

Board of Parks Commissioners
Tuesday, September 2, 2025 12:00 PM
Columbus Community Building/Community Room
2500 14 Street
Columbus, NE 68601

The Mayor and City Council reserve the right to go into closed session as per Section 84-1410 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes. A current agenda is on file at City Hall, 2500 14 Street, Columbus, Nebraska. For more information, call 402-562-4224 or visit our website at www.columbusne.us.

1. Statement of compliance with Open Meetings Act.

...4-1407. Act, how cited.

Sections 84-1407 to 84-1414 shall be known and may be cited as the Open Meetings Act.

Source: Laws 2004, LB 821, § 34.

84-1408. Declaration of intent; meetings open to public.

It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret.

Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies, except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of Nebraska, federal statutes, and the Open Meetings Act.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 1; Laws 1996, LB 900, § 1071; Laws 2004, LB 821, § 35.

Annotations

- Nebraska's public meetings laws do not apply to school board deliberations pertaining solely to disputed adjudicative facts. *McQuinn v. Douglas Cty. Sch. Dist. No. 66*, 259 Neb. 720, 612 N.W.2d 198 (2000).
- The primary purpose of the public meetings law is to ensure that public policy is formulated at open meetings. *Marks v. Judicial Nominating Comm.*, 236 Neb. 429, 461 N.W.2d 551 (1990).
- The public meetings law is broadly interpreted and liberally construed to obtain the objective of openness in favor of the public, and provisions permitting closed sessions must be narrowly and strictly construed. *Grein v. Board of Education of Fremont*, 216 Neb. 158, 343 N.W.2d 718 (1984).
- Although a committee was a subcommittee of a natural resources district board, it was not subject to the Open Meetings Act because there was never a quorum of board members in attendance and the committee did not hold hearings, make policy, or take formal action on behalf of the board. *Koch v. Lower Loup NRD*, 27 Neb. App. 301, 931 N.W.2d 160 (2019).
- A county board of equalization is a public body whose meetings shall be open to the public. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).

84-1409. Terms, defined.

For purposes of the Open Meetings Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1)(a) Public body means (i) governing bodies of all political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska, (ii) governing bodies of all agencies, created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, of the executive department of the State of Nebraska, (iii) all independent boards, commissions, bureaus, committees, councils, subunits, or any other bodies created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, (iv) all study or advisory committees of the executive department of the State of Nebraska whether having continuing existence or appointed as special committees with limited existence, (v) advisory committees of the bodies referred to in subdivisions (i), (ii), and (iii) of this subdivision, and (vi) instrumentalities exercising essentially public functions; and

(b) Public body does not include (i) subcommittees of such bodies unless a quorum of the public body attends a subcommittee meeting or unless such subcommittees are holding hearings, making policy, or taking formal action on behalf of their parent body, except that all meetings of any subcommittee established under section 81-15,175 are subject to the Open Meetings Act, (ii) entities conducting judicial proceedings unless a court or other judicial body is exercising rulemaking authority, deliberating, or deciding upon the issuance of administrative orders, and (iii) the Judicial Resources Commission or subcommittees or subgroups of the commission;

(2) Meeting means all regular, special, or called meetings, formal or informal, of any public body for the purposes of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action of the public body; and

(3) Virtual conferencing means conducting or participating in a meeting electronically or telephonically with interaction among the participants subject to subsection (2) of section 84-1412.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 2; Laws 1983, LB 43, § 1; Laws 1989, LB 429, § 42; Laws 1989, LB 311, § 14; Laws 1992, LB 1019, § 124; Laws 1993, LB 635, § 1; Laws 1996, LB 1044, § 978; Laws 1997, LB 798, § 37; Laws 2004, LB 821, § 36; Laws 2007, LB296, § 810; Laws 2011, LB366, § 2; Laws 2021, LB83, § 11; Laws 2022, LB922, § 12.

Annotations

- A township is a political subdivision, and as such, a township board is subject to the provisions of the public meetings laws. *Steenblock v. Elkhorn Township Bd.*, 245 Neb. 722, 515 N.W.2d 128 (1994).
- A county agricultural society is a public body to which the provisions of the Nebraska public meetings law are applicable. *Nixon v. Madison Co. Ag. Soc'y*, 217 Neb. 37, 348 N.W.2d 119 (1984).
- Failure by a public governing body, as defined under section 84-1409, R.R.S.1943, to take and record a roll call vote on an action, as required by section 84-1413(2), R.S.Supp.,1980, grants any citizen the right to sue for the purpose of having the action declared void. In this case such failure could not be later corrected by a nunc pro tunc order because there was no showing that a roll call vote on the disputed action was actually taken, and even if it was the record showed it was not recorded until over a year later. Sections 23-1301, R.R.S.1943, and 23-1302, R.R.S.1943, make it the duty of the county clerk to record proceedings of the board of county commissioners. *State ex rel. Schuler v. Dunbar*, 208 Neb. 69, 302 N.W.2d 674 (1981).
- Although a committee was a subcommittee of a natural resources district board, it was not subject to the Open Meetings Act because there was never a quorum of board members in attendance and the committee did not hold hearings, make policy, or take formal action on behalf of the board. *Koch v. Lower Loup NRD*, 27 Neb. App. 301, 931 N.W.2d 160 (2019).
- Although the Open Meetings Act does not define "subcommittee," a subcommittee is generally defined as a group within a committee to which the committee may refer business. *Koch v. Lower Loup NRD*, 27 Neb. App. 301, 931 N.W.2d 160 (2019).
- The Open Meetings Act does not require policymakers to remain ignorant of the issues they must decide until the moment the public is invited to comment on a proposed policy. By excluding nonquorum subgroups from the definition of a public body, the Legislature

has balanced the public's need to be heard on matters of public policy with a practical accommodation for a public body's need for information to conduct business. *Koch v. Lower Loup NRD*, 27 Neb. App. 301, 931 N.W.2d 160 (2019).

- As an administrative agency of the county, a county board of equalization is a public body. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).
- The electors of a township at their annual meeting are a public body under the Open Meetings Act. *State ex rel. Newman v. Columbus Township Bd.*, 15 Neb. App. 656, 735 N.W.2d 399 (2007).
- The meeting at issue in this case was a "meeting" within the parameters of subsection (2) of this section because it involved the discussion of public business, the formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action of the public power district. *Hansmeyer v. Nebraska Pub. Power Dist.*, 6 Neb. App. 889, 578 N.W.2d 476 (1998).
- Informational sessions in which the governmental body hears reports are briefings. *Johnson v. Nebraska Environmental Control Council*, 2 Neb. App. 263, 509 N.W.2d 21 (1993).

