

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE KNOX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Center, Nebraska  
May 1, 2024  
9:30 a.m.

A regular meeting of the Knox County Board of Supervisors was held in the Boardroom at the Knox County Courthouse in Center, Nebraska on the date of Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. Present were Supervisors Martin J. O'Connor District #1, Patrick J. Liska District #2, David L. Pierce District #3, James Sokol, Jr. District #4, Kevin D. Mackeprang District #5, Danny R. Schlote District #6 and James J. Borgmann District #7. Absent was none. Chairman Sokol, Jr. presiding.

Supr. Pierce led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Sokol, Jr. announced to the public that a copy of the Public Open Meeting Act was posted in the Boardroom.

Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Bloomfield Monitor newspaper, as shown by the Affidavit of Publication attached to these minutes.

Notice of this meeting was simultaneously given to all members and a copy of their acknowledgment and receipt of notice and agenda is attached to these minutes. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was opened to the attendance of the public.

Chairman Sokol, Jr. approved the minutes of the April 17, 2024 meeting as read.

Motion by Supr. Schlote, seconded by Supr. Liska that all claims except Claim #24050074 payable to Myndi J. Schlote in the amount of \$61.80, audited and approved for payment by the Claims Committee, be allowed subject to delinquent personal taxes. By roll call vote. Ayes all Districts. Nays none. Motion carried.

Motion by Supr. Pierce, seconded by Supr. Borgmann that Claim #24050074 payable to Myndi J. Schlote in the amount of \$61.80, audited and approved for payment by the Claims Committee, be allowed subject to delinquent personal taxes. By roll call vote. Ayes Districts #1, #2, #3, #4, #5 and #7. Nays none. Abstain District #6. Motion carried.

Claims totaling \$482,271.21 are listed at the end of these proceedings.

Motion by Supr. Mackeprang, seconded by Supr. Pierce to place on file the Receipts Revenue List of April 15 – 26, 2024. By roll call vote. Ayes all Districts. Nays none. Motion carried.

Public comment session was held from 9:44 a.m. through 10:05 a.m. Katrina Burkhardt and Representatives from National Grid Renewable Wind gave public comments.

Chairman Sokol, Jr. moved the Board recess at 10:06 a.m. for Board of Equalization.

The Knox County Board of Supervisors reconvened at 10:18 a.m. with all members present.

Hwy. Supt. Barta met with the Board on the following: 1.) Discussed repairs needed to a motorgrader at the Center yard. More discussion will take place later in the meeting; 2.) Three quotes were received from Husker Steel for steel products for three smaller bridge projects. Motion by Supr. Schlote, seconded by Supr. Mackeprang to approve the following quotes for steel products from **Husker Steel of Columbus NE** - \$13,845 for the "Heggemeyer South" bridge in Walnut Grove Township; \$27,917 for the "Circle E Land & Cattle, LLC" bridge in Dolphin Township; and \$39,818 for the "Doerr" bridge in Central Township. By roll call vote. Ayes all Districts. Nays none. Motion carried; 3.) Discussion was held on the Center West bridge project. The project began five years ago, and the cost of the project is estimated to increase three times over the first estimation, making the County's cost share nearly \$800,000 now. As the project has started and loss of Federal funds would cost the County considerably more to replace the bridge, the Board will continue with the project. Bidding for the project will take place on August 8, 2024. Motion by Supr. Pierce, seconded by Supr. O'Connor to adopt **Resolution #2024 – 05** authorizing Chairman Sokol, Jr. to sign the resolution and submit it to the State signifying the County's approval of the preliminary PS&E package. By roll call vote. Ayes all Districts. Nays none. Motion carried.

