

The Hartington City Council met in regular session on September 14, 2026, at City Hall, beginning at 5:00 p.m. Notice of the time and place of the meeting was given in advance by posting.

Present were Mayor Becker; Councilmembers Christensen and Sudbeck; City Clerk-Treasurer Schulte and Legal Counsel Nikki Brandt. Councilman Bartling and Kathol were absent.

Mayor Becker called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Council then considered approval of the minutes of the August 24 meeting. A motion to approve the August 24 minutes was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. Roll call was taken. Christensen – yes, Sudbeck – yes, Becker – yes. Motion Carried.

Zach Wirth and Keith Bird presented information on re-establishing a Cub Scout Pack in Hartington for children in kindergarten through fifth grade. They discussed possible outreach through the local schools, library, and potential charter organizations. Council members expressed support and recommended reaching out to the schools and library to gauge community interest.

A Creative District representatives provided updates on the A.K. Lammers Wall project and a proposed community gathering space. Funding for the wall project is fully secured, materials have been ordered, and work is expected to be completed before winter. The Creative District also proposed developing the adjacent city-owned vacant lot into a community space with picnic tables, lighting, a stage, shade structures, food truck space, and an expanded farmers market area. The project would be pursued through grants and fundraising, with no city funds currently requested. Council discussed site considerations, including existing concrete pads, stored equipment, and neighboring property. The council agreed to place the proposal on the next meeting agenda for formal action on whether to commit the city-owned lot for use as the proposed community gathering space.

The council considered the installation of three new streetlights along South Broadway to provide additional lighting near the recently completed parking lot. NPPD will install the lights at an additional cost to the city of \$24 per month. Councilman Christensen made a motion to approve the installation of three new streetlights, seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. Roll call vote was taken. Christensen – yes; Sudbeck – yes; Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker introduced a building permit application from Darryl Smith for a garage. Councilman Christensen moved to approve the permit, seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. Roll call vote was taken. Christensen – yes; Sudbeck – yes; Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Becker introduced a building permit application from Sheila Becker for a garage. It was noted that construction had already begun. Council discussed concerns regarding the project, including a neighbor's concern about an obstructed view and an existing water issue between neighboring properties. Council requested additional information regarding whether the garage would impact the water issue before taking action. Councilman Christensen made a motion to table the building permit until the next meeting, seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. Roll call vote: Christensen – yes; Sudbeck – yes; Becker – yes. Motion carried.

Department Reports:

Park – Councilman Kathol: Absent

Pool – Councilman Bartling: Absent

Complex/Auditorium – Councilman Sudbeck reported that track surfacing is complete, with painting expected to be finished within three weeks. A pressure tank for the sprinkler/water system was recently replaced. No report was given for the Auditorium.

Fire/Ambulance – Councilman Christensen: Nothing to report.

General – Mayor Becker reported that approximately 22 weddings are booked for next year, with most weekends from April through September filled at the Skylon. November through March remains largely open. Current rates are \$2,000 for a full-week wedding rental, \$1,500 for one day, \$500 for the front area only, and \$1,000 per day for community events. Becker suggested considering a reduced one-day rate during the winter months to encourage additional bookings and increasing the wedding rate for 2028 reservations. Any rate changes would require agreement between the City and operator Corey Kramer, as rental income is split 50/50.

The Council also reviewed the Skylon contract and its insurance allowance. The current approximately 19-month contract allows the operator to retain the first \$4,000 in rental income to help offset required insurance costs. City Attorney Nikki Brandt clarified that the allowance applies once per contract term rather than annually and recommended amending the agreement to better align the allowance with the annual insurance cycle.

Liquor liability coverage was also discussed. While Nebraska law does not require liquor liability insurance, maintaining coverage could help protect the City from litigation and defense costs related to alcohol-serving events. LARM coverage does not include liquor liability. The Council agreed to research the golf course's current coverage, consult with Clint Simmons regarding insurance options, and bring the contract amendment, insurance requirements, and proposed rental rates back for consideration at a future meeting.

Legal Counsel – Nikki Brandt: Nothing to report.

Clerk/Treasurer – Schulte: Nothing to report.

Public Comments: A member of the public addressed the Council regarding lighting at the ballpark and asked how to formally bring the matter forward. She was advised that the topic could not be discussed because it was not included on the agenda and was directed to contact the City Clerk to request placement on a future meeting agenda.

The following bills were presented for payments:

General: CRA Community Redevelopment Authority - \$8,276.62; FP Finance Program - \$115.98; Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC - \$198.23; Hartelco - \$194.27; Kennedy, Pier, Loftus, Reynolds & Brandt - \$500.00; NE Nebraska Economic Dev. District - \$50.00; Northeast Nebraska News Company - \$372.21; SpecSoft - \$61.20; T-Mobile - \$22.10.

