

**ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
October 16, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Ashland City Council was held at the Ashland City Hall Council Chambers on the 16th day of October, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor James Anderson
City Council Member Jerry Lofberg
City Council Member Jim Pinkman
City Clerk Kristina Stoki
City Attorney Mark Fahleson

Absent: City Council Member Michelle Libal
City Council President Chuck Niemeyer
City Administrator Jessica Quady

Others: Ron Pletcher, Deb Pletcher, Carol Clough, Dan Linke, Susan Cerny, Scott Howard, Julie Ogden, Caleb Fjone, and Bill Krejci

Notice of the meeting was posted in City Hall, the Ashland Post Office, and i3 Bank on October 10th, 2025. The Mayor and all Council Members received advance notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda as shown by the Acknowledgment of Receipt of Notice. All proceedings shown hereafter were taken while the convened meeting was open to the public.

Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:59 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll Call was taken, and a quorum was declared. Anderson noted the Open Meetings Act located on the south wall of the room.

Motion by Lofberg, second by Pinkman to adopt the regular agenda.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Public comment opportunity given. Susan Cerny spoke and stated the area of 8th & Dale Streets is a disaster and is hoping it can be fixed soon, stating it is nearly impassable for vehicles.

Mayor Anderson opened the public hearing on Conditional Use Permit #25-045 for Painted Mural north side of building at 6:02 p.m. The property is located at 133 N 14th Street, Ashland NE. Carol Clough of 325 N. 30th Street Ashland, NE stated she is hoping the Council will vote to approve this item. Clough stated she has spoken with the artist and building owner and stated the wall is primed and ready to go. Clough stated the artist is ready to start on November 2nd and plans to

finish on November 8th. Clough stated the mural will be a wonderful welcome to people coming in from the North. Zoning Administrator Bill Krejci stated the mural meets the City's size requirement codes and standards for a mural. Clough stated the mural has been approved by the Historical Preservation Committee and the Planning Commission. Clough clarified there will be lights above the mural. Caleb Fjone stated the funds will come out of the third Creative District grant. With no further comment, Mayor Anderson closed the public hearing at 6:04 p.m.

Mayor Anderson opened the public hearing on Ordinance 1251 for changing the way pools are counted with regards to the accessory uses at 6:04 p.m. Krejci stated the way pools and accessory structures are counted has been debated for quite some time. Krejci summarized the scenario which caused this ordinance change to come about. Krejci stated that after discussion, the Planning Commission felt an ordinance change was appropriate. Krejci stated the Planning Commission has looked at other communities and each community handles this a little differently. Krejci stated Planning Commission wants to take the square footage of pools out of the accessory square footage calculation and make pools a standalone item. Krejci stated for above-ground pools, the deck size is limited to 144 square feet in the ordinance. Council Member Pinkman asked about drains at the bottom of pools. Krejci stated yes drains need to be there and everything goes into the sewer. With no further comment, Mayor Anderson closed the public hearing at 6:08 p.m.

Mayor Anderson opened the public hearing on Ordinance 1254 to amend existing PUD Agreement at 6:08 p.m. The property is located at the Courtyards at Iron Horse. Krejci stated when the PUD was originally set up, the Courtyards were going to have a clubhouse with a pool, and in the approved accessory uses having pools on individual lots was not taken into account. Krejci stated the developer made the application to change the existing PUD agreement as people are wanting in-ground private pools. Krejci stated this does not permit above-ground pools and stated that is in line with Iron Horse overall, which only allows in-ground pools. With no further comment, Mayor Anderson closed the public hearing at 6:10 p.m.

Motion by Lofberg, second by Pinkman to approve the third and final reading of Ordinance 1250 – Change the Dog Kennel License Standards – Section 5 of Ordinance 1250 - Subsection 8.09.01, Section 8.09 Keeping of Animals be amended to read “8.09.01 No more than two dogs in duplex, triplex, quadplex and multi-family buildings. No more that 3 dogs in detached single family dwelling.”

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Lofberg, second by Pinkman to introduce and approve the first reading of Ordinance 1251 - Change the way pools are counted with regards to the accessory uses. City Attorney Fahleson read the title in full.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Pinkman, second by Lofberg to introduce and approve the first reading of Ordinance 1254 - Amend Existing PUD Agreement. The property is located at the Courtyards at Iron Horse.

City Attorney Fahleson read the title in full.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Pinkman, second by Lofberg to approve Conditional Use Permit #25-045 for Painted Mural north side of building. The property is located at 133 N 14th Street, Ashland NE.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Pinkman, second by Lofberg to approve authorizing the Mayor to sign Amendment #2 to Owner-Engineer Agreement with JEO Consulting Group for Birch Street Improvements.

