

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NELIGH, NEBRASKA

August 12, 2025

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Neligh was held at the City Council Chambers on Tuesday, August 12, 2025 at 7:00 P.M. Present were Mayor Joe Hartz and Council Members Leonard Miller, Ted Hughes, Steph Lundgren, and Tyler Pedersen. Also in attendance were City Attorney James McNally, City. Supt. Dan Donaldson, Economic Development Director Lauren Sheridan-Simonsen, City Clerk Danielle Klabenes, Police Chief Logan Lawson, News Reporter Carrie Pitzer, Antelope County Ag Society Members Jeff Carr, Heath Snodgrass, Aaron Krueger, and Geoffrey Carr. Notice of this meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Antelope County News on August 6, 2025. Notice of this meeting was given to the Mayor and all members of the Council and a copy of their acknowledgment of receipt of notice and the agenda is attached to the minutes. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice and in the notice to the Council of this meeting. Mayor Hartz offered a prayer before opening the meeting. All proceedings thereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public. Mayor Hartz presided over the meeting and noted that a copy of the Open Meetings Law, located on the east wall of the City Council Chambers, was available to the public. City Clerk Danielle Klabenes recorded the minutes. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council member Hughes moved to approve the July 15th regular meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Pedersen, Lundgren, and Miller. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

TREASURER REPORT

Clerk Klabenes reported the July spinning reserves were \$3,960 and two months of wind power were paid in July. She reported a reimbursement from State Revolving Fund (SRF) of approximately \$700,000 was anticipated to arrive before the end of September for water projects. Discussion was held for electric funds available between the checking account, insured cash sweep account and unrestricted investments. *Pedersen moved to approve the July 2025 treasurer's report as presented. Seconded by Hughes. Roll call votes in favor were Miller, Hughes, Lundgren, and Pedersen. Opposed: none. Motion carried.*

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were heard.

ANTELOPE COUNTY AG SOCIETY DISCUSSION ON RIVERSIDE PARK GRANDSTAND

Antelope County Ag Society Board Member Heath Snodgrass reported the Grandstand is used by approximately 1500 people during the Antelope County Fair for 3 days. He reported that the Neligh Young Men's Club was not using the concessions area under the Grandstand. Snodgrass reported boards under the Grandstand showed signs of rot and asked about repairs to the wooden supports. City Supt. Donaldson reported the city had contacted engineers and had not found an engineer willing to evaluate the Grandstand. Jeff Carr reported he had visited with someone from Huff Construction who was willing to look at the Grandstand by recommending a structural engineer to ask what fix or repair remedy would work. Discussion was held that the Grandstand was a historic structure and if fixable, the repairs to maintain the structure were ideal. Discussion was held that the Certified Local Government funds would not be enough to cover repairs for the size of the Grandstand. Discussion was held that information following the Governor's Summit later in the week would report if funding from the Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF) would be available. Discussion was held for city personnel to repair a water leak in the grandstands roof. Discussion was held for items that both the Ag Society and the City could work together on including keeping the ballfields together, re-installing the ballfields fences after the county fair, mowing in areas after the fair begins, and possible signage for placement on the Belmar Creek bridge between Riverside Park and the fairgrounds. It was the consensus of both the Ag Society and City Council to start discussions with the Huff Construction contact to ask for a structural engineer evaluation and cost estimate for repairs. No action was taken.

DIAL-A-RIDE PUBLIC TRANSIT FARE INCREASE TO \$1.50

Clerk Klabenes reported that discussion at the June meeting had considered a 30% reduction in operating assistance from Nebraska Department of Transportation and considered a transit fare increase of \$.50 per one way ride in city limits to offset the reduced operating assistance. She reported on local transit agencies considering increases in transit fares including Ponca Express, Norfolk Transit and Plainview Transit. Discussion was held for confirming a transit fare \$1.50 rate for Dial-A-Ride public transit and for the applicable public notices to be published accordingly. *Hughes moved to set a public hearing date for September 9th at 7:45P.M. to consider an increase in the Dial-A-Ride transit fare to \$1.50 per one way ride in city limits. Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Miller, Pedersen, Hughes, and Lundgren. Opposed: none. Motion carried.*

DANGEROUS BUILDINGS UPDATE

City Attorney McNally reported properties presented in pictures would be inspected between the next meeting and begin the process in determining if a dangerous building were present. He reported a house on 8th Street had started demolition and would be completed in the next few days. He reported a house on R Street without water services was consulted on with Health and Human Services which Health and Human Services could not offer assistance on, so an inspection of the property would be scheduled to move forward with determining if the home met the dangerous building regulations. He reported he would be filing a brief in response to the Connot appeal filed with the judge. City Supt. Donaldson reported that while some properties are in different condition from others, the city must be fair to all property owners and follow the regulations to make such determinations. He noted that the process of cleaning up dangerous properties was requested from constituents from surveys during the housing study. No action was taken.

