



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

City Council

Monday, March 2, 2026
7:00 PM

Regular

City Hall
Council Chamber
701 E. Broadway
Columbia, MO

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

The City Council of the City of Columbia, Missouri met for a regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, March 2, 2026, in the Council Chamber of the City of Columbia, Missouri. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and the roll was taken with the following results: Council Member JACQUE SAMPLE, Council Member NICK FOSTER, Council Member DON WATERMAN, Mayor BARBARA BUFFALOE, Council Member VALERIE CARROLL, and Council Member VERA ELWOOD were present. Council Member BETSY PETERS was absent. Deputy City Manager Matt Unrein, City Counselor Nancy Thompson, City Clerk Sheela Amin, and various Department Heads and staff members were also present.

Mayor Buffaloe welcomed the Visiting Scholars with the University of Missouri Asian Affairs Center who were in attendance.

The minutes of the regular meetings of February 2, 2026 and February 16, 2026 were approved unanimously by voice vote on a motion by Mayor Buffaloe and a second by Council Member Foster.

Mayor Buffaloe made a motion to table B37-26 to the May 18, 2026 Council Meeting. The motion was seconded by Council Member Waterman, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

The agenda, including the consent agenda, as well as the tabling of B37-26 to the May 18, 2026 Council Meeting, was approved unanimously by voice vote on a motion by Mayor Buffaloe and a second by Council Member Waterman.

II. SPECIAL ITEMS

SI3-26

Presentation of the Fiscal Year 2025 Financial Audit.

Jonathan Nibarger, Senior Vice President with AGH, spoke regarding the financial audit recently conducted, and he and Finance Director Matthew Lue responded to Council questions and comments.

III. APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

None.

IV. SCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENT

SPC11-26

Matt Schacht - An update on the conversations Vidwest is having about the future of community media.

Matt Schacht, 211 N. Ann Street, commented that community media was in danger of disappearing, believed the work Vidwest did aligned with the City's strategic goals of

creating a resilient economy as well as being an inclusive and equitable community as Vidwest provided high-level training, access to equipment to individuals, small businesses, and non-profits, which was truly life changing for some as it allowed them to start their own small businesses, stated community media allowed for youth engagement, supported entrepreneurs, enabled community members to connect in third spaces, and provided resources for civic participation, reiterated that investing in Vidwest was strategic as it equated to the City's values of resilient economy and a connected community, explained they kept coming to City leadership because they felt City leadership could help solve the problem, addressed some misinformation, which included the fact the City still collected hundreds of thousands in cable franchise fees, State Law had reduced but had not eliminated the amount that could be charged for cable franchise fees, the City's grant funding could not be utilized for community media because those funds could not be used for administrative or labor costs, or help with rent, utilities, and other items that were needed for a community media center, and Vidwest did not want earmarked funds but instead was requesting an RFP or RFQ be issued, and asked for assistance in moving forward as they were caught in a loop whereby City staff indicated they needed to go to the Council for support and the Council said City staff needed to provide them with a proposal.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS

PH5-26 Proposed construction of the Quail Drive - Phase 2 stormwater improvement project.

The public hearing was read by the City Clerk.

Utilities Director Erin Keys provided a staff report.

Mayor Buffaloe opened the public hearing.

There being no comment, Mayor Buffaloe closed the public hearing.

The Council made comments.

Mayor Buffaloe made a motion to proceed with the final design for the proposed construction of stormwater improvements on Quail Drive - Phase 2. The motion was seconded by Council Member Elwood, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

PH6-26 Proposed construction of improvements at Rothwell Park.

Discussion shown with B45-26.

B45-26 Authorizing construction of improvements at Rothwell Park; calling for bids for a portion of the project through the Purchasing Division; amending the FY 2026 Annual Budget by appropriating funds in the amount of \$40,000.00.

The public hearing was read by the City Clerk, and the bill was given second reading by the City Clerk.

Parks and Recreation Director Gabe Huffington provided a staff report, and responded to Council questions and comments.

Mayor Buffaloe opened the public hearing.

There being no comment, Mayor Buffaloe closed the public hearing.

The Council made comments.

