

CENTER REPUBLICAN PUBLIC NOTICES

CENTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

May 4, 2026
 At 6:04 PM Mayor Eric Casson called the meeting to order of the City of Center Council Meeting, May 4, 2026.

Roll call:
 Present: Becky Berg, Lisa Gusewelle, Kisa Kindsvogel, Troy Hatzenbihler, Eric Casson
 Others Present: Attorney Jen Gooss and Auditor Cassie Smith
 The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Agenda Approval:
 Gusewelle moved and Kindsvogel seconded to approve the agenda. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

Public comments:
 None.

Previous Minutes Approval:
 Berg moved and Kindsvogel seconded to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on April 6, 2026 and the amended minutes from the special meeting on March 26, 2026. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Financial Report:
 Auditor to contact Marco and ask if the late charge can be waived due to a change in staffing.

Auditor to contact Rud Oil and Gas to gain clarification on where we got the balance forward for \$3,702 and what was being filled on those four occasions in February.

Gusewelle moved and Berg seconded to approve the claim approval list. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Gusewelle moved and Kindsvogel seconded to table the check register from February and May for June's meeting. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

Gusewelle moved and Berg seconded to approve the financial reports from February and April with audit fees being left specifically for any auditing that the city does and has budgeted for and to find a more appropriate category for the interim auditor payment to the League of Cities. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Personal Appearances:
 Madison Kindsvogel asked for permission to put a little library in her front yard for adults and children. There is a lot of foot traffic, have a daycare down the street. She thought it'd be good for our little community. Madison would stock the library. They plan to hire Center Machine Shop to make it if granted permission. Gusewelle moved to approve Madison Kindsvogel to place a little library in the front yard of her home. Hatzenbihler seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Old Business:
 Keith Reuther accepted the bid from Lilis Electric to address the electrical issues in the basement. That project was finished last week. Only a few curb stops that got repaired remain to get black dirt over the top and be re-seeded. Crushed asphalt is difficult to come by, but that works better for some of the alleys. We are still waiting for gravel bids to come in. Gusewelle noticed someone had thrown tires on the bank of Square Butte Creek. Sheriff's department should be notified for littering. Sheriff Hilliard was present and has been notified.

Shandy Kraft reports that the ladies that come to the pool for excerswim have some concerns with the cost increases that were approved at the last meeting. There were a couple of participants that were present and gave suggestions for staggered age-based rates, advertising and looking into a North Dakota Health Grant Program for a healthy initiative that the city may be able to apply for. Staffing, wages and schedules were discussed. A meeting needs to be scheduled with the pool committee in the next couple of weeks. Gusewelle will work on scheduling this.

Sheriff's Department: Sheriff Hilliard raised a couple of questions regarding Old Settler's. In the past, the city has paid for two additional law enforcement officers during the street dance on Friday and Saturday nights. These officers come from Mercer or McLean County. They are paid \$55/hour for a minimum of 4 hours, whether they come from Mercer or McLean Counties. Keith Vitek will check on what the community club plans to pay for regarding security at their meeting on May 6, 2026. Gusewelle moved to hire up to three deputies for Friday and Saturday of Old Settlers for \$55/hour and up to five (5) hours each evening in lieu of the community club not paying. The motion died due to a lack of a second. Hatzenbihler moved to approve the security needed for the sheriff's department for Old Settlers at a rate of \$55/hour up to six hours at the sheriff's discretion for release up to three, additional security officers if assistance is

made by community club. If the community club does not assist with paying, the City of Center will pay wages. They should expect to be paid Monday after Old Settlers. Berg seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Hatzenbihler amended his motion to include the dates of June 12 and 13, 2026. Berg seconded the amended motion. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Cayden Dauphinais needs at least one full time employee until the high schoolers get out of school. Cayden would also like to interview high schoolers as soon as possible. Golf Course salary bands are on the agenda for later.

