VILLAGE OF CLEARWATER, NEBRASKA
BUDGET & TAX REQUEST HEARINGS & REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 14, 2026

The Board of Trustees of the Village of Clearwater met for a budget hearing, tax request hearing, and regular meeting that included a one- and six-year street improvement plan hearing Monday, September 14, 2026, at 7 p.m., in the fire hall meeting room. Budget hearing opened at 7:02 p.m. Notice of hearings and meeting were given in advance by publication in *Summerland Advocate-Messenger*, posted at US Post Office, Clearwater Market, and Cornerstone Bank and given to Board members prior to meeting. Public was informed of location of Open Meeting Act poster.

Present: Kelly Kerkman, Marsha Hart, Cody Kester, Brian King, Jeff Schlecht. Others present: Clerk Angie Hupp, Utilities Superintendent Michael See, attorney Kyle Petersen, reporter LuAnn Schindler, Tony Blecher, Andrew Blecher, Tom Thiele, Melissa Zegers.

No board members absent.

Kerkman opened floor for discussion of proposed 2026-2027 fiscal year budget. No public comment presented.

Motion by Hart, seconded by Kester, to close budget hearing at 7:03 p.m. Voting aye: Hart, Kester, King, Schlecht, Kerkman. Voting nay: none.

Tax request hearing opened at 7:03 p.m.

Kerkman opened floor for discussion of proposed 2026-2027 fiscal year tax request. No public comment presented.

Motion by Schlecht, seconded by King, to close tax request hearing at 7:03 p.m. Voting aye: Schlecht, King, Kester, Hart, Kerkman. Voting nay: none.

Opened regular meeting at 7:04 p.m. Present: Kelly Kerkman, Marsha Hart, Cody Kester, Brian King, Jeff Schlecht. Others present: Clerk Angie Hupp, Utilities Superintendent Michael See, attorney Kyle Petersen, reporter LuAnn Schindler, Tony Blecher, Andrew Blecher, Tom Thiele, Melissa Zegers, Sheriff Bob Moore.

No board members absent.

Motion by Kester, seconded by King, to approve August 18, 2026 minutes of budget workshop and regular meeting as presented. Voting aye: Kester, King, Schlecht, Kerkman, Hart. Voting nay: none.

Motion by Hart, seconded by Kester, to approve treasurer's report as presented. Voting aye: Hart, Kester, King, Schlecht, Kerkman. Voting nay: none.

Motion by King, seconded by Hart, to approve 2026-2027 fiscal year budget as presented at budget hearing. Voting aye: King, Hart, Kerkman, Kester, Schlecht. Voting nay: none.

Motion by Schlecht, seconded by Hart, to approve Resolution 2026-10 setting 2026-2027 tax request at 0.499996 per $100 of assessed value, equaling $121,050.50 for general fund and zero for bonds. Voting aye: Schlecht, Hart, Kerkman, King, Kester. Voting nay: none.

No public comment heard.

Discussion regarding Ordinance 2026-9 setting speed limit on 515 ½ Ave. King asked for clarification on completing ordinance. Attorney Kyle Petersen stated he gave options, not knowing what Board wanted to do. Kerkman said bus stop signs will be installed on either side of Blecher residences and resident Dick Kester, 85140 515 ½ Ave., couldn't attend meeting but asked Kerkman beforehand to pass along opinion to leave speed limit at 25 mph. Tony Blecher, 85128 515 ½ Ave., has videos of many vehicles speeding through area that's been a problem for years. King expressed personal opinion that 35 mph would not be problematic along that stretch and that should match River Rd. Blecher stated River Rd. is zoned differently, and state statute requires process beyond passing an ordinance and should also be 25 mph. King asked Petersen and Petersen stated per code book, ordinance is all that's needed. Blecher appreciates that Thiele Dairy trucks have slowed down significantly. Blecher stated Teresa Kester, 85140 515 ½ Ave., told him she tells grandchildren not to play in front yard because of traffic. Motion by Kerkman to leave speed limit at 25 mph. Cody Kester asked whether all signs are staying as is. Michael See said posts are installed but school bus stops signs still need to be installed. Blecher says security camera shows someone trying to remove 25 mph speed limit sign that was installed a couple of months ago at Village limits. Schlecht said speed limit sign should be installed south of Nebraska St. curve as well. Kester thinks speed should go from 55 mph in county, to 35 mph at Village limits and 25 mph before Nebraska St. curve. Village has verbal permission from county to place reduced speed signs in county right-of-way but need written permission. Rural resident Melissa Zegers, 85126 515 ½ Ave., said usually suggested speed limit on curves slower than posted speed. Blecher said when section of 515 ½ Ave. became Village-owned street, speed changed to 25 mph as stated in state statute for residential areas and can't be changed just because. Rural resident Tom Thiele of Thiele Dairy, 84925 515 Ave., mentioned families in countryside have dealt with 50-55 mph speed limits where school buses stop for years. Andrew Blecher, 85130 515 ½ Ave., said it's not the same because discussion is about residential area in town, not out in country. LuAnn Schindler, 403 Iowa St., asked difference between River Rd. heading out of town and 515 ½ Ave. heading out of town because both are residential on one side and pasture on the other. No real difference other than zoning. Kester didn't want to change the way things have been and putting up more speed traps. Petersen stated someone needed to second Kerkman's motion to leave speed limit alone or motion dies for lack of second. Kester seconded the motion. Tony Blecher asked if item would be on agenda again next month. Kerkman told him if motion passes, it'll be done. Kester wants to make sure it's clearly marked and feels it makes sense to transition from county's 55 mph to 35 mph at Village limits instead of sudden 25 mph. Angie Hupp read motion for clarification. Voting aye: Kerkman. Voting nay: Hart, Kester, King, Schlecht. Motion failed.