FRED BENNING STATUE

Discussion was held that last month a public comment shared an idea for a statue of Fred Benning. Discussion was held that the American Legion had discussed the project and while not opposed to the project, did not have funds to contribute to it. Discussion was held that one location for the statue may be in Riverside Park near the veteran's memorial that was damaged in the spring. Discussion was held that due to the repairs to the veteran's memorial not completed before the court heard the case for memorial damages, that restitution could not seek the full damages based on an estimate of \$10,200 but could include the city insurance deductible of \$2,500. Discussion was held that the city had received the insurance reimbursement less than the deductible which would go towards the repairs, but the city would not have excess funds from the memorial damages to contribute to a Benning statue. No action was taken.

ONE-AND-SIX-YEAR STREET PLAN

Lundgren moved to set a public hearing for the One-and-Six Year Street Plan for September 9th at 7:30 P.M. and to authorize the city clerk to advertise the hearing. Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Lundgren, Miller, and Pedersen. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

JOINT PUBLIC HEARING REPRESENTATIVES

City Clerk Klabenes reported one city representative and one elected official should be appointed to attend a joint public hearing, also referred to as the pink postcard public hearing, with all other political subdivisions if the city budget proposed an increase in property tax within the new budgetary parameters. *Pedersen moved to designate Mayor Joe Hartz as the elected official and City Clerk Danielle Klabenes as the city representatives to present the city property tax request at a Joint Public hearing, if applicable.* Seconded by Hughes. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Pedersen, Hughes, and Miller. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

BUDGET HEARING DATE SET

Clerk Klabenes reported a separate budget hearing is required by statute and could be held on the same day as the regular meeting or on a different day but could not be limited by time. She reported the hearing would review the budget documents and figures and provide time for questions. *Pedersen moved to set a budget hearing date of September 9th at 6:30 P.M.* Seconded by Hughes. Roll call votes in favor were Pedersen, Miller, Lundgren, and Hughes. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION 2025-15 FOR CITY INSURANCE RENEWAL WITH LARM FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026

Discussion was held about the city insurance renewal options with commitment levels and discounts varying from a 5% discount for a 3-year commitment to a 0% discount and 90-day notice only. Clerk Klabenes reported that if the city would like to begin the process to seek other bids, a gradual step-down process is required therefore since the city opted for a 2-year commitment last year, the city would need to select a 180 day notice with 2% discount or 90 day notice with 0% discount for the next fiscal year to seek bids in the spring of 2026. Discussion was held that the city went out for bids in 2017 and for about 5 years after that, the annual renewal increases were minor. Discussion was held that to step down to a 180-day notice which allowed the city to seek insurance bids, would increase the premium \$4,000. Discussion was held that seeking public bids offered a fair opportunity to confirm the current market for municipal insurance was presented to competitors. Discussion noted that the League Association of Risk Management (LARM) continued to increase its membership, including the newest member of the Village of Brunswick. Discussion was held to consider an increase in deductible from \$2,500 building and contents to a \$5,000 or \$10,000 deductible and an increase in automobile comprehensive and collision from \$1,000 to a \$2,500 or \$5,000 deductible. *Council member Miller introduced and moved for passage Resolution 2025-15 approving a 180-day notice with a 2% discount for an annual premium of \$186,123 before a deductible change for the city insurance policy for the 2025-2026 fiscal year and to retain the \$2,500 building and contents deductible and increase the auto coverage to a \$2,500 deductible for comp and collision.* Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Miller, Hughes, and Pedersen. Opposed: None. Therefore, Mayor Hartz declared Resolution 2025-15 adopted.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORS REPORT

