City of Blair Regular Council Meeting
July 14, 2026

The Mayor and City Council met in regular session in the City Council Chambers on July 14, 2026, at 7:00 PM. The following were present: Gary Banner, Kirk Highfill, James Letcher, Kent Long, Kevin Willis, and Frank Wolff. Absent: Brent Clark and Rick Paulsen. Also present were City Administrator Green, Deputy City Administrator Barrow, Deputy City Administrator Heaton, Deputy City Administrator Scott, City Attorney Talbot, Library Director Lukert, Community Development Director Beiermann, and Police Chief Kinsey.

The Mayor publicly stated to all in attendance that a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available for review and indicated the location of such copy posted in the room where the meeting was being held. Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Washington County Enterprise as shown by the affidavit of publication filed in the City Clerk's office. Notice of the meeting was simultaneously given to the Mayor and all members of the City Council, and a copy of their acknowledgement of receipt of notice and the agenda is filed in the City Clerk's office. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice and in the notice to the Mayor and Council of this meeting. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

Agenda Item #1, #2 & #3 – Mayor Rump called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by Roll Call and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Item #4 – Consent Agenda approved the following: 4a) Approval of Minutes of June 30, 2026, Special 5th Tuesday meeting, 4b) Clerk report of Mayoral Action of June 30, 2026, meeting, 4c) City Department reports for June 2026, 4d) Claims as recommended by the Finance Committee and 4e) Consider Resolution 2026-075 approving a Procurement and Asset Management Policy for the City of Blair. Motion by James Letcher, second by Kevin Willis to approve the Consent Agenda. Council members voted as follows: Gary Banner: Yea, Brent Clark: Absent, Kirk Highfill: Yea, James Letcher: Yea, Kent Long: Yea, Rick Paulsen: Absent, Kevin Willis: Yea, Frank Wolff: Yea. All Council members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Mayor Rump declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #5 – Fire Chief Aten presented the resolution to transition Chasity Hahn from the cadet program to a full-fledged member of the Blair Volunteer Fire Department. Chief Aten noted that she and other senior cadets had performed exceptionally well, and that this transition was exactly the intended purpose of the cadet program. Council member Highfill introduced Resolution 2026-076 approving Chasity Hahn as a new member of the Blair Volunteer Fire Department. Motion by Kirk Highfill, second by Gary Banner to adopt Resolution No. 2026-076 as presented. Council members voted as follows: Gary Banner: Yea, Brent Clark: Absent, Kirk Highfill: Yea, James Letcher: Yea, Kent Long: Yea, Rick Paulsen: Absent, Kevin Willis: Yea, Frank Wolff: Yea. All Council members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Mayor Rump declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #6 – Deputy City Administrator Heaton presented Supplemental Agreement No. 3 with JEO Consulting Group for preliminary engineering services for the federal aid River Road Connector Trail project. The city had secured a TAP grant of $1.7 million years prior. Early issues with Union Pacific railroad crossings at River Road and Jackson Street delayed progress, but Union Pacific provided a vote of confidence to proceed. The amendment adds full design services to bring the project from its current stage to ready-to-bid. The amendment total is $200,973.95, bringing the overall agreement to $221,768.15. The grant operates on an 80/20 split, meaning the city's share is only 20%. The process will be lengthy due to federal grant stipulations, including environmental reviews. Construction is anticipated within the next couple of years. The Transportation Committee reviewed and supported the resolution. Council member Wolff introduced Resolution 