**RESOLUTION  
APPROVAL OF PRELIMINARY PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS, AND ESTIMATES  
(PS&E)**

County of Knox  
Resolution No. 2024 - 05

**Whereas:** Knox County and State entered into an LPA Program Agreement for State to assist County in the development and construction of an LPA Federal-aid transportation project;

**Whereas:** The State or the design consultant has developed the project plans to the point where they are ready to submit to State's PS & E Section for final edits for a bid letting;

**Whereas:** The LPA Program Agreement requires the county to review the preliminary PS & E package and either request modification or approve them as acceptable at this stage;

**Whereas:** Knox County wishes to approve the preliminary PS & E package as prepared.

**Be It Resolved by the Board of Supervisors of Knox County that:**

The Chairman, James Sokol Jr. is hereby authorized to sign the bottom of this resolution and submit it to the State signifying the County's approval of the preliminary PS & E package.

NDOR Project Number: BRO-7054(22)  
NDOR Control Number: 32313  
NDOR Project Description: Center West  
Adopted this 1<sup>st</sup> day of May, 2024 at Center Nebraska.

The Board of Supervisors of Knox County, Nebraska

Patrick J. Liska /s/ James Borgmann /s/  
David L. Pierce /s/ Danny R. Schlote /s/  
Martin J. O'Connor /s/

James Sokol, Jr. /s/  
Kevin D. Mackeprang /s/

Board/Council Member Supr. Pierce  
Moved the adoption of said resolution  
Member Supr. O'Connor Seconded the Motion  
Roll Call: 7 Yes 0 No 0 Abstained 0 Absent  
Resolution adopted, signed and billed as adopted

Knox County  
James Sokol Jr. /s/  
Chairman  
Attest: (Seal)  
Joann M. Fischer /s/  
Signature County Clerk

Hwy. Supt. Barta continued with the following: 4.) The Frankfort Township Board requested that a .75-mile section of the East-West Platted Road #732 in Section 19, T33N, R2W be reclassified to Minimum Maintenance. An adjoining landowner to the road wants to vacate a portion of the road and reclassify the rest of the road to Minimum Maintenance. The matter was tabled for more information; 5.) Discussion was held on the Rec Road possible upgrade. Deputy County Attorney Jensen had submitted a Congressionally Directed Spending Request grant application to Senator Deb Fischer to upgrade nine miles of the Rec Road. Hwy. Supt. Barta contacted the State to see if they would pay part of the match cost and the answer was no. The match cost to the County could be 20% of \$13 million. More discussion will be held later in the meeting.

Tyler Wulf and Jeff Jones with Nebraska Game and Parks met with the Board to discuss the "Star Wars" projects and law enforcement. Mr. Wulf informed the Board of the following: Nearly \$6 million was "swept" from the designated funds to the Star Wars projects so instead of updating the Verdel and Niobrara boat landings, only the Verdel landing is proposed to be updated. The proposed construction of a new Niobrara State Park lodge project will be discussed with engineers in the next several weeks. Also, no bidding will be let for the Weigand Marina upgrade until the permitting process with the Army Corps of Engineers takes place. Sgt. Jeff Jones updated the Board on law enforcement in the park areas under the Nebraska Game and Parks authority, the number of Nebraska Game and Parks Officers available in his subdistrict and dispatching access.

Jackie Duncan with FirstNet met with the Board to present communication and network services for first responders and individuals provided by FirstNet. The program was built by AT&T and was built to maintain the confidentiality of data by maintaining segregation from other users' data as well as providing service to the public safety sector as a large amount of bandwidth is used by individuals affecting network service for the first responders, fire departments, highway departments and other departments. Discussed were costs, service area that can reach into South Dakota, use in fleet vehicles and deployable units available. No action was taken.

Economic Development Director Harvey and Bobby Pettit with Five Rule Planning updated the Board on the activity in most of the communities in Knox County that included low to moderate housing, senior citizens' housing, adopting a sales tax project and childcare.

