

Public Finance, Judiciary, and Personnel Committee
Monday, January 19, 2026 5:30 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.

{{Name: Agenda Item Name}}

1. Statement of Compliance with Open Meetings Act and roll call.

...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. Election of chair and vice chair.

3. Non-exclusive franchise agreement with Viero Fiber Networks, LLC for construction, operation, and maintenance of a cable system.



Accountability - Dedication
Honesty - Integrity - Respect

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 14, 2026
TO: Tara Vasicek, City Administrator
FROM: Richard J. Bogus, P.E. City Engineer
RE: Viaero Fiber Networks Franchise Agreement

RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend approval of the non-exclusive franchise agreement between Viaero Fiber Networks, LLC and City of Columbus for construction, operation, and maintenance of a cable system.

DISCUSSION:

The franchise agreement is in accordance with the Cable Communication Policy Act of 1984, as amended. The initial term is 10 years, unless revoked or terminated, and automatically renew or extended after 7 years.

FISCAL IMPACT:

City to receive five (5) percent of the annual gross revenue.

ALTERNATIVE:

Do not approve.

SIGNATURE:

By: Richard J. Bogus

Approved By: [Signature]

FRANCHISE AGREEMENT

This Franchise Agreement (“Franchise”) is between the City of Columbus, Nebraska, hereinafter referred to as the “Grantor” and Viaero Fiber Networks, LLC, a Colorado limited liability company, hereinafter referred to as the “Grantee.”

WHEREAS, the Grantor finds that the Grantee has substantially complied with the material terms of the current Franchise under applicable laws, and that the financial, legal and technical ability of the Grantee is sufficient to provide services, facilities and equipment necessary to meet the future cable-related needs of the community, and

WHEREAS, having afforded the public adequate notice and opportunity for comment, Grantor desires to enter into this Franchise with the Grantee for the construction and operation of a cable system on the terms set forth herein; and

WHEREAS, the Grantor and Grantee have complied with all federal and State-mandated procedural and substantive requirements pertinent to this franchise renewal;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Grantor and Grantee agree as follows:

SECTION 1 **Definition of Terms**

1.1 Terms. For the purpose of this franchise the following terms, phrases, words and their derivations shall have the meaning ascribed to them in the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984, as amended from time to time (the "Cable Act"), unless otherwise defined herein. When not inconsistent with the context, words used in the present tense include the future, words in the plural number include the singular number, and words in the singular number include the plural number. The word “shall” is mandatory and “may” is permissive. Words not defined shall be given their common and ordinary meaning.

- A. “Applicable Law” means any common law and any federal, municipal, state, regional, local or bylaw, rule, statute, ordinance, order or regulation.
- B. “Cable System,” “Cable Service,” and “Basic Cable Service” shall be defined as set forth in the Cable Act.
- C. “Board/Council” shall mean the governing body of the Grantor.
- D. “Cable Act” shall mean the Cable Communication Policy Act of 1984, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 521, et. seq.
- E. “FCC” shall mean the Federal Communications Commission and any successor governmental entity thereto.

- F. “Franchise” shall mean the non-exclusive rights granted pursuant to this Franchise to construct operate and maintain a Cable System along the public ways within all or a specified area in the Service Area.
- G. “Gross Revenue” means any and all revenue, as determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and Applicable Law, received by Grantee from Cable System to provide Cable Services in the Service Area; provided, however, that such phrase shall not include (1) any taxes, fees or assessments collected by the Grantee from Subscribers for pass-through to a government agency to a government agency, including any sales or utility taxes; (2) unrecovered bad debt; (3) credits, refunds and deposits paid to Subscribers; (4) any exclusions available under applicable State law.
- H. “Person” shall mean an individual, partnership, association, organization, corporation, trust or governmental entity.
- I. “Service Area” shall mean the geographic boundaries of the Franchise Authority and shall include any additions thereto by annexation or other legal means, subject to the exception in subsection 6.1 hereto.
- J. “State” shall mean the State of Nebraska.
- K. “Street” shall include each of the following located within the Service Area: public streets, roadways, highways, bridges, land paths, boulevards, avenues, lanes, alleys, sidewalks, circles, drives, easements, rights of way and similar public ways and extensions and additions thereto, including but not limited to public utility easements, dedicated utility strips, or rights-of-way dedicated for compatible uses now or hereafter held by the Grantor in the Service Area, which shall entitle the Grantee to the use thereof for the purpose of installing, operating, repairing and maintaining the Cable System.
- L. “Subscriber” shall mean any Person lawfully receiving Cable Service from the Grantee.