2026-077 approving Supplemental Agreement #3 with JEO Consulting Group, Inc for preliminary engineering services for the federal-aid project River Road Connector Trail. Motion by Frank Wolff, second by James Letcher to adopt Resolution No. 2026-077 as presented. Council members voted as follows: Gary Banner: Yea, Brent Clark: Absent, Kirk Highfill: Yea, James Letcher: Yea, Kent Long: Yea, Rick Paulsen: Absent, Kevin Willis: Yea, Frank Wolff: Yea. All Council members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Mayor Rump declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #7 – Deputy City Administrator Heaton presented three (3) bids that were received for the 2026 Mill and Overlay project as follows: 1) Midwest Coatings Company, Inc. - $475,055.73, 2) Western Engineering - $517,278.90 and 3) Omni Engineering - $382,961.95. Motion by Kevin Willis, second by Frank Wolff to receive and place on file the bids for the 2026 Mill and Overlay Project. Council members voted as follows: Gary Banner: Yea, Brent Clark: Absent, Kirk Highfill: Yea, James Letcher: Yea, Kent Long: Yea, Rick Paulsen: Absent, Kevin Willis: Yea, Frank Wolff: Yea. All Council members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Mayor Rump declared the motion carried. The project was split into an A and B bid package. The recommendation was to award Omni Engineering, which covers all council-approved road maintenance for 2026 within the allocated budget. The Transportation Committee had no questions. No exact start date was confirmed, but work would begin as soon as a contract is executed. Council member Letcher introduced Resolution No. 2026-078 awarding the bid for the 2026 Mill and Overlay Project. Motion by James Letcher, second by Frank Wolff to adopt Resolution No. 2026-078 as presented. Council members voted as follows: Gary Banner: Yea, Brent Clark: Absent, Kirk Highfill: Yea, James Letcher: Yea, Kent Long: Yea, Rick Paulsen: Absent, Kevin Willis: Yea, Frank Wolff: Yea. All Council members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Mayor Rump declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #8 – Deputy City Administrator Heaton presented the final amendment to the HDR Engineering agreement for the Water Treatment Plant Phase 5 Expansion, a multi-year project nearing completion. Final concrete is expected to be poured within the next one to two weeks. The amendment totals $45,729 and covers overruns in several line items, including: redundancy work on the Cargill water main ensuring independent or combined operation of old and new lines, ventilation improvements to the high-service pump room which reached over 140 degrees risking VFD and pump damage, design of a second air compressor for redundancy, and updates to the original chlorine pump room to ensure gas leak safety. Water and Sewer Committee recommended approval. Council member Willis introduced Resolution 2026-079 approving Amendment No. 10 to the agreement for engineering services with HDR Engineering for the Blair Water Treatment Plant Phase V expansion project. Motion by Kevin Willis, second by James Letcher to adopt Resolution No. 2026-079 as presented. Council members voted as follows: Gary Banner: Yea, Brent Clark: Absent, Kirk Highfill: Yea, James Letcher: Yea, Kent Long: Yea, Rick Paulsen: Absent, Kevin Willis: Yea, Frank Wolff: Yea. All Council members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Mayor Rump declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #9 – Deputy City Administrator Heaton presented an on-call agreement with Houston Engineering (formerly FIRA Engineering, original flood map designers for Blair) for FEMA-related flood regulation assistance, stemming from the August 2025 rain event. Two main projects are involved: (1) the Cobble Creek bike trail washout, a standalone project; and (2) approximately three dozen creek damage locations around town involving debris, erosion, and tree accumulation. FEMA treats each location as a separate project, requiring individual floodplain certifications, jurisdiction determinations (FEMA, Corps of

