Kimball City Council
Regular Meeting
March 3rd, 2026

A City Council meeting was convened in open and public session at 5:00 p.m. March 3rd, 2026, held at the City Council Chambers, 223 S. Chestnut St. Council members present were, Jamie Murdoch, Austin Garner, James Shields, and Greg Robinson. Also, present was Mayor John Morrison, City Administrator Annette Brower, City Treasurer Jean Klassen, and City Clerk Paula Tarango. The public was represented at the meeting.

Notice of the meeting was given in advance by publication in the Western Nebraska Observer. Notice of the meeting was given to the members and a copy of their acknowledgement of receipt of notice and the agenda is on record at the office of the City Clerk. Availability of the agenda was communicated in advance notice and in the notice to the members. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public except as otherwise indicated.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Garner, seconded by Murdoch to excuse the absence of board member Greg Robinson due to prior commitments. The following votes were recorded: Aye: Murdoch, Garner, and Shields. Nay: None. Absent: Robinson. Motion carried.

Morrison opened a Public Hearing at **5:03** pm to receive public comment regarding an application for a Conditional Use Permit for the property legally described as follows:

> .58 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, IN BLK 1 AND BLK 2 H.M. VOWERS, INC. ADD Parcel ID #5300057123; 1105 EAST 3RD ST, Kimball, NE 69145

Amy Rutledge – Kimball Citizen - Added a comment to this topic.

Mary Sue Gates – Kimball Citizen - Added a comment to this topic.

John Freed – Kimball Citizen – Added a comment to this topic.

There will be further discussions regarding the storage container being on this property short or long term.

Morrison closed the Public Hearing at **5:04pm.**

Morrison opened a Public Hearing at **5:04pm.** to receive public comment on an application for a Conditional Use Permit for the property legally described as follows:

Original Kimball Add Block 7 Lots 4, 5, & 6
Parcel ID #530044765; 109 W 2nd St, Kimball, NE 69145

No public comment.

Motion by Murdoch seconded by Shields to approve the recommendation from the Planning Commission Board to approve the application and request for a Conditional Use Permit for the property legally described as follows: .58 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, IN BLK 1 AND BLK 2 H.M. VOWERS, INC. ADD Parcel ID #5300057123; 1105 EAST 3RD ST, Kimball, NE 69145. The following votes were recorded: Aye: Garner, Murdoch, and Shields. Nay: None. Absent: Robinson. Motion carried.

Motion by Shields, seconded by Garner to approve the recommendation from the Planning Commission Board to approve the application and request for a Conditional Use Permit for the property legally described as follows: **Original Kimball Add Block 7 Lots 4, 5, & 6 Parcel ID #530044765; 109 W 2nd St, Kimball, NE 69145.** The following votes were recorded: Aye: Garner, Shields, and Murdoch. Nay: None. Absent: Robinson. Motion carried.

Morrison tabled the discussion on accepting the resignation from Sergeant Barboza due to him being absent.

Snow Plan – Streets Department Supervisor - James Shoup:
Mr. Shoup explained that the main objective of the snow plan is to provide for the orderly movement of emergency equipment, trucks, and general traffic throughout the city. Snow removal priorities are divided into four categories. The priority is clearing the main arteries coming into town, including Highways 30 and 71. The second priority includes the downtown business district, schools, hospitals, and major routes such as 6th Street. The third priority focuses on alternate truck routes out of town. Residential areas are addressed afterward to allow residents time to remove the snow from their residence.

Mr. Shoup noted that every storm is different, so crews may spend more time on certain priority areas depending on conditions. A copy of the snow plan is available at the Clerk's office for anyone who would like to review it. Snow removal operations typically begin once approximately four inches of snow has accumulated. Crews usually begin around 4:00 a.m. and continue until priority areas are cleared and operations are complete.

Board member Garner noted that there were some complaints last year and thanked the snow removal crews for their service. He also mentioned concerns from the public regarding snow management near the hospital, including instances where roads were temporarily blocked during snow removal. Mr. Shoup indicated that last year was the first-year coordinating snow removal around the hospital area, and the crews learned from the experience.

Mr. Garner also raised safety concerns regarding snow placement near the elementary school, noting that keeping snow piles further from the school would help improve visibility and safety for children who may run into the street from behind snowbanks.

1–6 Year Plan – James Shoup:
Mr. Shoup explained that the forms being presented are provided by the Nebraska Department of Transportation. Form 11 outlines the projects completed in 2025, which included replacing 1,125 feet of gutter and 200 feet of street. Some planned crack repairs were delayed and carried over into 2026.

For 2026, planned projects include applying approximately 5,585 square feet of armor coat. The intent is to complete as many streets in the Sunnyview area as possible; however, rising costs may limit how many streets can be completed Mr. Shoup explained that Form 9 serves as a planning tool for the state to ensure that road funds are being used in an organized manner. The listed projects are completed as funding and progress allow. The final three entries on the form specify the locations of each project.

Board member Murdoch stated that after frequently driving into Fort Morgan over the past several months, Murdoch has gained a new appreciation for the condition of Kimball's streets and commented that it is refreshing to return to the street conditions in Kimball. Mr. Shoup added that street conditions are constantly changing and require ongoing maintenance.