SECTION 2
Grant of Franchise

2.1 Grant. The Grantor hereby grants to the Grantee a nonexclusive Franchise which authorizes the Grantee to erect, construct, operate and maintain in, upon, along, across, above, over and under the Streets, now in existence and as may be created or established during its terms; any poles, wires, cable, underground conduits, manholes, and other conductors and fixtures necessary for the maintenance and operation of a Cable System. Nothing in this Franchise shall be construed to prohibit the Grantee from offering any service over its Cable System that is not prohibited by federal, State or local law. The Grantor reserves the right to grant a similar use of said Streets, public ways, and public places to other

qualified persons/entities at any time during the period of this Franchise and as long as this granting is done pursuant to Applicable Law.

2.2 Term. The Franchise and the rights, privileges and authority hereby granted shall be for an initial term *of ten (10) years*, unless revoked or terminated sooner as herein provided. The Franchise commences on the Effective Date of this Franchise as set forth in Section 15.10. This Agreement shall not be automatically renewed, and any extension shall be negotiated with the Grantor; provided at any time after the seven (7) year anniversary date of the Effective Date, Grantee shall have the right to request Grantor and Grantee enter into negotiations to renew the Franchise. If Grantee makes such request, the parties will then proceed under the federal Cable Act renewal procedures.

2.3 Police Powers and Conflicts with Franchise. The Grantee agrees to comply with the terms of any lawfully adopted generally applicable local ordinance necessary to the safety, health, and welfare of the public to the extent that the provisions of the ordinance do not have the effect of limiting the benefits or expanding the obligations of the Grantee that are granted by this Franchise. This Franchise is a contract and except as to those changes which are the result of the Grantor's lawful exercise of its general police power, the Grantor may not take any unilateral action which materially changes the explicit mutual promises in this contract. Any changes to this Franchise must be made in writing signed by the Grantee and the Grantor. In the event of any conflict between this Franchise and any Grantor ordinance or regulation that is not generally applicable, this Franchise shall control.

2.4 Cable System Franchise Required. No Cable System shall be allowed to occupy or use the Streets or public rights-of-way of the Service Area or be allowed to operate without a Cable System Franchise.

SECTION 3 **Franchise Renewal**

3.1 Procedures for Renewal. The Grantor and the Grantee agree that any proceedings undertaken by the Grantor that relate to the renewal of the Grantee's Franchise shall be governed by and comply with the provisions of Section 626 of the Cable Act, or any such successor statute.

SECTION 4 **Indemnification and Insurance**

4.1 Indemnification. The Grantee shall, by acceptance of the Franchise granted herein, defend the Grantor, its officials, officers, boards, commissions, agents, and employees for all claims for injury to any Person or property caused by the negligence of Grantee in the construction or operation of the Cable System and in the event of a determination of liability shall indemnify and hold Grantor, its officers, boards, commissions, agents, and employees harmless from any and all liabilities, suits, losses, claims, demands, judgments, costs, attorney fees, and/or out of pocket expenses arising out of any injury to any Person or property as a result of the negligence of Grantee arising out of the construction, repair, extension, maintenance, operation or removal of its wires, poles or other equipment of any kind or character used in connection with the operation of the Cable System, provided that the Grantor shall give the Grantee written notice of its obligation to indemnify the Grantor within ten (10) days of receipt of a claim or action pursuant to this section.

In the event any such claim arises, the Grantor shall tender the defense thereof to the Grantee and the Grantee shall have the right to defend, settle or compromise any claims arising hereunder and the Grantor shall cooperate fully herein. If the Grantor determined in good faith that its interests cannot be represented by the Grantee, the Grantee shall be excused from any obligation to represent the Grantor. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Grantee shall not be obligated to indemnify the Grantor for any damages, liability or claims resulting from the willful misconduct or negligence of the Grantor or for the Grantor's use of the Cable System, including any PEG channels.

4.2 Insurance.

A. The Grantee shall maintain throughout the term of the Franchise insurance in amounts at least as follows:

Workers' Compensation	Statutory Limits
Commercial General Liability	\$1,000,000 per occurrence, Combined Single Limit (C.S.L.) \$2,000,000 General Aggregate
Auto Liability including coverage on	\$2,000,000 per occurrence C.S.L. all owned, non-owned hired autos
Umbrella Liability	\$5,000,000 per occurrence C.S.L.

B. The Grantor shall be added as an additional insured, arising out of work performed by Grantee, to the above Commercial General Liability, Auto Liability and Umbrella Liability insurance coverage.

