

# CITY OF SIGOURNEY, IOWA

## MINUTES OF REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF

### September 16, 2025

The Sigourney City Council met in regular session in the Council Chambers at City Hall on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, with Mayor Morlan presiding and the following Council members answering roll call: Schultz, Clark, Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker and Lentz. Others present were: Brent Gilliland, Public Works Director II; Steve Shettler, with Steve Shettler Media; Neil Kracht, with Steve Shettler Media; Casey Jarmes; Staci Shettler; Larry Stevens; Shannon Stevens; Rose Fisher; David Goldman; Doug Glandon, Code Enforcement Officer; and Ashley Fry, City Clerk.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Council member McLaughlin moved, seconded by Council member Iosbaker, to approve the tentative agenda with the removal of item E under additional city business. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Schultz, Clark, Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker and Lentz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

Council member Clark moved, seconded by Council member Conrad, to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda items: Minutes of Regular Council Meeting of September 3, 2025; Payroll Expenses, Miscellaneous Expenses, ACH and Monthly Transfers for August 2025; Resolution No. 2025-09-27 for Tax Exemption for Daniel and Cathy Clawson at 616 Oak Street; Resolution No. 2025-09-27 for Temporary closing East Pleasant Valley for the Sigourney Schools Color Run; Resolution No. 2025-09-28 for transferring fund for 125(TIF) to 121(LOSST); credit card report and to set time and place for the next regular scheduled Council meeting is October 1, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Schultz, Clark, Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker and Lentz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

Council member Clark moved seconded by Council member Conrad to approve Council Account Payable Claims in the amount of \$72,427.89. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Clark, Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker. Abstain: Schultz (Schultz's Nephew owns Exceptional Edge) Lentz (Lentz's brothers owns Atwood Electric.) Nays: None. Motion approved.

**Additional City Business:** Superintendent Kevin Hatfield was at the meeting to explain the SCSD Bond Referendum that they are placing on the November 4, 2025, election ballot. Kevin explained that the Sigourney Community School District is placing a 9.9 million dollars bond referendum on the ballot for upgrades and repairs to the Sigourney JR/SR. High School. Some of the repairs that are being considered are upgrades to the water/sewer systems, the entrance of the school for safety and bathrooms so they are ADA compliant. Council member Iosbaker asked him how long the upgrades would take if the bond would pass in November. Mr. Hatfield stated that he would think about 2 years.

Hi, I'm Steve Shetter and on Wednesday, September 10, at approximately 3:25 pm I was walking our two small, older dogs, Hank and Stella, on leashes on the west side of our residence, 905 West Spring, Sigourney. We take this route quite often, walking along the yard between our house and Stevens House, who live directly to our west. As we were walking Stevens dog, Nugget came charging around the house, as he had done before, and this time attacked Stella, our nearly 14-year-old dog. He lifted her off the ground while biting her ear and face area on the right side of her head. This attack left two visible puncture wounds that I attached pictures to on the email. And although the wounds didn't look like much, Stella, who's mostly blind and deaf, quickly deteriorated over the next few hours and passed away while we pulled into the Keota Veterinary Clinic at about 7pm. An autopsy was done, it showed that she died from internal bleeding from being shaken. As mentioned, this isn't the first time that Nugget has charged our dogs. He repeatedly has come onto our property while doing so, he recently contacted our other dog, Hank in a similar fashion, but didn't leave any lasting marks. Now, to their credit, they do have a shock collar underground fence system set up. I have no idea if it's always turned on, or if his shock collar contains him or not, because, as I mentioned, he has crossed over into our property several times, and I've never seen Nugget on a leash. Stacy and I have gone back and forth, and this is an emotional topic, because as do the Stevens, our dogs live inside with us. Having had Stella for 14 years, she's a family member to us and if you are a dog person, you probably understand that more than if you're not. Staci has been a little bit more forgiving than I am on this topic. She was willing to let Nugget stay. We had expressed this to Doug Glandon and to the Stevens, if a fence was put up and or a kennel to keep him in check. Steve stated that Mrs. Stevens, had posted or shared a post about Nugget earlier today, about being the sweetest dog, and just given the situation, I just thought that was a slap in the face. I'm speaking for myself, but I do not feel safe for our dogs with Nugget in our neighborhood. I would like to see Nugget removed from our neighborhood after the incident. Staci stated that she had emailed Doug this morning and said, I'm writing regarding the recent incident in which our dog Stella was attacked by our neighbor's dog Nugget and passed away. After careful consideration we would like to rescind our original request for city action, provided that the following steps are taken to ensure the safety of all pets and people in the neighborhood, this has been a heartbreaking situation for us. Larry and Shannon Stevens have been good neighbors, and we value our relationship with them at the same time, our concern is that Nugget can be reactive, and has on several occasions, crossed into our yard up to our basement door despite his shock collar or his in-ground fence. His attack on Stella was unprovoked, and she was on a leash. Our only goal in this matter is to prevent another incident like this from happening to anybody else. We respectfully request that this be considered on the stipulation that Nugget is always contained within a secure physical fence or kennel. This condition would be necessary for our peace of mind, as well to give any other pets and neighbors. If these measures are not put in place, we would reserve the right to revisit this matter with the council. We are hopeful this resolution will allow us to move forward with safety for everyone, respect and peace in the neighborhood. Our concern, of course, is the safety for animals. And you know, God forbid a child, I think that a scared dog is a reactive dog, and Nugget has barked as long as he's lived there, it's heartbreaking, because I can't imagine if it was my dog being asked to be removed. I just want them to know that we do take that into consideration.

