

PROCEEDINGS OF THE DODGE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Regular meeting of the Dodge County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chairman Missel at 9:00 A.M. on Wednesday, May 15, 2024 in the Board Room of the Courthouse, Fremont, Nebraska with the following members present: Beam, Weddle, Strand, Backens, Missel, Tawney and Bendig. Absent: None. Prior to roll call Chairman Missel announced the meeting to be an open public meeting and that the current open meeting laws are posted on the wall and available for anyone's review.

The Board unanimously declared the meeting legally convened.

The Board unanimously approved the agenda as printed and received and placed on file county officials' reports, correspondence from Charter Communications regarding changes in channel lineup, proceedings of the Fremont Municipal Inland Port Authority's April 16, 2024 meeting, Certificates of Insurance for J & R Concrete & Construction LLC, Webster Township and WSP USA Inc. and NIRMA Safety Shorts for May 2024.

The Board, with Supervisor Backens abstaining since he was not present at the May 1, 2024 meeting, unanimously approved the minutes of the May 1, 2024 meeting as printed.

At 9:05 A.M., the Board recessed as a Board of Supervisors and convened as a Board of Corrections. Chairman Missel dispensed with roll all members being present.

Under any items of discussion, Supervisor Beam reported that Dodge County and Saunders County officials met last Friday to discuss operations at Saunders County Corrections. He said the Dodge County Sheriff and Saunders County Sheriff, judicial staff and board members from both counties were in attendance. Discussions about ways to improve operations was the focus of the meeting. Supervisor Tawney said there was an open dialogue and it was good to have so many individuals involved in the discussions. The contract for Saunders County to house Dodge County inmates renews effective July 1, 2024 and a 2% rate increase for housing the inmates is included with this renewal.

At 9:07 A.M., Chairman Missel adjourned the Board as a Board of Corrections until Wednesday, May 29, 2024 at 9:05 A.M.

Immediately thereafter, the Board reconvened as a Board of Supervisors. Chairman Missel dispensed with roll all members being present.

The Board unanimously approved the wage & hour claims as submitted in the amount of \$287,576.47.

Elaine Menzel, Legal Counsel for the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO), gave the Board an update. She told the Board about the County Board workshop to be held in Kearney on June 12 and 13, 2024. There is also a County Budget Workshop in the morning on June 12 where Governor Pillen will address property tax reform. Ms. Menzel pointed out that NACO publishes a weekly newsletter and they publish a special legislative bill summary during the legislative session; she encouraged the Board members to sign up for these. In October NACO will be hosting the NACO Legislative Conference; they are hoping to be able to host it at the new

NACO West location in Ogallala. In December, the NACO Annual Conference will be held on December 18-20, 2024 in Kearney. Ms. Menzel gave a summary of the most recent legislative session beginning with inheritance tax receipts; no changes were made during this session. NACO believes there needs to be replacement revenue if the inheritance tax is discontinued and they are hoping to come up with ideas for other revenue streams. The property tax reform efforts failed during this session and NACO anticipates a special session called for this summer by Governor Pillen. The Open Meetings Act was updated; NACO provides one free poster for Dodge County which will be posted in the boardroom. One other issue that was amended during this legislative session is the threshold for competitive bidding; the dollar amount increased to \$70,000 (formerly \$50,000) and will increase incrementally over the next few years. Supervisor Strand commented on the expense to government entities to place notices of public meetings. He added that Facebook and other online resources would be a good place to post these notices and would be more cost effective. Ms. Menzel said there are State online resources where smaller entities can post notices online and this trend may continue with the decline in the number of newspapers available to post notices.

Christopher Meeks introduced himself as a new Government and Community Relations Strategist for OPPD. He said he has been with OPPD for about three months with the public affairs unit that is assigned to local government. Over the next ten years OPPD wants to expand their energy portfolio so they can double their generating capacity. Supervisor Strand asked about the status of the natural gas generating stations at Standing Bear Lake and Turtle Creek. Michaela Valentin, Government Affairs & Community Relations Manager for OPPD, reported that they are hoping to have those two stations online by August 2024. She also said the Platteview Solar facility near Yutan started commercial operations on May 2, 2024 and is another example of the varied energy portfolio OPPD is building. Chairman Missel said he is thankful for the support from OPPD as it relates to the Fremont Municipal Inland Port Authority efforts; the ability to access power will be a big part of their projects.