C. The Grantee shall furnish the Grantor with current certificates of insurance evidencing such coverage.

SECTION 5
Service Obligations

5.1 No Discrimination. Grantee shall not deny service, deny access, or otherwise discriminate against Subscribers, channel users, or general citizens on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability or sex.

5.2 Privacy. The Grantee shall fully comply with the privacy rights of Subscribers as contained in Cable Act Section 631 (47 U.S.C. § 551).

SECTION 6
Service Availability

6.1 Service Area. The Grantee shall make Cable Service distributed over the Cable System

available to every residence within the Service Area where there is a minimum density of at least thirty (30) residences per linear strand mile of cable (excluding any home subscribing to any satellite service) as measured from Grantee's closest trunk line or distribution cable that is actively delivering Cable Service as of the date of such request for service. If such residence is located within one hundred twenty-five (125) feet of Grantee's feeder cable, the Cable Service will be provided at Grantee's published rate for standard installations. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Grantee shall have the right, but not the obligation, to extend the Cable System into any portion of the Service Area where another operator is providing Cable Service, into any annexed area which is not contiguous to the present Service Area of the Grantee or to any area which is financially or technically infeasible. Grantee at its discretion may make Cable Service available to businesses within the Service Area. Cable Service offered to Subscribers pursuant to this Franchise shall be conditioned upon Grantee having legal access to any such Subscriber's dwelling unit or other units wherein such Cable Service is provided. Nothing herein shall be construed to limit the Grantee's ability to offer or provide bulk rate discounts or promotions. Upon the annexation of any additional land area by the Grantor, the annexed area shall become part of the Service Area and subject to the terms of this Agreement; and, the Grantee's rights and duties under this agreement shall be deemed to include such annexed land; provided Grantor shall provide Grantee a reasonable time to extend its facilities to the annexed Service Area and any such extension shall be subject to the terms of this Section 6.1, including, Grantee's right to refuse to extend into the annexed Service Area if Grantee determines the extension is financially or technically infeasible, however, Grantor shall have the right to require Grantee to meet with Grantee to discuss Grantee's determination that such extension was financially or technically infeasible.

6.2 Annexation of Territory Which is Already Being Serviced by Grantee. The Grantor shall promptly provide written notice to the Grantee of this annexation of any territory which is being provided Cable Service by Grantee or its affiliates. Such annexed area will be subject to the provisions of this Franchise upon sixty (60) days written notice from the Grantor, subject to the conditions set forth below and Section 6.1 above. The Grantor shall also notify Grantee in writing of all new street address assignments or changes within the Service Area. Grantee shall within ninety (90) days after receipt of the annexation notice, pay the Grantor franchise fees on revenue received from the operation of the Cable System to provide Cable Services in any area annexed by the Grantor if the Grantor has provided a written annexation notice that includes the address that will be moved into the Service Area in and Excel format or in a format that will allow Grantee to change its billing system. If the annexation notice does not include the addresses that will be moved into the Service Area, Grantee shall pay franchise fees within ninety (90) days after it receives the annexed addresses as set forth above. All notices due under this section shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested to the address set for in Section 15.5. In any audit of franchise fees due under this Franchise, Grantee shall not be liable for franchise fees on annexed areas unless and until Grantee has received notification and information that meets the standards set forth in this Section 6.2.

6.3 Subscriber Charges for Extensions of the Cable System. No Subscriber shall be refused service arbitrarily. However, if an area does not meet the density requirements of Section 6.1 above, the Grantee shall only be required to extend the Cable System to Subscribers in that area if the Subscribers are willing to share the capital costs of extending the Cable System. The Grantee may require that payment of the capital contribution in aid of construction borne by such potential Subscribers be paid in advance. Subscribers shall also be responsible for any standard/non-standard

installation charges to extend the Cable System from the tap to the residence.

SECTION 7 **Construction and Technical Standards**

7.1 Compliance with Codes. All construction practices and installation of equipment shall be done in accordance with all applicable sections of the National Electric Safety Code.

7.2 Construction Standards and Requirements. All of the Grantee's plant and equipment, including but not limited to the antenna site, head end and distribution system, towers, house connections, structures, poles, wire, cable, coaxial cable, fixtures and appurtenances shall be installed, located, erected, constructed, reconstructed, replaced, removed, repaired, maintained and operated in accordance with good engineering practices and performed by experienced maintenance and construction personnel.

7.3 Safety. The Grantee shall at all times employ ordinary care and shall use commonly accepted methods and devices preventing failures and accidents which are likely to cause damage.

