

HOWARD COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

February 24, 2026

A Meeting of the Howard County Board of Commissioners was convened in open and public session on the 24th day of February, 2026, in the Boardroom, Howard County Courthouse, St. Paul, Nebraska. Notice of the meeting was given thereof on the 18th day of February, 2026. 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-Mike McCann commented on the real property that the County is planning to sell. He stated there is interest in the property and to not sell the County short. Make sure that everyone interested has a chance to bid on the property.

County Road Discussion –Highway Superintendent, Janet Thomsen and Road Foreman, Ray Hurt were present to discuss an employee resignation. Mr. Hurt is retiring from the County as of March 13, 2026. Ms. Hirschman wanted to thank Mr. Hurt for his 20 years of service to the County and his expertise. He has been a great asset to the County. Urbanski made a motion to approve the resignation of Mr. Hurt and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Ms. Thomsen asked about interviewing for the vacancy. This item was not on the agenda and will need to be placed on a future agenda. Ms. Thomsen had submitted the multi county grant on February 13, 2026. Construction on this grant if received would not start until the year, 2030. During this discussion, Mr. Lukasiewicz along with employees of the Road Department have been looking into adding to the current program that the Road's Department uses through gWorks. The County Road's Department received a notification from FEMA that the County would be awarded \$200,000.00 for the weather disasters in Howard County in 2024. The Commissioners wished to thank Michelle Woitalewicz for all of her hard work to compile and send in all of the documentation to FEMA.

Mail-

NIRMA Spotlight Seminar Series

Information regarding the following:

Virtual Public Meetings

Surplus Personal Property

Hedges and Trees

Email from Cherri Klinginsmith

Unfinished Business- None.

Public Hearing -Vacate Bell Street- Urbanski made a motion to open the Public Hearing at 9:00 a.m. and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Ms. Thomsen and Planning and Zoning Administrator, Cherri Klinginsmith were present during the hearing. Others present are Tom and Mary Bejot and Steve Buhrman. No one was present to oppose the vacating of Bell Street. Bell Street was designated as a street when the Buhrman Subdivision was approved. The County has never maintained Bell Street. Also discussed was access to both lots within the Buhrman Subdivision. Hirschman asked if an easement would be put in place to make sure access was available to both residences? There is a 24-foot strip of land that can be used as a driveway. Ms. Bejot stated an easement would need to be considered if one of the owners were to sell their property. Urbanski made a motion to close the Public Hearing at 9:12 a.m. and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. No action taken. A decision will be made at the March 10, 2026, Commissioner Meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Three Wildlife Management-Areas-Grading Contract- Mark Feeney with Nebraska Game and Parks Wildlife Management and Highway Superintendent, Janet Thomsen, were present to discuss a grading contract between Game and Parks and Howard County regarding Harold Andersen WMA, Marsh Wren WMA and Leonard A. Koziol WMA. Following discussion, it was agreed upon to grade each location one time per month beginning in May and ending in August with a charge of \$1,000.00 per time. Lukasiewicz made a motion to approve grading the three wildlife management areas one time per month during the months of May, June, July and August, at a cost of \$1,000.00 per time. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Mr. Feeney will have the contract drawn up and bring before the Commissioners for approval.

Approve/Deny County Attorney Petty Cash Account- County Attorney, Heather Sikyta was present to request a petty cash account for her office. Following discussion, Urbanski made a motion to table the opening of a petty cash account for the County Attorney's office until more information is received back from the County Auditor and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Resolution 2026-8- County Bridge Match Program- Discussion was held regarding the costs and reimbursements of the Bridge Match Program. Urbanski made a motion to approve Resolution

2026-8, signing of the project program agreement-BL2605 and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Rob Schultz-Discuss Interlocal Agreement with Hall County-Weed Services- Weed

Superintendent, Rob Schultz was present to discuss the Interlocal Agreement with Hall County which is set to expire on June 30, 2026. The costs to Howard County will increase from \$28,104.00 to \$28,666.00 per quarter which is approximately a 2% increase the first year and 0% increase the second year. The Agreement will be on the agenda for March 10, 2026, at 9:45 a.m. for approval or denial.

