

## HOWARD COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

June 13, 2023

A Meeting of the Howard County Board of Commissioners was convened in open and public session on the 13th day of June, 2023, in the Boardroom, Howard County Courthouse, St. Paul, Nebraska.

Notice of the meeting was given thereof on the 7th day of June 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.

Chairman Hirschman also 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.

### **Pledge of Allegiance-**

**Public Comment-** None.

### **County Road Discussion-**

**gWorks Program-** Janet Thomsen, Highway Superintendent, spoke with the Board regarding a gWorks program called Simple Roads. Signs, culverts, bridges, route maps, projects, One and Six Year Plans are examples of items that can be placed in the program. The setup cost is \$8,000.00 and the annual fee is \$4,500.00. Ms. Thomsen is to check with the Assessor to see if the County has any credits to put towards the setup cost and get back with the Board. Item is tabled.

**Assistant Road Foreman Position** – The position of Assistant Road Foreman would entail the individual being in charge if the Highway Superintendent and the Road Foreman were gone at the same time. Compensation would need to be negotiated with the Union. Hirschman made a motion to create an Assistant Road Foreman position and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. The job position will be posted at all Howard County Roads Shops. Applications will be reviewed at the June 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Mail** – None.

### **Unfinished Business** –

Elevator Update-The company doing the modernization is still waiting on some of the equipment. They are hoping to have all of the materials on-site in July.

Roof Repair Update-Spoke with Ziemba Roofing. They are hoping to start the project in two weeks.

Smoke Alarm Update-This project will be completed when the elevator work is completed.

**Public Hearing-Amend Howard County Medical Center Budget** –Motion was made by Urbanski to open the public hearing at 9:00 a.m. and seconded by Hirschman. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Arlan Johnson, CEO and Morgan Meyer, CFO were present to discuss amending the Howard County Medical Center budget for fiscal year 2022-2023. The increase of \$1.6 million is due to unexpected increased staffing costs. Due to a nursing shortage, the Medical Center has had to hire traveling nurses at a significantly higher hourly wage. The Medical Center is working to remedy this situation.

Hirschman made a motion to close the Public Hearing at 9:12 a.m. and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Urbanski made a motion to approve the amendment increasing the Howard County Medical Center Budget from \$23,151,500.00 to \$24,751,500.00, and Hirschman seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Update on Howard County Medical Center** – Along with the increased expenses for staffing, the Medical Center also had an increase in revenues. Mr. Johnson and Ms. Meyer provided the Board with a brochure regarding the new Wellness Center being built. Other items discussed were a dual status 501C3, bonds to be paid off by 2026, short term and long-term debts and the County's responsibility.

**Approval Job Performance Reviews-Roads Workers-Executive Session-Possible Action** – Motion was made by Hirschman and seconded by Urbanski to go into Executive Session to discuss performance reviews for roads workers at 9:21 a.m. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Hirschman stated the Board was going into Executive Session at 9:21 a.m. to discuss performance reviews for roads workers. Those present were Kathy Hirschman, Jessie Urbanski, Janet Thomsen, Ray Hurt and Jerry Thompson.

Motion was made by Hirschman and seconded by Urbanski to come out of Executive Session at 9:42 a.m. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Hirschman made a motion to approve compensation for Roads Workers effective July 1, 2023, as presented by Janet Thomsen, Highway Superintendent and Urbanski seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Correction to Addendum "A" Wages-Union Contract** – Motion was made by Urbanski and seconded by Hirschman to approve the correction of Dispatch/Clerical and maintenance wages in the union contracts as presented. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Public Hearing-Miretta Vineyards & Winery Inc-Class I Liquor License** – Motion was made by Hirschman and seconded by Urbanski to open the Public Hearing at 10:00 a.m. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Mick McDowell was present to discuss the application for a Class I Liquor License. The Class I liquor license will allow the winery to sell beer and distilled spirits.

Motion was made by Urbanski and seconded by Hirschman to close the public hearing at 10:09 a.m. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Motion was made by Hirschman and seconded by Urbanski to approve the Miretta Vineyards & Winery Inc-Class I Liquor License application. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**(3) SDL's Miretta Vineyards & Winery Inc.** –Urbanski made a motion to approve the (3) SDL's for events taking place on June 29, July 7 and July 15, 2023, and Hirschman seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Grand Island Area Clean Community System Request/Letter** – Email was received from L. Denise McGovern-Gallagher with Grand Island Area Clean Community System. Ms. McGovern-Gallagher asked that the Commissioners sign a letter in support of the Clean Community System and a request for a \$2,000.00 contribution for operations.