Engineers, city, or private), and eligibility reviews. The agreement is structured as not-to-exceed $150,000 on an as-needed basis, as not all sites may require engineering work. FEMA could cover up to 75% of eligible engineering costs. Staff including Jake, Aaron, and CJ have been actively working with FEMA. Mayor Rump emphasized the importance of maintaining the creek system's functionality. The Water and Sewer Committee recommended approval. Council Member Letcher introduced Resolution 2026-080 approving an On-call Agreement with Houston Engineering for Various Flood Regulations and FEMA Assistance. Motion by James Letcher, second by Kevin Willis to adopt Resolution No. 2026-080 as presented. Council members voted as follows: Gary Banner: Yea, Brent Clark: Absent, Kirk Highfill: Yea, James Letcher: Yea, Kent Long: Yea, Rick Paulsen: Absent, Kevin Willis: Yea, Frank Wolff: Yea. All Council members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Mayor Rump declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #10 – City Administrator Green presented a resolution authorizing the Mayor to sign a Letter of Intent with Lutheran Family Services regarding the replatting of a portion of Lot 81, Transformation Hill Addition, and the dedication of a public alley behind homes on the north side of Krejci Boulevard. The strip is currently owned by Lutheran Family Services, and the city holds only a water main easement for the line running to the elevated tower at Black Elk Night Hart Park. Neighbors have historically treated the strip as an alley, creating maintenance confusion. The city plans to perform grading and ditch work on the north side to address drainage from an adjacent parking lot, directing water toward Hanson Drive and the city stormwater system. The resolution was added to the agenda within 24 hours of the meeting, prompting a public comment from Shawn Cooper, 2300 College Drive requesting postponement for public review time. Council Member Highfill acknowledged the concern but noted the ongoing drainage problem affecting nearby homes and the inevitability of action. Green clarified that state statute allows agenda additions up to 24 hours before a meeting; emergency additions after that cutoff require a formal emergency declaration. The alley, once dedicated, will be given public access. The Judiciary Committee recommended approval. Council member Highfill introduced Resolution 2026-081 a Letter of Intent between the City of Blair and Lutheran Family Services regarding the replatting of a portion of Lot 81, Transformation Hill Addition and the dedication of a public alley. Motion by Kirk Highfill, second by Gary Banner to adopt Resolution No. 2026-081 as presented. Council members voted as follows: Gary Banner: Yea, Brent Clark: Absent, Kirk Highfill: Yea, James Letcher: Yea, Kent Long: Yea, Rick Paulsen: Absent, Kevin Willis: Yea, Frank Wolff: Yea. All Council members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Mayor Rump declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #11 – City Administrator Green noted that staff is finalizing recommended adjustments to the draft budget. Subcommittee meetings will be scheduled with various committees over the next two to three weeks. A detailed budget presentation is planned for either the next July council meeting or the first August meeting. Council was reminded that electronic group communications regarding budget decisions are not permitted under open meetings rules; individual communications are allowed. Green provided a detailed update on FEMA reimbursements from the August 9, 2025, storm. Total city expenditures were approximately $1.6 million. To date, $286,880.93 has already been received. An additional $540,000 is expected shortly, covering extended public works labor hours, tree grinding, contractor hours, and related cleanup. A further $354,000 is still being processed. Total expected FEMA reimbursement is just under $1.2 million, representing 75% of actual costs. All funds will be returned to the Street Fund. The remaining 25% ($400,000) is city responsibility, though the state may contribute, potentially reducing the city's share to 12.5%. Staff members Jake, CJ, David, and Aaron were commended for their diligent FEMA coordination. Police and fire departments were also recognized for their roles during the disaster. Green distributed and discussed a comprehensive sanitary sewer system study, urging council and citizens to review it carefully. A PDF will be posted on the city's website. Key findings include: the wastewater plant capacity is 2 million gallons/day; current average flow is approximately 1.3 million gallons/day (just over half capacity); during the August 9, 2025, storm, peak inflow reached 3.7 million gallons/day - nearly double capacity. The study identified inflow and infiltration as a critical issue, caused by cracked pipes and flooded manholes allowing groundwater entry. Mitigation options include rubber bladders on manholes. The report gives recommendations, split into two categories: (1) existing system needs, including areas already nearing capacity, and (2) reasonable growth planning for subdivisions in development over the next five to seven years. The study confirms that wastewater rates will need to increase to fund necessary infrastructure improvements and accommodate growth. CJ and the Water and Sewer Committee will work on implementation plans. Green then reported on a meeting with the president of the Columbus bank financing Von Lowe's projects. Key updates: (1) Elk Ridge development has been fully removed from Von Lowe's ownership. The city received a bond from the new developer and engineers are authorized to begin design and the project will be brought to council for approval and bid authorization. The two (2) downtown properties located at 1600 Washington and 1626 Washington are being transitioned to new developers. Mike Rooks suggested local developers as potential partners. The bank hopes to finalize developer assignments for both properties within the week. New building permits will be issued after the city inspector completes a review of work done under existing permits, with supplemental engineering inspections required if concerns are found. Green expressed optimism about seeing progress on both downtown properties in the coming weeks.