84-1410. Closed session; when; purpose; reasons listed; procedure; right to challenge; prohibited acts; chance meetings, conventions, or workshops.

(1) Any public body may hold a closed session by the affirmative vote of a majority of its voting members if a closed session is clearly necessary for the protection of the public interest or for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual and if such individual has not requested a public meeting. The subject matter and the reason necessitating the closed session shall be identified in the motion to close. Closed sessions may be held for, but shall not be limited to, such reasons as:

(a) Strategy sessions with respect to collective bargaining, real estate purchases, pending litigation, or litigation which is imminent as evidenced by communication of a claim or threat of litigation to or by the public body;

(b) Discussion regarding deployment of security personnel or devices;

(c) Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct;

(d) Evaluation of the job performance of a person when necessary to prevent needless injury to the reputation of a person and if such person has not requested a public meeting;

(e) For the Community Trust created under section 81-1801.02, discussion regarding the amounts to be paid to individuals who have suffered from a tragedy of violence or natural disaster; or

(f) For public hospitals, governing board peer review activities, professional review activities, review and discussion of medical staff investigations or disciplinary actions, and any strategy session concerning transactional negotiations with any referral source that is required by federal law to be conducted at arms length.

Nothing in this section shall permit a closed meeting for discussion of the appointment or election of a new member to any public body.

(2) The vote to hold a closed session shall be taken in open session. The entire motion, the vote of each member on the question of holding a closed session, and the time when the closed session commenced and concluded shall be recorded in the minutes. If the motion to close

passes, then the presiding officer immediately prior to the closed session shall restate on the record the limitation of the subject matter of the closed session. The public body holding such a closed session shall restrict its consideration of matters during the closed portions to only those purposes set forth in the motion to close as the reason for the closed session. The meeting shall be reconvened in open session before any formal action may be taken. For purposes of this section, formal action shall mean a collective decision or a collective commitment or promise to make a decision on any question, motion, proposal, resolution, order, or ordinance or formation of a position or policy but shall not include negotiating guidance given by members of the public body to legal counsel or other negotiators in closed sessions authorized under subdivision (1)(a) of this section.

(3) Any member of any public body shall have the right to challenge the continuation of a closed session if the member determines that the session has exceeded the reason stated in the original motion to hold a closed session or if the member contends that the closed session is neither clearly necessary for (a) the protection of the public interest or (b) the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. Such challenge shall be overruled only by a majority vote of the members of the public body. Such challenge and its disposition shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require that any meeting be closed to the public. No person or public body shall fail to invite a portion of its members to a meeting, and no public body shall designate itself a subcommittee of the whole body for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act. No closed session, informal meeting, chance meeting, social gathering, email, fax, or other electronic communication shall be used for the purpose of circumventing the requirements of the act.

(5) The act does not apply to chance meetings or to attendance at or travel to conventions or workshops of members of a public body at which there is no meeting of the body then intentionally convened, if there is no vote or other action taken regarding any matter over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 3; Laws 1983, LB 43, § 2; Laws 1985, LB 117, § 1; Laws 1992, LB 1019, § 125; Laws 1994, LB 621, § 1; Laws 1996, LB 900, § 1072; Laws 2004, LB 821, § 37; Laws 2004, LB 1179, § 1; Laws 2006, LB 898, § 1; Laws 2011, LB390, § 29; Laws 2012, LB995, § 17.

Annotations

- There is no absolute discovery privilege for communications that occur during a closed session. *State ex rel. Upper Republican NRD v. District Judges*, 273 Neb. 148, 728 N.W.2d 275 (2007).
- If a person present at a meeting observes a public meetings law violation in the form of an improper closed session and fails to object, that person waives his or her right to object at a later date. *Wasikowski v. Nebraska Quality Jobs Bd.*, 264 Neb. 403, 648 N.W.2d 756 (2002).
- The public interest mentioned in this section is that shared by citizens in general and by the community at large concerning pecuniary or legal rights and liabilities. *Grein v. Board of Education*, 216 Neb. 158, 343 N.W.2d 718 (1984).
- Hearing in closed executive session was contrary to this section since there was no showing of necessity or reason under subdivision (1)(a), (b), or (c), but did not result in reversal of board decision. *Simonds v. Board of Examiners*, 213 Neb. 259, 329 N.W.2d 92

(1983).

- Negotiations for the purchase of land need not be conducted at an open meeting but the deliberations of a city council as to whether an offer to purchase real estate should be made should take place in an open meeting. *Pokorny v. City of Schuyler*, 202 Neb. 334, 275 N.W.2d 281 (1979).
- Public meeting law was not violated where the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska voted to hold a closed session to consider the university president's resignation, and also discussed the appointment of an interim president during such session. *Meyer v. Board of Regents*, 1 Neb. App. 893, 510 N.W.2d 450 (1993).

84-1411. Meetings of public body; notice; method; contents; when available; right to modify; duties concerning notice; virtual conferencing authorized; requirements; emergency meeting without notice; appearance before public body; applicability of section.

(1)(a) Except as provided in subsection (9) of this section, each public body shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committees, such notice shall be given by:

(A)(I) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction that is finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting, (II) posting on such newspaper's website, if available, and (III) posting on a statewide website, if available, established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper; or

(B)(I) Posting to the newspaper's website, if available, and (II) posting to a statewide website, if available, established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers if no edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction is to be finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village, any advisory committee of such governing body, or the governing body of a rural or suburban fire protection district, such notice shall be given by:

(A)(I) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction that is finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting, (II) posting on such newspaper's website, if available, and (III) posting on a statewide website, if available, established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper;

(B)(I) Posting to the newspaper's website, if available, and (II) posting on a statewide website, if available, established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers if no edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction is to be finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper; or

(C) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city, village, or district.

Such notice shall be posted by the public body in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(iv) In case of refusal, neglect, or inability of the newspaper to publish the notice, the public body shall (A) post such notice on its website, if available, (B) request the newspaper submit a post on a statewide website, if available, established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers, and (C) post such notice in a conspicuous public place in such public body's jurisdiction. The public body shall keep a written record of such posting pursuant to subdivision (1)(b)(iv)(A) and (C) of this section and a written record of the request to the newspaper pursuant to subdivision (1)(b)(iv)(B) of this section. The record of such posting shall be evidence that such posting was done as required and shall be sufficient to fulfill the requirement of publication.

