

HOWARD COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

March 11, 2025

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

Notice of the meeting was given thereof on the 5th day of March, 2025. Copies of the agenda were posted in the courthouse, emailed 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 8:40 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 during the Board of Equalization meeting.

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 following:

Review Employee Applications-Executive Session-This item was held in open session. Ms. Thomsen and Chairman Hirschman had interviewed five applicants. They recommended to offer employment to three of the applicants. Lukasiewicz made a motion to offer employment to the three applicants recommended by Thomsen and Hirschman and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Clay for Road Projects-Ms. Thomsen reported that clay would not be available from the Loup Central Landfill due to highway projects in the area this summer. Ms. Thomsen stated clay would be needed for some of the roads and possibly to fill in around bridge wings. Discussion was held regarding where the clay has been obtained in the past and where it could be obtained in the future. Ms. Thomsen wanted to make the Board aware of the situation.

Computer Storage Upgrade-Ms. Thomsen stated that the Road's Department would be switching email accounts due to the current one being full. She has enough money in her budget to cover the cost estimated to be \$300.00.

Mail –

Nebraska State Fire Marshall-Fire Alarm Test Report

Kevin Lukasiewicz-Approval to Operate LWCF

Kevin Lukasiewicz-NPDES General Permit for Operations

George Jensen-Issued Permit-Modified Construction and Operating

2026 Juvenile Services Commission Grant Program (JS)

Hamilton-Howard County Government Monthly Report

Letter from State of Nebraska Department of Transportation

NIRMA-Spotlight Seminar Series

Unfinished Business – None.

Administrative Subdivision-Commander's Corner-Planning and Zoning Administrator, Cherri Klinginsmith was present to discuss the application for an Administrative Subdivision regarding Commander's Corner for Michael and Holly Sack. After discussion, Lukasiewicz made a motion to approve the Commander's Corner Administrative Subdivision and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Broadband Recommendation Update- The Clerk had been contacted by Nextlink Internet requesting that the County provide them with a letter of support to be included with the NE BEAD Grant they are submitting. Board members have spoken with SCEDD regarding the different internet companies applying for the grant and stated the County could have several companies wanting support letters. SCEDD provided questions to ask the companies before writing the letters of support. Nextlink will be on the agenda for March 25, 2025, Commissioner Meeting.

Approve/Deny ESI-Cellular Alarm Communicator Proposal – Pat Koperski was present to discuss the proposal received from Electronic Systems, Inc. to add on a cellular alarm communicator. The courthouse was experiencing some issues with the smoke alarm panel when the internet provider was performing updates during the work day. No issues have come up since this time. Urbanski made a motion to deny the ESI Cellular Alarm Communicator and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; Urbanski, Aye.

Generator and Electrical Issues-911 Center-Tim Wood- Tim Wood and Pat Henry with Powertech as well as Chief Dispatcher, Melissa Paxton, Deputy Jerome Thurnau, and Emergency Manager, Allen Willshusen were present to discuss the generator located at the 911 Center. The generator has been having mechanical issues which worsened during a recent power outage. County officials are concerned the generator may not work if we have future outages. After much discussion it was determined the purchase of a new generator met the criteria of being an emergency purchase to protect against threats of serious loss of life, health, or property in the county according to State Statute and the bidding requirements could be waived. Grants were discussed. General consensus was that Howard County could not wait for grant funds to be approved and available to purchase a generator. Mr. Henry stated that Powertech would provide a portable generator to be used until the new generator would be installed at no additional cost. The labor was not included in the estimate but he stated it would be approximately \$21,000.00, for purchase of the generator and installation. Lukasiewicz made a motion to waive the bidding requirements of the County Purchasing Act per the emergency purchase clause in State Statute 23-3109 and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and

Urbanski, Aye. Also discussed was the electrical in the 911 Center. The Commissioners asked Ms. Paxton to contact electricians to obtain bids on updating the electrical in the 911 Center.

Generator Emergency Purchase-911 Center-

Urbanski made a motion to approve the Powertech estimate and verbal agreement regarding labor, not to exceed \$21,000.00 for the purchase and installation of a Kohler generator and use of a portable generator until such time as the new generator is installed with funding from the 911 Holding Fund and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Hirschman thanked Tim Wood for all of his help in keeping the generators at the 911 Center and at the tower by Farwell running over the years.

Hirschman left the meeting to attend a funeral at 10:22 a.m.

Approve/Deny Nance County Dispatch Merge – Chief Dispatcher, Melissa Paxton and Deputy Jerome Thurnau were present to discuss merging Nance County Dispatch to Howard County Dispatch. Currently, Nance County is being serviced by Boone County. Nance County would like to have the service transferred to Howard County at the beginning of the next fiscal year which begins on July 1, 2025. Ms. Paxton provided the Commissioners with some estimated costs. Much discussion followed regarding costs to be able to accommodate the merge and any future mergers and where the money would come from to make the improvements. The Commissioners asked Ms. Paxton and Mr. Thurnau to provide solid numbers for the next meeting. Nance County is required to provide Boone County a 90-day notice to terminate services. Ms. Paxton asked the Commissioners if they wished to pursue the merger? Nance County would need to provide the notice of termination to Boone County by the end of March. Lukasiewicz made a motion to approve the Nance County Dispatch merge and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Absent; and Urbanski, Aye.

Approve/Deny Appoint Alternate- South Central Economic Dev. - Lukasiewicz made a motion to approve the appointment of Laura Berthelsen as the alternate for the South Central Economic Development Representative for Howard County and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Absent; and Urbanski, Aye.

Consent Agenda - The Board reviewed the claims dated 3/11/2025, and the regular minutes for the Board of Equalization and Commissioner Meetings dated 2/25/2025.; and the Special Meeting Minutes dated February 20, 2025. Reports from the Clerk, District Court, Treasurer and Sheriff's office were reviewed. Motion was made by Lukasiewicz and seconded by Urbanski to approve the claims dated 3/11/2025, General-\$99,895.95 and Roads-\$31,917.59, Tourist Improvement Fund-\$1349.00, Tourist Promotion Fund-\$612.00, Canine Cost-\$1,576.24, Inheritance Tax Fund-\$149,766.64 and 911 Emergency Management Fund-\$839.51 for a total of \$285,956.93, minutes dated 2/20/2025 and 2/25/2025, Clerk, District Court, Treasurer and Sheriff's Reports and authorize Board Chair, Kathy Hirschman to sign the minutes. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Absent; and Urbanski, Aye.

There being no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Lukasiewicz and seconded by Urbanski to adjourn the meeting at 11:40 a.m. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman,

Absent; and Urbanski, Aye. Meeting adjourned. The next regular meeting of the Howard County Board of Commissioners will be March 25, 2025.

Dated this 11th day of March, 2025.

Kathy Hirschman
Howard County Board Chair

ATTEST: Brenda Klanecky
 Howard County Clerk