



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

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

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**Call to Order**

Mayor **Chuck Hinz** called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Hinz

The meeting was recessed at 6:01 p.m. due to interruption from members of the public not listed on the agenda.

Motion by Cook, seconded by Vander Sanden, to return to open session at 6:18 p.m. Motion carried.

**Roll Call**

Present: Councilors Mike Foley, Cary Smith, Leigh Cook, Bruce Vander Sanden, 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, Lisa Goodin, City Clerk/Treasurer

Numerous members of the public were also present.

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**Approval of Agenda**

Motion by Councilor Smith, seconded by Councilor Foley, to approve the agenda. Motion carried. (5-0)

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**Reports**

**Mayor's Report**

Mayor Hinz reported that he and City Engineer Scott traveled to Washington, D.C. with a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) delegation to advocate for federal funding support of the Tower Terrace Road project. Meetings were held with U.S. Department of Transportation representatives and Iowa's federal legislative staff regarding the BUILD Grant application, which included 105 letters of support from regional partners and stakeholders.

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**Council Reports**

**Councilor Cook (Finance):** Reported that the Tyler Technologies software migration continues to progress on schedule, with the employee portal now operational. The FY25 annual audit is underway. Preliminary discussions have begun regarding a FY27 bond issuance.

**Councilor Smith (Streets):** Reported that the BUILD Grant application for Tower Terrace Road has been submitted and that Cedar Rapids is also advancing its portion of the project. She noted Robins' planned partnership with Hiawatha on certain street improvements. Kluesner Construction is expected to resume repairs on North Center Point Road as weather permits.

**Councilor Foley (Public Safety):** Reported that the Fire Department responded to 10 calls last month, which is below the department's monthly average. February training included water rescue exercises at Stonehedge Pond as well as medical/behavioral training scenarios. The new medical response vehicle build has been delayed several weeks. The Police Department continues its recruitment process for a Police Chief. One officer remains on Critical Incident Leave.

**Vander Sanden (Public Works):** Reported ongoing negotiations regarding a revised 28E agreement with Cedar Rapids for water provision. A meeting with legal counsel is scheduled this week. He also noted an upcoming meeting with Hiawatha officials to discuss future operation and maintenance (O&M) arrangements for the Robins water utility system.



**Hoyt (Parks):** Reported that ash trees at South Troy Park are being trimmed. Staff has begun preparation of the ball diamonds for the upcoming baseball and softball seasons. Coordination continues with the Civic Club for the annual Easter Egg Hunt scheduled for April 4 at East Knoll Park.

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#### **New Business**

##### **Resolution No. 0326-01**

##### **Directing Staff to Initiate Contract Negotiations with the City of Hiawatha for the Future Operation and Maintenance of the City of Robins Municipal Water Utility**

City Engineer Scott explained that after evaluating options for long-term operation and maintenance of the municipal water utility, including both private contractors and municipal partnerships, staff recommended pursuing negotiations with the City of Hiawatha.

Motion by Cook, seconded by Vander Sanden.

Roll Call Vote: Hoyt - aye, Cook - aye, Smith - aye, Foley - aye, Vander Sanden - aye. Motion carried (5-0)

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##### **Resolution No. 0326-02**

##### **Increasing the Water Service Surcharge Collected by the City of Cedar Rapids on Behalf of the City of Robins from Three Percent (3%) to Ten Percent (10%)**

Scott explained that the surcharge is collected by Cedar Rapids on behalf of Robins and is applied to customer water bills. The proposed increase from 3% to 10% is intended to provide revenue necessary for water system operation, maintenance and capital improvements. Based on average residential usage, the anticipated impact is approximately \$4.35 per month per household.

Mayor Hinz emphasized that the adjustment reflects the need to keep pace with infrastructure costs and ensure adequate reserves for future improvements.

Motion by Vander Sanden, seconded by Cook.

Roll Call Vote: Cook - aye, Vander Sanden - aye, Smith - aye, Foley - aye, Hoyt - aye. Motion carried (5-0)

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#### **Discussion: Amendment No. 3 to Robins Landing Development Agreement**

##### **Discussion:**

Mayor Hinz explained that although the Council previously approved the Developer's Agreement amendment at the February 16 meeting, he exercised his veto authority in order to allow additional review of the issue and its potential long-term impacts.

City Engineer Scott stated that after the February meeting she consulted with City Attorney Corkery regarding the legality of modifying setbacks through an amendment to the Developer's Agreement. Scott reported that she was advised that using a Developer's Agreement amendment to alter setbacks may not be the proper legal mechanism because it could potentially circumvent zoning ordinances already in place.

City Attorney Corkery explained that there may be lawful ways to address the issue through modification of the zoning ordinance itself rather than through a Developer's Agreement amendment.

Councilor Smith asked what the Mayor's veto means for how the Council should proceed.

Corkery responded that the matter could be placed on a future agenda and addressed through the appropriate legislative process if the Council wishes to continue exploring options.

Cook stated that once the City receives additional legal guidance from special counsel, the Council should schedule the issue for discussion again so the matter does not remain unresolved for an extended period.