Agenda Item #13 – Motion by Gary Banner, second by Kent Long to adjourn the meeting 7:40 p.m. Council members voted as follows: Gary Banner: Yea, Brent Clark: Absent, Kirk Highfill: Yea, James Letcher: Yea, Kent Long: Yea, Rick Paulsen: Absent, Kevin Willis: Yea, Frank Wolff: Yea. All Council members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Mayor Rump declared the motion carried.

The following claims were approved: Aaron Barrow, Reimb, $64.53; Abe's Trash Svc Inc, Svc 327.75; Access Technologies Inc, Inv, 4323.79; Acco, Inv, 1899.89; Aflac, Ins, 1540.00; Air Products & Chemicals, Inv, 15201.35; Amazon Sales Inc, Inv, 7683.77; American Underground Supply, Svc, 2620.58; Aqua-Chem Inc, Inv, 2834.75; Arps Red-E-Mix Inc, Svc, 2343.34; Assethr, Pyrl, 300291.41; Bart Moore Subcontracting Inc, Ref, 50.00; Belfor Usa Group Inc, Ref, 500.00; Benjamin Guhl, Reimb, 251.90; Bishop Business, Inv, 4391.00; Blair Ace Hardware, Inv, 1296.79; Blue Cross & Blue Shield Of Ne, Ins, 122063.72; Bobcat Of Omaha, Inv, 70.67; Bound Tree Medical Llc, Inv, 1076.07; Carquest Auto Parts, Inv, 13.42; Cdw Government Inc, Inv, 1183.32; Century Homes Co, Inv, 1070.14; Chad Ferrari, Reimb, 120.00; Charles J Heaton, Reimb, 314.73; Chris Olson, Svc, 500.00; Cintas Corporation, Svc, 6852.19; Concrete Equipment Co, Inv, 400.00; Conner Psychological Services, Svc, 930.00; Country Tire Inc, Svc, 2147.64; Cox, Tristan, Ref, 599.98; Danko Emergency Equipment Co, Inv, 319.39; Datashield, Svc, 245.83; Deborah Wood, Svc, 400.00; Dick's Electric Co, Svc, 8089.63; Eakes Office Plus, Inv, 4893.79; Ecolab, Inv, 77640.83; Electric Pump, Inv, 32555.00; Ems Management & Consulting, Inv, 1229.21; Eriksen Construction Co Inc, Svc, 589276.45; Fairway Oil Co, Inv, 233.23; Fcx Performance, Inc, Inv, 3160.63; Firstnet At&T Mobility, Omv, 229.29; Flynn Bob & Brenda, Ref, 50.00; Fremont Roofing Company, Ref, 500.00; Friends Of The Jeanette Hunt, Svc, 25440.00; Galls Llc, Inv, 1765.69; Gateway Development Corp, Svc, 120000.00; Gerhold Concrete, Svc, 3729.60; Gethmann Construction Co Inc, Svc, 29710.84; Gingerich Structures, Ref, 500.00; Great Plains Communications, Svc, 4730.72; Great Plains Uniforms Llc, Svc, 678.46; Gt Distributors Inc, Inv, 2165.00; Hach Co, Inv, 1801.33; Hackel Construction Inc, Ref, 500.00; Hansen Contracting, Ref, 500.00; Harsin Built Construction, Ref, 50.00; Hawkins Inc, Inv, 14124.00; Hdr Engineering Inc, Svc, 32804.34; Helmandollar, Corban, Ref, 50.00; Henton Trenching Inc, Svc, 5657.71; Henton Worx Llc, Inv, 468.02; Holiday Inn Express, Inv, 321.33; Holly Hafer, Reimb, 243.01; Horizon Rehabilitation Centers, Svc, 1026.00; Houston Engineering Inc, Svc, 14547.95; Howard D Thompson Agency, Inv, 2559.60; Hram, Inv, 150.00; Hrb Enterprises Llc, Inv, 564.40; Hsa Bank, Svc, 82.50; Ingram Industries Inc, Inv, 6309.95; International Code Council, Inv, 405.00; J Nielsen Construction Llc, Ref, 1000.00; Jackson Services, Svc, 927.67; James