Old Business:
 Lewis and Clark and Sakakawea Statues
 There have been a few different suggestions regarding placement. The city will be taking suggestions by Facebook, write in, or call in. People with ideas should list two of their proposed locations and that will be taken to the next meeting for Council to consider. Black Mountain ACH Accounts with Amortization Schedule for Interest

Auditor Smith talked to Black Mountain, and they said that is not possible unless the city pays for an Accounts Receivable module. The lady Smith talked to did not know the cost of that, but Smith will look into it further. Becky had asked Attorney Gooss to put together an amortization schedule for that, so it has now been provided to Auditor Smith. Vicky Meckle wants to know if we can stop charging for garbage while she continues to pay the base rate for water. After discussion, it was decided that is the same policy as our snowbirds and can be stopped/ resumed anytime. The tote will be removed and taken off the utility bill.

Direct Deposit for Council Members
 After a short discussion, it was decided Council will not go to direct deposit.

Golf Course Contract
 Minnkota leases the property to the city of Center through the Parks and Rec. Program. Attorney Gooss reviewed the contract and doesn't have any specific legal concerns about it other than two. One concern is where it talks about the insurance, and it says that the lessee, which would be the Golf Club, is responsible to have insurance on the premise. Attorney Gooss recommended that it include language that the city shall be listed as an additional insured on the policy, which is typical when you are leasing something, just so the city is covered. The second concern is that the contract is vague where repairs, maintenance and alterations are discussed. The lease says "lessor shall be responsible for structural and mechanical components of said building". Attorney Gooss recommends making it clearer as to what the city is responsible for related to structural and mechanical components because before that, the contract says "cost and expenses" and sets out how that is supposed to be covered. It is unclear if that's separate and aside from that, or not.

Discussion regarding the contract followed. Berg moved to change some language in the lease agreement to make sure it is switched over to Minnkota from BNI, extend the five-year lease to 2031, update the insurance to add that the lessor needs to be added as an additional insured, delete line six E, and the lessor is listed as the City of Center Park. Motion was seconded by Gusewelle. All in favor? Aye, aye, no, no. Roll call vote was held. Berg: aye, Gusewelle: aye, Kindsvogel: no, Hatzenbihler: no. Mayor Casson: no. Motion failed.

Hatzenbihler moved to change the lease agreement from a five-year to a three-year lease agreement. Kindsvogel seconded. Roll call vote was held. Berg: no. Additional discussion was held. Hatzenbihler moved to amend his motion from a five-year to a three-year lease, with the verbiage changed in the lease that was previously discussed with the city's attorney. Kindsvogel seconded the amended motion. Roll call vote was held. Berg: no, Gusewelle: no, Kindsvogel: yes, Hatzenbihler: yes. Mayor Casson: yes. Motion carried.

New Business:
 Designate Official Newspaper
 Gusewelle moved and Kindsvogel seconded to designate the city of Center's official newspaper to be The Center Republican published by Nordak Publishing. All in favor? Yes. Motion carried.

101 Things to Do
 Berg moved that we advertise 101 Things to Do with a half page ad for \$295 plus \$40 for color. Hatzenbihler seconded the motion. All in favor? Berg: aye, Gusewelle: aye, Kindsvogel: yes, Hatzenbihler: yes. Motion carried.

Beverage Machine in Civic Center
 A Coke driver stopped at the Civic Center recently. He only comes once a month. He was wondering if we wanted back on his list or not. Auditor is to look into pricing and bring information back to Council at the next meeting.

Password Change Policy
 Following the exit of an employee, it was stated a concern of previous employees being able to access the current city accounts. Attorney Gooss recommends that this should be one of the policies the city keeps in a specific place along with other written personnel policies, because that's the problem with turnover. This could be a repeated issue if it's not an actual stated policy. Attorney Gooss will draft a policy for the next meeting. This will include the revocation of all authorizations for charge accounts when you don't work for the city anymore. The policy should also cover keys, having the mayor signoff that the passwords, keys, all information have been returned upon leaving.

Fees for Fire and Ambulance Training
 Kindsvogel moved to waive the fee for this training. Hatzenbihler seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Planning and Zoning Appointments
 There are currently two positions available for the city planning and zoning committee. Gusewelle moved to advertise for the two planning and zoning appointments for a month in the newspaper and on Facebook, and then make appointments at the June meeting. Berg seconded. Attorney Gooss advised that the procedure is that the mayor makes an appointment and then the council votes to approve or not approve. Roll call vote was held. Berg: no, Gusewelle: yes, Kindsvogel: yes, Hatzenbihler: no, Mayor Casson: no.

