

HOWARD COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

February 13, 2024

A Meeting of the Howard County Board of Commissioners was convened in open and public session on the 13th day of February, 2024, in the Boardroom, Howard County Courthouse, St. Paul, Nebraska.

Notice of the meeting was given thereof on the 7th day of February 2024, 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, Aye; 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 the USDOT Bridge Investment Program. This is a federal program with 9.7 billion dollars available. Howard County does not meet the funding levels. The State of Nebraska will sponsor a webinar on Safe Streets next week. There will be a Nebraska Bridge Conference in April. The County Engineer attends this conference. Ms. Thomsen stated she will continue to look for funding opportunities for the County.

IBEW Discuss Possible Grievance- Jerry Thompson requested the Board to go into executive session to discuss possible litigation. Urbanski made a motion to go into executive session at 8:37 a.m. regarding possible litigation and seconded by Rasmussen. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye and Urbanski, Aye. Hirschman stated the Board was going into Executive Session to discuss possible litigation at 8:37 a.m. Those present in executive session were Rasmussen, Hirschman, Urbanski, Janet Thomsen and Jerry Thompson. Motion was made by Urbanski and seconded by Rasmussen to come out of executive session at 8:54 a.m. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. No action taken.

Mail –

Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition Zoom Meeting Minutes

Programmatic Closeout of FEMA Disaster 4375

Letter from NDEE

Letter regarding completion of the Tax Credit Program (Courthouse Steps Project).

Letter from Judy Puncochar to the Planning and Zoning Commissioner

NACO Legislative Report

NIRMA Annual Report

Unfinished Business-Allen Wilshusen stated that Jim Scheer would be working on the Howard County tower this week.

Public Hearing-Open Gravel and Hauling Bids –Rasmussen made a motion to open the public hearing at 9:01 a.m. and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

The Gravel and Hauling Bids were opened. Bids received were from Hooker Brothers Sand & Gravel, Island Land Handlers, Liberty Sand & Gravel, Mid-Nebraska Aggregate, Ulrich Sand & Gravel, and Wilson River Bottom Express. Rasmussen made a motion to close the public hearing at 9:14 a.m. and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Urbanski made a motion to approve the gravel bids and hauling bids as presented and seconded by Rasmussen. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Public Hearing-Amendments to Odor Footprints – Urbanski made a motion to open the public hearing at 9:15 a.m. to amend the odor footprints and seconded by Rasmussen. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Planning and Zoning Administrator, Cherri Klinginsmith, Steve Wissing, Terry Spilinek and Jeff Christensen were present to discuss the odor footprints. The odor footprint will remain in place until landowner requests a change. Urbanski made a motion to close the public hearing at 9:31 a.m. and Rasmussen seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Rasmussen made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-7 which amends Districts, Boundaries and Maps, Section 7, A-1 Agricultural District, Section 2, and A-2 Agricultural - Transitional District, Section 2. The Planning and Zoning Administrator will amend the zoning regulations and republish accordingly. Urbanski seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Public Hearing-Verizon Tower –Urbanski made a motion to open the public hearing regarding the Verizon Tower at 9:30 a.m. and seconded by Rasmussen. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Present were Planning and Zoning Administrator, Cherri Klinginsmith, Jeff Christensen, Terry Spilinek, Emily Milewski with Verizon and Andy Kampen with KGI Wireless. The new location for the tower will be 1200 feet off of Hardy Road. The Planning and Zoning Board had previously voted to approve the tower at the new location. Jessica Hancock was also present to ask questions regarding the tower. Her questions were answered by Ms. Milewski. Rasmussen made a motion to close the public hearing at 9:43 a.m. and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Rasmussen made a motion to approve the conditional use permit for Verizon Tower in the new location and Urbanski seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Update Comprehensive Planning and Zoning Subdivision Regulations - Ms. Klinginsmith was present along with Jeff Christensen, Terry Spilinek and Steve Wissing to discuss updating the comprehensive planning and zoning subdivision regulations. State law requires that updates be made every ten years. Marvin Planning Consultants Inc. was contacted. Ms. Klinginsmith received a quote of \$50,000.00 for the County and \$24,500 split between the six villages. All of the villages have been notified. This company comes highly recommended. Keith Marvin stated it would be two to three months before the company could start. Payment plans are available for the villages. The County will not have to go out for bids as this is for professional services. Urbanski made a motion to approve Marvin Planning Consultants Inc. in the amount of \$50,000.00 to be paid out of the ARPA funds to update the comprehensive planning and zoning subdivision regulations and seconded by Rasmussen. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Possible Addendum for Pay Scales Regarding Both Union Contracts – Jessica Hancock, Neal Dethlefs, Sara Roy, Tom Busch, Jerry Thompson and Janet Thomsen were present to discuss pay scales regarding both union contracts. Mr. Thompson presented two Addendum's to the IBEW Local 1597 Agreement for