B45-26 was given third reading by the City Clerk with the vote recorded as follows: VOTING YES: SAMPLE, FOSTER, WATERMAN, BUFFALOE, CARROLL, ELWOOD. VOTING NO: NO ONE. ABSENT: PETERS. Bill declared enacted, reading as follows:

VI. OLD BUSINESS

B37-26 Amending Chapter 16 of the City Code by adding a new Division 22 related to the regulation of electronic gaming machines.

Mayor Buffaloe noted this item had been tabled to the May 18, 2026 Council Meeting during the approval and adjustment of the agenda.

B38-26 Amending Chapter 5 of the City Code relating to animals and fowl.

The bill was given second reading by the City Clerk.

Public Health and Human Services Director Rebecca Roesslet and Animal Control Supervisor Kevin Meyers provided a staff report, and responded to Council questions and comments.

Kim, a First Ward resident, supported the idea of amending the current limit of four pets per household by a variance because it would allow each situation to be evaluated individually, ensuring the animals were properly cared for while still addressing legitimate concerns, such as neglect, noise, or unsanitary conditions, noted the variance option was also important for residents who temporarily took in animals from shelters or rescue groups until the animal could be adopted as that helped to reduce the overcrowding in shelters and saved the City resources, while improving animal welfare, stated opposition to the proposition of a \$50 charge for each animal after the first four as it would unintentionally discourage responsible people from properly registering their animals or from helping rescue animals in need and would create an unnecessary financial burden for responsible pet owners who were already paying for food, veterinary care, vaccinations, and spay and neuter services, believed responsible ownership should be measured by the quality of care provided, not the number of animals in the home or the ability to pay additional fees, pointed out that in her case, this sanction would total almost \$1,000 annually on top of the annual licensing fees, rabies shots, and daily care, asked what service the \$50 fee would offer, and reiterated this fee would only affect and punish responsible pet owners, like herself.

Dan Viets, 15 N. Tenth Street, commented that he represented Kim on an ordinance violation case, but he was not charging her nor was anyone paying for him to comment tonight, stated most of the proposals within the ordinance were positive, noted appreciation to the proposal that would make it easier to participate in feral cat colony caretaking, expressed concern for the \$50 fee as it was not feasible, believed people like Kim were providing a tremendous service to the community and should not be charged as they were caring for cats that did not have homes, at least temporarily, explained he had been to Kim's home, which was incredibly clean and well ordered, understood enforcement was complaint driven, but that a complaint could come from anywhere, suggested complaints be narrowed to residents or community members, and reiterated it was problematic to charge \$50 per cat.

Eugene Elkin, a Second Ward resident, stated \$50 was very expensive, wondered where that money would go, i.e., the Central Missouri Humane Society, the City's general revenue, etc., and understood there were other costs associated with maintaining animals.

Christina, a representative of Columbia Second Chance, explained that over the past five years she had helped trap, neuter, and return (TNR) more than 700 cats and kittens and had brought more than 300 in rescue and foster, pointed out that approximately 80 percent of the caretakers she assisted were renters, like herself, who would not be able to obtain a permit because the landlord would not sign it even though they did not have an issue with feeding or TNR work, requested the current permit requirement for community cat caretakers be removed and replaced with a general TNR ordinance that was enforceable, practical, and data driven, did not feel the permit system functioned as intended when there was only one permit in place and would not improve even with revisions to remove testing, microchipping, and annual revaccinations because it was

difficult to enforce and created barriers to compliance, understood feeding bans had consistently been proven ineffective because the cats did not relocate far distances, were not necessarily self-sustaining hunters, and prey was limited in populated city environments, commented that a managed feeding and TNR approach kept cats healthier, stabilized populations, and reduced the pressure on local wildlife, suggested a clear, enforceable TNR ordinance, which required any cat regularly fed to be neutered, tipped, and vaccinated for rabies, instead of a permit, noted rescues, shelter, and neuter clinics already tracked TNR surgeries, providing more accurate data than the voluntary permit system, stated that when colonies were properly managed through TNR, complaints decreased as cats fought less, roamed less, and stopped reproducing, stabilizing the numbers, reiterated her request to replace the permit requirement with a TRN ordinance that prioritized sterilization, accountability, and practical enforcement while also adding wording to safeguard rescues, shelters and independent trappers as that would protect the City, support Animal Control, and assist the rescues and volunteers who were already doing the work, and provided a handout.