(c) In addition to a method of notice required by subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice may also be provided by any other appropriate method designated by such public body or such advisory committee.

(d) Each public body shall record the methods and dates of such notice in its minutes.

(e) Such notice shall contain an agenda of subjects known at the time of the publicized notice or a statement that the agenda, which shall be kept continually current, shall be readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the public body during normal business hours. Agenda items shall be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting. Except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda shall not be altered later than (i) twenty-four hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting or (ii) forty-eight hours before the scheduled commencement of a meeting of a city council or village board scheduled outside the corporate limits of the municipality. The public body shall have the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

(2)(a) The following entities may hold a meeting by means of virtual conferencing if the requirements of subdivision (2)(b) of this section are met:

(i) A state agency, state board, state commission, state council, or state committee, or an advisory committee of any such state entity;

(ii) An organization, including the governing body, created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, the Joint Public Agency Act, or the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act;

(iii) The governing body of a public power district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(iv) The governing body of a public power and irrigation district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(v) An educational service unit;

(vi) The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council;

(vii) An organization, including the governing body, of a risk management pool or its advisory committees organized in accordance with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Act;

- (viii) A community college board of governors;
- (ix) The Nebraska Brand Committee;
- (x) A local public health department;
- (xi) A metropolitan utilities district;
- (xii) A regional metropolitan transit authority; and
- (xiii) A natural resources district.

(b) The requirements for holding a meeting by means of virtual conferencing are as follows:

(i) Reasonable advance publicized notice is given as provided in subsection (1) of this section, including providing access to a dial-in number or link to the virtual conference;

(ii) In addition to the public's right to participate by virtual conferencing, reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend at a physical site and participate as provided in section 84-1412, including reasonable seating, in at least one designated site in a building open to the public and identified in the notice, with: At least one member of the entity holding such meeting, or his or her designee, present at each site; a recording of the hearing by audio or visual recording devices; and a reasonable opportunity for input, such as public comment or questions, is provided to at least the same extent as would be provided if virtual conferencing was not used;

(iii) At least one copy of all documents being considered at the meeting is available at any physical site open to the public where individuals may attend the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act; and

(iv) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision, subsection (1) of section 70-1014, subsection (2) of section 70-1014.02, or subsection (4) of section 79-2204, no more than one-half of the meetings of the state entities, advisory committees, boards, councils, organizations, or governing bodies are held by virtual conferencing in a calendar year. In the case of (A) an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas, (B) an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, (C) a governing body of a risk management pool and any advisory committee of such governing body, or (D) any advisory committee of any state entity created in response to the Opioid Prevention and Treatment Act, such organization, governing body, or committee may hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if such organization holds at least one meeting each calendar year that is not by virtual conferencing.

(3) Virtual conferencing, emails, faxes, or other electronic communication shall not be used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act.

(4) The secretary or other designee of each public body shall maintain a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and shall make reasonable efforts to provide advance notification to them of the time and place of each meeting and the subjects to be discussed at that meeting.

(5) When it is necessary to hold an emergency meeting without reasonable advance public notice, the nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes and any formal action taken in

such meeting shall pertain only to the emergency. Such emergency meetings may be held by virtual conferencing. The provisions of subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting emergency meetings. Complete minutes of such emergency meetings specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available to the public by no later than the end of the next regular business day.

(6) A public body may allow a member of the public or any other witness to appear before the public body by means of virtual conferencing.

(7)(a) Notwithstanding subsections (2) and (5) of this section, if an emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to the Emergency Management Act as defined in section 81-829.39, a public body the territorial jurisdiction of which is included in the emergency declaration, in whole or in part, may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing during such emergency if the public body gives reasonable advance publicized notice as described in subsection (1) of this section. The notice shall include information regarding access for the public and news media. In addition to any formal action taken pertaining to the emergency, the public body may hold such meeting for the purpose of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action by the public body.

(b) The public body shall provide access by providing a dial-in number or a link to the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act. Reasonable arrangements shall be made to accommodate the public's right to hear and speak at the meeting and record the meeting. Subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting such meetings.

(c) The nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes. Complete minutes of such meeting specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of section 84-1413.

(8) In addition to any other statutory authorization for virtual conferencing, any public body not listed in subdivision (2)(a) of this section may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing if:

(a) The purpose of the virtual meeting is to discuss items that are scheduled to be discussed or acted upon at a subsequent non-virtual open meeting of the public body;

(b) No action is taken by the public body at the virtual meeting; and

(c) The public body complies with subdivisions (2)(b)(i) and (ii) of this section.

(9) This section does not apply to a meeting of the Nebraska Power Review Board or a public power district, a public power and irrigation district, an electric membership association, an electric cooperative company, a municipality having a generation and distribution system, or a registered group of municipalities if such meeting is subject to section 70-1034.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 4; Laws 1983, LB 43, § 3; Laws 1987, LB 663, § 25; Laws 1993, LB 635, § 2; Laws 1996, LB 469, § 6; Laws 1996, LB 1161, § 1; Laws 1999, LB 47, § 2; Laws 1999, LB 87, § 100; Laws 1999, LB 461, § 1; Laws 2000, LB 968, § 85; Laws 2004, LB 821, § 38; Laws 2004, LB 1179, § 2; Laws 2006, LB 898, § 2; Laws 2007, LB199, § 9; Laws 2009, LB361, § 2; Laws 2012, LB735, § 1; Laws 2013, LB510, § 1; Laws 2017, LB318, § 1; Laws 2019, LB212, § 5; Laws 2020, LB148, § 3; Laws 2021, LB83, § 12; Laws 2022, LB742, § 1;

Laws 2022, LB908, § 1; Laws 2022, LB922, § 13; Laws 2024, LB287, § 74;
Laws 2024, LB399, § 4; Laws 2024, LB1370, § 8; Laws 2025, LB521, § 82.

Operative Date: May 31, 2025

Cross References

- **Emergency Management Act**, see section 81-829.36.
- **Intergovernmental Risk Management Act**, see section 44-4301.
- **Interlocal Cooperation Act**, see section 13-801.
- **Joint Public Agency Act**, see section 13-2501.
- **Municipal Cooperative Financing Act**, see section 18-2401.
- **Opioid Prevention and Treatment Act**, see section 71-2485.