Motion by King, seconded by Hart, to amend Ordinance 2026-9 to remove Section 1a, amend Section 1b to 35 mph from Village limits to Dibble St. and place speed limit signs, reduced speed sign and school bus stop signs. Andrew Blecher asked purpose of increased speed. Kester worried about significant speed transition in small timeframe. Tony Blecher stated it's been that way for years and suggested asking county to decrease speed from 515 ½ Ave. curve north to Village limits to 35 mph. Hupp read new motion. Voting aye: King, Hart, Schlecht, Kester. Voting nay: Kerkman.

Motion by Hart, seconded by King, to amend title of Ordinance 2026-9 to "set the speed limit on 515 ½ Avenue from the point where the street curves from Dibble Street ~~a latitudinal direction to a longitudinal direction~~ to the south corporate limits; to repeal ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith; to provide when this ordinance shall be in full force and effect; and to provide for the publication of this ordinance in pamphlet form." Voting aye: Hart, King, Schlecht, Kester. Voting nay: Kerkman.

Motion by Kester, seconded by Schlecht, to waive three readings of Ordinance 2026-9 setting speed on 515 ½ Ave. Voting aye: Kester, Schlecht, King, Hart. Voting nay: Kerkman.

Motion by King, seconded by Hart, to approve Ordinance 2026-9 to set the speed limit on 515 ½ Avenue from Dibble Street to the south corporate limits; to repeal ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith; to provide when this ordinance shall be in full force and effect; and to provide for the publication of this ordinance in pamphlet form. Voting aye: King, Hart, Kester, Schlecht. Voting nay: Kerkman.

Opened one- and six-year street improvement plan hearing at 7:35 p.m. Only street listed on one-year plan is Nebraska St. using grant funds. Six-year streets remain same from last year. Kerkman opened floor for discussion. No public comment presented.

Motion by Schlecht, seconded by Hart, to close one- and six-year street improvement plan hearing at 7:37 p.m. Voting aye: Schlecht, Hart, Kerkman, King, Kester. Voting nay: none.

Motion by King, seconded by Kester, to approve one- and six-year street improvement plan as presented in hearing. Voting aye: King, Kester, Hart, Kerkman, Schlecht. Voting nay: none.

Motion by Kerkman, seconded by Schlecht, to approve Resolution 2026-11 confirming compliance with Nebraska Board of Public Roads Classifications and Standards for 2026. Voting aye: Kerkman, Schlecht, King, Kester, Hart. Voting nay: none.

Discussion regarding building permit application for Derek Thiele shop addition at 202 Nebraska St. Size much bigger than allowed in zoning regulations and concerns about how neighbors feel. Kester said was told neighbors okay with it. Should be denied because it violates zoning, then Thiele can appeal to Board as Board of Adjustment. Schlecht asked if needed to go to zoning. Petersen said no, as size variances go straight to Board of Adjustment. Kerkman wants to see written approval from neighbors. No motion.

Discussion regarding 2026-2027 fiscal year wages for Ordinance 2026-10. No raise for Board, Village Clerk or janitorial. Utilities Superintendent wage range between $21.00-25.00/hr. depending on certifications. Librarian between $16.50-18.00/hour. Library helpers and part-time/summer employees minimum raised to $15.26 according to Nebraska minimum wage requirements.

Motion by Kerkman, seconded by Hart, to amend Ordinance 2026-10 to include wage up to $25.00 per hour for Utilities Superintendent. Voting aye: Kerkman, Hart, Kester, King, Schlecht. Voting nay: none.

Motion by Kester, seconded by Kerkman, to waive three readings of Ordinance 2026-10. Voting aye: Kester, Kerkman, Hart, King, Schlecht. Voting nay: none.