Economic Development Director Lauren Sheridan reported no response was received by postcard receipt of the certified letter mailed in July to the 6-plex owner for the March deadline of the residential market rate housing loan. Discussion was held that the loan is still current and no further funding would be extended until work was done, inspected and communication was made. Discussion was held for updating the market rate housing program regulations for including timeline penalties. The Director reported she had attended the national Brownfields conference and had obtained contractor references for future projects. She reported the Discover Neligh app updates would include an iOS app and upon the updates completed would feature community events and push notifications. Discussion was held for signage at the parks campgrounds to include a QR code for the app. She reported that an October 16th event called Connect Neligh was schedule to explore non-profit organizations and community groups to highlight their work and attract new volunteers. She reported the first Community Hero award recognizing individuals that go above and beyond to improve the community honored Brian and Teresa Legate. She reported the four bronze signs with historic information would be installed at the Trail of Tears, Antelope County Museum, Antelope County Courthouse, and the Neligh Mill. She reported that the Chamber of Commerce barbeque at the county fair had a large attendance of approximately nine hundred, and the Clearwater Firemen's barbeque was the upcoming Sunday. City Supt. Donaldson reported the Assistant Director had assisted him with filing of the tire amnesty application. *Pedersen moved to approve the economic development director's report as presented.* Seconded by Hughes. Roll call votes in favor were Pedersen, Miller, Hughes, and Lundgren. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The Director reported that the Chamber of Commerce had approved of the contract presented for 550 hours with an anticipated 3% cost of living increase. *Hughes moved to approve the Neligh Chamber of Commerce contract for 2025-2026 fiscal year at \$14,163 for 550 hours with the Neligh Economic Development office.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Miller, Lundgren, Pedersen, and Hughes. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Director Sheridan reported the Village of Clearwater had approved and signed a contract for 400 hours as presented. *Hughes moved to approve the Village of Clearwater contract for the 2025-2026 fiscal year at \$19,358 for 400 hours with the Neligh Economic Development office.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Miller, Pedersen, Hughes, and Lundgren. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Discussion was held that the Economic Development board had reviewed and recommended the removal of a sentence in the façade application. The Director reported the change was noted on page 3 of the façade program application to remove the sentence stating, "which may include sidewalk repair or replacement." *Council Member Pedersen moved to approve the removal of sidewalk repairs or replacement from the façade grant application.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Pedersen, Lungren, and Miller. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The Director reported that the Economic Development Board had reviewed and recommended a couple minor changes for spacing on the cover page. *Council Member Lundgren moved to approve the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan for infrastructure, housing, and economic development planning.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Miller, Hughes, and Pedersen. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

POLICE REPORT

Chief of Police Logan Lawson reported Officer Riley Schroeder would be graduating from the police academy later that week and joining the police department for field training. The Chief reported a peaceful 4th of July and limited fireworks complaints this year. He thanked the Neligh Fire department for opening the firehall for availability to the Riverside Park campers during the July storms. He reported July calls included a driving under the influence, assisting the Health and Human services with children's welfare cases, assisting Antelope County with investigations and domestic disputes, and assisting Holt County with a sexual assault investigation. He reported training courses were limited in July with the number of events in town for the month. *Lundgren moved to approve the July written police report as presented.* Seconded by Hughes. Roll call votes in favor were Miller, Pedersen, Hughes, and Lundgren. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Chief Lawson thanked City Attorney Jim McNally for drafting the ordinance presented to update the recreational vehicle registration to use a license plate instead of a sticker which would begin after January 1, 2026. He reported the license plate offered better visibility to the police department on the ATV, UTV and golf carts. *Council member Lundgren introduced Ordinance 662 entitled as follows:*

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NELIGH, NEBRASKA, REGULATING AND REQUIRING THE REGISTRATION AND LICENSING OF ATV/UTV/VEHICLES; REPEALING CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

And moved that the statutory rule requiring reading on three different times be suspended. Council Member Pedersen seconded the motion to suspend the rules and upon roll call vote on the motion, the following Council Members voted YEA: Pedersen, Hughes, Miller, and Lundgren. The following voted NAY: None. The motion to suspend the rules was adopted by three-fourths of the Council and the statutory rule was declared suspended for consideration of said ordinance.

Said ordinance was then read by title and thereafter, *Council member Miller moved for final passage of the ordinance,* which motion was seconded by Council member Lundgren. The mayor then stated the question, "Shall

Ordinance No. 662 be passed and adopted?” Upon roll call voting, the following Council Members voted YEA: Miller, Lundgren, and Pedersen. The following voted NAY: Hughes. The passage and adoption of said ordinance, having been concurred in by three-fourths of all members of the City Council, the Mayor declared the ordinance was adopted and approved of the same and affixed his signature thereto and ordered the City Clerk to publish said ordinance one time as prescribed by law.

The Chief of Police reported a renewal contract for dispatch services with the Antelope County Sheriff’s Department was presented for another 3-year period at \$1,041.67 a month. *Lundgren moved to approve the renewal agreement for dispatch service between the Antelope County Sherriff Department and the City of Neligh for 3 years effective September 1, 2025, at \$1,041.67 per month.* Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Hughes, Pedersen, and Miller. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