Annotations

- Under subsection (1) of this section, the Legislature has imposed only two conditions on the public body's notification method of a public meeting: (1) It must give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting and (2) it must be recorded in the public body's minutes. *City of Elkhorn v. City of Omaha*, 272 Neb. 867, 725 N.W.2d 792 (2007).
- An emergency is "(a)ny event or occasional combination of circumstances which calls for immediate action or remedy; pressing necessity; exigency; a sudden or unexpected happening; an unforeseen occurrence or condition." *Steenblock v. Elkhorn Township Bd.*, 245 Neb. 722, 515 N.W.2d 128 (1994).
- An agenda which gives reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at a meeting of a city council complies with the requirements of this section. *Pokorny v. City of Schuyler*, 202 Neb. 334, 275 N.W.2d 281 (1979).
- When notice is required, a notice of a special meeting of a city council posted in three public places at 10:00 p.m. on the day preceding the meeting is not reasonable advance publicized notice of a meeting as is required by this section. *Pokorny v. City of Schuyler*, 202 Neb. 334, 275 N.W.2d 281 (1979).
- Teacher waived right to object to lack of public notice in board of education employment hearing by voluntary participation in the hearing without objection. *Alexander v. School Dist. No. 17*, 197 Neb. 251, 248 N.W.2d 335 (1976).
- A county board of commissioners and a county board of equalization are not required to give separate notices when the notice states only the time and place that the boards meet and directs a citizen to where the agendas for each board can be found. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).
- A county board of equalization is a public body which is required to give advanced publicized notice of its meetings. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).
- Notice of recessed and reconvened meetings must be given in the same fashion as the original meeting. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).
- True notice of a meeting is not given by burying such in the minutes of a prior board proceeding. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).
- An agenda notice which merely stated "work order reports" was an inadequate notice under this section because it did not give interested persons knowledge that plans for a 345 kv transmission line through the district was going to be discussed and voted upon at the meeting. Inadequate agenda notice under this section meant there was a substantial

violation of the public meeting laws; however, later actions by the board of directors cured the defects in notice, and such actions were in substantial compliance with the statute. *Hansmeyer v. Nebraska Pub. Power Dist.*, 6 Neb. App. 889, 578 N.W.2d 476 (1998).

84-1412. Meetings of public body; rights of public; public body; powers and duties.

(1) Subject to the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to attend and the right to speak at meetings of public bodies, and all or any part of a meeting of a public body, except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, may be videotaped, televised, photographed, broadcast, or recorded by any person in attendance by means of a tape recorder, a camera, video equipment, or any other means of pictorial or sonic reproduction or in writing. Except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, a public body shall allow members of the public an opportunity to speak at each meeting.

(2) It shall not be a violation of subsection (1) of this section for any public body to make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations regarding the conduct of persons attending, speaking at, videotaping, televising, photographing, broadcasting, or recording its meetings, including meetings held by virtual conferencing.

(3) No public body shall require members of the public to identify themselves as a condition for admission to the meeting nor shall such body require that the name of any member of the public be placed on the agenda prior to such meeting in order to speak about items on the agenda. The body shall require any member of the public desiring to address the body to identify himself or herself, including an address and the name of any organization represented by such person unless the address requirement is waived to protect the security of the individual.

(4) No public body shall, for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act, hold a meeting in a place known by the body to be too small to accommodate the anticipated audience.

(5) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds its meeting in its traditional meeting place which is located in this state.

(6) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds a meeting outside of this state if, but only if:

(a) A member entity of the public body is located outside of this state and the meeting is in that member's jurisdiction;

(b) All out-of-state locations identified in the notice are located within public buildings used by members of the entity or at a place which will accommodate the anticipated audience;

(c) Reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend, hear, and speak at the meeting, including making virtual conferencing available at an in-state location to members, the public, or the press, if requested twenty-four hours in advance;

(d) No more than twenty-five percent of the public body's meetings in a calendar year are held out-of-state;

(e) Out-of-state meetings are not used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act; and

(f) The public body publishes notice of the out-of-state meeting at least twenty-one days before the date of the meeting in a legal newspaper of statewide circulation.

(7) Each public body shall, upon request, make a reasonable effort to accommodate the public's right to hear the discussion and testimony presented at a meeting.

(8) Public bodies shall make available at the meeting or the instate location for virtual conferencing as required by subdivision (6)(c) of this section, for examination and copying by members of the public, at least one copy of all reproducible written material to be discussed at an open meeting, either in paper or electronic form. Public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room at a location accessible to members of the public. At the beginning of the meeting, the public shall be informed about the location of the posted information.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 5; Laws 1983, LB 43, § 4; Laws 1985, LB 117, § 2; Laws 1987, LB 324, § 5; Laws 1996, LB 900, § 1073; Laws 2001, LB 250, § 2; Laws 2004, LB 821, § 39; Laws 2006, LB 898, § 3; Laws 2008, LB962, § 1; Laws 2021, LB83, § 13; Laws 2024, LB43, § 21.

Annotations

- To preserve an objection that a public body failed to make documents available at a public meeting as required by subsection (8) of this section, a person who attends a public meeting must not only object to the violation, but must make that objection to the public body or to a member of the public body. *Stoetzel & Sons v. City of Hastings*, 265 Neb. 637, 658 N.W.2d 636 (2003).

84-1413. Meetings; minutes; roll call vote; secret ballot; when; agenda and minutes; required on website; when.

(1) Each public body shall keep minutes of all meetings showing the time, place, members present and absent, and the substance of all matters discussed.

(2) Any action taken on any question or motion duly moved and seconded shall be by roll call vote of the public body in open session, and the record shall state how each member voted or if the member was absent or not voting. The requirements of a roll call or viva voce vote shall be satisfied by a public body which utilizes an electronic voting device which allows the yeas and nays of each member of such public body to be readily seen by the public.

(3) The vote to elect leadership within a public body may be taken by secret ballot, but the total number of votes for each candidate shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) The minutes of all meetings and evidence and documentation received or disclosed in open session shall be public records and open to public inspection during normal business hours.

