

Regular Council Meeting
Wednesday, July 8, 2026

The Wakefield City Council met in a regular meeting on Wednesday, July 8, 2026 in the Wakefield Civic Center at 407 East 7th Street at 5:30 P.M. with the following present: Council members **Present:** Matt Brenn, John Geiser, Scott Hansen (Ward 1), Joe Nelson (Ward 1). Also present were Mayor Lehmkuhl, City Attorney Miner, Administrative Coordinator Decker, and Clerk Vander Veen. Visitors included

With a quorum being present, Mayor Lehmkuhl opened the meeting at 5:30 P.M. and informed those present of the Nebraska Open meetings Law, and where a copy of such was posted in Room B of the Civic Center for review. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited

Matt Brenn: Present, John Geiser: Present, Scott Hansen (Ward 1): Present, Joe Nelson (Ward 1): Present.

Council Member Matt Brenn moved to approve the consent agenda as written. Council Member John Geiser seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried.

Council Member Scott Hansen (Ward 1) moved to approve the claims as presented. Council Member John Geiser seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried.

Finance sub-committee update.

No news regarding the pending lawsuit; motion to dismiss under advisement. Current garnishment for defaulted LB840 loan will need to be refigured as the employee is no longer working. Attorney has been in contact with with Cubby's attorney and there is nothing new to report.

GenPro Letter of Intent: MFI will not sign as they have had issues with GenPro in the past; therefore, Henderson is recommending City doesn't sign the LOI. MFI is still willing to talk solar power, but will not sign an LOI.

DB retiring; will work until May 2027. Samuel Nuno has accepted the position and will be going to camp in January. DB will be working with Mike on nuisances to tidy up the community. No issues since the speed limit sign change south of town. Council would like to see jake breaking signage put back up especially since the noise is worse when trucks are coming from the south.

UF Buck gave a written report. Council had no questions.

CA Mogus also presented a written report. Brenn inquired about spraying curbs & gutters. Mogus responded that girls have already done this but are having to redo the spraying as it wasn't hot enough to kill everything.

Clerk Vander Veen offered a written report from the Annual Accounting & Finance Conference. Mayor encouraged council to read the report as there are many changes that will take effect later in July. The mayor also noted that there will be major issues getting the pool certified next year and the State will no longer be offering free inspections. Instead, the City will need to hire and pay for an inspector to come out. The State will no longer be issuing Pool Operating Certificates or Pool Operators Licenses which means the pool managers will need to go elsewhere to become certified to operate the pool. Again, an added cost because certification will need to come from a private company.

No public comments.

The change in the resolution is for the Fire/Rescue Department and the Police Department, and allows these entities to seek grants without the Council's permission as long as the individual award does NOT exceed \$20,000. The earlier rules still pertain to any other city entity wanting to apply for a grant using the City's EIN.

Council Member John Geiser moved to Resolution 4-2026 establishing a protocol for approval of contracts or agreements with obligate the City. Council Member Scott Hansen (Ward 1) seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried.

Rural Fire Board Secretary Galen Samuelson notified CA Henderson that the Board has two minor changes to the Interlocal Agreement. Henderson will get those changes made and have the agreement ready for approval at next month's meeting. This item was tabled until August 2026.

Thanks to Megan Weaver for generating the survey that was placed on social media for residents to vote on which of the two proposed signs they liked best. There were a variety of comments. The Council members offered their

insight: Geiser would like to know more about replacing the existing signage to include back lighting. Hansen would like a fresh upgrade as the signs are the first thing people see when they come to town; he prefers the taller signs and would like to keep both the 'established by' and 'baseball capitol of Nebraska' on the signs. Nelson would like to have the features of the two signs combined into one. Brenn would like to keep 'baseball capitol of Nebraska' but still pursue a baseball sign at the park entrance next year. There was also discussion about an electronic sign. Council instructed CA Mogus to go back and get bids for rehabbing the current signs as well as combining the two signs features into one. Council plans to make a decision in August thus this item was tabled.

After further investigation of the situation in June of a dog attacking another dog and its owner, CA Henderson stated that the dog in question does not meet the definition of a dangerous dog. Instead, it should be considered a potentially dangerous dog, and its owner should be notified by CA Mogus or the code enforcement officer.

CA Henderson has not heard from DTLA Farms LLC. Because the family has experienced recent issues, Mayor Lehmkuhl asked CA Henderson to reach out to the family to gauge their interest in the earlier offer.

Stephanie Palma recently resigned as a part-time library aide. Library Director Katelyn Pommer interviewed three candidates, and after much discussion, the Gardner Public Library board is recommending the hiring of Tajaharai (Tajah) Owen as the new aide at the rate of \$15/hour for 20-25 hours per week.

