

## 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 29, 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 Board of Trustees minutes for April 8, 2024 meeting and Statement of Revenues & Expenses YTD Comparison for the ten months ending April 30, 2024 and 2023 from Fremont Community Health Resources, letter from County Treasurer Winterstein regarding Dillon Companies Inc. (Kroger) 2020 Tax Roll Correction #5688 and 2021 Tax Roll Correction #5689 resulting in a tax refund of \$11,312.53, Certificate of Insurance for Scrib's House Moving, Inc., Notice of Public Hearing for the Fremont City Council for a request of Agustin Guerrero for a Conditional Use Permit to operate an auto sales facility located at 540 S. Broad Street, Fremont, NE – public hearing to be held May 14, 2024 at 7:00 p.m., letter from Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy requesting information from Marcel Padilla Acreage concerning a septic tank serving the dwelling at 6340 Platte River Road, Ames, NE discharging untreated septage onto a neighboring property and Utility Installation Agreement with OPPD to install an underground distribution line E ¼ Corner Section 15, T18N, R5E in Union Township.

The Board unanimously approved the minutes of the May 15, 2024 meeting as printed.

At 9:05 A.M., the Board recessed as a Board of Supervisors and convened as a Board of Corrections.

Under any items of discussion, Supervisor Beam reported that there are currently 55 inmates in custody with 42 being held in Saunders County, 12 in Washington County and 1 at the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services. In the month of May there have been 133 inmates booked into custody and 28 of those were booked over the Memorial Day weekend.

At 9:06 A.M., the Board adjourned as a Board of Corrections until Wednesday, June 12, 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 \$290,660.68.

The Board unanimously approved the financial claims as submitted in the amount of \$924,497.62.

The Board unanimously received the request for funding in the 2024-2025 Budget of \$4,000 for the Keep Fremont Beautiful October 2024 Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event and referred it to the finance committee.

The Board unanimously approved the audit proposal from Erickson & Brooks, CPAs to provide services for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2024 through 2026. Supervisor Bendig told the Board that he recommends the three-year contract for three main reasons. First, is the difficulty finding firms that will perform government audits. Second, Erickson & Brooks comes to the office and their hands-on approach is preferable versus trying to accomplish the audit through email and phone conversations. Third, the County Purchasing Act does not require competitive bidding for professional services. He added that Lisa Braasch, who is employed in the Dodge County Treasurer's Office, puts together the information for the audit since Dodge County does not have a Chief Financial Officer or a Comptroller. Ms. Braasch was formerly employed by Erickson & Brooks so she has a good understanding of what information they need and can help facilitate the process.

Brandon Jerred, Drug Court Coordinator, gave the Board an update on the Drug Court program. He explained that drug court is a specialized court that works with individuals that have committed a felony and their substance use disorder contributed in some way to the offense. He added that the candidates for the program are high risk to reoffend and not graduate and they are also high needs individuals. Their overall goal is to graduate the participants; they currently have 18 participating in the program. Supervisor Backens asked what the graduation ratio is. Mr. Jerred said last year the graduation rate was approximately 55%; he said his goal is 65%. One change they plan to make to the program is the referral process. If the participant can begin the application process to drug court within 52 days of committing the felony, they are more motivated to participate in the program. Right now, the court processes can drag out and the potential participants lose the motivation to apply. Supervisor Beam asked who typically refers the candidates. Mr. Jerred said the defense attorney makes the first contact, but County Attorney Hopkins has the ultimate authority as to who to accept into the program. Supervisor Tawney thanked Mr. Jerred for all they do with this program; he added that he learned a lot about the program during the jail meetings that were conducted between Dodge County and Saunders County. Chairman Missel told the Board that it would be well worth their time to attend a Drug Court graduation.

Committee Reports – Supervisor Beam reported that Jeff Kappeler, Director of the Dodge County Historical Society, will be retiring as of June 1, 2024. The organization is actively searching for a new director. Supervisor Tawney commended the Roads Department for their work after the torrential rains Dodge County received on May 21<sup>st</sup>. He said the standing water was drained within 24-36 hours of the event. This rain event also brought to light some drainage issues around the new Highway 30 By-Pass. Chairman Missel told the Board about two public information open house meetings the Nebraska Department of Transportation is hosting in regard to improvements that will be made to portions of Highway 77 in Dodge and Saunders County. Meeting number one is Wednesday, June 12, 2024 at the Mead Fire Hall from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Meeting number two is Thursday, June 13, 2024 at the Pohocco Lutheran Church from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Zoning Administrator Jean Andrews reported that Serrano's Auto Hail Repair, Hastings, NE (NIRMA recommended this vendor) is determining estimates for repairing county vehicles with hail damage. Estimates and repairs, if needed, are being done at

935 S. Schneider St. She said there are several county vehicles being looked at and the estimated average cost to repair each vehicle is approximately \$3,700.

