

## HOWARD COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

July 8, 2025

A Meeting of the Howard County Board of Commissioners was convened in open and public session on the 8th day of July, 2025, in the Boardroom, Howard County Courthouse, St. Paul, Nebraska.

Notice of the meeting was given thereof on the 2nd day of July 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-** Tim Terjak spoke about a wood bridge on Yutan Road located in the northwest corner of Howard County. Pictures of the bridge were shown. A short discussion was held on how to repair the bridge. The bridge was last inspected in 2023 and is scheduled to be inspected in 2025. Ms. Thomsen will have the bridge checked out and repairs as needed.

**County Road Discussion** – Highway Superintendent, Janet Thomsen was present to discuss the following: A location has been secured to park a motor grader in St. Libory. Ms. Thomsen and Jerry Thompson are working to get this in place. Also discussed were several other roads and bridges that were damaged by the heavy rains.

**Road Wage Classification-** The Road Worker Classifications were reviewed for two of the Road's Department employees. J. McClure and J. Thompson were reviewed and discussed. Urbanski made a motion to approve moving Mr. McClure from Road Worker II, Step 2 to Step 3 and Mr. Thompson from Road Worker II, Step 6 to Step 7 effective July 1, 2025 and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, No; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Motion Carried.

**Flood Update-**The flood update was combined with the Disaster Declaration that are both scheduled on the agenda as separate items. Ms. Thomsen provided Mr. Wilshusen with information regarding damage to bridges and roads across the County. Several roads were discussed. A bridge located on Kimball Road was discussed which also affects Liberty and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The railroad tracks located by the river bridge south of St. Paul also sustained extensive

damage. Emergency Manager, Allen Wilshusen and Janet Thomsen both spoke regarding these subjects. Mr. Wilshusen prepared a disaster declaration form due to heavy rain and flooding that took place on June 25<sup>th</sup> and June 26<sup>th</sup>. The declaration was signed by County Board Chair, Kathy Hirschman and County Clerk, Brenda Klanecky on June 30, 2025.

**Grader Purchase**- Tyler McNitt with Nebraska Machinery Company was present to discuss quotes on a used CAT motor grader and a new CAT motor grader. Ms. Thomsen had requested a quote on a motor grader for budgeting purposes this spring. Following discussion, Urbanski made a motion to move forward on the purchase of a new motor grader and financing through DA Davidson and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. It was determined that competitive bids are not required for this purchase. Mr. McNitt will provide proper paperwork to send into DA Davidson to work on the financing. Ms. Thomsen was advised to sell the equipment this purchase is replacing. Surplus equipment will be placed on a future agenda.

**Culvert on Property-Bob Bogus**-Bob Bogus was present to discuss flooding issues. He believes part of the issue is caused by a culvert that was installed this year. The water is not able to drain away properly and sits on his property. The Road's Department will look into a remedy for Mr. Bogus.

**Mail** –

Memorandum from NIRMA

Letter from Mr. and Mrs. Larry Steenson

Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT)

Opioid Payments

Hamilton Monthly Report

**Unfinished Business** – None.

**LB36-Jeff Selden**- Loup Central Landfill Manager, Jeff Selden was present to discuss LB36 which was signed into law by Governor Pillen on May 20, 2025, and how it will affect our County. This is a lithium-ion and rechargeable battery recycling bill. Collection sites were discussed. Mr. Selden spoke of the dangers of fire from these batteries in the landfill. Mr. Selden stated that these batteries should never be placed in with regular trash. If someone is not sure how to dispose of these batteries, contact Mr. Selden at the landfill.

**Disaster Declaration**- This item was discussed during the flood updates. Urbanski made a motion to approve the signing of the Disaster Declaration and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**22% Reduction in BEAD Eligible Locations-** The Federal government has cut funding on this grant and will affect areas of Howard County. It was suggested that Howard County send letters to Senator McKeon, Representative Smith, Senator Fischer, Senator Ricketts and Governor Pillen. Lukasiewicz made a motion to approve sending letters to the above listed individuals regarding the BEAD Project and seconded by Hirschman. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. All Commissioners will sign the letters after the Clerk has prepared them.

**County Road Building** –Kathy Hirschman and Janet Thomsen updated the Commissioners on the County Road building. Cracks in concrete to be fixed, wall liner to be extended and larger ceiling fans will be installed. All but two of the overhead doors have been installed. Change orders will be presented to the Board at a future meeting for approval.

**Svoboda Benefits-Kevin and Chad-Health Insurance-** Kevin From and Chad Svoboda were present to discuss quotes for the renewal of the health insurance plan and options. No action taken.

**Globe Life-** Jacob Graff and Forest Caldwell were present to talk about Globe Life and optional insurance policies they service. They would like an opportunity to provide information to Howard County employees that would be interested in their products. Lukasiewicz made a motion to have the Clerk send out questionnaires for Globe Life and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Judd Allen-Health Insurance** –Judd Allen and Mike Boden were present to discuss quotes for Blue Cross/Blue Shield through NACO.

**Budget-**Planning and Zoning Administrator, Cherri Klinginsmith met with the Board to verify numbers on her department's proposed budget.

**Custodial/Maintenance-July 1-Wage Increase**–Following discussion, Lukasiewicz made a motion to freeze the wage of the custodial/maintenance position for the 2025-2026 fiscal year and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Willow Rising-Budget Request-** Urbanski made a motion to approve a \$4,000.00 budget request for Willow Rising and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Sheriff's Dept.-Drone-**Chief Deputy, Paul Tartaglia was present to discuss a quote received to purchase two drones for the Sheriff's Department. These would be paid with a \$10,000.00 grant received by the Sheriff's Department. The invoice will be approved at a future meeting.

**Adams County-Mental Health Board Costs**-A letter was received from the Adams County Attorney's Office regarding the mental health board services. The fees will be re-structured

based upon use in the previous fiscal year. This information will be used to budget for fiscal year 2025-2026. No action taken.

**Joint Public Hearing-Designate Printing Service**- Urbanski made a motion to approve the designation of MIPS to facilitate the printing and mailing of the Joint Public Hearing postcards in September if needed and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Opioid Settlement Participation**-Urbanski made a motion to authorize the County Clerk to sign documentation to participate in a new national opioid settlement noted as Purdue Pharma L.P. as presented and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

**Consent Agenda** - The Board reviewed the claims dated 7/8/2025, and the Commissioner Meeting minutes dated 6/24/2025. The Board also reviewed the Clerk, District Court, Treasurer, Sheriff's, and Attorney's Reports. Motion was made by Urbanski and seconded by Lukasiewicz to approve the claims dated 7/8/2025, General \$112,238.64, Roads-\$62,770.56, Inheritance Tax Fund-\$237,622.98, 911 Emergency Management Fund-\$698.76, and E911 Wireless Holding Fund-\$3,156.00 for a total of \$416,486.94, the department reports, and Commissioner meeting minutes dated 6/24/2025 and authorize Board Chair, Kathy Hirschman to sign the minutes. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

There being no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Urbanski and seconded by Lukasiewicz to adjourn the meeting at 1:16 p.m. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Meeting Adjourned. The next regular meeting of the Howard County Board of Commissioners will be July 22, 2025.

Dated this 8th day of July, 2025.

Kathy Hirschman  
Howard County Board Chair

ATTEST:

Brenda Klanecky  
Howard County Clerk