Motion by Schlecht, seconded by Hart, to approve Ordinance 2026-10 setting wages and salaries of officers and employees of the Village for the fiscal year commencing October 1, 2026, and continuing to and through September 30, 2027; repealing all ordinances in conflict; providing an effective date; and to provide for the publication of this ordinance in pamphlet form. Voting aye: Schlecht, Hart, Kerkman, Kester, King. Voting nay: none.

Discussion regarding projects, especially those with past-due completion dates. Flenniken Electric contracted to replace large culvert under Main St. along First St. to be completed by March 1, 2026. Village paid for culvert in December but no work has been done. Petersen said should include phrase "time is of the essence" in future contracts so if not completed by deadline, Village can cancel contract and look elsewhere.

Motion by Hart, seconded by Kester, to send letter to Flenniken Electric offering to rescind contract with no penalties, contingent upon agreement by Flenniken Electric and receipt of culvert by Village and advertise for new bids. Voting aye: Hart, Kester, King, Schlecht, Kerkman. Voting nay: none.

Ruterbories Construction contracted to replace library/office roof before September 1, 2026. Letter received from Ruterbories on August 17, 2026, requesting increase in contracted amount due to error in cost of supplies in original bid in October 2025, as well as significant increase in cost of materials. Since insurance claim filed for roof replacement, Hupp checked with insurance company regarding timeline and reported if Village still intends to replace roof, no penalties for delays or having to get new bids. Kester asked for clarification of phrase "time is of the essence" and LuAnn Schindler asked about adding fines to contracts like county does. Kester worried about making it harder to obtain bids if too many restrictions included.

Motion by Kerkman, seconded by King, to send letter to Ruterbories Construction offering to rescind contract with no penalties, and advertise for new bids. Voting aye: Kerkman, King, Schlecht, Kester, Hart. Voting nay: none.

Motion by Kerkman, seconded by Schlecht, to approve installation of electrical panel by Boyd's Electric at library for well generator. Voting aye: Kerkman, Schlecht, King, Kester, Hart. Voting nay: none.

Discussion regarding other open projects. Hupp stated SCADA well system being partially paid for by

Neb. Dept. of Water, Environment and Energy grant needs to be completed by end of 2026. Contracted company Atlas Automation aware of deadline and said will be completed in time but hasn't been started. Comprehensive plan grant proceeding on schedule. Nebraska St. paving grant a few months behind, but topographic survey should be ready to present in November with construction bids requested in January. Rutjens Construction contracted to replace one fire hydrant and install another this fall or winter.

Discussion held regarding Ordinance 2026-11 to establish a Qualified Small Employer Health Reimbursement Arrangement (QSEHRA) for eligible municipal employees. Hupp explained differences between Health Savings Account and QSEHRA such as, with QSEHRA, money is owned by Village and employees don't contribute to fund account. Maximum contribution allowed for 2026 is $6,450 for individuals and $13,100 for families. Board budgeted $5,000 for health insurance for 2026-2027.

Motion by Kerkman, seconded by Hart, to amend Ordinance 2026-11 to include monthly contribution of $208.33 each for individuals and families for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. Voting aye: Kerkman, Hart, Kester, King, Schlecht. Voting nay: none.

Motion by Kerkman, seconded by Hart, to waive three readings of Ordinance 2026-11. Voting aye: Kerkman, Hart, Kester, King, Schlecht. Voting nay: none.

Motion by Schlecht, seconded by King, to approve Ordinance 2026-11 to establish a Qualified Small Employer Health Reimbursement Arrangement (QSEHRA) for eligible municipal employees; to authorize the Village Clerk to execute necessary plan documents; to repeal ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith; to provide when this ordinance shall be in full force and effect; and to provide for the publication of this ordinance in pamphlet form. Voting aye: Schlecht, King, Kester, Hart, Kerkman. Voting nay: none.

Motion by Hart, seconded by King, to approve full IT services from Network Consulting Services. Hupp explained that Neb. Public Power District currently hosts Village website for free but will be ceasing services at end of 2027, so Village needs to find another company. Both Network Consulting Services and 1to1 Technologies offer hosting services. Voting aye: Hart, King, Schlecht, Kerkman, Kester. Voting nay: none.

Motion by Kerkman, seconded by King, to approve payment of $42,815.82 to ZOLL Medical Corporation for defibrillator equipment for fire department, partially using Mutual Finance Organization funds from 2025 and 2026. Voting aye: Kerkman, King, Schlecht, Kester, Hart. Voting nay: none.

Motion by Kerkman, seconded by Hart, to approve transfer of $33,736 from water/sewer checking to sewer reserve savings for annual reserve of $7,736 and savings for 2027 USDA loan payment. Voting aye: Kerkman, Hart, Kester, King, Schlecht. Voting nay: none.