Council Member John Geiser moved to approve the Gardner Public Library board's recommendation of Tajah Owen as the new library assistant. Council Member Matt Brenn seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried.

When the City last discharged, our flow meter broke and one had to be rented. Therefore, a replacement is needed. A quote was obtained from GPM of Blair, Nebraska at a cost of \$8039.90. Monies for the purchase will come from the Sewer's repair & maintenance fund.

Council Member John Geiser moved to approve the purchase of a flow meter from GPM. Council Member Scott Hansen (Ward 1) seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried.

The last siren was purchased years ago to be placed on the west side of town at the Peter's property. Since then there has been growth to the south of town, so an emergency siren is needed. Federal Signal, the same company the last siren was purchased from, has submitted a quote of approximately \$37,000 for a new sign. Council would like to see if there are any grant dollars available for this purchase even though there are available funds in the current budget. Sheriff Tom Decker recommended the city administrator speak with Sara Kumm, Dixon County 911 supervisor.

As reported at last month's council meeting, Dennis Biggerstaff, who rents the dump ground from the City, reported damage to the fence. The new owner of the property abutting the dump was tearing out trees along the fence line and damaged the City's fence, and it needs to be replaced. According to Mogus, who shared photos of the damage, the new property owner (an LLC from Wayne) did not have permission nor did they inquire at the city office about removing trees on the City's side. Mogus has not requested a quote to replace the fence but is asking for direction from the Council on the next steps they would like to take. The mayor asked for the council to assume positive intent and start with a phone call to the new owner. If that doesn't go well, then the city attorney can send something more formal.

CA Mogus contacted JEO to get a quote for both water and waste water studies. He was told \$25K for EACH of the studies. After speaking with Matthew Smith, who used to be employed by Olsson and is now maintenance supervisor at Pender, Mogus contacted John Krajewski of Smithfield, Nebraska. Mogus spoke with Krajewski, owner of JK Energy Consulting, and received a bid of \$9K for a water study, and \$4 for a waste water study. The water study is higher priced because it will involve determining how to best fund the water treatment plant loan payment when sales tax dollars run out.

Council Member Scott Hansen (Ward 1) moved to approve the bid from JK Energy Consulting for both water and waste water rate studies. Council Member Matt Brenn seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried.

Cell phone expectations? 24/7, loss/damage, changing passwords,

\$100 charge for failure to return. If change password, contact office.
Need to include something about negligent conduct

Pat Lunz approached the mayor about being part of the Community Redevelopment Authority, so he is recommending her to fill the vacancy. Council Member John Geiser moved to approve the mayor's recommendation of Pat Lunz to the CRA. Council Member Scott Hansen (Ward 1) seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried.

Council Member Matt Brenn moved to enter into executive session at 6:27pm for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of a person. Council Member John Geiser seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried. Council Member Scott Hansen (Ward 1) moved to come out of executive session at 6:31pm. Council Member John Geiser seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried. Council Member Scott Hansen (Ward 1) moved to accept the recommendation from the Wakefield Cemetery Board to terminate the employment of the cemetery sexton. Council Member John Geiser seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried.

No action taken.

Council Member Joe Nelson (Ward 1) moved to enter into executive session at 6:33pm for the purpose of a potential real estate purchase. Council Member Scott Hansen (Ward 1) seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried. Council Member John Geiser moved to exit executive session at 6:45pm. Council Member Joe Nelson (Ward 1) seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried.

In August, council will have two meetings: the regular meeting on the 12th and a Zoom meeting with AMGL on Wednesday, August 26 at 5:30pm at City Hall. The meeting with AMGL will help the council decide what to do with the levy for fiscal year 2026-2027. This decision will determine if the City needs to attend the 'pink postcard' meeting at the county level in September. As a reminder, there must be at least one council member at the 'pink postcard' meeting to answer questions and justify the City's levy decision. The mayor is allowed to present the information, but cannot answer public questions. Council Member John Geiser moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:50pm. Council Member Joe Nelson (Ward 1) seconded the motion. Brenn: aye, Geiser: aye, Hansen (Ward 1): aye, Nelson (Ward 1): aye. Motion carried.

James R. Lehmkuhl, Mayor

State of Nebraska)

) ss:

County of Dixon)

I, the undersigned City Clerk of Wakefield, Nebraska, do certify that all the subjects in the attached proceedings, were contained in the agenda for the meeting on Wednesday, July 8, 2026 kept current and available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk, that such subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty-four hours to the meeting, that said minutes were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days prior to the next convened meeting of said body.

Pam Vander Veen, City Clerk