(5) Minutes shall be written or kept as an electronic record and shall be available for inspection within ten working days or prior to the next convened meeting, whichever occurs earlier, except that cities of the second class and villages may have an additional ten working days if the employee responsible for writing or keeping the minutes is absent due to a serious illness or emergency.

(6) Beginning July 31, 2022, the governing body of a natural resources district, the city council of a city of the metropolitan class, the city council of a city of the primary class, the city council of a city of the first class, the county board of a county with a population greater than twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and the school board of a school district shall make available

on such entity's public website the agenda and minutes of any meeting of the governing body. The agenda shall be placed on the website at least twenty-four hours before the meeting of the governing body. Minutes shall be placed on the website at such time as the minutes are available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of this section. This information shall be available on the public website for at least six months.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 6; Laws 1978, LB 609, § 3; Laws 1979, LB 86, § 9; Laws 1987, LB 663, § 26; Laws 2005, LB 501, § 1; Laws 2009, LB361, § 3; Laws 2015, LB365, § 2; Laws 2016, LB876, § 1; Laws 2021, LB83, § 14; Laws 2022, LB742, § 2.

Annotations

- Under prior law, if a person present at a meeting observes and fails to object to an alleged public meetings laws violation in the form of a failure to conduct rollcall votes before taking actions on questions or motions pending, that person waives his or her right to object at a later date. *Hauser v. Nebraska Police Stds. Adv. Council*, 264 Neb. 944, 653 N.W.2d 240 (2002).
- Subsection (2) of this section does not require the record to state that the vote was by roll call, but requires only that the record show if and how each member voted. Neither does the statute set a time limit for recording the results of a vote, after which no corrections of the record can be made. If no intervening rights of third persons have arisen, a board of county commissioners has power to correct the record of the proceedings had at a previous meeting so as to make them speak the truth, particularly where the correction supplies some omitted fact or action and is done not to contradict or change the original record but to have the record show that a certain action was taken or thing done, which the original record fails to show. *State ex rel. Schuler v. Dunbar*, 214 Neb. 85, 333 N.W.2d 652 (1983).
- Failure by a public governing body, as defined under section 84-1409, R.R.S.1943, to take and record a roll call vote on an action, as required by section 84-1413(2), R.S.Supp.,1980, grants any citizen the right to sue for the purpose of having the action declared void. In this case such failure could not be later corrected by a nunc pro tunc order because there was no showing that a roll call vote on the disputed action was actually taken, and even if it was the record showed it was not recorded until over a year later. Sections 23-1301, R.R.S.1943, and 23-1302, R.R.S.1943, make it the duty of the county clerk to record proceedings of the board of county commissioners. *State ex rel. Schuler v. Dunbar*, 208 Neb. 69, 302 N.W.2d 674 (1981).
- There is no requirement that a public body make a record of where notice was published or posted. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).

84-1414. Unlawful action by public body; declared void or voidable by district court; when; duty to enforce open meeting laws; citizen's suit; procedure; violations; penalties.

(1) Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be declared void by the district court if the suit is commenced within one hundred twenty days of the meeting of the public body at which the alleged violation occurred. Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in substantial violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be voidable by the district court if the suit is commenced more than one hundred twenty days after but within one year of the meeting of the public body in which the alleged violation occurred. A suit to void any final action shall be commenced within one year of the action.

(2) The Attorney General and the county attorney of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets shall enforce the Open Meetings Act.

(3) Any citizen of this state may commence a suit in the district court of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets or in which the plaintiff resides for the purpose of requiring compliance with or preventing violations of the Open Meetings Act, for the purpose of declaring an action of a public body void, or for the purpose of determining the applicability of the act to discussions or decisions of the public body. It shall not be a defense that the citizen attended the meeting and failed to object at such time. The court may order payment of reasonable attorney's fees and court costs to a successful plaintiff in a suit brought under this section.

(4) Any member of a public body who knowingly violates or conspires to violate or who attends or remains at a meeting knowing that the public body is in violation of any provision of the Open Meetings Act shall be guilty of a Class IV misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class III misdemeanor for a second or subsequent offense.

Source: Laws 1975, LB 325, § 9; Laws 1977, LB 39, § 318; Laws 1983, LB 43, § 5; Laws 1992, LB 1019, § 126; Laws 1994, LB 621, § 2; Laws 1996, LB 900, § 1074; Laws 2004, LB 821, § 40; Laws 2006, LB 898, § 4.

Annotations

- The Legislature has granted standing to a broad scope of its citizens for the very limited purpose of challenging meetings allegedly in violation of the Open Meetings Act, so that they may help police the public policy embodied by the act. *Schauer v. Grooms*, 280 Neb. 426, 786 N.W.2d 909 (2010).
- Any citizen of the state may commence an action to declare a public body's action void. *City of Elkhorn v. City of Omaha*, 272 Neb. 867, 725 N.W.2d 792 (2007).
- The reading of ordinances constitutes a formal action under subsection (1) of this section. *City of Elkhorn v. City of Omaha*, 272 Neb. 867, 725 N.W.2d 792 (2007).
- If a person present at a meeting observes a public meetings law violation in the form of an improper closed session and fails to object, that person waives his or her right to object at a later date. *Wasikowski v. Nebraska Quality Jobs Bd.*, 264 Neb. 403, 648 N.W.2d 756 (2002).
- Under the Public Meetings Act, a county lacks capacity to maintain an action to declare its official conduct "void" for noncompliance with the act. *County of York v. Johnson*, 230 Neb. 403, 432 N.W.2d 215 (1988).
- When a petitioner under this section is successful in the district court, that court may allow attorney fees. *Tracy Corp. II v. Nebraska Pub. Serv. Comm.*, 218 Neb. 900, 360 N.W.2d 485 (1984).
- Informal discussions between the Tax Commissioner and the State Board of Equalization in which instructions were clarified, with such clarification leading to the amendment of hearing notices, did not constitute a public meeting subject to the provisions of this section. *Box Butte County v. State Board of Equalization and Assessment*, 206 Neb. 696, 295 N.W.2d 670 (1980).
- The right to collaterally attack an order made in contravention of the Public Meeting Act must occur within a period of one year as is specifically provided by this section. *Witt v. School District No. 70*, 202 Neb. 63, 273 N.W.2d 669 (1979).
- Statutory change, requiring "publicized notice" for board of education employment hearings, occurring between dates meeting scheduled and conducted, held not to void

proceedings. *Alexander v. School Dist. No. 17*, 197 Neb. 251, 248 N.W.2d 335 (1976).