Larry Stevens stated, I have to say that I am deeply sorry that this happened. We've had dogs put down, and it is a horrible thing to have to go through, and I feel very deeply sorry for them. I would also like to apologize for the post that was put out there, if it made you feel that way, it was not the intent. Larry and Shannon have a flash drive that they had put together of their dog Nugget. Nugget is a six-year-old Labrador. He's been our family pet for six years. Typically, he's not aggressive. He's normally skittish with people, but we put an underground fence in because as a bigger dog, we felt he needed room to roam. That was the easiest way to go about it at the time. Probably some of the contention is our property line. I think that as far as this occurred that night, could potentially have happened on our property. Batteries go dead in the shock collars, they inadvertently get forgotten, to be put back on after he leaves the property. Those kinds of things do happen. I guess it was never

brought to our attention that this had happened numerous times. I guess as good neighbors, I would have thought that would have been brought to our attention so we could address him getting in their yard. Nugget and I were working in front of the house that day. He takes off around the house because he knows he can't go to the east. He always runs all the way around the house. I'm sure he was going as fast as he could possibly run when Steve and the dogs were out. It's possible he crossed the line and got to the dog. I don't know. I wasn't there. Steve was the only one that saw the event happen. Larry went back there as soon as he heard the commotion. Typically, he does not cross the fence. I've never seen him go across the street into the park and as far as the neighbors being in fear, our other neighbors come over and play with him. Charlie, the second grader, will throw his ball, and she knows that if it goes too far to the north, that she's going to have to go get the ball, because he will not go and get it. I don't know where this happened, and I think that, to me, it is a very important part of it. If it was on my property or their property, that's a blurry line. On the flash drive we have pictures and a video of our neighbor girl playing with Nugget and petting him. You can give him a piece of cheese and put it inside his mouth, and he is not going to bite. I understand he does bark at the other dogs you give me a dog that never barks at the neighbor's dogs, that'd be perfect, but it's not ideal. You can literally ask anybody else in town, and they will not say they have ever seen Nugget be aggressive. And I do know he barks at you guys all the time. And I wish he didn't. I think it's a territory thing, but typically he does not cross that fence. Steve Shettler argued that and said, anybody want to bring their dog right up next to the property line and see what happens. We are willing to put a fence between our two properties to make sure this never happens again. Like I said, as far as him ever runs around town or anything like that, that, to my knowledge, has never happened. If he crosses the line, he comes back quickly. And I guess the bottom line down there is the fact that if our dog leaves town, we're leaving town. That's just the way it is. That's how much we love our dog, and we aren't going to give it up that easy. I mean, if we truly thought he was a menace or a harm, we would do the right thing, but we honestly do not at all. Council member Conrad asked so are you disagreeing that he bit the other dog? Shannon stated no. I'm not going to say he didn't. Council member Conrad, I'm just trying to figure out, because I've seen the word never, and then I've seen, typically, those are not the same things. And just trying to figure it out. Shannon stated we've never seen it happen. That's all I can say. Never seen it. Council member Clark but you're also not calling Steve a liar because he witnessed it. Shannon stated, of course not. Council member Clark so it wasn't like another animal came onto the property and attacked Steve's dog and your dog was just there watching. Council member Clark stated that the Public Safety Committee did meet last night and we discussed this. It's clear that this incident classifies the Stevens dog, as an animal nuisance attack person or domestic animals. That's laid out in animal nuisances and that shows a civil penalty. The question that is in front of the council is, does the city council deem this as a dangerous animal, because if the council deems it a dangerous animal, then our code clearly states that you cannot keep a dangerous animal within the city limits. Then if the council deems that it is a dangerous animal, then the dog will have to be removed. The Public Safety Committee wanted to bring that in front of the entire council for discussion and a possible vote. If you go to 4-1-4, under animal nuisances, sub-3. It causes disturbance by excessive barking or other noise, making or chasing vehicles, molest attacks, interfere with persons or domestic animals. Council member Conrad so the ordinance doesn't have a restriction concerning whether it's across the street. Council member Clark there is nothing in our ordinances that state's where it took place. Then you bump over to section 4-1-8, dangerous animals, and then down to 2-C and that states any animal declared to be dangerous by the city council. Council member McLaughlin we also must look at number two definition, any animal which can kill or inflicting serious injury. Council member Clark it really falls under 2-C because 2-A states any animal which is not naturally tamed or gentle. Does the city council deem that the dog is a dangerous animal? Council member Conrad stated either way the council decides one party will not be happy with the results, he stated that if we kick the dog out then more that likely the owners of the dog will go with them. Mrs. Stevens stated we plan to move either way, whether it's in the city limits or outside the city limits. Their current intent would be within the city limits. Council member Conrad was just concerned with the under-ground fence and maybe there could be a better system with checking the batteries and so the dog couldn't get across the fence. Council member Lentz suggested we look at them putting up a physical fence. But if you look at the ordinance we don't have a rule that the city council can make someone, put up a fence. Council member Clark briefly stated that we need to look at re-wording the ordinance under vicious animal and state if a dog bites a person and or a domestic animal. But currently we are posed with whether the City council deems the dog to be dangerous and whether we remove it from town or not. Council member Schultz stated that once a request has been made to have a dog removed and then later ask to have the original request to be rescinded that can't be completed. He stated that a decision like this is very uncomfortable for all involved, but we must be consistent with our decision and if the dog is dangerous and that is what our ordinance states, then the dog needs to leave town. Council member Clark moved seconded by Council member McLaughlin to deem the Stevens dog to be dangerous and have the dog removed from town within 14 days and notifying the city clerk or the code enforcement officer where the dog has been taken. Upon the roll being called the following voted Ayes: Schultz, Clark, McLaughlin and Iosbaker. Nays: Conrad and Lentz. Motion Approved.

