

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Thursday, March 26, 2026, 10:00 a.m. to 11:50 p.m.

Nebraska Public Media

1800 N 33rd Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

TinaMaria Fernandez, Hope Esperanza

Bryan Seck, Lincoln Literacy

Jonathan Jank, Seward County

Jillian Linster, Center for Rural Affairs

Amanda Sweet, Library Commission

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Dekow Sagar, International Council for Refugees and Immigrants

Holi Dugan, Library Commission

Emily Duncan, Northeast Community College

OCIO STAFF PRESENT:

Vanessa Castro, Community IT Manager

Callie Richards, NITC Administrator Manager

Lori Lopez Urdiales, Office Services Manager

INTRODUCTIONS:

Vanessa Castro called the first meeting of the NITC Community Council to order at 10:05 a.m. Members introduced themselves and shared their backgrounds and experience with information technology.

Ms. Castro outlined the purpose of the Council, which is to advise the NITC on IT budgets, standards, and policies. She presented a draft Community Council Charter for members to review and provide input. The final Charter was submitted to the NITC for approval.

Members discussed issues and goals they would like the Council to address, including ways to improve digital access and ensure that all Nebraskans have the technology and resources needed to participate in the digital economy.

CHARTER REVISIONS

The Council reviewed the draft Charter as a group and identified revisions. Members were asked to continue reviewing the Charter and provide additional input for discussion and edits at a future meeting.

Ms. Castro informed the Council about legislative funding available for IT projects.

The Council discussed developing action items to support the NITC's strategic goals. The Statewide Technology Plan is due to the Legislature in November, and the NITC also submits a biennial progress report. The Council will work toward developing recommendations and suggestions for inclusion in the Statewide Technology Plan.

GOALS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR

Members were asked to review and provide input on the goals outlined in the Community Council Charter and identify any revisions or additions needed. The Council discussed the importance of establishing clear, achievable goals that align with the NITC's strategic priorities and address the technology needs of communities across Nebraska. Members will continue reviewing the goals and work together to develop action items and priorities for the upcoming year.

BEAD UPDATE

The Council received an update on the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program and discussed the potential impact of upcoming federal funding opportunities. Members discussed the need for continued planning and coordination to develop a strategy for pursuing future funding and identifying opportunities to support Nebraska's broadband and digital access priorities. The Council will continue discussions and provide recommendations to the NITC Commission as additional information and funding opportunities become available.

CHAIR VOTING

The Council discussed the need to elect Chair(s) to lead the Community Council. Members may volunteer or nominate a member to serve as Chair. Ms. Castro will develop a process for members to vote on or otherwise determine the Chair and will bring the process back to the Council for consideration.

NEXT MEETING

The Community Council will meet again in a couple of months prior to the NITC meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Ms. Castro adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Meeting minutes were taken by Lori Lopez Urdiales and reviewed by Vanessa Castro of the Office of the CIO/NITC.