



**City of Robins
City Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 8, 2026
Robins City Hall**

Unofficial Meeting Minutes Until Approved by Council

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hinz called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at Robins City Hall and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Chuck Hinz; Council Members Mike Foley, Cary Smith, Leigh Cook, Bruce Vander Sanden, and Leslie Hoyt.

Staff Present: Lisa Goodin, City Clerk/Treasurer; Rhonda Kortenkamp, Deputy City Clerk; Mike Kortenkamp, Building Official/Superintendent of Public Works; Adam Cirkel, Police Chief; Keith Feldkamp, Fire Chief; Kelli Scott, City Engineer; Vance McKinnon, Zoning Administrator; Doug Herman, City Attorney; and Amanda Maher, Accounting Clerk. Absent: Neal Boeckmann, Fire Code Official/Deputy Superintendent of Public Works. Others present included Tim Mroch of Snyder & Associates.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council approved the agenda on a motion by Council Member Leigh Cook, seconded by Council Member Cary Smith. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Hinz provided an update on asbestos testing and removal at the Church of the Brethren and applicable grant opportunities. The City plans to apply for a derelict building grant through the Iowa DNR, with an award announcement anticipated in April 2027. Diversion of material from the site may increase the grant amount.

The Mayor addressed the request from Council members to return City Hall hours to Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. He stated that he will meet with City Hall staff during September to determine next steps. He identified a target of October 15th for his recommendation.

The Mayor reported that the final FY2025 audit report had been received and that Moody's awarded the City an A1 rating. He also reported that the staff continues work on a cybersecurity audit and that a September 8 debrief regarding the City's non-receipt of the BUILD grant provided little useful information.

Council Member Foley questioned what measurable factors would be used in determining City Hall hours and reiterated that City Hall should be open to the public like other city halls in the area.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Public Safety – Council Member Mike Foley reported that the Fire Department responded to 27 calls in August and participated in ladder training and air ambulance training. The Police Department implemented the Axon body camera system in August. Chief Cirkel is working to establish a designated interview area. The speed trailer has been repaired. The Police Department responded to 185 calls for service during the month; 82 citations/warnings were issued.

Streets – Council Member Cary Smith reported that Hiawatha is interested in a 28E agreement for an overlay project on North Center Point Road. Final design work continues on the West Main Street reconstruction, with letters to affected homeowners and an open house targeted for October. A later work session would address Tower Terrace Road construction. Quotes are being obtained for asphalt overlays and repainting of street markings. Mastic repairs on Robins Road are scheduled to begin in mid-September.

Finance – Council Member Leigh Cook reported that the FY2025 audit is complete and that a link to the report is available on the City website. She reviewed audit findings, including significant expenditures related to the Indian Creek Sewer Upgrade project. Outstanding items identified by the auditors had been reconciled to FY2026. The Single Audit report was also positive.

Public Works – Council Member Bruce Vander Sanden reported that the 28E agreement with Hiawatha for operations and maintenance remains pending, as does the 28E agreement regarding Cedar Rapids water. The Mayor had met with Mayor O'Donnell to discuss this agreement.

Parks – Council Member Leslie Hoyt reported that the Parks Master Planning Committee finalized its comprehensive planning survey questions. The Committee endorsed a draft Parks Capital Improvement Plan prepared by Council Member Hoyt. Council Members Hoyt and Smith and City staff participated in a bike audit. Council Member Hoyt also met with Boy Scouts regarding repainting the South Troy Park dugouts and reminded Council about the upcoming Civic Club movie event.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

City Engineer Kelli Scott reported that the goal is to complete repairs on Robins Road the following week. Access to properties along Robins Road will be maintained. Letters had been delivered to homeowners, notice had been included in the newsletter, and an additional e-mail blast was scheduled for the following week.

PLANNING AND ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Zoning Administrator Vance McKinnon reported that four new construction permits were issued during the previous month, including two residential and two commercial permits. The Planning & Zoning Commission is discussing the Robins Overlay District and potential changes to the district. The September 9 meeting will include a roundtable discussion with developers and a real estate professional regarding residential housing and zoning in Robins.

Council Member Foley asked how many permits had been issued in Robins Landing. Mr. McKinnon reported that one permit had been issued there during the year.

Council Member Vander Sanden asked whether Robins Landing is the only area that allows 65-foot lots. Engineer Scott stated that Woods Edge and the Villages are also zoned R-3 and allow 65-foot lots.

ROBINS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (REDI) REPORT

No member of REDI was present. Council Member Vander Sanden reported that REDI is making good progress and has built momentum. He stated that he was very impressed with the organization's progress. Council Member Smith said she was looking forward to the annual meeting. Council Member Foley reported that the annual meeting had been moved from October to April 2027.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – AGENDA ITEMS

There were no public comments regarding agenda items.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Joe Suchan of Morrison Drive reported concerns regarding a neighboring property where additional dirt has been added. He stated that runoff from Morrison Drive is entering his property rather than the neighboring property and that homes on Oak Park Drive are also contributing water to his property. Council discussed the concern, including a question from Council Member Foley regarding when the neighboring property would be required to add sod. Council Member Hoyt also noted that dirt had been added to the property.