- Voiding an entire meeting is a proper remedy for violations of the Open Meetings Act. Once a meeting has been declared void pursuant to Nebraska's public meetings law, board members are prohibited from considering any information obtained at the illegal meeting. *Wolf v. Grubbs*, 17 Neb. App. 292, 759 N.W.2d 499 (2009).
- Actions by the board of directors were merely voidable under this section, and not void. Pursuant to subsection (3) of this section, the plaintiffs were awarded partial attorney fees because they were successful in having the court declare that the board of directors was in substantial violation of the statute, even though the plaintiffs did not get the relief requested of having the board's actions declared void. *Hansmeyer v. Nebraska Pub. Power Dist.*, 6 Neb. App. 889, 578 N.W.2d 476 (1998).

2. Minutes of August 5, 2025, meeting.

BOARD OF PARKS COMMISSIONERS
August 5, 2025

A regular meeting of the Board of Parks Commissioners of the City of Columbus, Nebraska, was convened in open and public session on August 5, 2025, at 12:00 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 30, 2025, with a copy of the proof of publication 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, members of the city council, and members of the board of parks commissioners. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the public.

1. **STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN MEETINGS ACT.** Vice-chair Sjuts announced that a copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted in the meeting room. Present were members Araceli Esquivel, Brad Hansen, Tina Pelan, Gary Puetz, Bruce Schmidt, Lynn Sjuts, and Stacey Smith. Member Jon Brezenski was absent and excused. Member Nick Larson was absent. City staff members included Assistant City Clerk Linda Nickeson, Park and Recreation Director Betsy Eckhardt, Park Superintendent Tom Ek, and Park and Recreation Coordinator Sydney Mroczek.
2. **MINUTES OF JULY 1, 2025, MEETING.** The minutes were approved as presented with a motion by Hansen and a second by Schmidt. Esquivel, Hansen, Pelan, Puetz, Schmidt, Sjuts, and Smith voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Brezenski and Larson were absent.
3. **UPDATE ON YOUTH GOLF AND PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.** Brent McGrew, head teaching professional, reviewed the programs offered to youth golfers noting that the change to weekly and daily sign ups has worked well. The USKids golf program ending next week has approximately 100 participants with the addition of many new kids this year. He pointed out the first PGA junior league was held this year as well with 22 participants and that he intends to offer a PGA junior simulator league this winter if time allows for details to be worked out.
4. **PARK AND RECREATION DIRECTOR REPORT.** Eckhardt reviewed the report. Hansen mentioned that he received a request from a Wagner's Lake homeowner that the trees and brush on the south side of the lagoon next to hole number one at Van Berg golf course remain in place since they provide some protection from golf balls. Eckhardt confirmed that a recent grant award will allow some new trees to be planted on the course this fall that could potentially provide additional protection for homes at Wagner's Lake.
5. **ADJOURNMENT.** The meeting adjourned at 12:19 p.m.

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
: Linda Nickeson

3. Presentation on sponsorship program for signage at Gerrard Park.



Columbus Parks and Recreation

<http://columbusne.us/571/Parks-Recreation> | 402-562-4261 | sydney.mroczek@columbusne.us

City of Columbus Parks and Recreation GERRARD PARK SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT

This agreement entered into this ____ day of ____, ____ by and between the City of Columbus Parks and Recreation, hereinafter referred to as “City”, and _____, hereinafter referred to as “Donor”, hereby agree and follows.

1. Terms and Conditions. Under the terms and conditions herein set forth, City grants advertising to Donor as stipulated in Attachment A. The Donor shall have the option to select the field on which their signage will be displayed, as outlined on page 3. Each field is limited to a maximum of six (6) signage locations. In the event the requested field has reached capacity, the City will notify the Donor and coordinate the next available option.
2. Payment. Payments shall be made to the order of City of Columbus as follows:

Agreement year 1: For services rendered March 1, 2026 to March 1, 2027
Payment 1: \$750.00 Payment due on or before March 1, 2026

Agreement year 2: For services rendered March 1, 2027 to March 1, 2028
Payment 1: \$750.00 Payment due on or before March 1, 2027

Agreement year 3: For services rendered March 1, 2028 to March 1, 2029
Payment 1: \$750.00 Payment due on or before March 1, 2028
3. Term of Agreement. The period of this agreement shall be for an initial term of 3 years, effective March 1, 2026 through February 28, 2029 with first right to refusal/renewal to extend additional years, as detailed in Item 4.
4. First Right of Refusal/Renewal. Donor shall have the right of first refusal and/or renewal to negotiate a new agreement, with respect to Advertising Rights and Conditions, and other terms and conditions, satisfactory to both parties, to extend this agreement for an additional 2 years. Donor to notify the City in writing, no less than 180 days prior to expiration of Agreement to exercise first right of refusal and/or renewal.

5. Assignment. This agreement shall not be assigned by Donor, nor shall Donor grant any other person any of its rights without prior written consent of the City.
6. Nondiscrimination. It is mutually agreed that there shall be no discrimination on the basis of a person's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability.
7. Default. If Donor fails to pay when due any amount owing under this Agreement, and such failure continues for a period of thirty (30) days after Donor receives written notice of the default from the City, or if either party to this Agreement fails to perform any of its covenants and obligations under this Agreement, and such failure continues for a period of (30 days) after the non-performing party receives written notice of the default from the other party, and such non-performance remained uncured after such thirty day period, then such aggrieved part may terminate this Agreement by giving notice of termination. All parties' rights under this Section are in addition to, and are not a limitation on or in substitution for, any other rights which either party has by reason of any non-performance, including, without limitation, any claim for damages under law or equity. All rights are cumulative. Upon termination, all rights and obligations of the parties under this Agreement shall cease. Time is of the essence in the performance of all duties and obligations imposed by this Agreement. Each party's course of dealing, or forbearance from, or delay in, the exercise of any of their rights, remedies, privileges or right to insist upon strict performance of any provisions contained in this Agreement, shall not be construed as a waiver by either party, unless such waiver is in writing and is signed by the party.



Columbus Parks and Recreation

<http://columbusne.us/571/Parks-Recreation> | 402-562-4261 | sydney.mroczek@columbusne.us

On this day and year first above written, the parties hereto have executed this Agreement.