Nielsen Dba, Inv, 1365.56; Jdw Midwest Llc, Svc, 3780.00; Jeff Beiermann, Reimb, 64.53; Jeh Specialized Transport, Inv, 4453.60; Jensen Well Company Inc, Svc, 300.00; Jeo Consulting Group Inc, Svc, 5558.01; Jeredith Brands Llc, Svc, 3019.00; Jetter's Plumbing Inc, Svc, 737.41; Kelly Ryan Equipment Co, Inv, 6000.00; Kramer, Marie, Ref, 51.56; Laird, Robert, Ref, 1172.50; League Association Of Risk, Ins, 4642.32; League Of Ne Municipalities, Inv, 1294.41; Little Blossoms Child Care & Pre-School, Ref, 50.00; Logan Contractors Supply, Inv, 942.56; Logix Transportation Inc, Inv, 2750.00; Long's Ok Tire Stores, Svc, 183.00; Lutheran Family Services Of Nebraska Inc, Inv, 153113.84; Macqueen Equipment, Inv, 3428.74; Martinwood Cabinetry, Inv, 483.73; Mccoy Roofing Llc, Ref, 150.00; Mcgargill, Zachary Thomas, Svc, 1680.30; Mcgill, Teri, Ref, 880.00; Memorial Community Hospital, Inv, 227.00; Menards, Inv, 816.90; Metonic Real Estate Solutions, Inv, 39539.86; Midland Scientific Inc, Inv, 1529.71; Midwest Laboratories Inc, Inv, 619.58; Midwest Maritime Services, Inv, 17660.00; Mike Hansen Building Service, Ref, 600.00; Mississippi Lime Co Llc, Inv, 58732.51; Municipal Pipe Services Inc, Svc, 42800.00; National Sign Company Llc, Inv, 2688.54; Nebraska Dwee, Inv, 400.00; Nebraska Public Health, Inv, 594.00; Ne-Ia Industrial Fasteners, Inv, 460.71; Nippon Sanso Matheson Inc, Inv, 874.66; Northeast Document Conservation Center Inc, Inv, 110.00; Odell Service & Repair, Svc, 1134.00; Olsson Associates, Svc, 5294.74; Omni Exteriors, Ref, 100.00; One Call Concepts Inc, Svc, 252.78; One Source, Svc, 277.00; Oppd, Inv, 106712.62; Orchard Valley Inc, Ref, 500.00; O'reilly Automotive Stores Inc, Inv, 50.36; Os Media Group Llc, Inv, 1875.00; Ostronic, Tyler, Inv, 900.00; Pioneer Cleaning Llc, Svc, 600.00; Pitney Bowes Global Financial, Inv, 614.10; Point C, Ins, 651.27; Principal Financial Group, Inv, 42738.03; Red Flint Sand And Gravel Llc, Pen, 60820.90; Red Rhino Roofs & Solar, Inv, 100.00; Relx Inc, Inv, 310.00; S & S Pumping Service Llc, Svc, 28530.00; S.E. Smith & Sons, Inv, 572.26; Sapp Bros Petroleum Inc, Inv, 4018.44; Saville, Jay Keith, Ref, 50.00; Scott, David, Reimb, 329.40; Seh Inc, Svc, 588.34; Sirchie Acquisition Company, Inv, 436.91; Spartan Stores Llc, Inv, 239.40; Stahlnecker Bieker, Kimberly, Svc, 360.00; Stangl, Theresa J, Ref, 100.00; Streakwave Wireless Inc, Inv, 18677.05; Sunset Law Enforcement, Inv, 9494.10; Superior Green Inc, Svc, 30308.96; Swanson, Paul J., Inv, 779.00; Talbot Law Office Pc Llo, Svc, 4315.00; The Association For Rural & Small Libraries, Inv, 100.00; The Garage Company, Ref, 500.00; The Guardian Life Ins Co, Ins, 14456.74; The Sign Depot, Svc, 705.74; Thermal Heating Air & Plumbing, Svc, 923.87; Thibault Suhr & Thibault Inc, Inv, 739.90; Thiele Geotech Inc, Svc, 2000.00; Thomas, Marian, Inv, 87.44; Timothy & Karen Lawson, Ref, 50.00; Titan Exteriors, Ref, 150.00; Trekk Design Group, Inv, 43899.50; Ty's Outdoor Power & Service, Inv, 16542.47; Univar Solutions Usa, Inv, 45263.89; Us Postal Service, Inv, 1889.76; Usabluebook, Inv, 2328.93; Velocity Systems Llc, Inv, 1875.00; Verizon 883740345-00001, Inv, 1507.23; Vessco Inc, Inv, 3347.34; Wakefield Towing And Recovery, Svc, 2600.00; Washington County Enterprise, Inv, 4039.12; Washington County Register, Inv, 196.00; Waste Management Of Ne, Inv, 154.55; Watertight Roofing, Ref, 250.00; Western Oil Ii Llc, Inv, 8391.45; Williamsen, Michael S & Roxanne R, Ref, 50.00; Woodhouse Ford Inc, Inv, 4469.67; Woods & Aitken Llp, Svc, 15458.45; Zoll Medical Corp, Inv, 1564.64.

Melinda K. Rump, Mayor

ATTEST:

Brenda Wheeler, City Clerk

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