The Board unanimously received a letter from the Elkhorn Township Board requesting the vacation of County Road 29 both north and south of the Union Pacific Railroad located in S.E. ¼ Section 14, Township 17 North, Range 9 East, Dodge County and authorized Highway Superintendent Huppert to conduct a study on said vacation and present a study letter at the June 12, 2024 meeting of the Dodge County Board of Supervisors.

The Board unanimously received a study letter from Highway Superintendent Scott Huppert regarding the request of 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 North, Range 7 East.

The Board unanimously adopted a Resolution of the Dodge County Board of Supervisors setting the Public Hearing date of June 26, 2024 at 10:15 A.M. in the Dodge County Board of Supervisors Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Courthouse, Fremont, NE to hear testimony for or against said vacation of a street in Ames, NE which lies east of Block 1 and 2 in the SE ¼ Section 9, Township 17 North, Range 7 East and authorized the necessary signatures on the Resolution.

Supervisor Backens returned to the discussion about hail damaged vehicles and asked if it would be necessary to fix all the vehicles with hail damage, specifically the sheriff's vehicles. Ms. Andrews said that would be up to NIRMA and Sheriff Weitzel. She also said it was her understanding that this would be considered a single event and the \$1,000 deductible would cover all vehicles.

At 9:49 A.M., the Board recessed as a Board of Supervisors.

At 10:00 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 accepted the recommendation of County Treasurer Winterstein on form 457, Application for Exemption from Motor Vehicle Taxes for 2024, on a 2000 Chevy Astro Van from Grants Wishes, 1825 N. Keene Avenue, Fremont, Nebraska, granted the exemption and authorized Chairman Missel to sign the form.

The Board unanimously received the Findings and Order In the Matter of Equalization of Value of Real Property Within Dodge County for Tax Year 2024 Before the Nebraska Tax Equalization and Review Commission (TERC) stating that the levels of value for real property in Dodge County for tax year 2024 meet the requirements of law; no further proceedings shall be held to determine whether further adjustments should be made.

The Board unanimously approved referee agreements for the 2024 property valuation protest season with Jeff Quist and Jeff Reynolds and authorized the necessary signatures on the agreements.

At 10:10 A.M., a Public Hearing was held to receive public input as whether to allow or to deny corrected permissive exemptions in Dodge County for 2024. The State requested more information on the exemption applications under further consideration.

On twelve of the applications in this group, corrections were made to the tax year written on the application. On four of the applications included in the twelve, there was no legal description; that information was added to these applications. The State also had questions about the daycare at First Lutheran Church; Assessor Churchill gathered that information and it was satisfactory to the State. There were two applications that the State requested further information and this further review prompted a change in Assessor Churchill's recommendation of approval. Midland University has a parcel that a vacant house sits on; the recommendation was changed to approve of a portion of the exemption. The recommendation for Rebuilding Together, Platte Valley East Inc. was to deny the exemption since no construction has been started. The Salvation Army has a parcel that is a vacant lot and after further review, Assessor Churchill determined that the lot is used for children's activities; she amended her recommendation to approval of the exemption. Hearing no testimony for or against the corrected recommendations from Assessor Churchill, the Board unanimously accepted the recommendation of Assessor Churchill to make the corrections on the twelve cited above, the partial approval for Midland University, the denial of the application from Rebuilding Together, Platte Valley East Inc. and the approval of the application for the Salvation Army (parcel #270001820).

Assessor Churchill reported that the 2024 property valuation notices are going out in the mail on Friday, May 31. There are approximately 20,600 notices being sent and of those approximately 1,700 valuations went down. The rest had an increase anywhere from \$1 to over a million dollars. She said in the towns and townships (half of the townships have been reviewed by the Assessor's Office) that have been reviewed, the residential parcels are "live" which means the values are driven by computer data. She added that most of the commercial and industrial parcels are "live" as well. For agricultural land she explained that there are three market areas. Market area 1 is the south half of Dodge County and irrigated land went up 16%, dry land went up 1% and grassland a negligible amount. For Market area 2 (northern half of Dodge County), irrigated land went up 9%, dry land went up 10% and grassland a negligible amount. Market area 3 is east of Fremont and irrigated land went up 7% and dry land and grassland a negligible amount. Supervisor Strand said he thinks Dodge County is chasing sales and he added that this used to be frowned upon. Assessor Churchill said if an entire area is adjusted based on multiple sales (at least 5), it isn't chasing sales. She said since values are based on market values, they must use sales of property.

At 10:28 A.M., the Board adjourned as a Board of Equalization until Wednesday, June 12, 2024 at 10:00 A.M.

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

Jarod Dendinger from Applied Connective Technologies conducted computer training for the Board members. Topics that were discussed included Team Alert, Microsoft Teams, the status of the centralized servers for the Dodge County Courthouse and cyber security.

At 11:12 A.M., Chairman Missel adjourned the Board as a Board of Supervisors until Wednesday, June 12, 2024 at 9:00 A.M.

Micki Gilfry  
Dodge County Clerk