

CITY OF HASTINGS, NEBRASKA
MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
Monday, November 24, 2025

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hastings, Nebraska was conducted at the Hastings Municipal Airport, 3300 West 12th Street, on November 24, 2025.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in Regular Session by Mayor Beckby with the following members present Steve Huntley, Michael Anderson, Brian Hoffman, Maggie Esch, Larry Consbruck, Brad Consbruck, Matt Fong, Marc Rowan. Absent: none. The following City Officials were present: City Administrator, Mark Funkey; City Attorney, Jesse Oswald; City Clerk, Tyler Ficken; Fire Chief, Troy Vorderstrasse; Police Chief, Adam Story; Utility Manager, Derek Zeisler; Director of Engineering, Lee Vrooman; Development Services Director, Kevin Kubo; Library Director, Kelly Reisig; Museum Director, Teresa Kreutzer-Hodson; Director of Human Resources, Lori Hartman; Director of Finance/City Treasurer, Roger Nash; Technology Director, Erik Nielsen; Public Information Manager; Tony Herrman; Information Technology, Kirk Layton; Safety Director, Trent Clark; Airport Manager, Matt Kuhr.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited.

Moved by Steve Huntley seconded by Matt Fong to adopt the current agenda. Roll Call: Ayes: Steve Huntley, Michael Anderson, Brad Consbruck, Larry Consbruck, Maggie Esch, Brian Hoffman, Matt Fong. Nays: Marc Rowan. Absent: None. The motion carried.

PUBLIC NOTICE - Official Notice of the Regular Meeting was published in the Hastings Tribune on Friday, November 21, 2025. Pursuant to Nebraska Revised Statute Section 84-1412, the public is advised that a copy of today's agenda and all reproducible written material which will be discussed at today's meeting is available for public review and a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act is posted and accessible to members of the public.

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:

Councilmember Rowan congratulated Ward 4 on the successful town hall event. Councilmember Hoffman commended the Chamber of commerce on the successful 2025 Celebration of Lights event. Councilmember Huntley prompted Utility Manager, Derek Zeisler to provide an update from the Utility Board which included a budget update and conservation efforts including smart sprinklers and conservation rates.

CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS:

Those speaking in opposition to item 4d: Tiffany McDonnell, Samuel Johnston, Marilyn Johnson, Tammy Craig. Jake Klabenes spoke in favor of item 4d. Edward Krontz suggested the use of smart sprinklers in the City parks.

MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Beckby enjoyed the show of community spirit at the 2025 Celebration of Lights event.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. All Consent Items.

Moved by Steve Huntley seconded by Larry Consbruck to approve all consent items. Roll Call: Ayes: Steve Huntley, Michael Anderson, Brad Consbruck, Larry Consbruck, Maggie Esch, Marc Rowan, Brian Hoffman, Matt Fong. Nays: None. Absent: None. The motion carried.

- (a) Approval of the minutes of the Council Meeting of November 10, 2025
- (b) Approval of claims and payroll except the claim of Vaughan's Printing
- (c) Approval of Work Order GA-388, new two inch medium pressure gas main on Quail Ridge Avenue, 330' south of White Wolf Street to 240' north of White Wolf Street; White Wolf Street, Quail Ridge Avenue to Mallard Way Avenue; Mallard Way Avenue, Fox Run Street to 240' north of White Wolf Street
- (d) Approval of Work Order SW-390, upgrade control equipment for lift station operations at Academic lift station (LS-9) located west of Technical Boulevard between Academic and Coal Train Road
- (e) Approval of Invoice No. 1997 from South Central Economic Development District in the amount of \$3,497.96 for administrative services for Community Development Block Grant Project 24-PWI-008, MHC Water Line
- (f) Approval of the drawdown request for Community Development Block Grant funds in the amount of \$3,497.96 for general administration work completed for Community Development Block Grant Project 24-PWI-008, MHC Water Line
- (g) Approval of the agreement with South Central Economic Development District for Construction Management Services for Public Facilities Improvement Project 24-PWF-001
- (h) Approval of the agreement with South Central Economic Development District for Construction Management Services for Mobile Home Community (MHC) Project 24-PWI-008
- (i) Approval of Invoice No. 1992 in the amount of \$2,185.00 from South Central Economic Development District for construction management services for Community Development Block Grant Project 21-DTR-007
- (j) Approval of Invoice No. 2007 from South Central Economic Development District in the amount of \$891.25 for construction management services for Community Development Block Grant Project 21-DTR-007
- (k) Approval of drawdown request for Community Development Block Grant funds in the amount of \$3,076.25 for general administration and construction management work for Community Redevelopment Block Grant Project 21-DTR-007, Downtown Revitalization
- (l) Approval of Invoice No. 1996 from South Central Economic Development District in the amount of \$1,667.50 for administrative services for Community Redevelopment Block Grant 24-PWF-001, Revive