Emergency Manager/Zoning Administrator Jelinek met with the Board on the following: 1.) The Crofton Community Fire Protection District #3 submitted a building permit application for construction of a rural fire hall. EM/ZA Jelinek asked the Board if the permit fee should be collected from the Crofton Fire District and the Board instructed her to waive the permit fee; 2.) Motion by Supr. Mackeprang, seconded by Supr. Liska to approve Administrative Plat Application #P2403 Jason Schendt for a 7.79-acre tract split in the NE1/4NW1/4 of Section 20, T33N, R2W of the 6<sup>th</sup> P.M., Knox County, Nebraska. By roll call vote. Ayes all Districts. Nays none. Motion carried; 3.) EM/ZA Jelinek requested clarification of Resolution #2021 – 45 that was adopted November 9, 2021 amending Section 8.04 of the Knox County Zoning Regulations. A building permit application was received from Jeanne Kneifl who wants to move a pre-built shed from Bloomfield to Cedar Ridge RV Park. Section 8.04 (8B) says "All external amenities (porches, screened patios, decks, built-in grills/pizza ovens, and similar) constructed on, relocated to, and placed on a recreational vehicle site or camping site shall require the following: B. Be considered permanent and said items shall be taxed as improvements to the land. This information shall be provided within the zoning permit and may be verified by any authorized county official." Landowner Robyn Barney signed the permit application approving the relocation of the pre-built shed to the Cedar Ridge RV Park. The Board said it will be permissible as the landowner has approved the relocation of the shed to the RV park. County Assessor McManigal said that the shed will be affixed to the real estate and is taxable to the landowner.

Nebraska Cooperative Government contacted County Clerk Fischer to inquire about Knox County designating a Community Day (bonus day) for KENO in the facilities under the County's jurisdiction. KENO players would have a chance to win extra money on Community Day. Motion by Supr. Mackeprang, seconded by Supr. Borgmann to authorize Chairman Sokol, Jr. to sign a letter to Nebraska Cooperative Government designating Saturday, June 15, 2024 as a Community Day (bonus day) for KENO in the sites under the County's jurisdiction and further to designate the third Saturday of June in the subsequent years as a KENO Community Day in the sites under the County's jurisdiction. By call vote. Ayes all Districts. Nays none. Motion carried.

Chairman Sokol, Jr. moved the Board recess at 12:01 p.m. for lunch.

The Knox County Board of Supervisors reconvened at 12:49 p.m. with all members present.

Hwy. Supt. Barta continued with the following: 6.) Discussion continued on repairing the motorgrader at the Center Shed. Motion by Supr. Pierce, seconded by Supr. Borgmann to put in a new motor in the Center John Deere motorgrader. By roll call vote. Ayes all Districts. Nays none. Motion carried; 7.) Further discussion was held on upgrading the Rec Road. As the State won't help with the cost share and it being a large burden on the County, Senator Deb Fischer will be contacted that the County's application be withdrawn. The grant application may be resubmitted next year and possibly shorten the number of miles of upgrading; 8.) Water continues to pool near CJ's on the Rec Road and a plastic pipe will be placed under the road. Lewis and Clark Rural Water crews will be checking the lines in that area to see if a leak is causing the pooling; 9.) Bridge Crew update.

The Board and Officials/Department Heads met to discuss employee wage increases. As it is time to begin the preliminary budget process, wage information is needed. The Officials/Department Heads met with the Finance Committee to discuss options. The proposal from the Officials/Department Heads and Finance Committee was to increase the wages at the June 30, 2024 payroll period by 3.5% for Categories 1, 2 and 3 employees with the exception that newer employees who have not been employed for one year would be eligible to receive an increase at their one-year anniversary. Also proposed the County pay of the premium of health insurance of the spouse/child(ren) or family health insurance premiums. Currently eligible employees who have their spouse or child(ren) enrolled are paying \$250 per pay period of twenty-four pay periods and eligible employees who have a family policy are paying \$375 per pay period of twenty-four pay periods towards that premium. The County is paying the remainder of those premiums. Eligible employees receive as a benefit a single health insurance policy or if they are not enrolled with 90 Degree Benefits health insurance, they receive an opt-out taxable stipend. Elected officials will receive a 2.886% increase on January 1, 2025 as per Resolution #2021 – 35. Motion by Supr.