Company

Company Contact (First, Last)

Job Title

Email

Company Address

Authorized Signature / Date

Requested Field: (circle one) A B C D E F

If the requested field is full: (circle one) A B C D E F

City of Columbus Parks and Recreation

Staff Member (First, Last)

Job Title

Email

2500 14th Street, Suite 3

Columbus, NE 68601

Authorized Signature / Date



Columbus Parks and Recreation

<http://columbusne.us/571/Parks-Recreation> | 402-562-4261 | sydney.mroczek@columbusne.us

ATTACHMENT A

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Static Signage

One (1) sponsor logo on a metal panel on the outfield fence, approximate size, 4'h x 8'w

4. Presentation on plot & grow community garden program.



Columbus Parks and Recreation

<http://columbusne.us/571/Parks-Recreation> | 402-562-4261 | ParksandRec@columbusne.us

Plot & Grow Community Garden Rental Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Fee:

☐ Resident \$50 / plot

☐ Non-resident \$70 / plot

By signing, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to abide by the community garden rules and guidelines. I understand that I am gardening at my own risk and agree to hold harmless the City of Columbus, Nebraska, for any liability, damage, loss, or claim that occurs in connection with the use of the garden by me or my guest.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For official use only

Date Received: _____ Staff Initials: _____

Plot Assigned: _____ Plot Expiration: _____

Fee Paid: \$_____ Date Payment Received: _____

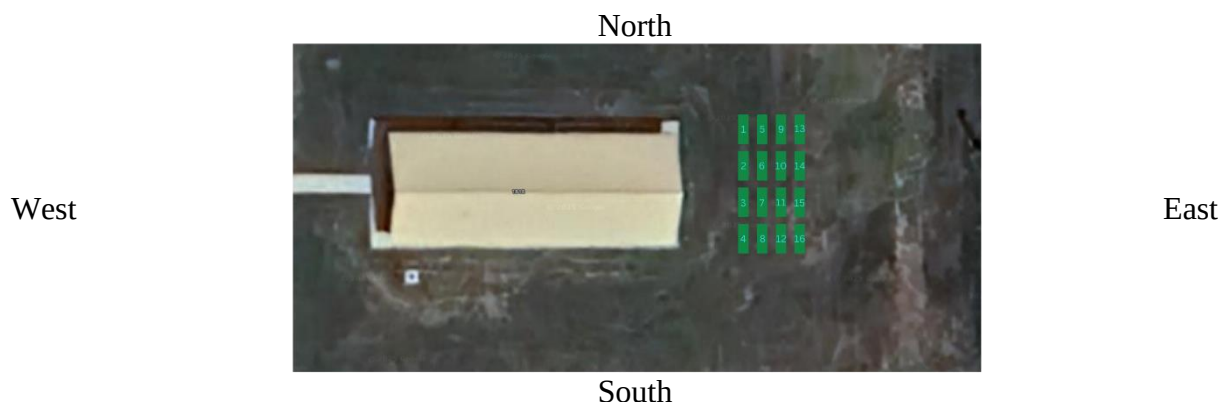
Plot & Grow Community Garden

Purpose of the Program

The City of Columbus Parks and Recreation Department offers residents the opportunity to take part in the community gardening experience. Community gardens give individuals the chance to grow their own food and plants, while also fostering learning, sharing, and connection among neighbors—helping both the garden and the community thrive.

16 Garden Plots are available at the following park:

- Frontier Park – 2969 Kozy Drive, Columbus, NE 68601



Garden Plots are rented on an annual basis:

- February 1 – March 31: Application window is open for **Columbus residents**
- After April 1: Remaining plots can be rented by **Columbus Residents** (including a second plot is available) and **Non-residents**
- November 1 – January 31: Returning gardeners can **renew** their previous season's plot

Gardener Eligibility

To be eligible for a garden plot, you must:

- Sign and return the rental contract with the \$50 payment (Columbus residents) or the \$70 payment (non-residents) to **City Hall**, 2500 14th St, Suite 3, Columbus, NE 68601
- Rent only one plot per household (unless extra plots are available after April 1)
- Use the plot only for personal consumption (no commercial use)
- Comply with the rules for the entire rental period
- Gardeners in good standing will be given priority for renewals

Rules

By following the rules and guidelines, gardeners contribute to a positive gardening environment and demonstrate their commitment to the responsible and productive use of the garden plots.

When signing up, you acknowledge the following rules:

1. **Access:** gardeners may access their garden between sunrise and sunset.
2. **Plot Boundaries:** All gardening activities must remain within the gardener's assigned plot boundaries marked by the Parks and Recreation Department. Gardeners may only pick their own crops unless permitted by another plot user.
3. **Plot Return Policy:** Gardeners wishing to return their plot must contact the Parks and Recreation Department directly. Garden plots may not be given away, transferred, or sublet to other individuals. All plot exchanges or terminations will be managed exclusively by the Parks and Recreation Department. Please note that all fees are non-refundable and will not be prorated in the event a plot is returned early or reclaimed.
4. **Fencing:** The Parks and Recreation Department will provide fencing around the entire garden area. Renters who wish to add additional fencing around their individual plot may do so; fencing must be mesh, no higher than two feet, and remain entirely within their plot boundaries.
5. **Structures:** Simple non-permanent structures like trellises (up to 4 feet) are allowed but should not shade neighboring plots.
6. **Seasonal Planting:** Begin planting as soon as the weather permits in the spring. Fall clean-up, including removing dead plants and structures, must be completed by November 1.
7. **Mulch:** Non-biodegradable mulches (e.g., stone, carpet) are prohibited.
8. **Woody Plants:** Trees, shrubs, and woody vines are not allowed.
9. **Weed Control:** Flamers and torchers are not permitted for weed control.
10. **Pesticides:** Only granular pesticides are allowed. Follow label instructions strictly. Do not use restricted pesticides or store them in your plot.
11. **Trash and Plant Debris:** Dispose of all waste in the park's trash receptacles. Do not dump materials outside your plot or in surrounding areas.
12. **Storage:** There are no storage bins for tools or hoses. Bring tools, hoses, and other supplies with you and take them when you leave. Do not store excess lumber, fencing, or garden tools at your plot.
13. **Water Access:** Water access is available on the west side of the building for gardeners to connect a hose.
14. **Plot Maintenance:** Maintain active weeding, planting, and harvesting throughout the season.
15. **Inspections:** The Parks and Recreation Department will conduct inspections and issue written notices to gardeners whose plots are not in compliance with the rules, who disrupt neighboring plots, or who fail to use their plots appropriately. Gardeners will have seven days from the date of the notice to address and correct the identified issues. Failure to comply may result in the plot being reclaimed and reassigned.

