

HOWARD COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

December 27, 2023

A Meeting of the Howard County Board of Commissioners was convened in open and public session on the 27th day of December, 2023, in the Boardroom, Howard County Courthouse, St. Paul, Nebraska.

Notice of the meeting was given thereof on the 20th day of December 2023, a proof of publication filed in the Clerk's office. Copies of the agenda were posted in the courthouse, delivered to each Commissioner, and kept current and available to the public at the Clerk's office.

Chairman Hirschman called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Roll Call: Gary Rasmussen, Absent; Kathy Hirschman, Aye; and Jessie Urbanski, Aye. Also, present is County Clerk, Brenda Klanecky.

Pledge of Allegiance -

Chairman Hirschman stated to those in attendance that a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act is available for review and indicated the location of such copy in the room where the meeting is being held.

Public Comment- None.

County Road Discussion – Highway Superintendent, Janet Thomsen was present to discuss purchase of a used motor grader. CAT had spoken with Ms. Thomsen regarding a used 2018 motor grader. The motor grader has less than 2,000 hours on it. Typically, the County puts on around 1,000 hours a year. The cost is \$275,000.00. The County is a member of Source Well which does the bidding and so the County would not have to go out for bids. Hirschman stated that she would like to wait. A motor grader was not budgeted and at this time the County is not in need of another grader. Mr. Urbanski was in agreement. Ms. Thomsen has contracted for 45,000 gallons of #2 diesel fuel. Also discussed was condition of roads after the snowstorm. General consensus was that the amount of snow on the roads did not warrant sending motor graders out on the holiday. Updates on the most recently purchased dump trucks. One of the trucks is operational and the other one is still being made ready. Discussion was held regarding county roads and medical emergencies.

NIRMA Assist letter-Roads-Ms. Thomsen applied for assistance to purchase a hydraulic pole saw in the amount of \$2,109.14 and (10) LED light bars, not to exceed \$1,104.79, have been approved.

Mail –NIRMA Assist Letter-Emergency Manager, Allen Wilshusen had applied for first aid kits (not to exceed \$315.00) and the annual fire extinguisher servicing (not to exceed \$125.00). Also received was a report from Berggren and Associates regarding the front steps.

Unfinished Business-None.

Elaine Menzel-NACO –Elaine Menzel was present to discuss NACO updates. NACO's goal was to attend all 93 County Board Meetings. They are short just a few Counties due to weather. Ms. Menzel talked about upcoming trainings and meetings. The hourly salary survey results compiled by the County Clerks will be made available at the Budget meeting in June. The annual NACO Conference will be December 18-20, 2024 in Kearney. Ms. Menzel also spoke about the NACO building that is being built in Ogallala. Legislative information and updates were also discussed. The primary issue NACO is taking an interest in is the inheritance tax. If the inheritance tax would go away NACO would push for a guaranteed

replacement revenue. Hirschman asked about the EPIC Tax presentation that was given at the NACO conference. Consumption Tax was also discussed, NACO is in opposition.

Connie Holmes-Crime Commissioner Grant Application –Connie Holmes was present to discuss the FY 2025 Community-based Aid (EB) Application for Howard County. In the past, St. Paul Schools, Elba Schools and Centura Schools were involved in the program. Centura Schools has decided to no longer be in the program for fiscal year 2025. They have hired a full-time Social Emotional Learning position and would have savings of approximately \$7,000.00. Urbanski made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2025 Enhancement Grant as presented and Hirschman seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Ms. Holmes plans to submit the grant today and will send a completed copy to the Clerk.

Employee Evaluations-Executive Session -Hirschman made a motion to go into executive session at 9:42 a.m. to discuss employee evaluations and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Hirschman stated the Board was going into Executive Session at 9:42 a.m. to discuss employee evaluations. Those present were Kathy Hirschman, and Jessie Urbanski. Motion was made by Hirschman and seconded by Urbanski to come out of Executive Session at 10:28 a.m. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Hirschman made a motion to go back into executive session at 11:29 a.m. to finish discussing the employee evaluations and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Hirschman stated the Board was going back into Executive Session at 11:29 a.m. to discuss employee evaluations. Those present in Executive Session were Hirschman and Urbanski. Hirschman made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 11:38 a.m. and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Evaluations were completed.

Consent Agenda -

The Board reviewed the minutes, payroll and claims, and Sheriff's report as presented. Motion was made by Urbanski and seconded by Hirschman to approve the Commissioner Meeting Minutes for 12/12/2023, Payroll and Claims for 12/27/2023: General-\$228,036.56 and Roads-\$68,478.01, for a total of \$296,514.57, and the Sheriff's report. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Update Senator Fred Meyer- Senator Fred Meyer was present to discuss budgets for the County and the other political subdivisions in the County. The Governor is looking at ending the Inheritance Tax. This is a concern of Howard County. Emergency Management Region 26 Commissioner, Diana Hurlburt and Region 26 Director, Alma Beland were present to discuss legislation regarding the 911 Call Center funding issue with Senator Meyer. Funding shortages are causing training, employment and other issues in rural Nebraska. Also mentioned was the Highway 281 corridor to finish the four-lane between Highway 58 and South Highway 92.

There being no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Urbanski and seconded by Hirschman to adjourn the meeting at 11:58 a.m. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Meeting adjourned. The next regular meeting of the Howard County Board of

Commissioners will be January 9, 2024.

Dated this 27th day of December, 2023.

Kathy Hirschman
Howard County Commissioners

ATTEST: Brenda Klanecky
Howard County Clerk