

The Independence City Council met in regular session in the council chambers at 5:30 p.m., on Monday, March 9, 2026.

OPENING/ROLL CALL

Mayor Bleichner opened the meeting by calling the meeting to order with Council Members Weber, Hanna, Moore, Prusator, Mayner, O'Loughlin, and Appleby in attendance.

This meeting was available for public attendance. The meeting was also broadcast on the local access channel, YouTube, and Facebook.

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Motion by Council Member Mayner, second by Council Member O'Loughlin to approve the agenda as presented for the regular meeting held March 9, 2026. Ayes: All.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chelley Pratt, Project Director for the Senior Community Service Employment Program, presented information on a Title V Program that helps older Americans gain skills to return to the workforce.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Council Member O'Loughlin, second by Council Member Weber to accept and approve the consent agenda that approves the following: a) The minutes of the February 23, 2026, Regular Meeting. b) Request to hunt within City Limits from Curtis Cooksley for the October 2026 to January 2027 bowhunting season. c) Walmart Inc. Class E retail alcohol license ownership amendment. Ayes: All.

FINANCIALS

Motion by Council Member Mayner, second by Council Member Weber to approve the following bills for payment. Ayes: All.

ADP	PAYROLL SVCS	\$111,731.57
AIR SERVICES INC	SERVICES-W	\$300.00
AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	SUPPLIES-CH,PD,F,W	\$1,584.38
ANGELA KILER	PHONE ALLOW	\$50.00
ASSURITY LIFE INSURANCE CO	ASSUR CRIT ILL	\$586.64
BAKER, NICK	REIMB-W	\$271.27
BAUER BUILT	VEH REPAIR-F	\$340.20
BLAKE HAYWARD	PHONE ALLOW	\$50.00
BLEICHNER, BRAD	PHONE ALLOW	\$100.00
BRAD ESCH	PHONE ALLOW	\$50.00
BRENT RECK	PHONE ALLOW	\$50.00
BRIAN LAU	PHONE ALLOW	\$50.00
CARD SERVICES-VISA	MISC EXP-CH,B,A	\$1,955.58
CITY LAUNDERING CO. INC	MISC EXP-PD,W	\$163.21
COLE'S ACE HARDWARE	SUPPLIES-PR,ST,W,CH	\$1,366.04
CONNIE MCDONALD	UNIFORM-PD	\$28.00
CONSOLIDATED ENERGY CO	FUEL-A,ST	\$2,878.03
CY & CHARLEY'S FIRESTONE INC	VEH REPAIR-W	\$110.93
DANKO EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT COCL	EQUIP-F	\$16,008.00
DELL MARKETING, LP	EQUIP-PR	\$1,093.69
DELTA DENTAL OF IOWA	DENTAL BENEFIT	\$4,333.08
DINGES FIRE COMPANY	EQUIP-F	\$3,275.79
DON'S TRUCK SALES INC	VEH REPAIR-ST	\$118.72
DUNLAP MOTORS INC	SUPPLIES-W	\$695.00
ELITE LAND IMPROVEMENT, LLC	SERVICES-W	\$6,485.00
EMPLOYEE BENEFIT SYSTEMS	MISC EXP BENEFIT	\$5,291.35
EUROFINS ENVIRONMENT TESTING	LAB ANALYSIS-W	\$1,719.44
FEHR-GRAHAM & ASSOCIATES LLC	SERVICES-B	\$8,935.25