Janeene Johnston, 1408 St. Andrew Street, expressed appreciation for staff for their work on this along with their willingness to listen to those who were passionate about TNR work whereby they trapped, neutered, spayed, vaccinated, and returned the cats to the area where they were trapped, explained those involved were passionate and funded this themselves with the assistance of rescues and TNR groups, noted the care of an injured animal was also the responsibility of the TNR caretaker, stated many chose not to obtain permits because they did not want their name, address, or the location of the cats available to the public as it could put the cats at risk of harm or the TNR caretaker receiving comments or threats, thanked staff for removing the requirement of yearly rabies and testing because it was difficult to get a cat into a trap a second time as they tended to be savvy, and pointed out TNR caretakers were doing the work to maintain and reduce the cat population because cats could get pregnant as early as 3-4 months of age and likely have three or more litters per year, which was a cycle that continued with each litter.

Pat Fowler, 606 N. Sixth Street, stated she lived among a cat colony on her street but did not have problems because the cats had separate territories and respected each other's boundaries, noted a former city employee had fostered puppies, which added to the quality of life of the neighborhood as they were able to interact with them before they were sent to their forever homes, suggested a community mediation program for situations that needed attention, and asked City staff to rethink the regulations regarding fosters because it was a civic good that was necessary and important to the community.

Renee Carter, a Second Ward resident, wondered how many people would be willing to foster with a \$50 charge and how that would impact the animals, understood fostering enriched the life of an animal but also was sometimes necessary due to shelter capacity, thought it was a good idea to discuss the issue of fostering versus having a permanent pet and being aware of the length of time involved when fostering, and asked why a rabies vaccination beyond the one time was acceptable.

Tom Rose, a Board of Health (BOH) member, commented that it was important to have at least one rabies vaccine as it provided a decent amount of immunity versus no immunity, explained discussing the number of animals was difficult because it was dependent on whether they were discussing large dogs, such as Great Danes, or cats, and the restriction of four had been around for decades, stated the goal of the BOH had been to find a way to allow more animals, which had been discussed without any mention of fees, felt it was up to the City to determine an appropriate fee amount, noted the BOH had not considered fostering in those discussions, which again would depend on the type of animal, i.e., adding two Great Danes to a home with four similar animals already or adding cats to a home with cats, clarified the BOH discussion regarding feral cats involved the best way to accommodate public health, and noted the BOH could re-evaluate specific items, including comparing the pros and cons of a TNR ordinance

with the feral cat ordinance, if desired by the Council.
The Council asked questions and made comments.

Mayor Buffaloe made a motion to withdraw B38-26 with the understanding two ordinances would come forward in the future, one that had changes to Chapter 5 that did not need another review by the Board of Health, and the other that had changes to Chapter 5 after further review by the Board of Health based on the discussion this evening. The motion was seconded by Council Member Sample, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

B39-26 Establishing local regulations on hours of operation of businesses licensed to sell intoxicating liquor by the drink at retail for consumption on the premises for the duration of the 2026 FIFA World Cup Tournament.

The bill was given second reading by the City Clerk.

Convention and Visitors Director Amy Schneider provided a staff report, and she, Police Chief Jill Schlude, and City Counselor Nancy Thompson responded to Council questions and comments.

Lily White Boyd, Interim CEO and President of the Columbia Chamber of Commerce, commented that the Chamber had not taken an official position on this topic, believed it was best to let businesses decide what might work best for them, noted that most of the businesses they had spoken with had self-identified that they did not necessarily have the staff to accommodate extra hours, understood some businesses might deem themselves as the official site of certain teams, including a business downtown that was already the site the U.S. Men's National Soccer Team fan club, stated the Chamber would be happy to lend their voice to communicating with the business community so they were aware of this special event permit process, and thought this might be an opportunity to test the results of bar closures at different times versus the normal bar dump when all of the bars tended to close at the same time.

The Council asked questions and made comments.