CITY SUPERINTENDANT & ELECTRIC REPORT

City Supt. Dan Donaldson reported the Street department would be performing more maintenance, cross walks, and patching potholes now that the July events and County fair activities were completed. He reported the mowing in the park has been continuous with the regular rains this season, and the July baseball tournaments went well and had terrific help from coaches prepping the fields after some heavy rains. He reported the number of people utilizing Russell Park during the County Fair this year had increased and the location of a proposed dog park in Russell Park will not take away the parking availability in Russell Park. He reported the end of the season pool party with the dog swim was growing each year and the disc golf installation had one more tee basket to complete. Discussion was held for working with the school for students to use the new amenities including disc golf, pickle ball and the existing sand volleyball. Discussion was held to create a map of the park showing and listing where the amenities are located. He reported the VFD on the blower at the sewer plant had failed and was out of warranty and a new blower was on its way. The Supt. extended his thanks to Neligh residents for their patience during the water project which disturbed water flow at different connection times. He reported the total gallons of water pumped in July was down three million gallons compared to the same month last year due to many rain showers last month. In the Solid Waste department, the City Supt. reported a \$1 per ton increase for hauling was coming and a flat rate of \$500 per haul for solid waste disposal is coming which will be discussed during the budget workshop. He reported cardboard baling with the new baler started earlier that day. He reported the electric personnel had reset the transformer at the new fairgrounds building and three additional poles were set for the new lift station. He reported difficulty in getting bids returned of two boring utility projects which now show escalated project costs so one project will be worked on in the current fiscal year and the second project will be delayed into the next fiscal year. He reported generation had run four times in the last month and that emissions tests would be done in the coming days. *Pedersen moved to approve the City Superintendent report as presented.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Pedersen, Miller, Lundgren, and Hughes. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The City Supt. reported he had asked the City Engineer and Water Operator Scott Kester for recommendations on the next water projects as the city was completing several water projects this year. He reported that the City Engineer had been busy with family events and had not had a chance to review and discuss them yet. He reported a new plan would be presented at a later meeting. No action was taken.

NEW MOON THEATER REPORT

Theater Liaison Lundgren reported that the Sherwood Foundation visited the theater in July allowing a group of theater board members and local supporters to tell the theater’s story. She reported that the Sherwood Foundation awarded a second operating grant of \$25,000 to the theater. She reported that one member of the Sherwood Foundation in attendance had actively worked with the Rose Theater from a warehouse condition to the current theater and the member was a valuable resource for the theater board to work with. She reported another \$25,000 grant from the Gilchrist Foundation, a Sioux City organization, had also been awarded. She reported the original asbestos inspection under listed the theater so anticipation for a larger asbestos removal process was expected and a revisit with the asbestos grantor may be needed depending on asbestos removal bids received. Lundgren reported Nebraska Husker raffle tickets for an October football game with a hotel stay, parking pass and a gift certificate for a restaurant were being sold. *Hughes moved to approve the New Moon Theater report as presented.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Pedersen, Hughes, Miller, and Lundgren. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Clerk Klabenes reported that upon notice of award for an asbestos removal grant for the theater that the Nebraska Water Energy & Environment had electronically sent the interlocal agreement for such grant naming the City Supt. as a project manager to assist with obtaining contractor estimates and named the City Clerk as the contact person to correspond documentation. She reported the interlocal agreement was submitted to the city digitally for an electronic signature which the city clerk signed. *Pedersen moved that the action of the city clerk in digital signing for the interlocal agreement with Nebraska Department of Water Energy and Environment for asbestos removal of the New Moon Theater be affirmed and ratified.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Miller, Hughes, Pedersen, and Lundgren.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Lundgren moved to approve Pay Application #10 to Rutjens Construction for \$103,461.30 for water project #4. Seconded by Hughes. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Miller, Pedersen, and Hughes. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Pedersen moved to approve the Blackstrap invoices for weigh tickets totaling \$80.00. Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Miller, Lundgren, and Pedersen. Abstain: Hughes. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

Hughes moved to approve the Boyd’s Electric invoice for wiring of the new baler at the compactor totaling \$1,235.00. Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Miller, and Hughes. Abstain: Pedersen. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Lundgren moved to approve the current claims as presented, except for Blackstrap and Boyd’s Electric invoices. Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Pedersen, Hughes, Miller, and Lundgren. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

There being no further business to conduct, *Miller moved to adjourn.* Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Lundgren, Miller, and Pedersen. Opposed: None. Thereupon Mayor Hartz declared the meeting adjourned. Time 8:57 P.M.

City of Neligh

Joe Hartz, Mayor

ATTEST

Danielle Klabenes, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, City Clerk of the City of Neligh, Nebraska, hereby certify that on August 12, 2025; that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and readily available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk; that such agenda items were sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting; that such subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to said meeting; that at least one copy of all reproducible material discussed at the meeting was available for public inspection at least twenty-four hours before the meeting; that the said minutes from which the foregoing proceedings have been extracted were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days and prior to the next convened meeting of said body; that all news media requesting notification concerning meetings of said body were provided advance notification of the time and place of said meeting and the subjects to be discussed at said meeting; and that a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available and accessible to members of the public, posted during such meeting in the room in which such meeting was held.

(SEAL)

City Clerk