(m) Approval of drawdown request for Community Redevelopment Block Grant funds in the amount of \$1,667.50 for general administration for Community Redevelopment Block Grant Project 24-PWF-001, Public Works Facilities (Revive)

(n) Approval of Invoice No. 1993 from South Central Economic Development District in the amount of \$1,150.00 for grant administration for Community Development Block Grant Project 23-ED-001, Economic Development - Western Reserve

(o) Approval of drawdown request for Community Development Block Grant funds in the amount of \$1,150.00 for general administration for Community Development Block Grant Project 23-ED-001, Economic Development - Western Reserve

(p) Approval of Invoice No. 1995 from South Central Economic Development District in the amount of \$862.50 for grant administration for Community Development Block Grant Project 24-ED-003, Economic Development - Bruckman Rubber

(q) Approval of drawdown request for Community Development Block Grant funds in the amount of \$862.50 for general administration for Community Development Block Grant Project 24-ED-003, Economic Development - Bruckman Rubber

REGULAR AGENDA:

2. Unfinished Business of Preceding Meeting.

None.

3. Public Hearings.

None.

4. General Business.

(a) Approval of the claims of Vaughan's Printing in the amount of \$107.50. Moved by Matt Fong seconded by Brad Consbruck to approve claim of Vaughan's printing in the amount of \$107.50. Roll Call: Ayes: Steve Huntley, Michael Anderson, Brad Consbruck, Larry Consbruck, Marc Rowan, Brian Hoffman, Matt Fong. Nays: None. Abstention: Esch. Absent: None. The motion carried.

(b) Approval of Public Consulting Group (PCG) Emergency Services Agreement with the City of Hastings. Moved by Brian Hoffman seconded by Michael Anderson to approve the agreement between the City of Hastings and Public Consulting Group LLC, to provide data collection, cost reporting, reviews, audits and track payment processes as per agreement terms. Fire Chief Troy Vorderstrasse reported that with State approval of LB380 and approval by Council of this proposed agreement with PCG, PCG would be authorized to gather information needed for the City of Hastings to participate in a program that has the potential to increase revenues associated with Medicaid by drawing down additional federal funding. PCG will do data collection, reporting, reviews, audits, tracking and submittal on our behalf. Their payment will be 10% of any Federal Funds we receive above our current revenues. It is estimated that Hastings Fire & Rescue could access approximately \$170,000 in new annual federal funding yearly with full reimbursement of the local share. Councilmember B. Consbruck asked for an explanation of the current process. Fire Chief, Troy Vorderstrasse explained that the City currently collects \$274 for Medicaid medical transport; with the agreement, the City will also be able to be funded for

calls with a response not resulting in transport. Councilmember Anderson asked if the proposed work by PCG could be completed internally. Fire Chief, Troy Vorderstrasse stated that the program is new to Nebraska, and other communities in the State will be participating. The deadline is quickly approaching to participate; the Department will evaluate going forward and gain familiarity with the program. Roll Call: Ayes: Steve Huntley, Michael Anderson, Brad Consbruck, Larry Consbruck, Maggie Esch, Marc Rowan, Brian Hoffman, Matt Fong. Nays: None. Absent: None. The motion carried.