7.4 Network Technical Requirements. The Cable System shall be designed, constructed and operated so as to meet those technical standards adopted by the FCC relating to Cable Systems contained in part 76 of the FCC's rules and regulations as may be amended from time to time, regardless of the transmission technology utilized.

7.5 Performance Monitoring. Grantee shall test the Cable System consistent with the FCC regulations.

SECTION 8 **Conditions on Street Occupancy**

8.1 General Conditions. No Street or right of way shall be used by Grantee if the Grantor, in its sole opinion, determines in accordance with Applicable Law that such use is inconsistent with the terms, conditions or provisions by which such Street or right of way was created or dedicated, or presently used under Applicable Laws. As further required in Section 8.3, prior to any construction, maintenance, or repair, and/or any distributing of the streets and/or right-away, Grantee shall first acquire any and all right of way permits that are now required by Grantor or which may be required in the future. Additionally, the use of poles, conduits, and other facilities belonging to the Grantor or other third parties, or the erection or construction of new pole or conduits, shall be governed by a separate Pole Use Agreement with the appropriate entities and/or utilities. Grantee shall only be allowed to use existing poles, conduits, and other facilities owned by the Grantor when there is adequate room available and when it has been determined that said pole, conduit, or facility can structurally hold the additional load. If poles, conduits, or other facilities are installed on public property by the Grantee, then assuming adequate space or room exists, as such determination regarding adequate room or space is made by Grantee in its sole and absolute discretion, the Grantor shall have the right to make additional use, for any public or municipal purpose, of any of said poles, conduits, or facilities controlled or maintained exclusively by or for Grantee in any street or on any public property, provided such use by Grantor does not interfere with use by Grantee.

8.2 Underground Construction. The facilities of the Grantee shall be installed underground in those Service Areas where existing telephone and electric services are both underground at the time of system construction. In areas where either telephone or electric utility facilities are installed aerially at the time of system construction, the Grantee may install its facilities aerially with the understanding that at such time as the existing aerial facilities are required to be placed underground by the Grantor, the Grantee shall likewise place its facilities under ground. In the event that any telephone or electric utilities are reimbursed by the Grantor or any agency thereof for the placement of cable underground or the movement of cable, Grantee shall be reimbursed upon the same terms and conditions as any telephone, electric or other utilities.

8.3 Construction Codes and Permits. Grantee shall obtain all legally required permits before commencing any work requiring a permit, including the opening or disturbance of any Street within the Service Area. The Grantor shall cooperate with the Grantee in granting any permits required, providing such grant and subsequent construction by the Grantee shall not unduly interfere with the use of such Streets. The Grantee shall adhere to all building and zoning codes currently or hereafter applicable to construction, operation or maintenance of the Cable System in the Service Area, provided that such codes are of general applicability and such codes are uniformly and consistently applied by the Grantor as to other public utility companies and other entities operating in the Service Area. Notwithstanding the above, the Grantee may set off any administrative permit fees or other fees (including annual right-of-way fees) required by the Grantor related to the Grantee's use of Grantor rights-of-way against the franchise fee payments required under Section 10.1 of this Franchise. Grantee shall give Grantor notice of proposed construction in and Street and other public ways at least ten (10) days prior to such construction so as to coordinate all work between Grantee and Grantor after Grantor has acquired all required permits.

8.4 System Construction. All transmission lines, equipment and structures shall be so installed in accordance with industry standards at the time of construction and located as to cause minimum interference with the rights and reasonable convenience of property owners and at all times shall be kept and maintained in a safe, adequate and substantial condition, and in good order and repair. The Grantee shall, at all times, employ ordinary care and use commonly accepted methods and devices for preventing failures and accidents which are likely to cause damage, injuries, or nuisances to the public. Suitable barricades, flags, lights, flares or other devices shall be used at such times and places as are reasonably required for the safety of all members of the public. Any poles or other fixtures placed in any public way by the Grantee shall be placed in such a manner as not to interfere with the usual travel or visibility on such public way, and Grantee shall use reasonable efforts designed to ensure such placement does not interfere with the adjoining property owners, or with the other utilities which may be located in the right of way.

8.5 Good Order and Repair. Grantee shall use reasonable efforts designed to ensure all structures and all lines, equipment and connection in, over, under, and upon the Streets, sidewalks, alleys, and public ways or places of the Service Area wherever situated or located shall at all times be kept and maintained, operated in a safe, suitable conditions and in good order and repair and at all times in compliance with all applicable safety codes and in accordance with Applicable Law and applicable industry standards in effect from time to time.