JD Smith commented regarding the August 31 special Council meeting and the lack of public comment on the agenda, which featured a single item: the award of the 2026 Series General Obligation Bond. He also questioned why Council members are unable to respond to public comments and referred to a perceived "gag order." Council Member Cook stated that a public hearing had been held, as required by law, prior to the issuance of the bond. City Attorney Doug Herman clarified the applicable Iowa law and explained that Council may not engage in discourse on non-agenda items. He noted that the Iowa Public Information Board receives complaints regarding discussion of items at meetings that were not on the agenda and is strict about the requirement.

Council Member Vander Sanden stated that he wants to ensure concerns raised during public comment are addressed at a later meeting. Council Member Smith noted that Council members are available to answer questions outside of Council meetings. Council Member Vander Sanden stated that he wants public comments included on all agendas.

CONSENT AGENDA

Council approved the minutes of the August 17 and August 31 meetings and the list of bills submitted on a motion by Council Member Leigh Cook, seconded by Council Member Leslie Hoyt. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Second Reading of Ordinance 2610 – An Ordinance Amending Chapter 51: Junk and Junk Vehicles

Council voted to suspend the requirement for a second reading of Ordinance 2610 pursuant to Iowa Code Section 380.3 on a motion by Council Member Cary Smith, seconded by Council Member Mike Foley. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

Council then approved the final reading of Ordinance 2610 on a motion by Council Member Leslie Hoyt, seconded by Council Member Leigh Cook. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

ECICOG Comprehensive Plan – Council Member Vander Sanden requested an update on the Comprehensive Plan process and asked that new members be included as the Steering Committee is formed. Council Member Hoyt asked about the City Services Committee. Mayor Hinz explained that the committee would provide input and guidance to City staff regarding services provided to residents, such as solid waste collection, and stated that he would like to reconvene the group to provide information for the Comprehensive Plan process. Council Member Vander Sanden urged the City to establish a timeline, goals, and regular reports to Council. Council Member Hoyt reported that the Parks Committee had added two new members.

First Reading of Ordinance 2612 – An Ordinance Amending Chapter 63, Speed Regulations

Council approved the first reading of Ordinance 2612 on a motion by Council Member Mike Foley, seconded by Council Member Bruce Vander Sanden. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

Chief Cirkel explained that, following a request from Linn County to reduce the County Home Road speed limit to 55 mph from 60 mph as mandated by recent state legislation, City staff reviewed speed limits citywide. He recommended reducing North Center Point Road to 45 mph, North Mentzer Road near East Knoll to 25 mph, and Quass Road to 35 mph, and allowing Linn County to designate the speed limit on County Home Road. He stated that the proposed changes were legislative changes and were not prompted by accidents.

Engineer Scott explained that 20, 25, and 45 mph are statutory speed limits and that deviations require supporting data. She recommended returning City roads to statutory speed limits, bringing speed signage into compliance regarding placement, and using transitional speed signage where appropriate. She noted that the 25-mph flashing lights on North Center Point Road near the churches are not legal or enforceable. She recommended a 25-mph limit on West Main Street west of Robins Road until reconstruction is complete and the roadway is properly designed for a higher speed.

Council Member Hoyt asked whether West Main Street would be 35 mph after reconstruction, and Engineer Scott confirmed that that was the intent. Chief Cirkel further recommended relocating speed signs so they conform to statute and are visible to motorists. Council Member Foley stated that the changes would provide consistency to local speed limits. Council Member Hoyt expressed support, particularly for the four-way stop at Main and Mentzer. Council Member Smith asked why West Main Street could not be 30 mph throughout. Engineer Scott explained that 30 mph is not a statutory speed and would require additional data to support a deviation. City Attorney Herman provided additional guidance regarding use of the speed trailer to collect data.

First Reading of Ordinance 2615 – An Ordinance Amending Chapter 71, Snow Removal

Council approved the first reading of Ordinance 2615 on a motion by Council Member Bruce Vander Sanden, seconded by Council Member Mike Foley. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

Mike Kortenkamp addressed Council regarding the proposed ordinance amendment, which would add language allowing annual notification to be published in the Cedar Rapids Gazette. Council Member Vander Sanden asked whether the ordinance would be enforced. Mr. Kortenkamp stated that the City receives several snow-removal complaints annually and that the ordinance would be enforced by the Code Compliance Officer.