(c) Approval of the application of Queen City Development to provide Community Development Block Grant Downtown Revitalization forgivable loan funding (CDBG contract 24-DTR-004) in the amount of \$445,000 for a facade renovation project at 714 W. 5th Street. Moved by Brian Hoffman seconded by Matt Fong to approve application of Queen City Development to provide Community Development Block Grant Downtown Revitalization forgivable loan funding (CDBG contract 24-DTR-004) in the amount of \$445,000 for a facade renovation project at 714 W. 5th Street. Randy Chick, Community Redevelopment Authority Director provided a history and process of the facade program. He explained that, historically, the CRA would apply for the facade funding and then market the building following the improvements, but changes at the State no longer allow the CRA to apply for the facade funding. Councilmember Huntley asked about the history of the Downtown Revitalization Committee. Randy Chick, Community Redevelopment Authority Director, stated that in approximately 2015 the board was created to review applications instead of the CRA, CRA Director or Business Improvement District Board; The projects are reviewed and submitted to the City Council for final approval. Councilmember B. Consbruck asked where the funding for the asbestos removal came from. Randy Chick, Community Redevelopment Authority Director provided that the City applied for an EPA cleanup grant; the project has been funded and is currently in the RFP stage. Councilmember Rowan asked about additional steps for the project to proceed. Randy Chick, Community Redevelopment Authority Director provided that Queen City and the CRA applied for Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust funds which was successful. There will be a request for plan modification with the Planning Commission and City Council to allow for the use of Tax Increment Financing, additional Workforce Housing Loan funding through the HEDC. Councilmember Hoffman expressed his appreciation for the work by the CRA and the developer in getting the project going; it is sorely needed. Mayor Beckby asked if the Downtown Revitalization Committee had denied any projects in the past. Randy Chick, Community Redevelopment Authority Director provided that there had not been any denials, and he prides himself on trying to bring forward incredible projects. Mayor Beckby asked who citizens and developers should contact if they are interested in facade funding. Randy Chick, Community Redevelopment Authority Director, stated that those who are interested should contact him directly, to complete an application. The current project under consideration began in January 2025. Property owners downtown at the behest of the Department of Economic Development received a letter to inform them about the program, and additionally, a news article resulted in three or four inquiries about the program. Councilmember Rowan confirmed with Randy Chick, Community Redevelopment Authority Director, that there is \$80,000 in funding which has been successfully extended in the past and provided the PACA Soap project as an example.

Councilmember Anderson inquired about the guidelines for the program, and Randy Chick, Community Redevelopment Authority Director provided a rundown of the guidelines originating from the Department of Economic Development, State Historic Preservation and local program guidelines. Roll Call: Ayes: Steve Huntley, Brad Consbruck, Larry Consbruck, Maggie Esch, Marc Rowan, Brian Hoffman, Matt Fong. Nays: Michael Anderson. Absent: None. The motion carried.