8.6 Restoration of Public Ways. Grantee shall, at its own expense, restore any damage or disturbance caused to the public way, street, or paved area as a result of its operation, construction, or

maintenance of the Cable System to a condition reasonably comparable to the condition of the Streets immediately prior to such damage or disturbance. Any excavation or repair of a Street or public roadway shall be performed in accordance with applicable provisions of Applicable Law.

8.7 Removal in Emergency. Whenever, in case of fire or other disaster, it becomes necessary in the judgment of the Grantor to remove any of the Grantee's facilities, no charge shall be made by the Grantee against the Grantor for restoration and repair, unless such acts amount to gross negligence by the Grantor.

8.8 Tree Trimming. Grantee or its designee shall have the authority to trim trees on public property at its own expense as may be necessary to protect its wires and facilities. All trimming is to be done at the expense of the Grantee, who shall make every effort to preserve the aesthetic beauty and viability of any trees trimmed. Grantee may contract for such services; however, any firm or individual so retained shall be required to receive Grantor's approval (such approval not to be unreasonably withheld, conditioned, or delayed), be subject to all Applicable Laws provisions regarding tree trimming, and have a City business license prior to commencing such activity.

8.9 Relocation for the Grantor. Nothing in this Agreement shall prevent the Grantor from constructing, maintaining, repairing or relocating and/or altering any street; constructing, laying down, repairing, maintaining or relocating any water mains; or, constructing maintaining, relocating, or repairing any sidewalk or other public work. The Grantee shall, upon receipt of reasonable advance written notice, to be not less than ten (10) business days, protect, support, temporarily disconnect, relocate, or remove any property of Grantee when lawfully required by the Grantor pursuant to its police powers. Grantee shall be responsible for any costs associated with these obligations to the same extent all other users of the Grantor rights-of-way are responsible for the costs related to the relocation of their facilities.

8.10 Building Moving By Third Party. Grantee, on the request of any person holding a valid building moving permit and provided Grantee is provided reasonable access to the building and surrounding area and receives reasonable cooperation from the holder of the building permit, shall temporarily raise or lower its wires to permit the moving of said building. The expense of such temporary removal, raising or lowering of wires shall be paid by the person requesting the same, and the Grantee has the authority to require such payment in advance. Grantee shall be given at least five (5) business days advance notice of removal or change, unless a different notice timeframe is provided for in Applicable Law or if the need is because of a declared emergency or involves inadequate clearance by the Grantee's facilities.

8.11 Relocation for Street Improvements or Expansion. Upon request of the Grantor, in connection with street improvements or expansion, the Grantee shall protect, support, raise, lower, temporarily disconnect, relocate within, or remove from the Street any property of the Grantee, as reasonably necessary to accommodate such improvements or expansion. All expenses of such work shall be borne by the Grantor. The Grantee shall be provided with reasonable advance written notice to prepare for such work, which shall mean not less than ten (10) business days for a temporary relocation and not less than one hundred twenty (120) days for a permanent relocation.

8.12 Reimbursement of Costs. If funds are available to any Person using the Streets for the

purpose of defraying the cost of any of the foregoing, the Grantor shall reimburse the Grantee in the same manner in which other Persons affected by the requirement are reimbursed. If the funds are controlled by another governmental entity, the Grantor shall make application for such funds on behalf of the Grantee.

8.13 Emergency Use. If the Grantee provides an Emergency Alert System ("EAS"), then the Grantor shall permit only appropriately trained and authorized Persons to operate the EAS equipment and shall take reasonable precautions to prevent any use of the Grantee's Cable System in any manner that results in inappropriate use thereof, or any loss or damage to the Cable System. The Grantor shall hold the Grantee, its employees, officers and assigns harmless from any claims or costs arising out of use of the EAS, including, but not limited to, reasonable attorneys' fees and costs.

SECTION 9 **Service and Rates**

9.1 Phone Service. The Grantee shall maintain a toll-free telephone number and a phone service operated such that complaints and requests for repairs or adjustments may be received at any time. Subject to Section 15.1 hereof, Grantee shall respond to subscriber complaints in accordance with its subscriber complaint procedures in effect from time to time, but any such response shall be no later than three (3) business days after a complaint is made.

9.2 Maps and Records of System. Grantee shall keep accurate 'as-built' maps and records of all its facilities which have been compiled in accordance with Grantee's processes and procedures related to such maps and records (it being understood that the maps and records shall not include any information related to Grantee's drops located within the Service Area). Upon request, Grantee shall furnish un-redacted copies of such maps and records of all its facilities as they are in existence as of the date of such request. The maps and records shall be updated periodically, in accordance with Grantee's standard procedures as they are in effect from time to time. In the event Grantee provides maps and records to Grantor the maps and records shall be held in confidence by Grantor.