Mayor Buffaloe made a motion to amend B39-26 by replacing "Each day for which extended hours of operation is requested shall require a separate permit and application to be submitted for approval." in the first paragraph of Section 2 with "A special event permit authorizing such extended hours of operation may only be granted on the following dates and may only authorize hours of operation to extend until 2:30 a.m.: June 14, 2026, June 17, 2026, June 20, 2026, June 21, 2026, June 23, 2026, June 27, 2026, July 3, 2026." The motion was seconded by Council Member Foster, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

B39-26, as amended, was given third reading by the City Clerk with the vote recorded as follows: VOTING YES: SAMPLE, FOSTER, WATERMAN, BUFFALOE, CARROLL, ELWOOD. VOTING NO: NO ONE. ABSENT: PETERS. Bill declared enacted, reading as follows:

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

The following bills were given second reading and the resolutions were read by the City Clerk.

B40-26 Voluntary annexation of property located on the southeast corner of Highway WW and El Chaparral Avenue (1020 S. El Chaparral Avenue); directing the City Clerk to give notice of the annexation; establishing permanent District R-1 (One-family Dwelling) zoning (Case #56-2026).

B41-26 Granting the issuance of a conditional use permit to Matthew and Hope Hawley to allow the operation of a short-term rental on property located at

- 903 W. Worley Street; providing a severability clause (Case No.32-2026).
- B42-26 Approving the Final Plat of "Boone Industrial Park East Plat No. 2" located on the west side of Paris Road (4999 Paris Road); authorizing a performance contract (Case # 27-2026).
- B43-26 Accepting Stormwater Management/BMP Facilities Covenants; directing the City Clerk to have the conveyances recorded.
- B44-26 Authorizing a terminal agency agreement with Boone County Joint Communications associated with Missouri Law Enforcement System (MULES) and National Crime Information Center (NCIC) access.
- B46-26 Amending the FY 2026 Annual Budget by appropriating funds in the amount of \$1,297,758.00 associated with the design and construction of a passenger boarding bridge at the Columbia Regional Airport.
- B47-26 Authorizing a contract with the Missouri Department of Health and Human Services for HIV case management program services.
- B48-26 Authorizing Amendment No. 2 to the contract with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services for teen connection project program services.
- B49-26 Authorizing an agreement with Boone County, Missouri for 2026 public health services.
- B50-26 Authorizing an agreement with Boone County, Missouri for 2026 animal control services.
- B51-26 Authorizing a subaward agreement with Johns Hopkins University associated with the Love Your Block program to support activities in central neighborhoods; amending the FY 2026 Annual Budget by appropriating funds in the amount of \$60,000.00.
- B52-26 Amending Chapter 2 of the City Code to create a Communications Department; amending Chapter 19 of the City Code as it relates to unclassified service; amending the FY 2026 Annual Budget Appendix - Authorized Full Time Equivalent (FTE) position identification summary; amending the FY 2026 Classification and Pay Plan by closing, adding, reassigning, and retitling classifications.
- R36-26 Setting a public hearing: consider the 2025 Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER).
- R37-26 Authorizing an aviation project consultant agreement with Burns and McDonnell Engineering Co., Inc. for design services associated with the Terminal Building passenger boarding bridge project at the Columbia Regional Airport.

The bills were given third reading and the resolutions were read by the City Clerk with the vote recorded as follows: VOTING YES: SAMPLE, FOSTER, WATERMAN, BUFFALOE, CARROLL, ELWOOD. VOTING NO: NO ONE. ABSENT: PETERS. Bills declared enacted and resolutions declared adopted, reading as follows:

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- R38-26 Authorizing the temporary closure of a portion of the sidewalk, parking lane, and vehicular lane shifting on Stewart Road between Fourth Street and Fifth Street, and a portion of the sidewalk on Fifth Street between Stewart Road and Elm Street to facilitate a roof removal and replacement at the University of Missouri power plant.

The resolution was read by the City Clerk.

Public Works Director Shane Creech provided a staff report, and he and City Counselor Nancy Thompson responded to Council questions and comments.