Streets: Bank of Hartington - \$266.66; Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska - \$2,822.22; Central Valley Ag - \$295.60; Colonial Life - \$40.83; Farmers Union Coop Gas & Oil - \$1,845.97; Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC - \$798.47; Grossenburg Implement - \$1,865.89; Hartelco - \$105.70; Hartington Auto & Truck Parts, Inc. - \$229.30; NEB Department of Transportation - \$2,273.60; Nebraska Public Power District - \$3,658.38; USABLE LIFE - \$29.00.

Water: Burnell's Foodtown - \$5.65; Cedar-Knox Public Power Dist. - \$2,212.43; Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC - \$727.79; Hartington Ace Hardware - \$25.98; Nebraska Public Power District - \$1,105.60; One Call Concepts, Inc. - \$7.94; Peitz GMC Services - \$29.00.

Sewer: Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC - \$653.42; Hartington Auto & Truck Parts, Inc. - \$163.82; Midwest Laboratories, Inc. - \$403.15; Nebraska Public Power District - \$4,633.66; Olson's Pest Technicians - \$60.00; One Call Concepts, Inc. - \$7.95; Wiechelman's Repair Shop - \$179.70.
Sanitation: Bank of Hartington - \$83.33; Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska - \$1,411.11; Colonial Life - \$194.49; Farmers Union Coop Gas & Oil - \$848.88; Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC - \$417.68; L.P. Gill, Inc. - \$10,320.76; USABLE LIFE - \$14.50.

Fire: Farmers Union Coop Gas & Oil - \$168.18; Hartelco - \$47.26; Nebraska Public Power District - \$191.51.

Police: Cedar County Sheriff - \$14,220.04.

Ambulance: Burnell's Foodtown - \$235.13; Farmers Union Coop Gas & Oil - \$298.87; Hartelco - \$47.25; Hartington Ace Hardware - \$5.99; M Bruning - \$27.69; Nebraska Public Power District - \$154.68; S Atkins - \$53.20; Steffen Drug Store - \$29.61.

Cemetery: Cedar Knox Rural Water - \$59.63; M Heine - \$1,000.00; P Leise - \$1,000.00.

Recreation: Nebraska Public Power District - \$110.52; Northeast Nebraska News Company - \$250.00.

Pool: Art Kathol Appliance, Inc. - \$1,164.40; Hartington Ace Hardware - \$34.98; K Backer - \$35.00; Nebraska Public Power District - \$1,081.05.

Parks: Grossenburg Implement - \$94.95; Hartington Ace Hardware - \$109.09; Jerry's Service - \$522.20; Nebraska Public Power District - \$1,252.79; Zimco Supply Company - \$588.00.

Complex: Carhart Lumber Co. - \$970.45; Hartington Ace Hardware - \$15.00; Nebraska Public Power District - \$915.99; Plumbing & Electric - \$256.50; X-Pert Lawn & Landscaping - \$1,700.00.

Library: Bank of Hartington - \$333.34; Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska - \$5,785.56; Burnell's Foodtown - \$5.65; Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC - \$715.96; Hartelco - \$163.20; Hartington Ace Hardware - \$44.97; Hometown Leasing - \$53.90; Nebraska Public Power District - \$485.81; USABLE LIFE - \$29.00.

City Hall: Colonial Life - \$210.27; Eakes Office Solutions - \$212.97; Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC - \$178.08; Nebraska Public Power District - \$235.73; USABLE LIFE - \$14.50.

Auditorium: Appera - \$79.10; Nebraska Public Power District - \$104.58.

Economic Development: Eakes Office Solutions - \$91.27; Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC - \$395.02; Hartelco - \$53.12; USABLE LIFE - \$14.50.

Transfer Station: Cedar-Knox Public Power Dist. - \$206.67; Deere Credit, Inc. - \$755.02; Franklin Templeton Investor Services, LLC - \$95.54; Gill Hauling, Inc. - \$1,592.70; Hartelco - \$47.71; Jerry's Service - \$989.71; NE Dept. of Water, Energy, and Environment - \$500.00; Olson's Pest Technicians - \$80.00.

Veterans Memorial: Nebraska Public Power District - \$60.34.

Skylon Event Center: Nebraska Public Power District - \$918.55.

Councilman Christense moved to approve payment of the claims, seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. Roll call vote was taken. Christensen – yes; Sudbeck – yes; Becker – yes. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Christensen and seconded by Councilman Sudbeck. Roll call vote was taken. Christensen – yes; Sudbeck – yes; Becker – yes. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m. The next scheduled meeting is September 28, 2026.

Respectfully submitted by, Casey Schulte, City Clerk-Treasurer

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Casey Schulte". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.