Hoyt stated that if the City considers allowing reduced setbacks for the developer, the Council should also consider whether there could be any additional benefit to the City. Hoyt asked whether the developer might be willing to renegotiate elements of the park agreement.

Corkery cautioned that any form of negotiated exchange or “quid pro quo” arrangement with the developer would need to be carefully reviewed for legality.

Vander Sanden stated that if the amendment ultimately does not move forward, the developer could face significant financial challenges related to unsold lots.

Foley stated that Scott had previously been very transparent with Council regarding the difficulty of marketing the lots as currently configured. Foley said the City should consider whether some flexibility may help improve the desirability of the lots.

Hoyt stated that reducing setbacks could represent a significant change in the character of development within Robins. Hoyt noted that the community traditionally has larger lots and greater spacing between homes.

Mayor Hinz stated that special counsel Doug H. has significant expertise in these matters and asked whether he could attend a future meeting to advise Council.

Corkery stated she would contact special counsel to determine availability.

Scott noted that the developer is already contributing significantly to the community through the park project. Scott explained that the park is estimated to cost the developer approximately \$1.9 million, while the City’s portion is approximately \$1.6 million. Scott stated that the City will receive approximately 16 acres of parkland along with grading, parking, and infrastructure improvements, and that the land purchase price reflects the improved value of the property. Scott also expressed concern that if the lots remain unsold, the developer could potentially sell the lots in bulk to lower-quality builders.

Vander Sanden stated that he was not present at the February meeting and would like additional information regarding how the current lot configuration was originally determined.

Scott explained that she was unsure why 80-foot lots were selected in this particular subdivision. Scott noted that builders often construct homes between 61 and 65 feet wide, which makes it difficult to accommodate those homes on 80-foot lots with Robins’ current 10-foot side setbacks.

Hoyt asked whether the developer involved is new to residential development.

Scott replied that the developer is experienced.

Hoyt stated that she finds it surprising that the developer would not have anticipated the limitations created by the setback requirements.

Scott responded that Robins’ 10-foot setback requirement is somewhat unique, noting that many surrounding communities require setbacks of approximately 7 feet.

Foley noted that the difference being discussed amounts to roughly three feet between homes.

Mayor Hinz reiterated that Council would benefit from the legal expertise of special counsel before proceeding further.

The Mayor directed staff to place the matter on a future agenda.

No formal action was taken.

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## **Old Business**

### **Discussion: Fiscal Year 2027 Sewer Rate Re-alignment**

#### **Discussion:**

Scott presented comparative utility rate data compiled by Cedar Rapids’ City Manager reflecting wastewater and water rates across metro-area communities. Robins’ sewer rates remain approximately \$20 lower than Cedar Rapids resident rates, despite Robins conveying wastewater to Cedar Rapids for treatment. Discussion centered on long-term capital planning, including funding mechanisms for ongoing segments of the Indian Creek sewer project. Only 4 of 20 segments are complete, and Robins’ cost obligations will continue over several years. Scott noted that Cedar Rapids likely



incorporates infrastructure financing and revenue bond obligations into its rate structure, whereas Robins has historically relied more heavily on general obligation (GO) bonds. Council discussed the advantages of revenue bonds, which align repayment with utility users rather than property tax obligations. Vander Sanden emphasized the importance of thoughtful, phased rate adjustments and noted that eventual transition to water-usage-based billing is forthcoming but cannot be relied upon to resolve current funding gaps. Scott reported that Speer Financial is preparing a formal sewer rate analysis to project required adjustments and ensure adequate debt coverage and capital reserves. Additional information will be presented upon completion of that analysis.

No formal action was taken.

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### **Discussion and Motion: Chapter 71 – Snow Removal**

#### **Discussion:**

Mayor Hinz stated that the City may not yet have enough information to determine whether expanding municipal sidewalk snow removal services would be feasible. Hinz suggested maintaining Chapter 71 of the Municipal Code as currently written, which places responsibility for sidewalk snow removal on property owners.

Smith stated that continuing the current policy is likely the most practical option in the short term while the City evaluates costs. She added that the City would need to revisit the budget to determine whether contracted snow removal services or additional equipment could be funded.

Smith also suggested exploring the creation of a volunteer “Snow Buddy” program similar to one offered in Cedar Rapids, which pairs volunteers with residents who may need assistance clearing sidewalks.

Motion by Vander Sanden, seconded by Cook, to continue enforcement of Chapter 71 as written.

Ayes: 4 Nays: 1 (Hoyt) Motion carried (4-1)

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### **Discussion: Fiscal Year 2027 Budget**

#### **Discussion:**

City Clerk Goodin reported preliminary projections indicating the City’s property tax levy is likely to decrease for FY27 compared to FY26. Mayor Hinz commended staff and Council for their hard work during the budget process.

No formal action was taken.

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### **Adjournment**

Motion by Vander Sanden, seconded by Foley, to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 p.m. Motion carried (5-0)

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Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Goodin  
City Clerk/Treasurer

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Chuck Hinz, Mayor

Attest:

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Lisa Goodin, City Clerk/Treasurer