9.3 Notification of Service Procedures. The Grantee shall furnish each Subscriber at the time service is installed, written instructions that clearly set forth information concerning the procedures for making inquiries or complaints, including the Grantee's name, address and local telephone number. Grantee shall give the Grantor thirty (30) days prior notice of any rate increases, channel lineup or other substantive service changes.

9.4 Rate Regulation. Grantor shall have the right to exercise rate regulation to the extent authorized by law, or to refrain from exercising such regulation for any period of time, at the sole discretion of the Grantor. If and when exercising rate regulation, the Grantor shall abide by the terms and conditions set forth by the FCC.

9.5 Continuity of Service. It shall be the right of all Subscribers to continue receiving Cable Service insofar as their financial and other obligations to the Grantee are honored, and subject to Grantee's rights under Section 15.1 of this Franchise.

SECTION 10 **Franchise Fee**

10.1 Amount of Fee. Grantee shall pay to the Grantor an annual franchise fee in an amount equal to five percent (5%) of the annual Gross Revenue or at such other higher rate as may be otherwise become set in accordance with Applicable Law. Prior to any new rate becoming effective, Grantor shall provide reasonable prior written notice of the rate change to Grantee. Such payment shall be in addition to taxes of general applicability owed to the Grantor by the Grantee that are not included as franchise fees under federal law. Franchise fees may be passed through to Subscribers as a line item on Subscriber bills or otherwise as Grantee chooses, consistent with federal law.

10.2 Payment of Fee. Payment of the fee due the Grantor shall be made on a quarterly basis, within forty-five (45) days of the close of each quarter. The payment period and the collection of the franchise fees that are to be paid to the Grantor pursuant to the Franchise shall commence sixty (60) days after the Effective Date of the Franchise as set forth in Section 15.10. In the event of a dispute, the Grantor, if it so requests, shall be furnished a statement of said payment, reflecting the Gross Revenues and the applicable charges.

10.3 Accord and Satisfaction. No acceptance of any payment by the Grantor shall be construed as a release or as an accord and satisfaction of any claim the Grantor may have for additional sums payable as a franchise fee under this Franchise.

SECTION 11 **Transfer of Franchise**

11.1 Franchise Transfer. The Franchise granted hereunder shall not be assigned, other than by operation of law or to an entity controlling, controlled by, or under common control with the Grantee, without the prior consent of the Grantor, such consent not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed. No such consent shall be required, however, for a transfer in trust, by mortgage, by other hypothecation, or by assignment of any rights, title, or interest of the Grantee in the Franchise or Cable System to secure indebtedness. Within thirty (30) days of receiving a request for transfer, the Grantor shall notify the Grantee in writing of any additional information it reasonably requires to determine the legal, financial and technical qualifications of the transferee.

SECTION 12 **Records, Reports and Maps**

12.1 Reports Required. The Grantee's schedule of charges for regular Subscriber service, its policy regarding the processing of Subscriber complaints, delinquent Subscriber disconnect and reconnect procedures and any other terms and conditions adopted as the Grantee's policy in connection with its Subscribers shall be filed with the Grantor upon request.

12.2 Records Required.

The Grantee shall at all times maintain:

- A. A record of all written complaints received regarding interruptions or degradation of Cable Service, which record shall be maintained for one (1) year.

- B. A full and complete set of plans, records and strand maps showing the location of the Cable System.

12.3 Inspection of Records. Grantee shall permit any duly authorized representative of the Grantor, upon receipt of advance written notice, to examine during normal business hours and on a non-disruptive basis any and all of Grantee's records maintained by Grantee as is reasonably necessary to ensure Grantee's compliance with the Franchise. Such notice shall specifically reference the subsection of the Franchise that is under review so that the Grantee may organize the necessary books and records for easy access by the Grantor. The Grantee shall not be required to maintain any books and records for Franchise compliance purposes longer than three (3) years, except for service complaints, which shall be kept for one (1) year as specified above. The Grantee shall not be required to provide Subscriber information in violation of Section 631 of the Cable Act. The Grantor agrees to treat as confidential any books, records or maps that constitute proprietary or confidential information to the extent Grantee make the Grantor aware of such confidentiality. If the Grantor believes it must release any such confidential books or records in the course of enforcing this Franchise, or for any other reason, it shall advise Grantee in advance so that Grantee may take appropriate steps to protect its interests. Until otherwise ordered by a court or agency of competent jurisdiction, the Grantor agrees that, to the extent permitted by State and federal law, it shall deny access to any of Grantee's books and records marked confidential, as set forth above, to any Person.