Middle Loup River Project-Update- Present for the discussion were Emergency Manager, Allen Wilshusen, St. Paul Council Member, Jerry Woodgate and Chuck Schmid. Mr. Lukasiewicz updated those present. Mr. Wilshusen had made some contacts as well as Mr. Lukasiewicz who had spoken to the Army Corps of Engineers. Currently no funds are available. It was discussed to write to the Governor, Senators and Federal Congressman for their support of the project. Other entities that would be affected by future damages to the railroad bridge and highway bridge that cross over the Middle Loup River south of St. Paul were also mentioned to be included to endorse support of the project in a letter to the political entities. Mr. Lukasiewicz plans to meet with the St. Paul City Council at the next City Council Meeting to see if the City would be in favor of this approach and work on putting a letter together.

Approve/Deny KV Family Subdivision- Planning and Zoning Administrator, Cherri Klinginsmith and Chelsie Veleba were present to discuss the application for a single lot subdivision known as K-V Family Acres Subdivision by Scott and Cherri Klinginsmith. Following discussion, Urbanski made a motion to approve K-V Family Acres Subdivision and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Courthouse North Parking Lot- Discussed was the plate on the concrete located by the handicap parking space on the north side of the building which is starting to work loose and the curbing. Commissioners will research the ADA requirements before making any decisions. Urbanski made a motion to table this item until further research is done and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Hirschman agreed to do the research.

AKRS Lease Extension- The current lease between AKRS and Howard County will expire on April 23, 2026. AKRS contacted the Clerk to possibly extend the lease for an additional year with the option of two additional 12- month renewals. Urbanski made a motion to extend the lease an additional year with the option of two additional 12-month renewals and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Approve/Deny County Burial Application-Wilcox- Lukasiewicz made a motion to deny the County Burial Application for Wilcox and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Commissioner Meeting Date Change Due to Primary Election- The Primary Election will be held on May 12, 2026, which is the same day as the first Commissioner meeting date in May. It was agreed upon to change the Commissioner meeting date to Friday, May 15, 2026. Lukasiewicz made a motion to change the first Commissioner meeting date in May to May 15, 2026, at the regular time and seconded by Urbanski. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Authorize ACH Payments-Discussion was held regarding a payment that was made by mail and took three weeks to get there. The Clerk is starting to see a trend of more payments taking longer to be delivered. The Commissioners discussed possible solutions. Urbanski made a motion for the Clerk's office to utilize ACH payment to pay monthly bills if needed and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Executive Session-Possible Litigation- Motion was made by Urbanski and seconded by Lukasiewicz to go into Executive Session for possible litigation at 10:50 a.m. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Hirschman stated the Board was going into executive session for possible litigation at 10:50 a.m. Those present in executive session are Lukasiewicz, Hirschman and Urbanski and Howard County Attorney, Heather Sikyta and County Clerk, Brenda Klanecky. Motion was made by Urbanski and seconded by Lukasiewicz to come out of executive session at 11:09 a.m. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye. Urbanski made a motion to have the County Attorney write a letter to the Director at NPERS regarding an appeal of the 2024 audit decision and seconded by Lukasiewicz. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

Consent Agenda - The Board reviewed the payroll and claims dated 2/24/2026, and the Commissioner Meeting and regular minutes dated 2/10/2026 and Special Meeting minutes dated 2/12/ 2026. Motion was made by Urbanski and seconded by Lukasiewicz to approve the payroll and claims dated 2/24/2026, General \$258,071.74, and Roads-\$73,637.25, for a total of \$331,708.99, and Commissioner meeting minutes dated 2/10/2026, and Special Meeting minutes dated 2/12/2026, and authorize Board Chair, Kathy Hirschman to sign the minutes. Roll Call: Lukasiewicz, Aye; Hirschman, Aye; and Urbanski, Aye.

The Board of Commissioners recessed at 11:14 a.m.

The Board of Commissioners reconvened at 11:50 a.m.

Afternoon Road Work Session-Those present for the road work session were Lukasiewicz, Hirschman, Urbanski, Highway Superintendent, Janet Thomsen, Road Foreman, Ray Hurt and

Assistant Road Foreman, Jerry Thompson. Future road projects, repairs and maintenance of equipment and a review of the Road's Department inventory were discussed. No action taken.

There being no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Lukasiewicz and seconded by Urbanski to adjourn the meeting at 1:54 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 March 10, 2026.

Dated this 24th day of February, 2026.

Kathy Hirschman
Howard County Board Chair

ATTEST:

Brenda Klanecky
Howard County Clerk