval of minutes from the March 17, 2026, meeting – Motion by Kristi Rounds, second by Sarah Boeka to approve the minutes from the March 17, 2026, meeting. Board members voted as follows: Betsy Anderson: Yea, Sarah Boeka: Yea, Joe Burns: Yea, Corey Hafer: Yea, Kristi Rounds: Yea, Dean Thoene: Yea. All Board members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0. Chairman Anderson declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #4 – Budget Report for March 2026 – The March budget report was reviewed. Staff summarized current expenditures and noted that parks and cemetery spending remain within expected seasonal limits. No action was requested.

Agenda Item #5 – Discussion and possible action regarding the 100-year Cemetery project – Deputy City Administrator Heaton presented background on LB 257 (2024), which authorizes cities to reclaim and resell cemetery lots that have had no activity for at least 30 years. He explained that cemetery staff have been conducting a multi-year review of burial records dating back 100 years to identify unused plots, many of which were purchased prior to 1926. These lots are treated as real property under state law, similar to residential lots. Historically, families purchased large blocks of graves anticipating multi-generation use, but in recent years some descendants have requested burial near distant relatives which requires clarification of ownership and availability. Identified lots would be published in the newspaper to provide public notice prior to any reclamation and resale. Board members discussed transparency, sensitivity to family concerns, and the importance of proper historical documentation. Motion by Dean Thoene, second by Kristi Rounds recommending to the City Council to move forward with the publication of a public notice for the 100-year Cemetery project. Board members voted as follows: Betsy Anderson: Yea, Sarah

Boeka: Yea, Joe Burns: Yea, Corey Hafer: Yea, Kristi Rounds: Yea, Dean Thoene: Yea. All Board members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0. Chairman Anderson declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #6 – Discussion and possible action regarding E-Bike locations and the City applying for a grant through NRD to offset the costs of the program – Deputy City Administrator Heaton reported that staff has contacted the Natural Resources District regarding a potential grant and has also met with representatives of an e-bike association to gauge interest in expanding recreational transportation options in Blair. The proposed project would total approximately \$100,000, consisting of a \$50,000 grant and \$50,000 City match, and would include 7–8 pedal-assist e-bikes per station with speeds under 20 mph. Suggested locations included city-owned property near the YMCA/NRD building, Generations Park, and possibly central downtown areas. The long-term vision would be to extend trail connectivity toward Fort Calhoun, Boyer Chute, and Omaha. Heaton explained the City would not manage rentals or maintenance. All usage would occur through an app. Users would have one-hour rental periods, significant penalties for late returns, and be financially responsible for lost bikes. City staff may be asked to assist with battery swaps and limited cleaning. Jake Loftis, 2129 Park Steet, described the bike system, age limit of sixteen, fee structure, lack of physical locks, and customer service policies that he was familiar with from using the e-bike system in Omaha. Board discussion focused on cost-benefit concerns, enforcement, safety on trails and ballfields, ordinances regulating scooters and e-bikes, and whether the service would see sufficient usage in Blair. They also expressed concerns about readiness, partner participation from Fort Calhoun, and whether the program aligns with community needs. Motion by Corey Hafer, second by Dean Thoene to postpone moving forward with E-Bike locations and the City applying for a grant through NRD to offset the costs of the program. Board members voted as follows: Betsy Anderson: Yea, Sarah Boeka: Yea, Joe Burns: Yea, Corey Hafer: Yea, Kristi Rounds: Yea, Dean Thoene: Yea. All Board members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0. Chairman Anderson declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #7 – Discussion and possible action on a location for a new Bike Pump Track in Steyer park – Deputy City Administrator Heaton presented potential sites for a new bike pump track, noting that Stemmermann Park was removed from consideration due to planned Little League expansion. He reviewed a scoring matrix and site maps, highlighting Steyer Park as a strong candidate due to flat terrain, year-round restroom availability, and flexibility for future park development. Heaton also emphasized that the design is fully funded through donations, with no City funds required. Motion by Kristi Rounds, second by Corey Hafer recommending to the City Council Steyer Park as the location for a new Bike Pump Track. Board members voted as follows: Betsy Anderson: Yea, Sarah Boeka: Yea, Joe Burns: Yea, Corey Hafer: Yea, Kristi Rounds: Yea, Dean Thoene: Yea. All Board members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0. Chairman Anderson declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #8 – Discussion and possible action regarding an updated City of Blair Tree Ordinance – Deputy City Administrator Heaton presented proposed revisions to the City Tree Ordinance developed in coordination with community input, the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, and the Arbor Day Foundation. The revisions simplify language, update approved tree species lists, adjust spacing requirements, and clarify approval authority. Kyle Sheets, Parks Laborer, provided a presentation and shared that he is pursuing arborist certification, with an exam scheduled for May 8, 2026. Upon certification, he will assume duties as City Arborist. The

ordinance applies only to trees planted in the right-of-way. Permits would be reviewed by the City Arborist to ensure proper species and spacing, encouraging more street tree planting while reducing long-term maintenance issues. Motion by Sarah Boeka, second by Kristi Rounds to recommend to the City Council approval of the updated City Tree Ordinance. Board members voted as follows: Betsy Anderson: Yea, Sarah Boeka: Yea, Joe Burns: Yea, Corey Hafer: Yea, Kristi Rounds: Yea, Dean Thoene: Yea. All Councilmembers voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0. Chairman Anderson declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #9 – Discussion and possible action on the setting of the Blair Pool fees for the 2026 season – Deputy City Administrator Heaton stated he had reviewed pool fee comparisons from surrounding communities. Current fees being proposed remain consistent with regional fees; however, Ashley Clary recommended adjustments based on customer feedback. Proposed changes included are Free admission for children age 2 and under when accompanied by a paying adult, Baby pool remains free when used exclusively, Youth (age 3–18): \$4/day. Adults: \$5/day and allow an option to add an additional 30 minutes to pool parties for \$50 due to staffing costs exceeding \$100/hour for the pool parties. Board discussion included monitoring age limits, enforcement, and staffing impacts. Motion by Joe Burns, second by Dean Thoene to recommend to the City Council approval of Blair Pool fees for the 2026 season. Board members voted as follows: Betsy Anderson: Yea, Sarah Boeka: Yea, Joe Burns: Yea, Corey Hafer: Yea, Kristi Rounds: Yea, Dean Thoene: Yea. All Board members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0. Chairman Anderson declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #10 – Staff Report – Deputy City Administrator of Public Works Heaton reported on the following; 1) all parks are open and water has been turned on, 2) Splash pad opening dependent on consistent warm weather, 3) Pool is fully staffed and ready for the season, 4) Pickleball court windscreens completed, 5) Mowing contractor began work this week, 6) Ongoing discussions with the Youth Sports Complex regarding long-term partnership, 7) Budget planning is underway, 8) Disc golf at Neihardt park project has not yet started, 9) Generations Park playground potential and additional pickleball courts, 10) fish cleaning station has been removed for repairs, and park camera upgrades were discussed.

Agenda Item #11 – Adjournment – Motion by Sarah Boeka, second by Kristi Rounds to adjourn the meeting 6:29 pm. Board members voted as follows: Betsy Anderson: Yea, Sarah Boeka: Yea, Joe Burns: Yea, Corey Hafer: Yea, Kristi Rounds: Yea, Dean Thoene: Yea. All Board members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0. Chairman Anderson declared the motion carried.

Brenda Wheeler, Recording Secretary