Gusewelle moved to advertise one position for planning and zoning on Facebook. Berg seconded. Berg: aye, Gusewelle: aye, Kindsvogel: yes, Hatzenbihler: yes. Motion carried. Mayor Casson appointed Brittany Hagen to the planning and zoning. Gusewelle moved to accept Mayor Casson's appointment of Brittany Hagen to Planning and Zoning. Kindsvogel seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Lots & Lines Estimate and Jet Black
 Estimates were obtained for fixing the streets doing some crack sealing. Lots and Lines also gave an estimate of what it would cost to repaint the lines in our parking lot. Jeepers Creepers also submitted an estimate for consideration. The most cost-efficient bid is \$89,000 and our most expensive bid is \$198,000 to crack seal and maintain our streets. Discussion ensued regarding where to find funding to fix even a portion of the roads for now, since nothing was budgeted for road repair this year.

Revised Agreement NDLC
 Discussion was held regarding whether there is still a need for an interim auditor to assist in the office. Because budgeting is coming up it would be good to have some assistance for that. Berg could possibly free up some time to help with budgeting as well. Other

sources of guidance would be other auditors along with the League of Cities. Gusewelle moved to approve the revised agreement for financial services through the North Dakota League of Cities with the understanding that it's on an as needed basis for our city office. Hatzenbihler seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Building Insurance
 A few of these buildings do not qualify for our blanket coverage anymore because they are not at true and full value, so they would like to move these three buildings, the restroom building, the golf course pump house and the golf course maintenance building up to the full value and pay the insurance premium difference, so we can keep it on our blanket coverage. They're switching over from the insured amount to the suggested amount. Hatzenbihler moved to bring commercial building and personal property schedule and tax assessment up to current and leave on blanket coverage. Berg seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Garbage Rate Increases
 Right now, with postage and the cost of postcards to mail out for garbage, we charge one tote at \$18 and we are charged \$17.75. That doesn't even cover our postage to mail out our water bills, much less the paper or anything else that we're putting this stuff on. Berg presented a list of proposed rate increases and would like for the increases to be effective June 1, 2026. The city has roughly 221 single tote customers, 30 two-tote customers, ten 2-yard dumpsters and some random dumpsters of various sizes. We need to be able to cover the four roll offs for our fall cleanup. Typically, the council approves a fall cleanup where we bring in four roll off dumpsters at \$600 each. That fund needs to balance itself out. The proposed increases would bring us fairly close to even for the end of the year. Our garbage contract rate will go up January 1, 2027 by three percent. Kindsvogel moved to increase the garbage rates to these proposed prices effective June 1, 2026. Gusewelle seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

Civic Center Hours in Personnel Manual
 When Cassie was hired to work, we agreed to the hours 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. In our personnel manual, it does say 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Signs on the door, Facebook and website will be updated to reflect these hours with a lunch break included.

Homeowners Association Board Abolish Homeowners to Move Forward with Condo Association
 Discussion was held about the situation and processes regarding the Homeowners Association, Condo Association and how to handle fund transfers now that the last condo unit has been sold. The first step going forward is to get the HOA board to step down. Hatzenbihler is president of the board, so he could hold it in his portfolio.

Property in Violation of Cleanup Ordinance Through Western Plains by the Catholic Church
 There was a timeframe set by Western Plains that owners of a certain property had

a set number of days to clean up. Under certain criteria, an unkempt structure can be deemed a nuisance, animal trap, and/or unsafe. Since the deadline has come and gone, the burden falls on the city of Center. To avoid being fined, a deadline for a third-party cleanup crew needs to be set, because Western Plains will be following up to make sure it is taken care of. Since the city does not have a building inspector, we are not certified to say a building is not safe or unsafe enough to demolish it. There is potential to partner with Hazen for an inspector to handle situations like this. Berg moved to grant forty-five days for the city to find a third-party contractor to clean up the property in question by Western Plains and to assess the costs back to the property owner's taxes. Gusewelle seconded. Roll call vote was held. Berg: aye, Gusewelle: aye, Kindsvogel: aye, Hatzenbihler: aye. Motion carries.