(d) Approval of First Amendment and Ratification of Agreement with Heartland Pet Connection. Moved by Michael Anderson seconded by Matt Fong to approve the first amendment and ratify the agreement between City of Hastings and Heartland Pet Connection. City Administrator Mark Funkey reported that the City was approached by Heartland Pet Connection regarding financial issues and subsequently met with the executive board on November 4, 2025; issues and a process forward were discussed. It has been proposed to add a City representative to their board and provide financial and animal reports. The board subsequently met on November 11, 2025, and the City received a formal request of \$80,000. Jake Klabenes, of the Heartland Pet Connection Board reported that Heartland Pet Connection will have trouble making payroll, costs are increasing, animal numbers are increasing, minimum wage is increasing which is impacting the budget approximately \$8,000. The board is working with lams to get the food costs down to close to zero and looking for grant funding. Mayor Beckby stated that his recollection from the November 4, 2025, meeting was that there was \$20,000 needed for the remainder of the fiscal year. Jake Klabenes confirmed but there are no capital funds to replace items, such as a washing machine that is needed, and the October financials show a \$12,000 loss. Mayor Beckby asked for information on the number of animals taken in. Jake Klabenes reported that in 2024-25 there were 765 animals received; of those numbers, 688 were from the jurisdiction of the City of Hastings; 2023-2024 was 602 and 2022-23 was 499. Councilmember L. Consbruck asked if fiscal accountability is being investigated. Jake Klabenes stated that as a CPA, he reviewed the transactions and invoices for the last two years and six years prior; funds are being spent on necessities. He reconciled vet expenses; there are just a lot of animals that go through the building; fees have not kept up with the rising costs. At the Request of Councilmember Fong, Jake Klabenes provided that the annual operating expenses for 2024-25 are \$228,000, 2023-24 were \$199,000; Councilmember Fong followed up to ask what the board's plan is to become solvent in the future. Jake Klabenes stated that fundraising will be important, the Christmas appeal letter, advertising, Give Hastings. Councilmember B. Consbruck asked about potential management changes; Jake Klabenes provided that there is friction in most organizations, and the board will be working with management to receive management training, conflict resolution, and review of animal welfare procedures with Companions Choice and the Animal Clinic. Councilmember L. Consbruck asked about the differences between Heartland Pet Connection and Start Over Rover. Jake Klabenes stated that he does not have insight into Start Over Rover finances but knows that they do receive a lot of small donations and an active volunteer base. Councilmember Rowan asked why the Council was being approached at this time instead of months ago and asked about operational differences between Heartland Pet Connection and Start Over Rover. Jake Klabenes stated that since Start Over Rover is not contracted with the City, they are not

required to take any and all animals. Heartland Pet Connection also takes birds, rabbits, Guinea Pigs, fish and a horse once in 2015; the current contract provides that chickens and large livestock are not to be left with Heartland Pet Connection. Councilmember Anderson provided that one could surmise that Heartland Pet Connection receives animals that are more distressed since they come from the Police Department; he sees two issues, with one being funding and the other management. Mayor Beckby discussed with Jake Klabenes the roles of Penny and Jenny in the operation of the facility and asked if they would like to speak. Councilmember Hoffman expressed his concerns about the timing and the difficult decisions that the City had to make on positions in the recent budget process.

Councilmember B. Consbruck asked City Administrator Funkey what the City would do if Heartland Pet Connection was not able to meet its contract obligations. City Administrator Funkey provided that the City is statutorily required to address dangerous or injured animals, and the City would need to take on the service, which could cost \$400,000 to \$500,000 to do. Councilmember Huntley asked if Grand Island contracts for the service, and Jake Klabenes confirmed that they do; it is a common practice. Councilmember B. Consbruck provided a recap of the discussion and asked whether tabling the item to get further answers and consider alternatives, and Councilmember Fong agreed that further discussion is needed for any Plan B. Councilmember B. Consbruck asked where the additional funding could come from within the City. City Administrator Funkey stated that contingency funds or Keno funds could be used; Councilmember Consbruck stated that he could see \$20,000, but beyond that, there would need to be changes. Councilmember Huntley also suggested tabling the item to the next meeting, and Councilmembers Anderson and Hoffman discussed the need for temporary funding to cover payroll until the next Council Meeting. City Administrator Funkey stated that part of the proposed course of action is to add the City Administrator or designee to the board. Councilmember Huntley inquired whether requests had been made to other entities. Jake Klabenes provided that Adams County provided \$20,000 in March, and their annual contract is \$7,000.