Scott Keene – Piper Sandler –
Last week the BPW met and discussed the possibility of refinancing the Series 2018 landfill bonds. The purpose would not necessarily be to achieve interest rate savings, but rather to restructure the bond payments so they better align with landfill operations and the revenues generated by the system. When the bonds were issued in 2018, they were structured to fill payment gaps within the City's outstanding combined utility bonds, which resulted in an unusual debt service schedule. Over the past five years, the pay has been approximately $40,000 annually but beginning this year they will increase to around $100,000 and are projected to rise to approximately $150,000 within the next few years. This structure was originally designed to take advantage of older combined utility bonds that were scheduled to roll off, creating capacity for higher payments later. While the structure made sense at the time, it has proven to be less practical for the ongoing operations of an enterprise fund such as the landfill system. The discussion focused on the possibility of refinancing the debt to level out the payments and extend them over a longer period.

Motion by Murdoch, seconded by Garner to approve the recommendation from the Board of Public Works Board to approve the refunding of the Landfill 2018 Series bond. The following votes were recorded: Aye: Garner, Murdoch, and Shields. Nay: None. Absent: Robinson. Motion carried

Amber Sweetland – Kimball Library Director – Annual Report – Sweetland presented the library's annual report. She reported that average monthly patronage is 903, with approximately 39 patrons per day, a slight increase from last year. While many usage numbers are like the previous year, the maker space has seen significant growth, increasing from 77 visits last year to 173 this year. Monthly maker space training courses are now being hosted, with about five participants attending each session. Reference questions also increased, indicating that patrons are engaging more with library services. The summer reading program was successful, and in partnership with the Mary Lynch Elite program, the library provided programming for 109 of Kimball's youth. State funding and WNCC contributions totaled $27,086. Additionally, the library received roughly $3,000 worth of biodiversity-related books and games from a UNL grant, which were mostly geared toward children. The Deputy Clerk of the District Court also wrote a letter to the library highlighting the impact of library services and staff, noting how they have assisted individuals needing court documents and other resources. Amber also introduced the library's newest team members, Nuray Moreno and Tracy Haden, who are joining as Youth Services and Library Page, respectively. Additional updates given, a copy of the 2026 annual report is available at the Clerk's office.

Chrisly Land and Kaden Vowers with the Nebraska Forest Service joined the meeting to discuss the Urban & Community Forestry Federal Grant opportunity. Land discussed grant funding by the US Forest Service and that Kimball is eligible to apply based on need. Land explained that it is funded 100%, no need for a match. The city would pay for the work up front and be reimbursed. Maximum request is $300,000 and can be used to prune or remove trees on public and private property. Any tree removed would need to have another one planted on the same property in its place. Lands discussed other aspects of the grant, what it could be used for. If Kimball applies the projects would not be restricted to city limits only as the entire County has been selected. City would control the grant, what trees or areas were improved. Board would like to proceed to next step and due to short timeline of grant needing to be submitted by March 31, 2026.

Motion by Garner, seconded by Murdoch to approve the recommendation from the Kimball Tree Board on moving forward with the application process for the Urban and Community Federal Grant. The following votes were recorded: Aye: Garner, Shields, and Murdoch. Nay: None. Absent: Robinson. Motion carried.

Motion by Garner, seconded by Murdoch, to appoint Sarah Flores to the Landbank Board as the representative for Gering, replacing former board member Kelsey Molina. The following votes were recorded: Aye: Garner, Murdoch, Shields; Nay: none; Absent: Robinson. Motion carried.

Motion by Murdoch, seconded by Garner to approve the mayor's appointment of Brad Gutknecht to the Kimball Tree Board effective immediately. The following votes were recorded: Aye: Garner, Murdoch, and Shields. Nay: None. Absent: Robinson. Motion carried.

Reports –

John Morrison, Mayor – Spent two days in Lincoln last week attending the League of Nebraska Municipal Mid-Winter Conference. Most of the sessions focused on grants and legislative updates. It was also a great opportunity to visit with other mayors and administrators from across the state. I would like to thank everyone who is currently serving on our boards. Your time and commitment to the community are greatly appreciated. I know there are often discussions and concerns shared on Facebook and other social media, and while it's good to see people engaged and caring about the community, I would encourage anyone with concerns to also take the time to learn more about how the city operates and consider getting involved.
We currently have five open positions on various boards and commissions, and we would welcome anyone who is interested in serving. If you have questions, concerns, or ideas, please feel free to reach out to me or contact the city. We are always open to hearing from the public and working together to find solutions.
Kimball is a great community, and everyone involved with the city is doing their best to serve and move the community forward.

Annette Brower – City Administrator – Our thanks to the Utility Department. The City's power plant has successfully passed the air permit testing with the State of Nebraska, and that project is now being wrapped up. Work on the underground tank will continue through the month of March, with site grading and fencing scheduled for April. The project completion date is currently targeted for May.

The kickoff meeting for the Wastewater Treatment Plant spring startup was held today with contractors, Jim Cederburg, and me. Crews are scheduled to return onsite on March 16, with an approximate completion date of July 2026. Water and sewer projects at the Lighthouse Subdivision are continuing. The Streets Department is taking advantage of the favorable weather conditions to fill potholes throughout the city. Upgrades at City Park are currently underway. Dam inspectors were onsite on March 5, with a follow-up all-day meeting scheduled for March 10. A Sentinel Town Hall Meeting will be held at Sagebrush on Monday, March 23. The U.S. Air Force is expected to provide major updates.

Public Comment –

Gabriel Miller – Kimball Citizen – Added a comment to this topic.

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 17 2026, at 5:00pm. There being no further business, motion by Murdoch, seconded by Garner, to adjourn the meeting at 6:22p.m. The following votes were recorded: Aye: Shields, Garner, and Murdoch. Nay: None. Absent: Robinson. Motion carried.

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John Morrison, Mayor City Clerk