Julie Ogden of JEO Engineers handed out a supplemental diagram. Mayor Anderson stated the location of the cul-de-sac to be on Birch Street in East Ashland. Ogden stated in the current coordination efforts with the Iron Horse Golf Club, an alternate location for the cul-de-sac has been proposed, which moves the location further west, closer to the apartment driveway and closer to Oxbow Crossing. Ogden stated this places the driveway onto the cul-de-sac and a retaining wall will need to be built. Ogden stated they met with Golf Club representatives on-site to make sure this would work. Ogden stated they feel confident this can get graded out but since JEO is done with the original design, there will be additional engineering fees to do the redesign to move the cul-de-sac location. Ogden stated this will make obtaining the right-of-way they need from the Golf Club easier and hopefully avoid condemnation, which would have been required with the original location plan. Ogden stated right-of-way and an easement from a property owner who has a rental house in the site location will be needed. Ogden stated they will reach out to the property owner if the Council wants to move forward with the relocation and redesign. Ogden clarified a small corner of the front yard is needed for a retaining wall to be placed there. Ogden stated the retaining wall currently planned will continue up to the driveway, which services 3-4 properties in the area. Ogden stated the retaining walls will be about four feet high and will have handrails at the top and clarified this does not affect the apartment entrance but the sidewalk access will be up against their driveway return and will tie into the sidewalk at the park. Additional discussion by all was had about additional paving to alleviate some of the existing gravel and a separate project for the paving of Birch Street. Ogden stated they want to get that project bid by the end of this year so it can be under construction early next year after winter.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Pinkman, second by Lofberg to approve authorizing the Mayor to sign Fireworks Stand License Agreement with 1517 Midwest, LLC for lease of property for fireworks stand December 27th, 2025 through January 2nd, 2026.

City Clerk Stoki stated this is a similar agreement to the normal July season agreement they have, which allows them to sell fireworks.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Pinkman, second by Lofberg to approve authorizing the mayor to sign 5-year Access and Lease Agreement with Nextlink for use of water tank for telecommunication services.

City Clerk Stoki stated the agreement is not in exchange for payment but gives the City free internet, and Nextlink uses both water towers for their equipment. Stoki stated this agreement provides internet service for 5 City buildings.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Pinkman, second by Lofberg to approve Ashland Towers of History Cost Summary Estimate in the amount of \$197,961.

Caleb Fjone stated one of the Creative District's strategic plan in 2022 included a capital project to finish up the Towers of History Project, and they have the funds to do this through the second grant they received for capital infrastructure and programming. Fjone stated they are under the \$250,000 grant amount and would like to finish up the project this year. Krejci stated the tower heights have been determined and are 4'6", 5'6", and 6'6". Fjone stated the location of the towers is by the 13th & Silver Street parking lot, and the location will include a retaining wall, bench, and flower garden with the stair-stepping towers. Fjone stated the location of the tower tops are currently at Farmers & Merchants Bank, Willow Point Gallery, the Ashland Public Library, and Kim Cooper Gallery. Fjone stated the tower tops will be relocated when the tower project gets to that phase.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Administrative reports were reviewed as a standard item. Mayor Anderson summarized the Building Permit report, stating 5 permits issued in September with total computed construction costs of \$1.726 million. Anderson stated there were 52 rescue calls in September. Anderson stated the police department made 111 traffic stops with 29 citations and 85 warnings. Anderson stated the citation fees are paid to the Common School Fund, not to the City, and the court costs go to the county. Attorney Fahleson confirmed this statement.

Motion by Lofberg, second by Pinkman to approve Consent Agenda which included approval of the September 25th, 2025 Planning Commission meeting minutes, approval of the October 2nd City Council meeting minutes, and approval of the September 2025 Treasurer's Report.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Motion by Pinkman, second by Lofberg to approve the first half of the October 2025 Claims.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Communications given. City Clerk Stoki provided an update on the new financial system in response to the Council's inquiry. Stoki stated there are some benefits gained and other functionality lost but the new system is a good intermediary step in system changes for now. Stoki stated the transition has gone fairly smooth but some unanticipated manual entry had to be done by her and Utility Billing Clerk Teresa Akeson. Stoki stated there will naturally be less paper and printing and with the way the new system works, this may result in some additional shifts in moving towards electronic document retention.

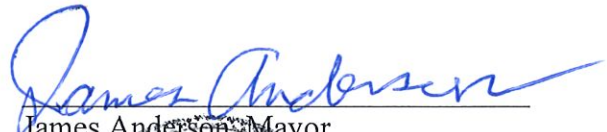
Caleb Fjone of the Ashland Community Development Corporation noted they had a meeting with UNL, which will possibly shift the Community Center project, as UNL has expressed interest in partnering with Ashland in a new aquatics facility as UNL's current facility isn't meeting their needs. Fjone stated this may result in Ashland being the home of the University Systems Aquatic Program, which would turn the Community Center project into a regional and state project because our State lacks the facilities for Big 10 competitions and Olympic trials, which would affect City and State tourism. Fjone stated they will talk with the Legislature about funding help if the project were to go in that direction.

Motion by Lofberg, second by Pinkman to adjourn at 6:39 p.m.


Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried



Kristina Stoki, City Clerk



James Anderson, Mayor


(SEAL)

I, the above signed City Clerk of Ashland, Saunders County, Nebraska hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of the proceedings had and done by the Council on October 16th, 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 subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty four hours prior to said meeting; that said minutes from which the foregoing proceedings have been extracted were in written form and available for public inspection within ten business days or prior to the next convened meeting of said body.