the Roads Department, Dispatch and the Courthouse employees. The addendum would add pay scales from 8+ years to 18+ years. Currently the wage scales are set from 0 to 8 years. Employees and elected officials discussed the current agreement and how changes would affect employees. The change will affect three employees. Hirschman asked if the affected budgets could absorb the increases. She also questioned the effective date. The beginning of the next pay period would be February 18, 2024. The increase of 4% would be effective July 1, 2024. Original pay scales would remain the same. Urbanski made a motion to approve the Addendum Agreement by adding an additional 8+ to 18+ years of service to the pay scales and that the addendum be effective February 18, 2024, and seconded by Rasmussen. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Scrap Tire Grant- Allen Wilshusen – Emergency Manager, Allen Wilshusen was present along with Jeremy Meyer and Matt Helzer to discuss the upcoming scrap tire collection in Howard County. Mr. Wilshusen suggested holding the event on Saturday, April 6, 2024, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. It would be suggested that the County Commissioners be present. Mr. Wilshusen is going to reach out to all of the schools in the County to see if they have students willing to help. This will be for Howard County residents only with a limit of 30 tires. The collection will take place at the fairgrounds. The County will provide a payloader and two employees. The City of St. Paul had approved an alternate location at the tree dump north of town as well as one payloader and one employee. A flyer will be placed in the paper and on facebook. Mr. Wilshusen will send a copy of the flyer to the Clerk for the Commissioners to approve of the content prior to publishing. Urbanski made a motion to approve the date of Saturday, April 6, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the fairgrounds to collect 175 tons of scrap tires only, no rims limited to 30 tires and Howard County residents only with the County providing one payloader and two employees and the City of St. Paul providing one payloader and one employee and seconded by Rasmussen. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Audit – The Clerk received the Audit books from Contryman and Associates and presented to the Commissioners for review. Rasmussen made a motion to accept the Audit and Urbanski seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Homeland Security Grant – Adam Jurgens, Sales and New Business Developer for Hamilton Telecommunications was present to discuss a Homeland Security Grant. This grant would cover physical security needs such as cameras and access controls. Hamilton will complete the application and the County would need to submit. The grant does not have a matching funds requirement. Rasmussen made a motion to apply for the Homeland Security Grant and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. The Clerk will email the completed application.

2023 Annual Report – NE Extension in Howard County – The Board reviewed the 2023 Extension Annual Report. Urbanski made a motion to approve the 2023 Annual Extension Report and seconded by Rasmussen. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

MIPS Budget Revision/Compensation – The Clerk has been working with Amy Nelson, the Clerk from Fillmore County on the new MIPS Budget system. The Howard County Clerk discussed with the Board to reimburse the Fillmore County Clerk for her time spent as well as mileage. The Board has asked the Clerk to come back with an amount.

Rob Schultz-Award – The Nebraska Weed Control Association recognized Rob Schultz as the Superintendent of the year in Weed Control for the State of Nebraska for 2023. Mr. Schultz has gone above and beyond the necessary duties to help prevent the spread of noxious weeds across the state.

Windows- State Glass came out last week and looked at the windows. The windows would be a commercial grade. Discussion was held whether the County wants windows that can open or not. Also discussed were the fourth floor windows. We will wait until a quote is received from State Glass before proceeding.

Urbanski made a motion to recess the meeting at 11:28 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. and seconded by Rasmussen. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Dedicate Bench in memory of Jackie Synowski – At 11:30 a.m. a large crowd of Jackie’s family, co-workers, and elected officials both current and past, gathered in the hallway on the second floor. Board Chair, Kathy Hirschman spoke a few words about Jackie. Those attending also shared memories of Jackie. A Cinco de Mayo meal furnished by courthouse officials and employees was served following the dedication.

The meeting was reconvened at 1:02 p.m.

Road Work Session – Present to meet with the Board were Janet Thomsen, Ray Hurt and Jerry Thompson.

Consent Agenda - The Board reviewed the minutes, reports and claims as presented. Motion was made by Urbanski and seconded by Rasmussen to approve the Commissioner Meeting Minutes dated 1/23/2024, Treasurer, Clerk, District Court and Sheriff’s Reports, and Claims dated 2/13/2024: General-\$77,218.04, Roads-\$101,535.47, Tourism-\$1,700.00, ARPA - \$10,408.32, 911 Emergency Management - \$750.96, and E911 Holding Account - \$428.00 for a total of \$192,040.79. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

There being no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Rasmussen and seconded by Urbanski to adjourn the meeting at 3:52 p.m. Roll Call: Rasmussen, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Meeting adjourned. The next regular meeting of the Howard County Board of Commissioners will be February 27, 2024.

Dated this 13th day of February, 2024.

Kathy Hirschman
Howard County Commissioners

ATTEST: Brenda Klanecky
Howard County Clerk