Resolution No. 0926-1 – Annual Microsoft Office 365 G3 Licenses

Council approved Resolution No. 0926-1, approving a quotation from CloudFit for annual Microsoft Office 365 G3 licenses, on a motion by Council Member Leigh Cook, seconded by Council Member Leslie Hoyt. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

Resolution No. 0926-2 – \$2,105,000 General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bonds, Series 2026

Council approved Resolution No. 0926-2, authorizing and approving a Loan Agreement providing for the issuance of \$2,105,000 General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bonds, Series 2026, and providing for the levy of taxes to pay the bonds, on a motion by Council Member Leigh Cook, seconded by Council Member Mike Foley. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

Staff Presentation: FY2026 Financial Wrap-Up

Clerk Goodin presented the FY2026 financial wrap-up, noting that the Balance Sheet was now accurate, and tied out to the CIP due to the removal of duplicate transactions as noted in the FY25 Audit Report, and thanked Amanda Maher for her work on this project. Goodin also called attention to the Unallocated General Fund Reserve total, which exceeded the 35% cap established by recent state legislation. Goodin recommended allocation of \$500,000 to the Streets/Drainage Reserve fund in order to comply with this legislation, noting that these funds could be used as a debt buy-down for future GO bonds.

Discussion: FY2026 Year-End Reserve Fund Contribution

Clerk Goodin identified a FY26 General Fund surplus of \$387,787 and a surplus across all funds of \$1,024,770. Goodin recommended allocating surplus departmental budgetary funds from Fire Department, Parks Department and City Hall to their respective reserve lines. She further recommended the combination of surplus budgetary funds from the Police Department, Inspections Department and all remaining General Fund departmental budgets and allocation to the Streets/Drainage reserve in the amount of \$227,935 to increase the City's ability to buy down for future GO bonds. Goodin noted that the re-allocation of the Police Department's surplus was done with the support of Police Chief Cirkl, as his department's CIP items were already fully-funded.

Councilor Smith expressed support of this recommendation, citing the upcoming reconstruction of West Main St., the possible construction of a segment of Tower Terrace Road, and the planned issuance of additional municipal bonds in FY29. Councilor Foley expressed a lack of support for this recommendation, citing the Police Department's need of the \$98,000 departmental surplus to support the hiring of a 2nd full-time officer.

Discussion: FY2028 Capital Improvement Plan

Clerk Goodin presented a draft of the General Fund CIP, noting the current departmental reserve balances would be increased by the proposed FY26 budgetary surplus allocations, which would be approved by Council resolution at a future meeting. Engineer Scott reported that departmental CIP requests had been updated in the draft document, including the Parks Capital Improvement plan provided by the Parks Master Planning Committee. Clerk Goodin also presented a forecast of funds available for inclusion in the FY28 CIP.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Foley reported that the Robins Swim & Racquet Club concept had been proposed to Council and recommended a future agenda item. He also recommended upgrading signage around Robins and requested a future discussion regarding a hotel/motel tax on current AirBnB properties to provide additional funding for REDI.

Council Member Smith commented on Civic Club contributions toward replacement of City banners on Main Street. She requested that the City revisit snow removal on sidewalks along Main Street and discuss the future of bike lanes on West Main Street.

Council Member Cook suggested future agenda items concerning an auditor RFP, an update to the TIF ordinance, the tax abatement ordinance, and adding a City Administrator role.

Council Member Vander Sanden requested discussion at a future meeting regarding monthly financial reporting, requesting that information be provided orally. He also requested a Council discussion on how items may be added to City Council meeting agendas.

Council Member Hoyt suggested a future discussion regarding creation of a 501(c)(3) organization, “Friends of Robins Parks.” City Attorney Herman and Council Member Foley provided additional clarification and guidance.

SHORT RECESS

The Council recessed at 8:05 p.m. and reconvened at 8:19 p.m.

COUNCIL WORK SESSION – TOWER TERRACE ROAD UPDATE AND FUNDING DISCUSSION

Engineer Scott and Tim Mroch of Snyder & Associates presented information to Council regarding the proposed use of CPF grant funds for the construction of one of three segments of the Tower Terrace roadway.

Council discussed the Tower Terrace Road project and funding. Approximately \$4.5 million in CPF funds have been appropriated for the project. Council discussed the appropriateness of applying those funds to Segment A, from North Center Point Road to Robins Road.

Council Member Hoyt questioned the need for plantings in the center median because of ongoing maintenance costs. Engineer Scott stated that this could be discussed with Hiawatha if the project moves forward.

Council Member Vander Sanden asked about the proposed 10-foot trail and 5-foot bike lane widths. Tim Mroch of Snyder & Associates clarified that, with curb and gutter, the bike lane measures 6.5 feet. He explained that the 10-foot trail width allows two-way traffic and that trails on both sides of the roadway provide equal access to pedestrians and cyclists entering from either side. Engineer Scott added that the bike lane provides additional access for emergency vehicle passage.

Engineer Scott reviewed the financial implications of prioritizing both Tower Terrace Road Segment A and the West Main Street project.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m. on a motion by Council Member Leigh Cook, seconded by Council Member Cary Smith. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Goodin
City Clerk/Treasurer

Chuck Hinz, Mayor

Attest:

Lisa Goodin, City Clerk/Treasurer