



CITY OF DOWNS

Regular Council Meeting
March 16, 2026 - 5:30 p.m.
715 Railroad Street
Downs, Kansas 67437

Downs City Council met in regular session at 5:30 p.m. on Monday March 16, 2026, at City Hall. Council members present: Joyce Hake, Harry Colburn, John Bisnette, Collin Jones, Heather Hancock. Others present: Sherry Knouf, Bruce Berkley, Brady Pound, and Miranda Robinson. Mayor Vienna Janis called the meeting to order and led the flag salute.

Minutes

Harry moved, John seconded, to approve regular meeting minutes from March 2, 2026. Motion carried with 4 ayes, Heather abstained.

Staff Reports

Sherry Knouf presented the council with the library report. She mentioned attendance is down due to the cold winter months but she has been delivering books to the nursing home. The Storytelling Festival will bring a big book give-away. Knouf also reported a grant should be coming from the Carnegie Foundation, and she also stated she was going to look into another grant to help with costs for replacing the carpet in the library.

Animal Control Collin Jones reported he caught a cat in a trap; orange tabby that was taken to the vet clinic. The trap was set to catch a raccoon in the 500 block of Division Street. He also removed a dead cat out of the street on Osborne Street.

Code Enforcement Harry Colburn reported Ron Schlaefli Construction should be starting soon on the demolition of structures at 1001 Blunt Street.

In the water report, Colburn reported the nitrate analyzer was received back. However, it is not functioning correctly. He is going to have to get a tech from HACH out here, which is not part of the contract so it will be an additional cost. Colburn mentioned that a water leak at the water plant was fixed last week with help from Kruger Backhoe.

In the sewer report, Colburn was asking the council to approve sewer jetting for \$6,000 done by Kingsbury Septic. Heather moved, Collin seconded, to approve sewer jetting from Kingsbury Septic in the amount of \$6,000. Motion carried 4 ayes, Harry abstained.

City Superintendent Brady Pound stated that Jerry Lee contacted him about the placing of food trucks. Council held discussion and stated it would be best for them to stay on the white-way.

Pound mentioned he would like to hold the city-wide clean up from April 3-14 and he is going to check into different companies for metal collection. Heather moved, Harry seconded, to have the Spring City Wide Clean-up April 3 to 14, and pay for advertising. Motion carried with 5 ayes.

Pound brought up wanting to purchase certain tools for the shop, council asked him to get quotes. The grader attachment arrived and he has been working on roads and the cemetery. The crew has cut down elm trees out of the tree line. Council suggested getting the cemetery sprayed for weeds.

City Clerk Miranda Robinson reported the memorial funds for Vickie Oviatt were used to purchase a bench and a plaque, which will be placed at the Memorial Hall. She mentioned that building permits 26-02, 26-03, and 26-05 are going to be heard by the board of zoning appeals for variance applications. Robinson mentioned to council that the gWorks payment processing fees will be increasing as of March 30 and they will be passed on to the customer.

Collin mentioned County Commissioner Rex Johnston contacted him about a grant for a slide in unit for a fire department truck, so he is waiting on a quote from Weis Fire and Safety. He also mentioned that the international fire truck is needing repairs and could cost up to \$50,000. Collin reported that the department wants to join a local task force that could get reimbursements for call outs. However, it requires the firetrucks to have \$1,000,000 insurance coverage so he requested the insurance coverage be changed. Heather moved, John seconded, to increase the vehicle insurance blanket policy from \$500,000 insurance coverage to \$1,000,000 coverage. Motion carried with 5 ayes.

Boards and Committees

Heather mentioned securing sponsors for this summer's Free Swim Saturday and asked when the crew would set up the pool slide.

Permits

Heather moved, John seconded, to approve contractor licenses: 26-36 to 26-37. Motion carried with 5 ayes.

Harry moved, Joyce seconded, to approve special use permits: 26-33 to 26-39. Motion carried with 5 ayes.

John moved, Harry seconded, to approve building permit: 26-04. Motion carried with 5 ayes.

New Business

Carla Naasz Schlatter was present to ask for an exemption to keep two pigs from March to mid-July at the barn for her grandkids' fair projects. Council held discussion on this issue. The city code ordinance states no swine allowed in city limits. City Attorney advised if changing the ordinance, it needs to be done legally and it's a lengthy process. Council decided to abide by the city ordinance and not allow the pigs.

Applications were reviewed for pool manager and assistant pool manager. John moved, Joyce seconded, to hire Ariana Cannon as pool manager and Kelli Hennes as assistant pool manager. Motion carried with 5 ayes.

The City Council received a letter of concern about issues at the cemetery. City Superintendent stated some of the issues have been addressed and they are continuing to work on the rest. Council suggested a reply letter sent back addressing the concerns.

The City Council received a request for Sypulski Trust Fund application from Downs Community Connection for the veteran's memorial project located at 421 Morgan Ave. Harry moved, Joyce seconded, to give \$10,000 to the Downs Community Connection group for the Veterans Memorial from the Sypulski Trust Fund and donation of fencing the city has on hand. Motion carried with 4 ayes, Collin abstained.

At 7:25p.m., Harry moved, John seconded, to move into executive session to discuss non-elected personnel for 15 minutes with council, mayor, superintendent present per K.S.A. 75-4319 (b)(1). Motion carried with 5 ayes. The regular meeting will resume at 7:40 p.m. Collin moved, John seconded, to give Creighton Hendrickson a \$1.25/hour raise as he has completed his 90-day probationary period, effective immediately. Motion carried with 5 ayes.

Council & Mayor Reports

Collin resigned from his City Council position because he is moving outside of Downs.

Vouchers & Payroll

John moved, Heather seconded, to approve vouchers and payroll as presented. Motion carried with 5 ayes.

With no further business, Heather moved, John seconded, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried with 5 ayes. The meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Vienna Janis

Vienna Janis, Mayor

ATTEST:

Miranda Robinson

Miranda Robinson, City Clerk



(seal)