SECTION 13 **Enforcement or Revocation**

13.0 Notice of Violation. If the Grantor believes that the Grantee has not complied with the terms of the Franchise, the Grantor shall first informally discuss the matter with Grantee. If these discussions do not lead to resolution of the problem, the Grantor shall notify the Grantee in writing of the exact nature of the alleged noncompliance (the "Violation Notice").

13.1 Grantee's Right to Cure or Respond. The Grantee shall have thirty (30) days from receipt of the Violation Notice to (i) respond to the Grantor, contesting the assertion of noncompliance, or (ii) to cure such default, or (iii) if, by the nature of default, such default cannot be cured within the thirty (30) day period, initiate reasonable steps to remedy such default and notify the Grantor of the steps being taken and the projected date that they will be completed.

13.2 Public Hearing. If the Grantee fails to respond to the Violation Notice received from Grantor, or if the default is not remedied within the cure period set forth above, the Board shall schedule a public hearing if it intends to continue its investigation into the default. The Grantor shall provide the Grantee at least twenty (20) days prior written notice of such hearing, which specifies the time, place and purpose of such hearing, notice of which shall be published by the Clerk of the Grantor in a newspaper of general circulation within the Grantor in accordance with subsection 15.5 hereof. The Grantee shall have the right to present evidence and to question witnesses. The Grantor shall determine if the Grantee has committed a violation and shall make written findings of fact relative to its determination. If a violation is found, the Grantee may petition for reconsideration before any competent tribunal having jurisdiction over such matters.

13.3 Enforcement. Subject to applicable federal and State law, in the event the Grantor, after the

hearing set forth in subsection 14.3 above, determines that the Grantee is in default of any provision of the Franchise, the Grantor may:

- Seek specific performance of any provision, which reasonably lends itself to such remedy, as an alternative to damages; or
- Commence an action at law for monetary damages or seek other equitable relief; or
- In the case of a substantial default of a material provision of the Franchise, seek to revoke the Franchise itself in accordance with subsection 14.5 below.

13.4 Revocation.

- Prior to revocation or termination of the Franchise, the Grantor shall give written notice to the Grantee of its intent to revoke the Franchise on the basis of a pattern of noncompliance by the Grantee, including one or more instances of substantial noncompliance with a material provision of the Franchise. The notice shall set forth the exact nature of the noncompliance. The Grantee shall have sixty (60) days from such notice to either object in writing and to state its reasons for such objection and provide any explanation or to cure the alleged noncompliance. If the Grantor has not received a satisfactory response from Grantee, it may then seek to revoke the Franchise at a public hearing. The Grantee shall be given at least thirty (30) days prior written notice of such public hearing, specifying the time and place of such hearing and stating its intent to revoke the Franchise.
- At the hearing, the Board shall give the Grantee an opportunity to state its position on the matter, present evidence and question witnesses, after which it shall determine whether or not the Franchise shall be revoked. The public hearing shall be on the record and a written transcript shall be made available to the Grantee within ten (10) business days. The decision of the Board shall be made in writing and shall be delivered to the Grantee. The Grantee may appeal such determination to an appropriate court, which shall have the power to review the decision of the Board
- Notwithstanding the above provisions, the Grantee does not waive any of its rights under federal law or regulation.
- Upon revocation of the Franchise, Grantee may remove the Cable System from the Streets of the Grantor, or abandon the Cable System in place.

SECTION 14 **Miscellaneous Provisions**

14.0 Force Majeure. The Grantee shall not be held in default under, or in noncompliance with the provisions of the Franchise, nor suffer any enforcement or penalty relating to noncompliance or default, where such noncompliance or alleged defaults occurred or were caused by circumstances reasonably beyond the ability of the Grantee to anticipate and control. This provision includes, but is not limited to, severe or unusual weather conditions, fire, flood, or other acts of God, strikes, pandemics, work

delays caused by failure of utility providers to service, maintain or monitor their utility poles to which Grantee's Cable System is attached, as well as unavailability of materials and/or qualified labor to perform the work necessary.

14.1 Minor Violations. The parties hereby agree that it is not the Grantor's intention to subject the Grantee to penalties, fines, forfeitures or revocation of the Franchise for violations of the Franchise where the violation was a good faith error that resulted in no or minimal negative impact on the Subscribers within the Service Area, or where strict performance would result in practical difficulties and hardship to the Grantee which outweighs the benefit to be derived by the Grantor and/or Subscribers.