Hirschman made a motion to sign the letter and approve the requested amount of \$2,000.00., Urbanski seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. The Commissioners would like a report on money spent on Howard County.

**Set Budget Workshop Dates** – Motion was made by Hirschman to approve the following dates for Budget Workshop- July 25, 2023, beginning at 1:00 p.m. and July 27<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30 a.m., Urbanski seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Land Negotiations-Executive Session** – Motion was made by Hirschman and seconded by Urbanski to go into Executive Session to discuss land negotiations at 11:10 a.m. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Hirschman stated the Board was going into Executive Session at 11:10 a.m. to discuss land negotiations.

Those present in Executive Session are Joel Bergman, Matt Helzer, Jessie Urbanski and Kathy Hirschman.

Motion was made by Hirschman and seconded by Urbanski to come out of Executive Session at 11:30 a.m. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Hirschman made a motion to work with the County Attorney to acquire a 14-foot strip of land located on the east side of the block and Urbanski seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Road Building Committee Report** – The Road Building Committee met at the newly acquired property two weeks ago and tentatively flagged out an area for the new building. Howard Greeley Public Power has been contacted for the electrical work and a number of well drilling companies have been contacted to get quotes to have a well drilled. Once the land closing has been completed the County will begin on removing trees. The committee made plans to visit Sherman County and Buffalo County buildings the next day.

**Ag Society Land Closing-Process Claim** – Commissioners reviewed the Buyers and Sellers Settlement Statements and the Warranty Deed regarding the purchase of land from the Ag Society. Said documents had previously been reviewed and approved by the County Attorney. Urbanski made a motion to approve the Buyer's Settlement Statement in the amount of \$50,200.00. This includes the sales price of \$50,000.00 plus recording fees (\$21.00) and the buyer's portion of title insurance (\$179.00). With the payment to be paid out of the ARPA account. Hirschman seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Front Steps Update**– Doug Elting, Contract Administrator with Berggren Architects provided the Board with a written statement regarding questions they had. The Board is waiting for information back from Mr. Elting regarding the historic tax credits.

**Clerk's Office-Temporary Records Update** – The Clerk would like to hire a part-time employee to input register of deed records into the computer and this employee may also be available to help out during the 2024 election. Urbanski made a motion and Hirschman seconded the motion to approve the Clerk's request to hire a temporary, part-time employee for 24 hours per week. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Treasurer Position-Review Applicants-Executive Session-Possible Action** – Motion was made by Hirschman and seconded by Urbanski to go into Executive Session to discuss the applications for Treasurer at 10:40 a.m. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Hirschman stated the Board was going into Executive Session at 10:40 a.m. to discuss applications received for the Treasurer position. Present in Executive Session were Hirschman, Urbanski and Klanecky.

Motion was made by Hirschman and seconded by Urbanski to come out of Executive Session at 11:02 a.m. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. No action taken. A Special Meeting is scheduled for June 16, 2023, to select a Treasurer.

**Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation Agreement** -Urbanski made a motion to approve the agreement between AOC (Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation) and Howard County approving the terms of the Clerk Magistrate as Clerk of the County Court shall be the Ex Officio Clerk of the District Court for Howard County effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, and seconded by Hirschman. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye, and Urbanski, Aye.

**Consent Agenda** - Motion was made by Hirschman and seconded by Urbanski to approve the Commissioners Meeting Minutes for 5/23/2023 and 5/30/2023, Claims: General-\$267,313.78, Roads-\$126,362.17, Tourism Improvement Fund-\$5,200.00, Tourism Promotion Fund-\$2,750.00 and Covid American Rescue Plan-\$98,778.50, Reports from the Clerk, District Court, Treasurer and Sheriff. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Absent; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

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 June 27, 2023.

Dated this 13th day of June, 2023.

Kathy Hirschman  
Howard County Commissioners

ATTEST: Brenda Klanecky  
Howard County Clerk