R38-26 was read by the City Clerk, and the vote was recorded as follows: VOTING YES: SAMPLE, FOSTER, WATERMAN, BUFFALOE, CARROLL, ELWOOD. VOTING NO: NO ONE. ABSENT: PETERS. Resolution declared adopted, reading as follows:

IX. INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

The following bills were introduced by the Mayor unless otherwise indicated, and all were given first reading.

- B53-26 Amending Chapter 2 of the City Code to revise Article X relating to purchasing.
- B54-26 Amending the FY 2026 Annual Budget by appropriating funds in the total amount of \$9,485,007.67 for second quarter appropriation of funds.
- B55-26 Granting the issuance of a conditional use permit to BVSHSSF COLUMBIA, LLC to allow the of establishment of a spa facility on property located on the northwest corner of University Avenue and S. College Avenue (1205 University Avenue) in a R-MF (Multiple-family Dwelling) zoning district (Case No. 64-2026).
- B56-26 Vacating a drainage easement adjacent to Lot 174 of Old Hawthorne North, Plat No. 1 located at 6409 Crooked Switch Court; directing the City Clerk to have a copy of the ordinance recorded.
- B57-26 Authorizing a transportation alternatives program supplemental agreement with the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission for construction of a sidewalk project along Broadway, between Maplewood Drive and West Boulevard.
- B58-26 Amending the FY 2026 Annual Budget by appropriating funds in the amount of \$750,000.00; authorizing an air service agreement with American Airlines, Inc. for roundtrip air service between Columbia Regional Airport and Charlotte Douglas International Airport.
- B59-26 Authorizing Amendment No. 2 to the contract with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services for disease intervention specialist workforce program services.
- B60-26 Authorizing a third amendment to the affordable housing funding agreement with the Housing Authority of the City of Columbia and Providence Walkway Housing Development Group, LP associated with the Providence Walkway development project.

B61-26 Authorizing a second addendum to the power purchase agreement with The Curators of the University of Missouri for the sale of wind energy and associated credits produced by Crystal Lake III.

X. REPORTS

REP15-26 FY26 Uncollectible Receivables and Adjustments.

Assistant Finance Director Jim McDonald provided a staff report, and responded to Council questions and comments.

REP16-26 Monthly Finance Report.

Finance Director Matthew Lue provided a staff report, and responded to Council questions and comments.

XI. GENERAL COMMENTS BY PUBLIC, COUNCIL AND STAFF

The Council and staff discussed various topics to include the responsiveness of the Public Health and Human Services Department in addressing a situation of a bat in a home late at night as the residents impacted had been effusive in their praise of how it had been handled, looking forward to the results of the meeting to be hosted by the Office of Violence Prevention on Thursday, the CoMo to Zero event held last week to provide input on ways to address safety along roadways, pedestrian ways, and for cyclists, the tragic death of a pedestrian traversing I-70 last night, the Improve I-70: Rocheport to Columbia public input meetings held by MoDOT earlier tonight and on Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. at Midway Golf and Games, interest for inclusion of a safe transition from one side of I-70 to the other regardless of the mode of travel as part of the I-70 improvements, the Community Summit scheduled for Saturday, March 14 at City Hall from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (noon), daylight savings occurring this weekend, thanking the community and staff for attending the Let's Talk Local that had been held on February 23 and included discussions involving support for neighborhoods, being appreciative of the public sharing their needs and trusting the City to try to assist, applications for the Love Your Block mini-grants being accepted until March 15, informational sessions regarding the Love Your Block mini-grants being held on Saturday, March 7 at the Boone Electric Community Building from 12:00 p.m. (noon) to 2:00 p.m. and on Saturday, March 14 during the Community Summit, the receipt of another \$60,000 to support a second staff fellow for the Love Your Block program, the opportunity to view the "Americans and the Holocaust" exhibition at the Daniel Boone Regional Library, excitement for the True/False Film Festival being held this Thursday through Sunday as well as the Unbound Book Festival that would be held in April, the item on the consent agenda that would allow for the formation of a Communications Department, and the cancelation of the July 6, 2026 Council Meeting.

Mayor Buffaloe made a motion to cancel the July 6, 2026 pre-council and regular council meetings to accommodate the AV remodeling project. The motion was seconded by Council Member Foster. After discussion, the motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned without objection at 9:38 p.m.