

HOWARD COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

February 11, 2025

A Meeting of the Howard County Board of Commissioners was convened in open and public session on the 11th day of February, 2025, in the Boardroom, Howard County Courthouse, St. Paul, Nebraska.

Notice of the meeting was given thereof on the 5th day of February, 2025. 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. A proof of publication is filed in the Clerk's office.

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

Pledge of Allegiance- The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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 various roads in the County. Road's Department-St. Paul have been cutting trees. Elba-will be using the mulcher. She has had several individuals interested in the Road's maintenance positions.

Mail –

Email from NDOT regarding CCTV Cameras

Money for Minutes Award

Register for Central District Meeting

Public Hearing Notice from City of St. Paul

Monthly Summary from Hamilton

Unfinished Business – None.

Public Hearing-Open Gravel Bids/Open Hauling Bids-

Urbanski made a motion to open the public hearing at 9:01 a.m. and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. The gravel and hauling bids were opened. Bids received were from: Hooker Bros. Sand and Gravel, Legacy Rock N Sand LLC, Liberty Sand and Gravel, Mid-Nebraska Aggregate and Ulrich Sand and Gravel. Hauling Bids were received from Legacy Rock N Sand LLC and Wilson River Bottom Express. Lukasiewicz made a motion to close the public hearing at 9:23 a.m. and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Lukasiewicz made a motion to approve the gravel and hauling bids as presented and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

NIRMA Safety Shorts-Freezing Weather- Back in July 2024, a failure to maintain heat exclusion had been added to NIRMA's coverage document. If the insured fails to heat in a structure or do not drain equipment or shut off the water supply to plumbing and pipes freeze, NIRMA would not pay on the claim.

Extension Update-Kayla Nilson, Maddie Werner – Kayla Hinrichs, Kayla Nilson and Maddie Werner were present to introduce Kayla Nilson and Maddie Werner to the Board. They both explained what their duties are for Howard County. The Board discussed what opportunities the Extension program offered to students in school, and job and education opportunities after high school.

Howard County Extension 2024 Annual Report- The Board reviewed the 2024 Extension Annual Report with Kayla Hinrichs. Urbanski made a motion to approve the 2024 Annual Extension Report as presented and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Road's Shop Building – County Building Committee members, Janet Thomsen, Jerry Thompson and Rob Schultz were present to update the Board on the progress of the shop building. Currently, they are working to finish installing the roof. The windows have been covered with plastic. Mr. Schultz asked if it might be possible to have the contractor provide updates once a month on the progress of the building.

Land Purchase/Purchase Agreement- Board Chair, Kathy Hirschman met with the Howard County Ag Society regarding purchasing additional land (approximately 3.05 acres) from the Ag Society in the amount of \$31,500.00. The Ag Society is in agreement. Lukasiewicz made a motion to move forward on the purchase of land from the Ag Society by having the County Surveyor, Tim Aitken, survey the land to get a legal description of the property and have Deputy County Attorney, Heather Sikyta write up a purchase agreement and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Dan Howard-County Attorney/Possible Executive Session – Police Chief Dan Howard sent a text to Ms. Hirschman this morning that he would not be present at the meeting. This item had been placed on the agenda per Mr. Howard so no discussion was held on this item.

Courthouse Door – Commissioners discussed the west entrance door which does not have a panic bar on the door. Mr. Koperski was instructed to contact Island Glass to get a quote to add the panic bar for safety reasons.

Audit Documents- Auditor, Jada Thompson was not present but stated in a phone conversation prior to the meeting to Kathy Hirschman that the audit went very well. Ms. Hirschman stated that the Treasurer and Clerk did a great job with the audit running smoothly. The Board reviewed a list of Journal Entries made by the Auditor, the financial statement transmittal and approval to be signed by the Treasurer and Clerk. The Contryman Associates PC Representation Letter needs to be signed by Board Chair, Treasurer and Clerk. Lukasiewicz made a motion to have the Board Chair, Treasurer and Clerk sign the audit documents for the auditor as requested and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Nebraska Broadband Equity Project Grants – The Clerk had received an email from Rachel Kilcoin, Communications Director for the Nebraska Broadband Office regarding the Nebraska Broadband Equity, Access, & Deployment (NBEAD) Last-mile Broadband Deployment Project Grants. The Clerk had reached out to the County's IT person at Hamilton's to find out if Howard County would be eligible for this grant.

The Clerk wanted to see if the grant would be available to provide fiber optic to the courthouse. Hamilton's had not gotten back with the Clerk prior to the meeting. Urbanski made a motion and seconded by Lukasiewicz to move forward on the grant process. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

County Attorney's Office-New Computer –Deputy Attorney, Heather Sikyta was present to discuss the purchase of a new computer for the attorney's office. The current computer will not work and she has been using her personal computer for the attorney's office. Ms. Sikyta reached out to Hamilton Information Systems to get a quote on a new computer set up for the Attorney's office. The quote is \$2,362.99 for the computer and additional equipment to be compatible with the secretary's computer. The office had previously purchased a new copier in October, 2024. A new computer was not budgeted for and would take them over budget. Urbanski made a motion to approve paying for the new computer out of miscellaneous in the miscellaneous general fund in the amount of \$2,362.99, and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Plaque for Existing Bench-Sheriff Mike Hoff – Sheriff Mike Hoff and Clerk Magistrate Lisa Johnson were present to discuss placing a plaque on one of the County benches located on the third floor, outside the courtroom in memory of former County Attorney, Dave Schroeder. There would be no cost to the County. Urbanski made a motion to place a plaque in memory of Mr. Schroeder on a County bench and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

The Road Work Session-The Road Work Session started at 10:30 a.m. Present were Janet Thomsen, Ray Hurt, and Jerry Thompson and all three Commissioners. Discussed was the One and Six Year Plan, who is responsible for trees etc. in the County road ditches (County right-of-way), planting crops to the edge of the road, new bridge inspections, bridges, upgrade instead of replace bridges, maintainer routes, stop signs to be replaced, number of employees needed, and equipment. The session ended at 1:40 p.m.

Urbanski left the meeting at 12:14 p.m. to attend another meeting.

Consent Agenda - The Board reviewed the claims dated 2/11/2025, and the minutes dated 1/28/2025. Reports from the Clerk, District Court, Treasurer and Sheriff's office were reviewed Motion was made by Lukasiewicz and seconded by Hirschman to approve the claims dated 2/11/2025, General-\$88,521.15 and Roads-\$53,976.54, Road's Buyback Program-\$1,652.82, Canine Cost-\$274.98, Inheritance Tax Fund-\$141,178.64 and 911 Emergency Management Fund-\$839.51 for a total of \$286,443.64, minutes dated 1/28/2025, Clerk, District Court, Treasurer and Sheriff's Reports and authorize Board Chair, Kathy Hirschman to sign the minutes. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Absent.

There being no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Hirschman and seconded by Lukasiewicz to adjourn the meeting at 1:52 p.m. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Absent. Meeting adjourned. The next regular meeting of the Howard County Board of Commissioners will be February 25, 2025.

Dated this 11th day of February, 2025.

Kathy Hirschman
Howard County Board Chair

ATTEST:

Brenda Klanecky
Howard County Clerk