Council member Schultz moved seconded by Council member Iosbaker to approve Resolution No. 2025-09-24 for Tax Increment Financing Sigourney Belva Deer Inn Urban Renewal. City Clerk Fry stated that she will be submitting to the County Auditor TIF paperwork to be reimbursed for the work that was completed on Ringgold Street. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Schultz, Clark, Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker and Lentz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

Council member Lentz moved seconded by Council member Conrad to approve to approve Resolution No. 2025-09-25 for Tax Increment Financing Sigourney Downtown Urban Renewal. City Clerk Fry stated that she will be submitting to the County Auditor TIF paperwork to be reimbursed for the work that was completed in the Sigourney Downtown District. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Schultz, Clark, Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker and Lentz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

Council member Iosbaker, KCED Director, stated the farmers market have 2 weeks left. Planning for the \$10,000 Gala raffle and Ladies Night to be held in November are coming together and more information will be released soon. Keokuk County Childcare Network received their tax exemption status from the IRS. They are hopeful to have the Child care opened in January 2026.

**Street and Sanitation Meeting:** Set a Park and Recreation Committee Meeting on Monday September 29 at 6:00 PM

**Public Safety:** Council member Conrad moved seconded by Council member Iosbaker to approve the first reading of ordinance Title III Public Order, Safety and Health, Chapter 14 Unlawful Occupation of Public Property. Council member Clark went over the entire ordinance and explained what the purpose and intent of this ordinance will do. It is deemed that any City owned public property we are prohibiting camping, sleeping and loitering, in those areas. Another thing would be the obstruction of sidewalks. The exception would be businesses that have items outside of their store would still have to have 5 feet of space for people to get through. We discussed no parking between the hours of 3 am to 6 pm. Council member Schultz asked about taking parking away from the apartments around the square. Council member Iosbaker stated that we looked around the square and there are other places where residents of the square can park. Council member Conrad asked about what if your

business had an awning what are we going to do about with the 5 feet of clearance. Council member Clark the awnings were brought in the Public Safety discussion and right now we would like to grandfather all awnings but at the time of the sale of said building it would have to be removed. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Schultz, Clark, Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker and Lentz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

Council member Clark moved seconded by Council member McLaughlin to approve the first reading of ordinance Title III Public Order, Safety and Health, Chapter 15 Hours of Operation. Council member Clark went over the entire ordinance and explained what the purpose and intent of this ordinance will do. This would allow us to have the parks close at 10:30 pm. This ordinance would be hours of operation for City owned parks. Hours of operation would be 5 am to 10: 30 pm. The parks would be closed from 10:30pm to 5 am. We would allow for special exceptions upon request made to the City Clerk. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Schultz, Clark, Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker and Lentz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

**City Clerk:** City Clerk Fry stated in the past week she was made aware of new reports that needed to be completed by September 30, 2025 and that is what you are being shown now. It is a GASB 77 report that shows the amount of money the city didn't receive due to tax abatement applications.

**Public Input:** Citizen was concerned about the ordinance that was proposed tonight at the council meeting about parking around the square. He stated that he doesn't believe that there is enough parking space for the amount of people that live in apartments on the square.

Council member Clark moved, seconded by Council member Lentz, to adjourn the meeting. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Schultz, Clark, Conrad, McLaughlin, Iosbaker and Lentz. Nays: None. Motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

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Jimmy Morlan, Mayor

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

Ashley Fry, City Clerk