Motion by Hart, seconded by Schlecht, to approve changing automatic monthly transfer of $3,000 from water/sewer checking to water/sewer savings to $6,500 automatic monthly transfer from water/sewer checking to sewer reserve savings to cover annual USDA loan payments. Voting aye: Hart, Schlecht, King, Kester, Kerkman. Voting nay: none.

Economic report presented. Cost in annual contract had transposed numbers. Approved contract listed 2026-2027 cost as $20,362.10 when it should have been $20,326.10. Updated contracts available for chairperson's signature.

Maintenance report presented. Maguire Iron cleaned and inspected water tower. In pretty good shape but interior, if not exterior as well, will need painting within next couple of years. Michael See asked about being approval for overtime during remaining mowing season. Kerkman and Schlecht mentioned Village has two people available to mow part-time so utilize them so See can work on other things.

Library report presented. After another trivia fundraiser, should be close to having enough money to pay for flooring in library and will be getting quotes.

Motion by Hart, seconded by Kester, to approve annual library interlocal agreement with Antelope County. Voting aye: Hart, Kester, King, Schlecht, Kerkman. Voting nay: none.

Clerk report presented. Had meeting with Maguire Iron who suggested service agreement for water tower instead of paying as needed. Would help pay for painting but Board won't discuss until 2027-2028 budget. Ewing maintenance guy asked Hupp about borrowing skid loader broom, so Hupp asked about interlocal for borrowing equipment. Board said last time discussed, decided not interested due to liabilities.

Sheriff report presented. Sheriff Moore asked about status of 205 Colorado St. as Department called for trespasser. Petersen said Village doesn't own it, so can't stop people from being on property or prove they do/don't have permission from owners, but sheriff's office should check on it. June hours were 134 hours 26 minutes with eight 911 calls and July had 77 ½ hours with nine 911 calls.

Motion by Kerkman, seconded by Hart, to approve Resolution 2026-12 electing to abate concurrent public nuisances by demolishing an unsafe building and clearing overgrown vegetation at 205 Colorado Street, authorizing the expenditure of municipal funds for said abatements, and directing the reporting of itemized costs for the imposition of a special assessment. Voting aye: Kerkman, Hart, Kester, King, Schlecht. Voting nay: none.

Discussion regarding Resolution 2026-9 Master Fee Schedule. Hupp to research surrounding towns' pricing and present more information at October meeting.

No discussion regarding updating employee manual.

Confirmed next regular meeting date of Monday, October 12, 2026 at 7 p.m.

Motion by Hart, seconded by King, to approve claims of $115,750.94 and payroll of $6,880.74. Voting aye: Hart, King, Schlecht, Kerkman, Kester. Voting nay: none.

General Checking: American Legal Publishing, srv, 7,598.50; Antelope Co. Sheriff, srv, 1,352.25;

Black Hills Energy, util, 111.96; Bomgaars, sup, 483.54; Brian Scholl, srv, 3,000.00; ColdType Publishing, adv, 561.48; Cordell's ATV Repair, sup, 37.46; ERPPD, util, 1,244.02; Economic Money Market, tnfr, 2,735.65; Jarecki Sharp & Petersen, lgl, 300.00; NNTC, util, 188.97; Neligh Auto & Machine, sup, 58.99; Petty cash, sup, 78.75; Professional Tax Services, srv, 2,300.00; Summerland Public School, fees, 1,430.00; Two Rivers Auto Parts of Neligh, sup, 113.99; Western Oil, fuel, 680.22; ALLO Business, srv, 48.00; EMC Insurance, ins, 5,135.11; Neb. Dept. of Ag, dues, 176.75; Neb. Dept. of Revenue, tx, 2,237.46; Payroll, pay, 5,636.35.

Water/Sewer Checking: Bud's Sanitary Service, util, 3,606.25; ERPPD, util, 754.14; Maguire Iron, srv, 2,850.00; One Call Concepts, Inc., srv, 1.64; Courtney Soper, ret, 101.01; Sewer Savings, tnfr, 33,736.00; US Post Office, sup, 164.00; Utility Equipment Co., sup, 171.00; Village of Ewing, srv, 300.00; Neb. Dept. of Revenue, tx/dues, 763.73; Water/Sewer Savings, tnfr, 3,000.00.

Fire Checking: Heartland Fire Protection, srv, 275.00; One Billing Solutions, srv, 37.50; ZOLL Medical Corp., sup, 42,815.82.

Keno Checking: Petty cash, sup, 12.47.

Library Checking: Clearwater Market, sup, 63.63; Capital One, sup, 225.65; Payroll, pay, 898.09.

Credit Card: Amazon, sup, 225.65.

Motion by Hart, seconded by Kester, to approve adjourning and closing meeting at 8:41 p.m. Voting aye: Hart, Kester, King, Schlecht, Kerkman. Voting nay: none.

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Chairperson Kelly Kerkman Clerk Angie Hupp