O'Connor, seconded by Supr. Pierce to approve a 3.5% wage increase for Categories 1, 2 and 3 employees with the exception that newer employees who have not been employed for one year would be eligible to receive an increase at their one-year anniversary, and the County to pay the full premium for spouse/child(ren) or family of eligible employees enrolled in the 90 Degree Benefits Health Insurance starting at the June 27, 2024 payroll period noting that the Board will review the health insurance County pay of premiums in one year. By roll call. Ayes Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7. Nays District 5. Motion carried.

Job evaluations were held on Appointed Officials Hwy. Supt. Barta, Veteran Service Officer Jones and Weed Supt. Banks. Emergency Manager/Zoning Administrator Jelinek requested closed session for her job evaluation. Motion by Supr. Liska, seconded by Supr. Pierce to go into closed session at 2:40 p.m. so as to not cause injury to the reputation of an individual while discussing a job evaluation and personnel. By roll call vote. Ayes all Districts. Nays none. Motion carried. Supr. Borgmann left the meeting during the closed session at 3:05 p.m. The Board came out of closed session at 3:15 p.m.

Motion by Supr. Pierce, seconded by Supr. Mackeprang to close at 3:15 p.m. the closed session held on job evaluation and personnel. By roll call vote. Ayes Districts #1, #2, #3, #4, #5 and #6. Nays none. Absent was District #7. Motion carried.

The Board discussed personnel and tabled discussion of wage increases for the Appointed Officials until the next meeting.

**GENERAL FUND.** Salaries, 97,655.72; Applied Connective Technologies, IT, 5,610.54; April 2024 Jurors, jury duty/mileage, 4,958.02; Bloomfield Tire & Oil LLC, repairs, 100.00; Bomgaars, repairs, 184.66; Bryan Health, copy fees, 29.00; Ciox Health, retrieval fees, 146.50; Classic Carpet Care, mop rental, 40.00; Clerk of District Court, court costs, 37.00; Collector of Internal Revenue, Social Security County pays, 7,164.01; County of Knox Employee Benefit c/o Healthcare Solutions Group Inc., insurance County pays, 43,004.59; Crofton Journal/Niobrara Tribune, publishing, 304.00; DAS State Accounting-Central Finance, radios, 161.00; DAS State Accounting-Central Finance, teletype, 537.60; Eakes Office Solutions, copier agreement, 333.02; Election Systems & Software Inc, ballots, 2,578.38; First National Bank Omaha, gas/supplies/postage/meals/lodging, 3,622.79; Holiday Inn-Kearney, lodging, 1,037.55; Joann Fischer, reimbursement of van gas, 46.25; Knox County Clerk, jury meals, 22.00; KV Electric LLC, electrical work, 294.79; Lincoln National Life Insurance Co., insurance County pays, 295.91; Loffler, copier contract, 355.03; Matthew R Fischer, reimburse jury meals, 81.88; Midwest Radar & Equipment, equipment, 82.00; Moody Motor Company, repairs, 185.67; NACT, registration, 150.00; Nebraska Sheriffs' Association, dues, 60.00; Northeast Nebraska RC&D, dues, 2,000.00; Pitzer Digital, publishing, 481.98; Principal Life Insurance Company, insurance County pays, 2,241.00; Quill Corporation, supplies, 279.20; Red Door Grill, jury meals, 369.00; Retirement Plans Division of Ameritas, retirement County pays, 6,721.93; Rhonda Surface, reimburse supplies, 13.50; Top Quality Glove, gloves, 89.31; US Cellular, cell phones, 185.62; Verdigre PrintWorks, printing, 867.75; Village of Center, hall rent, 80.00.