14.2 Action of Parties. In any action by the Grantor or the Grantee that is mandated or permitted under the terms hereof, such party shall act in a reasonable, expeditious and timely manner. Furthermore, in any instance where approval or consent is required under the terms hereof, such approval or consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.

14.3 Equal Protection. If any other provider of cable services or video services (without regard to the technology used to deliver such services) is lawfully authorized by the Grantor or by any other State or federal governmental entity to provide such services using facilities located wholly or partly in the public rights-of-way of the Grantor, the Grantor shall within thirty (30) days of a written request from Grantee, modify this Franchise to insure that the obligations applicable to Grantee are no more burdensome than those imposed on the competing provider. If the Grantor fails to make modifications consistent with this requirement, Grantee's Franchise shall be deemed so modified thirty (30) days after the Grantee's initial written notice. As an alternative to the Franchise modification request, the Grantee shall have the right and may choose to have this Franchise with the Grantor be deemed expired thirty (30) days after written notice to the Grantor. Nothing in this Franchise shall impair the right of the Grantee to terminate this Franchise and, at Grantee's option, negotiate a renewal or replacement franchise, license, consent, certificate or other authorization with any appropriate government entity.

14.4 Notices. Unless otherwise provided by federal, State or local law, all notices, reports or demands pursuant to this Franchise shall be in writing and shall be deemed to be sufficiently given upon delivery to a Person at the address set forth below, or by U.S. certified mail, return receipt requested, nationally or internationally recognized courier service such as Federal Express or electronic mail communication to the designated electronic mail address provided below. Grantee shall provide thirty (30) days' written notice of any changes in rates, programming services or channel positions using any reasonable written means.

As set forth above, notice served upon the Grantor shall be delivered or sent to:

Grantor: City of Columbus, Nebraska
Attn: City Administrator PO
Box 1677
Columbus, NE 68602

Grantee: Viaero Fiber Networks, LLC
Attn: President
1224 West Platte Avenue
Fort Morgan, CO 80701

Copy to: Viaero Fiber Networks, LLC
Attn: Legal Department
1224 West Platte Avenue
Fort Morgan, CO 80701

14.5 Public Notice. Minimum public notice of any public meeting relating to this Franchise or any such grant of additional franchises, licenses, consents, certificates, authorizations, or exemptions by the Grantor to any other Person(s) to provide Cable Services, video services, or other television services utilizing any system or technology requiring use of the public rights of way shall be by publication at least once in a newspaper of general circulation in the area at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting and a posting at the administrative buildings of the Grantor.

14.5.1. Grantor shall provide written notice to Grantee within ten (10) days of Grantor's receipt from any other Person(s) of an application or request for a franchise(s), license(s), consent(s), certificate(s), authorization(s), or exemption(s) to provide Cable Services, video services, or other television services utilizing any system or technology requiring use of the public rights of way. Any public hearings to consider such an application or request shall have the same notice requirement as outlined in Paragraph 15.6 above.

14.6 Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of this Franchise is, for any reason, held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent provision and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Franchise.

14.7 Entire Agreement. This Franchise and any Exhibits hereto constitute the entire agreement between Grantee and the Grantor, and they supersede all prior or contemporaneous agreements, representations or understandings (whether written or oral) of the parties regarding the subject matter hereof.

14.8 Administration of Franchise. This Franchise is a contract and neither party may take any unilateral action that materially changes the explicit mutual promises and covenants contained herein.

Any changes, modifications or amendments to this Franchise must be made in writing, signed by the Grantor and the Grantee.

14.9 Effective Date. The Franchise granted herein will take effect and be in full force from such date of the approval of this by the City Council and Mayor of the Grantor. This Franchise shall expire on _____, unless extended in accordance with Section 2.2 of the Franchise or by the mutual of the parties. If any fee or grant that is passed through to Subscribers is required by this Franchise, other than the franchise fee, such fee or grant shall go into effect sixty (60) days after the Effective Date of this Franchise.

14.10 Governing Law. This Franchise shall be governed by be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Nebraska without regard to conflicts of law rules.

Considered and approved this _____ day of _____ 2026.

City of Columbus, Nebraska

Signature: _____
Name/ Title: _____
Date: _____

Accepted this 12 day of January 2026, subject to applicable federal, State and local law.

Viaero Fiber Networks, LLC

Signature: Ronald Christensen
Name/Title: Ron Christensen - President
Date: January 12, 2026

4. Adjournment.