FLETCHER-REINHARDT CO	EQUIP REPAIRS-ST,PR	\$827.20
GUARDIAN	LIFE-LTD-ADD	\$1,449.21
IMFOA	DUES-CH	\$20.00
INDEPENDENCE LIGHT & POWER	MISC EXP-PD,CH	\$412.58
INDEPENDENCE NAPA	SUPPLIES-F,ST,W,PR,A	\$65.77
INDEPENDENCE PLUMBING, HEATING	SERVICES-PR	\$281.16
JOHN BUTLER	PHONE ALLOW	\$50.00
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL	SUPPLIES-ALL	\$2,089.62
J & R SUPPLY INC	SUPPLIES-W	\$2,078.00
KAY PARK REC CORP	EQUIP-PR	\$3,230.00
KIRKWOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE	TRAINING-F	\$70.00
KLUESNER SANITATION, LLC	GARBAGE-G	\$47,057.92
LADY EXPOS TOURNAMENT	TOURNEY FEES-PR	\$100.00
LEGALSHIELD	LEGAL/ID BENEFIT	\$174.55
LYNX YOUTH BASEBALL	TOURNEY FEES-PR	\$325.00
MANCHESTER KIDS LEAGUE	TOURNEY FEES-PR	\$1,100.00
MATTHEW SCHMITZ	PHONE ALLOW	\$100.00
MICROBAC LABORATORIES, INC	LAB ANALYSIS-W	\$158.25
MIDAMERICAN ENERGY COMPANY	UTILITIES-CH,PR,PD	\$3,640.13
NEJDL, MICHELLE	PHONE ALLOW	\$50.00
OELWEIN PUBLISHING COMPANY	PUBLICAT-CH	\$380.60
PEPSI-COLA GEN. BOT. IN	SUPPLIES-PR	\$487.25
PINE GROVE SHOES & MORE	SAFETY EQUIP-ST	\$56.50
PITNEY BOWES GLOBAL FINANCIAL	MISC EXP-CH	\$623.32
PRECISION PLUMBING, HEATING,	SERVICES-ST	\$540.00
PRINT EXPRESS	PRINTING-PD	\$95.00
RACOM CORPORATION	VEH REPAIR-F	\$1,105.00
RADIO COMMUNICATIONS CO INC	EQUIP-PR	\$1,006.47
RITLAND KUIPER LANDSCAPE ARCHI	SERVICES-ST	\$22,598.99
RJS WELDING LLC	REPAIR-W	\$60.00
ROBERT BEATTY	PHONE ALLOW	\$50.00
SIGNS & MORE LLC	MISC SVC-CH	\$101.36
S&K COLLECTIBLES	SHIPPING-W	\$16.90
SOBIESKI, LANE	PHONE ALLOW	\$50.00
SOUKUP, BRETT	PHONE ALLOW	\$50.00
SPAHN & ROSE LUMBER COMPANY	SUPPLIES-ST,PR,A	\$3,552.69
STATE STREET BANK & TRUST CO	RETIRE BENEFIT	\$7,651.03
TASC	FLEX MED/DEP CARE	\$1,497.28
T-MOBILE	PHONE-B,F,CH,PR,PD,W	\$1,042.44
TRAVIS FOLEY	PHONE ALLOW	\$50.00
TRENTON CABELL	PHONE ALLOW	\$50.00
UNITYPOINT HEALTH AT WORK	SERVICES-PR	\$273.00
USA BLUE BOOK	SUPPLIES-W	\$1,067.65
VERIZON WIRELESS	PHONE-F	\$7.02
VERN'S TRUE VALUE	SUPPLIES-PR,F,ST	\$322.00
WEX BANK	FUEL-A,F,PD,PR,W	\$2,851.02

CLAIMS TOTAL \$278,486.08; General Fund \$150,286.23; Library \$10,537.96; Streets Dept-Road Use \$17,147.52; Employee Benefits \$11,456.04; Cap Outlay Savings/LOST \$20,696.55; Cap Project-1st St W Reconstruction \$22,598.99; Water Fund \$16,674.05; Sewer Utility Fund \$23,797.39; Self Insurance \$5,061.12; Self Insurance-Enterprise \$230.23.

REVENUES MONTH TO DATE TOTAL \$122,730.42; General Fund \$24,552.64; Library \$327.10; Employee Benefits \$3,503.83; Water Fund \$29,997.02; Sewer Utility \$54,861.95; Storm Water \$4,196.53; Self Insurance \$5,061.12; Self Insurance-Enterprise \$230.23.

The February 2026 bank reconciliation and the revenues and expenses by department to date were available for

council review and discussion.

HEARINGS & ORDINANCES

Council Member Weber with a motion to approve the first reading of an ordinance that amends provisions pertaining to Chapter 69 – Parking Regulations, second by Council Member Moore. Mayor Bleichner stated the revisions are to Section 69.09 and 69.11 to remove the parking regulations on the north side of 2nd Street NE between 2nd and 3rd Avenues NE. Council Member Hanna asked if the handicap parking signs had been removed in front of the one building? City Manager Schmitz said the area will be looked at and taken care of accordingly. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Hanna, Moore, Prusator, Mayner, Appleby, and Weber. Nays: O'Loughlin. Council Member Weber with a motion that the statutory rule requiring an ordinance to be considered and voted on for passage at two Council meetings prior to the meeting at which it is to be finally passed be suspended, second by Council Member Hanna. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Moore, Prusator, Mayner, Weber, and Hanna. Nays: O'Loughlin and Appleby.