**ROAD FUND.** Salaries, 37,137.51; B's Enterprises Inc., blades, 18,826.00; Black Hills Energy, heating fuel, 69.18; Bomgaars, shop tools/repairs, 1,087.98; Cedar-Knox Public Power District; electricity, 254.07; Collector of Internal Revenue, Social Security County pays, 2,708.79; County of Knox Employee Benefit c/o Healthcare Solutions Group Inc., insurance County pays, 18,745.32; Fairfield Inn & Suites; lodging, 559.80; First National Bank Omaha, meals/gas, 144.34; Herbert Feed & Grain Co., diesel, 4,424.83; Laflan Medical Clinic, drug test, 75.00; Lincoln National Life Insurance Co., insurance County pays, 113.24; Mainelli Wagner & Associates Inc., engineer fees, 18,753.16; Medical Enterprises Inc., drug test, 75.00; Nebraska Public Power District, electricity, 184.75; Overhead Door Co., repairs, 125.00; Principal Life Insurance Company, insurance County pays, 806.76; Quill Corporation, office supplies, 83.98; Retirement Plans Div. of Ameritas, retirement County pays, 2,451.11; Verdigre Collision Repair, repairs, 1,683.70; Verdigre Eagle, publishing, 17,529.76; Highway Bridge Buyback Fund, highway bridge, 123,796.00.

**FLOWAGE EASEMENT ROAD FUND.** Mainelli Wagner & Associates Inc., engineer fees, 632.50.

**CHILD SUPPORT FUND.** First National Bank Omaha, courtroom supplies, 78.17; Hometown Leasing, copier lease, 164.44.

**COVID ARPA FUND.** Scott Ober Construction LLC, storage/garage, 23,835.00.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND.** NENEDD, admin fees, 42.50.

**C&C DEVELOPMENT FUND.** Salaries, 3,510.00; Collector of Internal Revenue, Social Security County pays, 264.50; Crofton Journal/Niobrara Tribune, publishing, 576.00; First National Bank Omaha, leadership/postage/meals/travel, 921.09; Flagship Publishing Inc., publishing, 1,300.00; Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, insurance County pays, 5.96; Niobrara Promoters, Niobrara bucks, 120.00; Principal Life Insurance Company, insurance County pays, 44.82; Retirement Plans Div. of Ameritas, retirement County pays, 225.11; Stacy Miller, reimburse meals, 46.33; Verdigre Eagle, publishing, 210.00.

**INHERITANCE FUND.** Brogan Lamml P.C., court appointed attorney, 1,070.14; Mark D. Albin, court appointed attorney, 1,608.09; Rodney W. Smith, public defender contract, 2,083.33; Stratton DeLay Doele Carlson & Buettner PC LLO, court appointed attorney, 552.72.

**911 EMERGENCY FUND.** First National Bank Omaha, supplies, 29.82; GEO Comm Inc., GIS mapping, 3,287.40.

**911 WIRELESS SERVICE FUND.** GEO Comm Inc., GIS mapping, 7,670.60.

TOTALS

General Fund	\$183,617.27
Road Fund	126,579.42
Highway Bridge Buyback Fund	123,796.00
Flowage Easement Road Fund	632.50
Child Support Fund	242.61
Covid ARPA Fund	23,835.00
Economic Development Fund	42.50
C & C Development Fund	7,223.81
Inheritance Fund	5,314.28
911 Emergency Fund	3,317.22
911 Wireless Service Holding Fund	7,670.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$482,271.21</b>

Chairman Sokol, Jr. adjourned the Knox County Board of Supervisors at 3:25 p.m. on May 1, 2024 until 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, May 15, 2024 for a regular meeting.

I, Joann M. Fischer, Knox County Clerk, do hereby certify that the County Board minutes are correct to the best of my knowledge.

ATTEST:

COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
OF KNOX COUNTY, NEBRASKA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joann M. Fischer, Knox County Clerk

By \_\_\_\_\_  
James Sokol, Jr., Chairman

\*\*\*\*\*