Kimball City Council
Regular Meeting
August 4, 2026

A City Council meeting was convened in open and public session at 5:00 p.m. on August 4, 2026, 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 Deputy City Clerk Rosa-Ellen Williams. 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.

Randy Bohac led the room was in prayer.

Morrison called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. On roll call the following votes were recorded: Aye: Robinson, Garner, Shields, Murdoch, and Morrison.

Morrison acknowledge the Open Meetings Act.

No items listed under Consent Agenda Items, no action was taken.

Morrison stated that there needed to be an amendment to the Interlocal Agreement Establishing the Western Nebraska Regional Land Bank. This amendment is to change the name to the Western Panhandle Regional Land Bank. The need to change the name was a result of the original name being too close to other similarly named groups in the area. Motion by Murdoch, seconded by Garner to amend the Interlocal Agreement Establishing the Western Nebraska Regional Land Bank, changing the name to the

Western Panhandle Regional Land Bank. The following votes were recorded: Aye: Robinson, Garner, Shields, and Murdoch. Nay: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Garner, seconded by Murdoch to approve the mayor's appointment of Jolie Dorrell to the Community Redevelopment Authority Board effective immediately. The following votes were recorded: Aye: Robinson, Garner, Shields, and Murdoch. Nay: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

Brower provided some history on when the landbank was originally organized about five years ago, the city had discussed helping to fund this. At that time $100,000.00 had been considered, though the landbank did not fully materialize at that time no money was provided from the city. Now that it is moving forward the funding amount could be discussed and included in the budget for this coming fiscal year. These funds are matched by private funds as well to help the member communities. No action was taken.

Kimball Police Chief, James Lucero, was present to discuss the sale of the 2017 Dodge Charger K-9 Unit. Lucero indicated that at this time he does not plan on having a K-9 in the police department, making the vehicle unnecessary and surplus. Estimated value is around $10,000.00, though with the equipment could be higher. Lucero answered that if the vehicle is sold to a private citizen, then all police items would be removed. Brower stated that the police dept. still owns K-9 Lucy, who is being housed at Ragner where she continues in her training. The Pine Bluffs, WY police dept has shown interest in her, but thus far has not come together. Motion by Shields, seconded by Garner to list the 2017 Dodge Charger K-9 Unit for auction with a $10,000.00 reserve. The following votes were recorded: Aye: Robinson, Garner, Shields, and Murdoch. Nay: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

Morrison turned the review and discussion of the draft 26/27 FY General Fund Budgets over to Brower.

- Library – Amber Sweetland, Librarian, was present to discuss her budget with the Council. Sweetland stated that with the sales tax cut this year, her budget has taken a big hit. There are some noticeable differences in this proposed budget. The phone is lower as there is a company that has reduced the hot spot cost, salaries are lower do to having new employees as others have moved on. Sweetland stated that one of her employees volunteered to cut their hours to

help, and others have been scaled back to provide for the minimum coverage. Council asked if Sweetland was required by the library commission to purchase a percentage of books per year. Sweetland stated that she is required to weed out 3% of collection per year, but there is not a purchase requirement. Library Board will meet next Monday, August 10th, to review and approve the budget.

- Economic Development – Brower stated that she kept this low until we see what happens in November when we see the results of the two ballot initiatives. Brower stated that our LB840 fund is down to $26,000.00. Brower stated that some of the funds go towards billboards outside of town, and support for the Kimball Visitors Center. We currently pay $1,500.00 per month, $18,000.00 per year, even though there isn't an established visitors center. The money goes to the committee and I'm not sure what happens from there. Currently sales tax is down from last quarter, and we will lose our sales tax January – March of 2027. With all of this, we must account for that loss in our general budget.

- Parks – We have expenses for the Tree City program, which could be lowered. The city has a tree grant program that has $5,000 per year to help homeowners remove dead trees, city will pay up to $500.00. Council could look at suspending the program for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. This is a city operated grant and is not related to the Forestry Grant that was recently awarded to the city.