RESOLUTIONS

Council Member O'Loughlin with a motion to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the resolution approving the contract and performance and/or payment bonds for the 2026 Street Rehabilitation Project, and to authorize the City Manager to sign the contract, second by Council Member Weber. Council Member Moore asked what the total special assessment was for the residents and businesses impacted by the project? City Manager Schmitz replied he did not have the information available but would look into it. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Mayner, O'Loughlin, Weber, Hanna, and Prusator. Nays: Appleby and Moore.

Resolution adopted and upon approval by Mayor assigned No. 2026-16 in the Official Book of Resolutions.

Council Member Hanna with a motion to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the resolution approving the preliminary plat of survey for the Jackson Green 7th Addition, noting that it complies with the City Ordinances, with the exception of 175.37,1 C (5), which requires a cul-de-sac not to exceed 500 feet in length, which by approval of the attached resolution, is extended as shown on the attached preliminary plat, but only for this preliminary plat, second by Council Member Prusator. Mayor Bleichner identified the plat of the area of land at the intersection of 6th Avenue SW and Enterprise Drive. He wants the development to move forward but has concerns with the preliminary plat. He drafted a letter to the Planning & Zoning Commission to consider before they made their decision at the February 23, 2026, meeting. Planning & Zoning recommended the City Council approve the preliminary plat as submitted with a 3-2 vote. The City has actively pursued grant opportunities to finish the trail from Enterprise to 6th Avenue SW and has been successful. There are lots in the preliminary plat that would have driveways that would go over the trail's location. When the City adopted SUDAS, SUDAS did not overwrite the City's Code. While there are other cul-de-sacs longer than 500 feet in Independence, it does not mean the City has to continue to allow that. The City Council has the option to approve the resolution as presented while it does make mention that the preliminary plat complies with City Code with the exception of 175.37,1 C (5). Council Member O'Loughlin encouraged the rest of the Council to vote no because of the driveways that enter directly on Enterprise Drive. Council Member Moore asked why the road couldn't continue through Lot 9 instead of creating a cul-de-sac? Mayor Bleichner stated he had that same concern. Council Member Moore said he would be in favor of it being a through street in the event of a fire or similar situation. There are several houses with only one way in or out of that area. Council Member Hanna asked if Fire Chief Hayward could come up to speak about the cul-de-sac and fire trucks. Fire Chief Hayward stated he attended the February 23, 2026, Planning & Zoning meeting. The department has been involved with this preliminary plat for a while. The department's biggest concern was there were not enough hydrants in the event of a fire. The preliminary plat was modified to allow for more hydrants. Chief Hayward said that the current fire trucks are able to get in and out of other current cul-de-sacs. Council Member Prusator asked who was responsible for maintaining the trail across the proposed driveway locations? There are driveways that go over sidewalk throughout town and that doesn't seem to be as big of an issue. City Manager Schmitz said the City would be responsible for trail maintenance and would work with the property owner if work needed to be done. The City would only pay for work related to the trail and not for pavement outside of the trail's locations. Council Member O'Loughlin said that trails and sidewalks are treated differently in the City's Code. Council Member Moore asked what if there was a fire at the house on lot 2 once the area was developed? There is no other way out of the area for the other households. Council Member Hanna asked why it couldn't be turned into having a through street? Brian Crawford, Crawford Engineering, stated that the trail portions that were expected to be part of a driveway would be built with different specifications to handle the vehicle traffic. Ron and Janice Ohl wanted to develop a quiet area for families. They had looked at different concept plans before finally deciding upon the cul-de-sac plan. In the preliminary plat, there are 14 lots that face the cul-de-sac road. For the homes that would have driveways on 6th Avenue SW and Enterprise Drive, the homes could be custom built to allow the homeowner room to back out of their garage and drive out onto the respective roads to help with addressed safety concerns previously mentioned. Council Member Hanna asked if the Council sent the plat back to Planning and Zoning, what would be the Council's direction for them? City Manager Schmitz explained potential directions the Council could give the Planning & Zoning Commission if that is what Council wanted to do. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Appleby, Weber, Hanna, Moore, and Prusator. Nays: O'Loughlin and Mayner.

Resolution adopted and upon approval by Mayor assigned No. 2026-17 in the Official Book of Resolutions.