Guidelines

These guidelines provide gardeners, their families, and the gardening community with basic principles for a successful garden plot program.

Plant Choices

- Grow a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers.
- Some perennials are permitted, but must be managed.
- Keep plants like mint in pots to control their spread.
- Plants listed as invasive in Nebraska are not allowed.

Mulch

Organic mulch (e.g., compost, leaves, straw) is highly recommended. Plastic or porous weed-blocker covers are allowed but must be secured. Avoid fresh manure.

Watering

- The Frontier Park concession building has a hose attachment on the west side. Due to the distance, we will provide a hose extension.
- Bring your own hose or bucket. Sharing is encouraged.
- Use water efficiently and fix leaky hoses to avoid wasting water.
- Limit watering to 15 minutes if others are waiting.

Managing Pests

Pests like weeds, insects, and small animals can be controlled using the following practices:

- Choose pest-resistant plant varieties.
- Use compost for fertilizer and organic mulch to retain water.
- Remove pests by hand where possible.
- Dispose of dead and diseased plants immediately.

Safety

Gardeners participate at their own risk. The City of Columbus is not responsible for loss or damage to personal property. Report illegal activities to the City of Columbus Police Department at 402-564-3201.

Program Management

The City of Columbus Parks and Recreation Department

ParksandRec@columbusne.us

402-562-4261 | 402-562-4240

5. Presentation on pollinator project partnership with Pheasants Forever.

2026 Pollinator Project





Introduction

What is Pheasants Forever mission?

► Overview of the Mission

- Pheasants Forever, established in 1982, is dedicated to the conservation of upland wildlife habitats. The organization focuses on several key areas to achieve its mission:
 - **Habitat Improvements:** The organization works to restore and enhance habitats suitable for pheasants, quail, and other wildlife. This includes creating and maintaining grasslands, wetlands, and other critical ecosystems.

Parks we are targeting

- ▶ Airport
- ▶ Bark Park
- ▶ Buffalo Square
- ▶ Centennial Park
- ▶ Frontier Park
- ▶ Sock Pond
- ▶ Sunset Park

What is our Goal?

- ▶ Our goal is to add pollinators and or native grasses in certain parks around our community. We have hand selected 7 parks in Columbus we thought would be a good fit for this project.



What is a pollinator and why have them?

- ▶ A pollinator is anything that helps move pollen from one part of a flower to another. This movement fertilizes a plant, helping make seeds, fruits, and new plants. Some plants can pollinate themselves, and others use wind or water to move their pollen. But many plants need help from insects and animals like bees, butterflies, birds, bats, and even some small mammals.
- **Pollinators are responsible for 1 out of 3 bites of food we take each day.** Pollinators help plants produce seeds, fruits, and vegetables.
- **Healthy ecosystems depend on pollinators.** At least 75% of all flowering plants on Earth are pollinated by insects and animals! This amounts to more than 1,200 food crops and 180,000 different types of plants—plants which help stabilize our soils, clean our air, supply oxygen, and support wildlife.
- **They're part of a healthy economy.** In the United States alone, pollination by honey bees contributed to over \$19 billion of crop production in 2010, while pollination by other insect pollinators contributed to nearly \$10 billion of crop production.

Our goal for 2026



Bark Park

- One big pollinator in the northeast corner.
- Native grass lining the whole south side of the park.



Frontier Park

- One big pollinator
- 3 patches of native grasses



2027 Goals

- ▶ We will visit this at the end of 2026 to see how well Bark Park and Frontier Park take off. Our plan would be to get the remaining parks... Airport, Buffalo, Centennial, and Sunset done in year 2027. Sock Pond would be our main focus for 2028 as it's a large area to cover and would need lots of attention and planning. As we start the process and get the 2026's goals completed, I will share what the plans for each park in 2027 will look like.

Questions/Concerns/Comments



- ▶ Please feel free to reach out to our Pheasants Forever President or myself.
- ▶ Casey Schwarting- (402) 270-0511
- ▶ Nick Zakrzewski- (531) 348-3606

6. Park and Recreation Director report.



Columbus Parks and Recreation

<http://columbusne.us/571/Parks-Recreation> | 402-562-4261

Park Maintenance

- Normal operations
- Made repairs to archery range
- Start up of facilities for fall sports (Memorial Stadium, Bradshaw Park, Tennis)

Recreation

- Columbus Days went well
- Puppy Plunge: 108 Dogs participated
- Issues with Aquatic Center, YMCA is letting swimmers swim at the Y.
- Fall Brochure is out and ready.

Golf

- Working on hiring a new Golf Superintendent
- Held open house for QR Design.
- Simulator is all set up and getting ready for a grand opening.

Aquatic Center Attendance

Month	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
August	1348	1275	580 (AC not open yet)
September	1320	1066	1081
October	1242	1169	1225
November	1203	1111	948
December	981	1100	884
January	1120	886	937
February	1347	1272	913
March	1739	1266	1324
April	1332	1341	1357
May	1464	1217	943
June	967	810	708
July	773	969	968
August	1275	679	334

Aquatic Center Membership Count:

Month	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
August	670	413	418
September	669	422	437
October	612	424	425
November	617	434	423

December	601	442	413
January	588	443	401
February	577	458	420
March	522	445	414
April	505	446	410
May	506	463	425
June	434	427	423
July	412	429	423
August (as of Aug 27)	432	433	410

Pawnee Plunge Attendance

Month	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
June)	16363	15507	15809
July	17482	16544	17217
August	6094	5587	3577

Pawnee Plunge Membership

Month	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
June 17217	1012	1207	1304
July	1022	1071	1112
August	1022	1089	1099

- September Events

- CGA Couples Scramble-September 27th
- Fall Adult Softball Starts @ Gerrard Park.
- Hunter Safety Class: September 14 in the Community Room
- Family Swim Night: September 20th
- Aqua Fitness Classes Start the week of Sept 15th
- Swim Lessons star the week of September 22

CIP Updates

- Sertomaland Playground: Federal government released the funds so we were able to order at 1st council meeting. Carried over into next budget season to finish.
- Quail Run Shop Addition Design: COW presentation on Sept. 2. @ 5pm

7. Adjournment.