- Streets – Budget is looking good as there is no chip seal project planned at this time, though it is up for discussion. We could look at doing our project in conjunction with another community in the area. This could help spread the cost of having the company come to the panhandle. With the retirement of Jim Shoup, we are looking at hiring another person. Council asked if hiring high school students for seasonal help would be beneficial. Brower stated that it is difficult to get students to apply. Council suggested this could be a stopgap instead of hiring full-time.

- Pool – Currently in the process of gathering quotes for getting new doors and painting the building. The pool house could use a complete makeover, but these are the most pressing things. Discussion arose about the last time pool fees were adjusted, Brower thought about seven years ago. Council asked that this be brought up at the next meeting.

- Fire Maintenance & Fire Equipment – Brower stated that she has not met with Chief Andrew Bohac on this draft budget, so just carried over the numbers from the previous year. Brower will see if they need any equipment when they meet. The current year to date is difficult to pin down as they tend to wait until the last minute to turn receipts in.

- KENO – Only have one establishment running KENO, so there is a cut in those funds. KENO currently has a balance of $88,970.00. We normally give to Kimball prom, Potter prom, and the feral cat program. KENO funds are currently split by 75% going towards the pool and park and 25% for grants. Council asked if the funds might be used for the library as well.

- Police – This budget is funded from the property tax collected at the county level. These figures will be available once the County Assessor finalizes them on 8/20/2026. This draft is based on last year's numbers. Council asked various questions to Chief Lucero such as the cost per citizen, 24/7 coverage vs looking at the calls to see what the times are for most calls, contacting other agencies in the area regarding assistance for coverage until new officers are hired. It was stated that the salary reflected in the budget is not for 24/7 coverage.

Brower stated that the BPW will meet next week to continue budget discussions. At the next meeting, a more complete budget with firmer numbers will be presented.

The funds from the property tax were discussed. Brower stated that historically it has gone to the Fire and Police departments. It could be changed and go to other departments as well but again historically reserved for just the Fire and Police.

Morrison asked the Council if they wanted to have a joint meeting with the BPW board as we have done in the past few years. Brower stated that unlike the past few years with the new power plant, and wastewater treatment plant, there are no big projects planned. Council was fine with not needing to meet.

Reports –

Mayor Morrison – Attended two Air Force functions and met with Northrop Grumman. The Sentinel project is progressing, we might not be seeing it much in

Kimball, but they are working on it. The Sentinel Rockets have passed all the testing and will have a test launch by end of 2030.

Chief Lucero – This is my fourth full week and have still been learning the procedures. First thing is both officers are getting burned out from forced overtime, forced on call etc. Looking at getting two more officers hired to help with that load. Department responded to 200 calls in the month of July, which is down from 2025, and not entirely sure why. Held the first town hall meeting with the community and felt that he received some good feedback.

Board member Robinson – Attended the Commissioner's meeting and they are deep into budget as well meeting again this afternoon and on Thursday if needed.

Board member Shields – Nothing to report.

Board Member Garner – Tree Board meets tomorrow; they have identified the first set of trees for removal.

Board Member Murdoch – Nothing to report.

City Administrator Brower – Lots of budget work going on. There is a company that will be doing a boring contract and taking the dirt out to the landfill which will be useful there. This is part of the Air Force project.

We found out today that Scottsbluff and Gering have formally dissolved their landfill agreement. This opens discussion with Gering and Kimball for the use of Kimball's landfill once their cell is closed. Anticipating meetings to start quickly and discussions such as who pays or contributes to closing our cell and the opening of a new one.

Public Comment –

Gabriel Miller – Kimball resident – added discussion on these topics.
Julia Gehrig - Kimball resident – added discussion on these topics.

There is a Park & Rec Executive Board meeting for August 18, 2026, at 4:00 pm held at the Kimball County Transit Center. Next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday,

August 18, 2026, at 5:00pm. There being no further business, motion by Murdoch, seconded Garner, to adjourn the meeting at 6:04 pm. The following votes were recorded: Aye: Murdoch, Shields, Garner, and Robinson. Nay: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

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John Morrison, Mayor City Clerk