



**City of Robins, Iowa
City Council Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2026**

The City Council of the City of Robins, Iowa, met in regular session on Monday, February 2, 2026, at City Hall.

Call to Order

Mayor Chuck Hinz called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Hinz.

Roll Call

Present: Councilors Mike Foley, Cary Smith, Leigh Cook, Bruce Vander Sanden, and Leslie Hoyt.

Also present: Vance McKinnon, Planning & Zoning Administrator; Kelli Scott, City Engineer; Holly Corkery, City Attorney; Keith Feldkamp, Fire Chief; Mike Kortenkamp, Building Official/Superintendent of Public Works; Neal Boeckmann, Fire Code Official/Deputy Superintendent of Public Works; Rhonda Kortenkamp, Deputy City Clerk; and Lisa Goodin, City Clerk/Treasurer.

Approval of the Agenda

Mayor Hinz requested reordering New Business items to 13(a), (c), (b), and (d).

Motion by Councilor Cook, seconded by Councilor Foley, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Mayor's Report

Mayor Hinz reported on conversations with Representative Amy Wichtendahl (Iowa House District 80) regarding property tax reform and noted her willingness to meet with the Council in the near future. Mayor Hinz and City Engineer Kelli Scott will travel to Washington, D.C. with delegates from nearby cities to advocate for the award of BUILD grant funds for the Tower Terrace Road project.

Council Reports

Public Safety: Councilor Foley reported that the Fire Department responded to 13 calls in January, which is below average. The Fire Department approved the purchase of a Chevrolet Tahoe to replace the medical response vehicle, which has since been sold at auction. CPR training was conducted. With the retirement of Police Chief Humphrey, the search for a replacement is underway and the Police Chief job description is pending Council approval. Lettering has been ordered for one police vehicle. Planning for the FY27 budget includes adding a second full-time police officer to improve coverage.

Streets: Councilor Smith reported that the City will partner with the City of Hiawatha on certain street repairs. The Troy Road bridge repair bid came in at \$25,000, and estimates for the Mentzer Road bridge are approximately \$90,000. The West Main Street Rehabilitation Project came in under budget. The City is exploring hiring an employee focused on code enforcement, particularly sidewalk repairs. Salt and sand supplies for snow removal are adequate and may come in under budget. Quotes are being obtained for snow removal on Main Street sidewalks.

Finance: Councilor Cook reported that the FY25 audit will begin this week. The Tyler Technologies upgrade is progressing well, with financials and payroll completed. The employee portal is expected to be live next week, and utility billing is anticipated to be implemented this summer.

Public Works: Councilor Vander Sanden reported that he met with Superintendent Kortenkamp and City Engineer Scott and toured the City to review infrastructure concerns. Several calls related to water and sewer issues were discussed.

Parks: Councilor Hoyt reported meeting with Superintendent Kortenkamp regarding park operations. She stated a goal of developing a list of unmet park maintenance and upgrade needs in order to pursue grant opportunities. She is also working with the Robins Civic Club to prepare for the annual Easter Egg Hunt.

Engineer's Report

City Engineer Scott reported that project updates were included in the Council packet and highlighted the Indian Creek Sewer Project, noting that she is re-evaluating the City's flow capacity requirements. Councilor Foley asked about a setback requirement change in the Developer's Agreement for Robins Landing. Engineer Scott stated the issue will be addressed by the Planning & Zoning Commission this month and explained that current setback requirements have resulted in custom home construction, slowing lot sales.

Planning & Zoning Administrator Report

Administrator McKinnon reported that no new residential home permits were issued in January, though activity continues on commercial construction.

Robins Economic Development Initiative (REDI)

No report.

Citizen Comments – Agenda Items

Richard Starks, 500 Mary Jo Avenue, thanked the Council for considering his request that the City resume clearing snow on Main Street sidewalks and emphasized the hardship placed on residents.

Councilor Foley stated that he personally cleared the sidewalk at Mr. Starks' property and noted that overgrown grass narrows the five-foot sidewalk to approximately four feet. He explained that the City lacks appropriate equipment to clear sidewalks and that complaints about Chapter 71 of the Municipal Code have been limited to a small number of residents. Chase Stinger commented that access to the sidewalk behind Mary Jo Avenue homes is difficult and stated his belief that the sidewalk is considered a trail. He expressed that residents should not bear responsibility for snow removal and stated that he and his wife will not clear the sidewalk.

J.D. Smith, 780 Kervin Court, spoke regarding Resolution No. 0226-1 and suggested that the Superintendent of Public Works salary be increased an additional \$1,000 to align with the City Clerk/Treasurer's salary.

Citizen Comments – Non-Agenda Items

None heard.

Consent Agenda

Motion by Councilor Cook, seconded by Councilor Smith, to approve the minutes of the January 19 and January 26, 2026 meetings and the list of bills submitted.

Roll call vote: Vander Sanden – aye; Smith – aye; Cook – aye; Foley – aye; Hoyt – aye. Motion carried (5–0).

New Business

Discussion – Operation and Maintenance Services for Public Water Utility

Mayor Hinz described efforts to transition the water utility from a retail to a wholesale model as required by the City of Cedar Rapids. City Engineer Scott reviewed options for contracting operation and maintenance services, including a proposal from Ion Environmental Services and a proposal from the City of Hiawatha. She outlined the scope of services offered by each and noted Hiawatha's ability to provide additional services and document costs with the intent of transitioning operations back to City staff in the future. This item was discussion only.

Discussion – Water Rate Pass-Through Surcharge

City Clerk/Treasurer Goodin explained the existing three percent surcharge on water bills that funds water utility upgrades. City Engineer Scott discussed the need to build capital reserves for future infrastructure improvements. Councilor Foley asked about costs associated with starting a City-operated water utility; additional information will be provided at a future meeting. This item was discussion only.

Discussion – Sewer Rate Re-Alignment

City Engineer Scott provided background on sewer rates, noting that rates have remained unchanged since 2019 and reviewed hypothetical revenue scenarios. This item was discussion only.

Resolution No. 0226-1 – Establishing Employee Compensation for Fiscal Year 2027

Motion by Councilor Vander Sanden, seconded by Councilor Hoyt. Roll call vote: Smith – aye; Foley – aye; Cook – aye; Hoyt – aye; Vander Sanden – aye. Motion carried (5–0).

Council discussion followed regarding the implementation of employee performance reviews, merit-based raises, audit considerations, and administrative responsibility. Mayor Hinz proposed placing establishment of a performance review process on the February 16, 2026 agenda.

Old Business

Discussion – Chapter 71: Snow Removal

Council discussed equipment costs, subcontracting estimates, resident polling, ordinance exceptions, liability concerns, and potential committee formation. No formal action was taken. The matter will be placed on the February 16, 2026 agenda pending receipt of additional estimates.

Work Session – Fiscal Year 2027 Budget

City Clerk/Treasurer Goodin presented budget information related to the recently approved IT services contract and anticipated Office 365 licensing costs.

Council Comments

Councilor Smith thanked Mayor Hinz for encouraging open Council discussion. Councilor Cook proposed allowing residents to subscribe to Council agenda notifications through the City newsletter.

Adjournment

Motion by Councilor Vander Sanden, seconded by Councilor Smith, to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Goodin
City Clerk/Treasurer

Attest: Lisa Goodin, City Clerk/Treasurer

Chuck Hinz, Mayor

Lisa Goodin, City Clerk/Treasurer