The Board unanimously approved the financial claims as submitted in the amount of \$471,221.13. Supervisor Backens asked Highway Superintendent Huppert for clarification of the expenditure for address signs. He wanted to know if this was a purchase of additional signs & stickers or if this was an invoice for signs and stickers the County already had. Superintendent Huppert said these are additional signs to complete the lake projects; the signs are \$18 each.

The Board unanimously approved the Proposed 2024-2025 Budget Calendar as presented. Supervisor Bendig pointed out that the LB644 Public Hearing for subdivisions that need to exceed the 2% tax cap plus growth will be on September 23, 2024 at the Dodge County Extension Office at 1206 W. 23rd St., Fremont, NE.

Zoning Administrator Jean Andrews reported that Chad Engle, Loss Prevention Manager & Safety Specialist for NIRMA, will be conducting a county building inspections seminar on May 30, 2024 in Knox County (Center, NE). She said this would be a good seminar for our building and grounds personnel to attend. Supervisor Strand said he would make sure Dana Nielsen is aware of this opportunity.

The Board unanimously authorized Highway Superintendent Huppert to conduct a study on the request from Taylor Farms to vacate a street in Ames, NE which lies east of Block 1 and 2 in the SE ¼ Section 9, Township 17 N, R7E. Assistant Highway Superintendent Jean Andrews said the study letter will be presented to the Board during

the May 29, 2024 meeting of the Dodge County Board of Supervisors. At this same meeting, the Board will also be asked to consider the adoption of a Resolution setting the public hearing date on the vacation of this street.

The Board unanimously approved the request of Highway Superintendent Huppert to advertise for bids for Road Gravel for fiscal year 2024-2025 and to have the bids opened on May 31, 2024 at 11:15 A.M. in the office of the Dodge County Highway Department.

The Board unanimously approved the 2024 Master Professional Services Agreement between Speece Lewis, a Bowman Company and authorized Chairman Missel to sign the agreement. Speece Lewis and Bowman recently merged making it necessary to update this agreement that will be in effect for the remainder of calendar year 2024. In the future the agreement will be renewed each calendar year.

Highway Superintendent Scott Huppert reported that employees are finishing the road grading project (#654) around Scribner. Employees are also cleaning ditches, replacing culverts and mowing as the weather allows. There is work going on at County Road 3 and Highway 91 to work on bridge approaches. Superintendent Huppert said the road gravel is holding up well with all the rain we have received. The State is in the last phase of closing county roads to finish construction for the new Highway 30 Bypass; it is possible they will be done with the project and could open the bypass up by the middle of June 2024. Supervisor Backens asked if the ditch on County Road T between Luther Road and Yager Road was cleaned out by a contractor or by the Roads Department. Superintendent Huppert said his employees have been cleaning it out and have hauled off 7 loads of tires and trash. He said this greatly improved the drainage in this area.

At 9:53 A.M., Chairman Missel adjourned the Board as a Board of Supervisors until Wednesday, May 29, 2024 at 9:00 A.M.

At 10:02 A.M., the Board convened as a Board of Equalization with the following members present: Beam, Weddle, Strand, Backens, Missel, Tawney and Bendig. Absent: None.

The Board unanimously approved tax roll corrections #5688 and 5689.

The Board unanimously received the Tax Increment Financing Annual Report from City of Scribner.

The Board unanimously approved referee agreements for the 2024 property valuation protest season with the following appraisers: Scott Brettmann, Nick Dizona, Craig Miller, Chad Howser and Brian Arnold and authorized the necessary signatures on the agreements.

Assessor Churchill reported that she has gotten the State's reply to the Permissive Exemption applications that were sent in for 2024. She said there were a few that had the wrong tax year on the form, one that had no legal description, one that was reevaluated for a partial exemption instead of total exemption and one that was denied. The Board will need to revisit the applications that have been corrected and make a determination on those at the May 29, 2024 meeting of the Dodge County Board of Equalization. The Assessor's Office has also been tasked with calling several

organizations (primarily churches with parsonages and churches with storage garages) and asking more questions to determine their eligibility for exemption. The State has asked that this follow-up work be done by Monday, May 20. Assessor Churchill also reported that her office will be closed over the lunch hour during the month of June.

At 10:07 A.M., Chaiman Missel adjourned the Board as a Board of Equalization until Wednesday, May 29, 2024 at 10:00 A.M.

Micki Gilfry
Dodge County Clerk