

NEWTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 16, 2026, 6:00 PM

Pledge

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Ervin asked everyone present to join in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

Call to Order

1. Roll Call

The City Council of Newton, Iowa met in regular session at 6:00 P.M. on the above date in the Council Chambers at 101 West 4th Street South. Mayor Ervin presided. Present Council Members: Mills, Roth, Dalton, Hallam, Simbro, Holschuh. Absent: None.

Presentation

2. Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Program - Kevin Schnoebelen, CASA Program Coordinator, Division of Compliance and Administration, Iowa Department of Health and Human Services

CASA trains and supports community volunteers to advocate for a safe and permanent home for children who are in the welfare system. They ensure the voice of each child is heard. Anyone can volunteer.

3. Eagle Scout 5K Course Project Presentation - Noah Tremel

This project will include updating the high school 5k course in Maytag Park to create a permanent course that the community can use. The funds for this project will come from donations from family, friends, and others who want to contribute to the improvement of the 5k course.

Citizen Participation

4. Darnell Loatman, CEO—FOCUSS notified the council that they had secured another \$50,000 from a private donor in Des Moines for their Newton project. Frank Liebl, Newton Development Corp. Executive Director, announced that the Newton Rail Park has been certified by the Iowa Economic Authority.

Consent Agenda

Moved by Holschuh, seconded by Roth to approve consent agenda items 5-21. AYES: Six. NAYS: None. Consent Agenda was adopted.

5. March 2, 2026 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

6. Certify Assistant Fire Chief candidate list

7. Approve Liquor Licenses for the following: 2nd Ave Social at DMACC Newton Campus, 600 N 2nd Ave W, for Special Event on March 28, 2026, Class C Retail Alcohol License; Elite Mart, LLC (formerly Shop n Save), 404 S 11th Ave W, new ownership, Class E Retail Alcohol License pending state and local approval

8. Approve 2026-2027 Cigarette/Tobacco/Nicotine/Vapor License for the following: Elite Mart, LLC, 404 S 11th Ave W; Hy-Vee Fast & Fresh, 1421 1st Ave E; and Hy-Vee Food Store, 1501 1st Ave E

9. Resolution Adopting 2026 S21 Supplement to the "Code of Ordinances of the City of Newton, Iowa, 2025," and Approving Distribution of the Same to Code Subscribers
Resolution 2026-083 adopted.

10. Resolution levying assessments for costs of nuisance abatement and providing for the payment thereof (Schedule 26-05)
Resolution 2026-084 adopted.

11. Resolution fixing the amounts to be assessed against individual private properties for the abatement of nuisance violations (Schedule No. 26-06)
Resolution 2026-085 adopted.

12. Resolution approving a Five (5) year agreement and One (1) year supplemental agreement with the Iowa Department of Transportation for City maintenance of U.S. Highway 6
Resolution 2026-086 adopted.

13. Resolution accepting completion of the 2025 Landfill Concrete Crushing Project
Resolution 2026-087 adopted.

14. Resolution authorizing the submittal of the USDOT Standard Title VI/Non-Discrimination Assurances document and Iowa DOT Title VI Non-Discrimination Agreement
Resolution 2026-088 adopted.

15. Resolution Approving Payment to S&P Global Ratings for Services Related to the 2026 Bonding
Resolution 2026-089 adopted.

16. Resolution Approving a Property Tax Rebate for the Ex Nihilo Property Located at 107 1st Ave W Within the North Central Urban Renewal Area
Resolution 2026-090 adopted.
17. Resolution accepting the ISE Grant awarded for the emergency replacement of the airport beacon
Resolution 2026-091 adopted.
18. Resolution approving change order #1 for 1st Ave E and E 12th St Drainage Improvements Project
Resolution 2026-092 adopted.
19. Resolution Setting a Public Hearing for the Sale of 1219 South 4th Avenue East, Newton, Jasper County, Iowa
Resolution 2026-093 adopted.
20. Resolution Setting a Date For a Public Hearing on the Proposed Property Tax Levy for Fiscal Year July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027
Resolution 2026-094 adopted.

21. Approve Bills

Public Hearing

22. Public Hearing on Proposed Adoption of an Ordinance Granting to Interstate Power and Light Company (Alliant Energy) a 25-Year Non-Exclusive Electric Franchise
Mayor Ervin stated that this is the time and place for a Public Hearing on the above Resolution. One written comment was received and forwarded to the council. Susanne Scott, 718 S 3rd Ave W, and Joyce Prendergast, 5672 S 9th Ave E, voiced concerns. Moved by Mills, seconded by Hallam to close the public hearing. AYES: Six. NAYS: None. The public hearing was closed.
23. First Consideration of an Ordinance Granting to Interstate Power and Light Company (Alliant Energy) a 25-year Non-Exclusive Electric Franchise
Item postponed at the request of the Mayor.
24. Public Hearing on Proposed Adoption of an Ordinance Establishing a Franchise Fee on Energy Providers Operating in the City of Newton, Iowa
Mayor Ervin stated that this is the time and place for a Public Hearing on the above Resolution. One written comment was received and forwarded to the council. Susanne Scott, 718 S 3rd Ave W, and Joyce Prendergast, 5672 S 9th Ave E, voiced concerns. Moved by Dalton, seconded by Hallam to close the public hearing. AYES: Six. NAYS: None. The public hearing was closed.
25. First Consideration of an Ordinance Establishing a Franchise Fee on Energy Providers Operating in the City of Newton, Iowa
Item postponed at the request of the Mayor.