Council Member Mayner with a motion to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the resolution appointing Bill Lake to the Planning and Zoning Commission, second by Council Member O'Loughlin. Mayor Bleichner stated Stephanie Sailer will be moving soon and submitted her resignation. Bill Lake was previously on the Commission and attended all the meetings. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Weber, Hanna, Moore, Prusator, Mayner, O'Loughlin, and Appleby.

Resolution adopted and upon approval by Mayor assigned No. 2026-18 in the Official Book of Resolutions.

Council Member Moore with a motion to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the resolution that sets a public hearing on March 23, 2026, at 5:30 pm for the consideration of a rezoning request from A-1 Agricultural to R-3 Residential within the City of Independence, Buchanan County, Iowa, second by Council Member Mayner. City Manager Schmitz identified the area of land being at the end of Pine Drive. Steve Gee has the intention of selling the property if it is rezoned. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Hanna, Moore, Prusator, Mayner, O'Loughlin, and Weber. Nays: Appleby.

Resolution adopted and upon approval by Mayor assigned No. 2026-19 in the Official Book of Resolutions.**OTHER BUSINESS**

Council Member O'Loughlin with a motion to extend the 28E agreement to align with the AMR contract completion date of October 31, 2026, second by Council Member Appleby. Mayor Bleichner spoke of the 28E agreement that was entered into in May 2021 and had a term length of 5 years with no language of it being extended. The City has budgeted funds through June 2026. The 28E participants are the City of Independence, Buchanan County, and the Hospital. The Hospital and AMR are in the contract for ambulance services being provided currently within Buchanan County and that contract ends October 31, 2026. Council Member O'Loughlin pointed out that residents are paying taxes to each entity for ambulance services currently. Mayor Bleichner explained that a yes vote means the Council wants to extend the 28E agreement and a no vote means that the 28E will be done at the end of June 2026. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Nays: Moore, Prusator, Mayner, O'Loughlin, Appleby, Weber, and Hanna.

Council Member O'Loughlin with a motion to approve the proposal for professional engineering services from Fehr Graham to conduct the Pines First and Third Additions Stormwater Study, and to authorize the City Manager to sign the proposal, second by Council Member Prusator. Council Member O'Loughlin stated he drove that area during the recent heavy rains and did see that some back yards did have water in them. Council Member Hanna asked if the homeowners would be notified when Fehr Graham would be doing their surveying work? City Manager Schmitz said the request would be passed along to Fehr Graham. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Prusator, Mayner, O'Loughlin, Appleby, Weber, Hanna, and Moore.

Council Member O'Loughlin with a motion to approve the \$8,500.00 revised proposal for MEP services with Martin Gardner Architecture, and to authorize the City Manager to sign the contract, second by Council Member Mayner. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: Mayner, O'Loughlin, Appleby, Weber, Hanna, Moore, and Prusator.

Council Member Weber with a motion to approve and authorize the City Manager to sign the vehicle purchase and transfer agreement with Black Hawk County, second by Council Member Moore. The roll being called the following Council Members voted: Ayes: O'Loughlin, Appleby, Weber, Hanna, Moore, and Prusator. Abstain: Mayner.

REPORTS

The following comments were heard from Council and Staff: Hanna – Attended the Oakwood Cemetery meeting last Saturday. Discussions need to be held with Parks and Recreation Director Beatty about getting rock and organizing clean-up help. Moore – He attended the recent Board of Supervisors meeting and the tax statement should be mailed out and in people's homes at the end of the week. Mayner – Attended the open house at the Airport that was part of the Library's One Book One Independence. City Manager – In the Fiscal Year 2027 budget, the Street Department had planned to purchase a diamond grinder to be used on streets. With the upcoming events this year, he would like to purchase this sooner to allow the Street Department enough time to prepare streets. The tax notice is misleading as it automatically assumes a 10% increase. City Clerk/Treasurer – The City does not mail anything out related to the proposed property tax levy or the final property tax levy. The City is only required to publish the notices in the paper.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Council Member O'Loughlin, second by Council Member Mayner to adjourn. Ayes: All.

Whereupon Mayor Bleichner declared the meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Brad Bleichner, Mayor of the City of Independence, Iowa

ATTEST:

Susi Lampe, CMC, IaCMC, IaCFO,
Assistant City Manager/City Clerk/Treasurer of the City of Independence, Iowa

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