Councilmember Hoffman asked if structural changes to the contract to account for the increased number of animals could be possible. City Administrator Mark Funkey stated that the proposed change might necessitate going back out to bid on the contract; it can be done, but it is not a quick fix, potentially a couple of months. Councilmember Esch confirmed with City Administrator Funkey that there are only two shelters in the community, and City Administrator Funkey confirmed with Jake Klabenes interjecting that Start Over Rover is classified as a rescue. Mayor Beckby asked about the type of organization Heartland Pet Connection is and whether they own the property and building. Jake Klabenes responded that they are a 501c3 and confirmed ownership of the property and building. Councilmember Esch suggested that the board come back to the City with a revised number and contract for the next two or three months while discussion continues. Councilmember Huntley moved to postpone with stipulations to amend the contract after Heartland Pet Connection and City staff get together to work out a real number, also a plan for Heartland Pet Connection on how they are going to continue forward to make up their shortfalls and marketing in writing, and the possibility of another organization such as Start Over Rover merging with Heartland Pet Connection, taking over the contract or something of that nature. Councilmember Anderson asked Jake Klabenes if Heartland Pet Connection could make payroll until the next meeting, and Jake Klabenes provided that they probably

could. Councilmember Rowan asked how long the \$80,000 would allow the organization to operate, and Jake Klabenes responded for the remainder of the contract until 2028. Jake Klabenes provided loss numbers, and the last revenue positive year was 2020. The motion to postpone with stipulations was repeated by Councilmember Huntley and seconded by Councilmember Anderson. Roll Call: Ayes: Steve Huntley, Michael Anderson, Brad Consbruck, Larry Consbruck, Maggie Esch, Brian Hoffman, Matt Fong. Nays: Marc Rowan. Absent: None. The motion carried.

(e) Approval of change to calculation methodology for payment in-lieu of tax to continue monthly payments based on current month revenue and remove accruals from financial statements calculated on prior year revenue. Moved by Maggie Esch seconded by Matt Fong to approve change to calculation methodology for payment in-lieu of tax to continue monthly payments based on current month revenue and remove accruals from financial statements calculated on prior year revenue. Roger Nash, Director of Finance reported on how the dividend fee will be shown on the financial statements and how it will be different from how the payment in-lieu of tax was shown. This item will allow for restating prior year financial reporting, to adjust for this change. This is a clean-up item to finalize the change from PILOT to a Dividend. Roll Call: Ayes: Steve Huntley, Michael Anderson, Brad Consbruck, Larry Consbruck, Maggie Esch, Marc Rowan, Brian Hoffman, Matt Fong. Nays: None. Absent: None. The motion carried.

5. Ordinances and Resolutions.

(a) Resolution No. 2025-44 adopting and approving the execution of an agency agreement with the Nebraska Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics for Project No. 3-31- 0040-025-2026 to be submitted by the Department to the Federal Aviation Administration to obtain federal assistance for the development of the airport. Moved by Brad Consbruck seconded by Larry Consbruck to approve Resolution No. 2025-44 adopting and approving the execution of an agency agreement with the Nebraska Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics for Project No. 3-31- 0040-025-2026 to be submitted by the Department to the Federal Aviation Administration to obtain federal assistance for the development of the airport. Matt Kuhr, Airport Manager reported that this is another grant for the airport apron project. Roll Call: Ayes: Steve Huntley, Michael Anderson, Brad Consbruck, Larry Consbruck, Maggie Esch, Marc Rowan, Brian Hoffman, Matt Fong. Nays: None. Absent: None. The motion carried.

6. Final Passage of Ordinances.

None.

7. Appointments.

None.

8. Miscellaneous and Other Business.

None.

9. Possible Closed Session (if necessary or requested).
None.

There being no further business before the Council, Mayor Beckby adjourned the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

APPROVED:

George J.J. Beckby, Mayor

ATTEST:

Tyler Ficken, City Clerk

(SEAL)