Golf Course Worker Salary Bands
 In order to move forward on hiring interested parties, Gusewelle's recommendation is to set a salary band of \$12-\$17. Berg moved to hire two employees at the golf course. If they are new, their wage will be \$12/hour, if they are returning employees, we'll hire them back at \$13/hour. Kindsvogel seconded the motion. Discussion and roll call vote were held. Berg: aye, Gusewelle: no, Kindsvogel: aye, Hatzenbihler: no, Mayor Casson: yes. Motion carried.

Pool Employees Salary Rate
 Discussion was held regarding salary rates for pool employees. Kindsvogel moved to approve a \$12-13/hour salary band for pool employees from May through August. Hatzenbihler seconded the motion. Discussion took place. A roll call vote was held. Berg: aye, Gusewelle: aye, Kindsvogel: yes, Hatzenbihler: yes. Motion passed.

Reimbursement for Lifeguard Training
 Discussion was held regarding reimbursement for training required for lifeguards. Kindsvogel moved that the city of Center covers the cost of lifeguard training, on the condition that the individual passes the training and works at the pool for ninety (90) days. Absent the ninety (90) days worked, the individual will get a prorated bill depending on how much they work. Berg seconded the motion. Discussion continued. A roll call vote was held. Berg: no, Gusewelle: no, Kindsvogel: no, Hatzenbihler: no. Motion fails. Berg moved to reimburse the \$200 training fee to lifeguards upon hire at the Center pool. Kindsvogel seconded the motion. A roll call vote was held. Berg: aye, Gusewelle: aye, Kindsvogel: yes, Hatzenbihler: yes. Motion passed.

Annexation Application/ Planning and Zoning Meeting Date
 The city acknowledged that they have received an application for annexation and zoning change. Discussion and clarification about proper processes going forward was held.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM.
 Eric Casson, Mayor
 Cassie Smith, Auditor
 (05-28-2026)

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department announces the following summary of regulations and changes for the 2026-2027 Deer Hunting Proclamation.

Apply online at gf.nd.gov. The deadline for submitting online applications is June 3, 2026.

| SEASON | OPENS | CLOSES | AREAS | RESTRICTIONS |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------|------------------|--|
| DEER BOW | September 4 12:00 noon (CT) | January 3 | Statewide | Residents - Any deer is legal. No unit restrictions. Nonresidents - Restricted to species of deer described on license. No unit restrictions. Orange clothing required of all bow hunters during regular gun season. |
| DEER GUN | November 6 12:00 noon (CT) 16 1/2 Day Season | November 22 | All units | Restricted to type of deer and unit described on license. Type of deer includes species and whether antlerless or antlered (at least one visible antler). Note exception for white-tailed deer hunters in units 4B, 4C, 4D and 4E. Orange clothing required. |
| MUZZLELOADER | November 27 12:00 noon (CT) | December 13 | Statewide | Restricted to white-tailed deer only and type of deer described on license. No unit restrictions. Orange clothing required. |
| YOUTH DEER | September 18 12:00 noon (CT) | September 27 | Statewide | 11-, 12- and 13-year-olds - Any antlerless deer is legal. No unit restrictions.* 14- and 15-year-olds - Any deer is legal. No unit restrictions.* * Hunting units 4A-4F, a special license is required to hunt mule deer. These licenses are valid only in the unit specified on the license. Orange clothing required. |
| SPECIAL DEER-BOW HERD REDUCTION | September 4 12:00 noon (CT) | January 3 | See Proclamation | Restricted to any-antlerless deer as described on license. |

SUMMARY OF CHANGES FROM LAST YEAR

- The 2026 North Dakota deer hunting season is set with 39,100 licenses available, 3,200 less than last year.
- A total of 750 muzzleloader licenses will be available in 2026, 56 less than last year.
- A total of 240 nonresident any deer archery licenses available, 60 less than last year.

A complete 2026 deer hunting proclamation is available from the North Dakota Game & Fish Department, 100 North Bismarck Expressway, Bismarck, ND 58501-5095, (701) 328-6300 or online at gf.nd.gov.