Ordinance

26. Second consideration of an Ordinance Amending the Code of Ordinances, City of Newton, Iowa, 2025, Title VII, Chapter 70, Section 70.15, "Traffic and Parking Schedules Adopted by Reference", to make changes to street parking in the 100-200 Block of East Twenty-First Street South
Moved by Hallam, seconded by Simbro to approve the second consideration of the Ordinance. AYES: Six. NAYS: None. Second Consideration of the Ordinance was approved.
27. Second Consideration on an Ordinance amending City of Newton Code of Ordinances Title IX: General Regulations, Chapter 94: Public Nuisances and Title XV, Land Usage, Chapter 158: Zoning pertaining to Urban Chickens & Ducks
Moved by Mills, seconded by Holschuh to approve the second consideration of the Ordinance. Erika Patterson, 1421 N 8th Ave E, and Alexa Young, 313 E 13th St N, thanked everyone involved for supporting this ordinance. AYES: Five. NAYS: Simbro. Second Consideration of the Ordinance was approved.

Resolution

28. Resolution approving Eagle Scout Project at Maytag Park
Moved by Mills, seconded by Dalton to adopt the Resolution. AYES: Six. NAYS: None. Resolution 2026-095 adopted.
29. Resolution updating the Cemetery Rules and Regulations for Union Cemetery and Memorial Park Cemetery and Fee Schedule
Moved by Hallam, seconded by Roth to adopt the Resolution. Moved by Holschuh, seconded by Dalton, to table the resolution to get more information. AYES: Six. NAYS: None. Resolution was postponed.
30. Resolution approving the Newton Sanitary Landfill fee schedule
Moved by Roth, seconded by Hallam to adopt the Resolution. AYES: Six. NAYS: None. Resolution 2026-096 adopted.

31. Resolution awarding contract for the Aurora Park Parking Improvements Project
Moved by Dalton, seconded by Simbro to adopt the Resolution. AYES: Six. NAYS: None. Resolution 2026-097 adopted.
32. Resolution approving the purchase of musical play equipment for Harmony Park using funds donated for the purpose
Moved by Simbro, seconded by Roth to adopt the Resolution. AYES: Six. NAYS: None. Resolution 2026-098 adopted.
33. Resolution Authorizing and Approving a Loan Agreement, Providing for the Issuance of \$5,455,000 General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bonds, Series 2026A and Providing for the Levy of Taxes to Pay the Same
Moved by Simbro, seconded by Mills to adopt the Resolution. AYES: Six. NAYS: None. Resolution 2026-099 adopted.
34. Resolution Approving Pay Plan Adjustment for the Finance Officer position and Eliminating the Sr Financial Analyst Position in the Administration Department
Moved by Hallam, seconded by Holschuh to adopt the Resolution. Susanne Scott, 718 S 3rd Ave W, indicated that the ranges were unclear. AYES: Six. NAYS: None. Resolution 2026-095 adopted.

Staff Report

35. Staffing at Westwood Clubhouse - Brad Sponseller, Westwood Operations Manager
The City authorized a Westwood Operations Manager, Clubhouse Manager, and a Golf Pro. The Golf Pro position has remained unfilled. To address unmet supervisory staffing needs a reorganization is proposed. Instead of the Golf Pro position, which is authorized at Range 6 on the pay matrix (entry level is \$56,077 annually), staff is proposing an Assistant Clubhouse Manager at Range 1 on the pay matrix (entry level is \$37,044). The position would be fully paid for by the Golf Fund.

Mayor/Council Comments

36. Mayor and Council Comments
Dalton announced an open house at their business on March 28th from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., free lunch, clearance on snow blowers, and lots of fun things. Simbro indicated that the city has not decided to close Aurora Park Street, which was just an idea. Roth was able to see the wind turbines going down the railroad. It was a sight to see. Holschuh indicated that the first couple of days of the N 2nd Ave traffic light stop sign change was a little sketchy. He feels that it has gotten a lot better. Sometimes we just need to take a breath and give it time to adjust. PW Director Joe Grife indicated that they will be removing the signal heads in order to help clear the confusion. Mills appreciates the feedback on the Franchise Fees. Mayor Ervin, attended a mayor's meeting and took Joe Grife. It's a great opportunity to see what others are doing. Ervin stated that our directors are doing a great job. Ervin reiterated the importance of the Rail Park to be state-certified. Ervin indicated that he is not a fan of franchise fees, but we will need them depending on the legislature. We are one of the few communities that doesn't already have them.

Closed Session

37. Closed Session under Iowa Code Section 21.5.1.j, to discuss the purchase or sale of particular real estate only where premature disclosure could be reasonably expected to increase the price the governmental body would have to pay for that property or reduce the price the governmental body would receive for that property. The minutes and the audio recording of a session closed under this paragraph shall be available for public examination when the transaction discussed is completed
At 7:21 P.M., it was moved by Mills, seconded by Dalton to go into closed session. The city attorney advised the council that they had legal authority to do so. AYES: Six. NAYS: None. The motion passed.

Return to Open Session

38. Return to Open Session
Council returned to open session at 8:26 P.M. with all members present.

Adjourn

Moved by Dalton, seconded by Mills to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 P.M.
AYES: Five. NAYS: Holschuh. Motion carried by voice vote.


Katrina Davis, City Clerk


Randy J. Ervin, Mayor

