

PROCEEDINGS OF THE KNOX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Center, Nebraska
October 30, 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, October 30, 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.

Supervisor Liska 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 and Verdigre Eagle newspapers, as shown by the Affidavits 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.

County Clerk Fischer read the minutes of the October 16, 2024 meeting. Chairman Sokol, Jr. approved the minutes of the October 16, 2024 meeting.

Chairman Sokol, Jr. opened the public comment session at 9:43 a.m. Brad Young gave public comments regarding wind turbines and zoning regulations.

Motion by Supr. Schlote, seconded by Supr. Pierce that all claims except Claim #24100284 payable to Elder Law and Estate Planning, 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. Schlote, seconded by Supr. Borgmann that Claim #24100284 payable to Elder Law and Estate Planning in the amount of \$21,938.37, 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, #6 and #7. Nays none. Abstain District #5. Motion carried.

Claims totaling \$1,286,585.48 are listed at the end of these proceedings.

Motion by Supr. O'Connor, seconded by Supr. Liska to place on file the Receipts Revenue List of October 14 – 25, 2024. By roll call vote. Ayes all Districts. Nays none. Motion carried.

Motion by Supr. Borgmann, seconded by Supr. Schlote to accept the resignation of Creighton Township Chairman Brady Wortman and the appointment of Bronson Pahl as Creighton Township Chairman. By roll call vote. Ayes all Districts. Nays none. Motion carried.

Chairman Sokol, Jr. closed the public comment session at 9:58 a.m.

Chairman Sokol, Jr. moves the Board recess at 9:59 a.m. for Board of Equalization

The Knox County Board of Supervisors reconvened at 10:08 a.m. with all members present.

Emergency Manager/Zoning Administrator Jelinek met with the Board on the following: 1.) Motion by Supr. Mackeprang, seconded by Supr. Pierce to place on file the Board of Adjustments September 26, 2023 meeting minutes. By roll call vote. Ayes all Districts. Nays none. Motion carried; 2.) Discussion was held on a potential Cedar/Knox County Emergency Management Region. Discussion was held on the recent Cedar County Commissioners' meeting that Chairman Sokol, Jr. and E.M. Jelinek attended, funding, that the Federal Government is phasing out the match funding, splitting the Emergency Manager/Zoning Administrator position so each has a stand-alone official, advertising on Indeed, the new Emergency Manager would need to be certified within the first twelve months of hire, and hiring wage. County Clerk Fischer will advertise the position on Indeed as well as placing it on the Knox County Nebraska Courthouse Facebook page.

Hwy. Supt. Barta met with the Board on the following: 1.) Antelope/Knox County bridge project update; 2.) Motorgrader operating training is taking place for newer employees; 3.) Bridge inspections are ongoing; 4.) The Federal Bridge letting date is December 12, 2024 for the Center West Bridge project; 5.) Seeding is completed on the Verdigre North Federal Bridge project; 6.) Oil Crew update; 7.) Discussed cost of renting equipment to cut cedar trees along the Rec Road.

Insurance Agent Jeff Hammer met with the Board with proposed insurance premiums for the 2025 health insurance and the dental/vision insurance. The health insurance premiums increased approximately 5%. Discussed was the possible review of claims if more employees add a spouse or family and stipend options. Motion by Supr. Mackeprang, seconded by Supr. Borgman to approve the 90 Degree Benefits Health Insurance 2025 premiums starting January 1, 2025 noting that the County will pay the full premiums for eligible employees as follows: eligible employee policy - \$1,020 per month; eligible employee plus spouse - \$1,965 per month; eligible employee plus child(ren) - \$1,645 per month; eligible employee plus family - \$2,910 per month, and the opt-out taxable stipend - \$396.50 per month (\$183.00 per 26 pay periods), with the addition that the Board will review the premiums, claims and other costs of the insurance benefit on a regular basis to determine if any changes to the insurance benefit is needed. By roll call vote. Ayes Districts #2, #3, #4, #5 and #7. Nays none. Abstain Districts #1 and #6. Motion carried.

Agent Hammer informed the Board that the vision insurance premiums were not increasing but there is a slight increase of the dental insurance premiums for 2025. The County pays for a single dental/vision insurance policy for eligible employees while eligible employees can enroll spouses, children, or family in the dental/vision insurances with employee payroll deduction for these premiums. Motion by Supr. Borgmann, seconded by Supr. Liska to approve the 2025 Principal Insurance dental/vision insurance premiums starting January 1, 2025 as follows: County pay eligible employee dental premium at \$38.72 per month and vision premium at \$7.94 per month for a total of \$46.66 per month; eligible employee pay spouse dental premium at \$37.89 per month and vision premium at \$7.89 per month for a total of \$45.78; eligible employee pay child(ren) dental premium at \$57.07 per month and vision premium at \$9.89 for a total of \$66.96 per month; and eligible employee pay family dental premium at \$101.80 per month and vision premium at \$19.76 for a total of \$121.56 per month. By roll call vote. Ayes Districts #2, #3, #4, #5 and #7. Nays none. Abstain Districts #1 and #6. Motion carried.

Officials' updates were as follows: 1.) County Clerk Fischer gave an update on the progress of the 2024 General Election. Also, the National Operation Green Light project will take place from November 4 – 17, 2024; 2.) Sheriff Henery updated the Board on the recent missing child case. Also, he informed the Board that there have been no applicants for the dispatcher/jailer positions; 3.) Chairman Sokol, Jr. received and read a resignation letter from Knox County Attorney

John Thomas who plans to resign effective December 31, 2024 and recommended the Board appoint Deputy County Attorney Hanna Knox Jensen to fill his unexpired term as Knox County Attorney. Deputy County Attorney Knox Jensen discussed the matter with the Board and asked the Board to consider keeping County Attorney Thomas on as an assistant starting January 1, 2025 due to upcoming trials with the proposal that, as assistant, Mr. Thomas' salary would be what Deputy County Attorney Knox Jensen is currently receiving and with no insurance benefits and staying on as assistant until after one of the upcoming murder trials. Chairman Sokol, Jr. asked that the matter be placed on the agenda for the November 13, 2024 meeting and asked that County Attorney Thomas be present at the meeting; 4.) Supr. Mackeprang informed the Board that he has not heard back yet if he will be dismissed from the North Fork wind lawsuit; 5.) Deputy County Attorney Knox Jensen updated the Board on the recent ordering of an autopsy of a young woman who passed away suddenly. Supr. Mackeprang questioned autopsy policies and that it would be beneficial to have written rules regarding County paid autopsies.

Supr. Mackeprang left the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

Motion by Supr. Borgmann, seconded by Supr. Pierce to go into closed session at 11:20 a.m. to discuss the North Fork Wind lawsuit. By roll call vote. Ayes Districts #1, #2, #3, #4, #6 and #7. Nays none. Absent was District #5. Motion carried. Chairman Sokol, Jr. reiterated that the closed session will be held to discuss the North Fork Wind lawsuit. Also present during the closed session was Emergency Manager/Zoning Administrator Jelinek. The Board came out of closed session at 12:03 p.m.

Motion by Supr. Liska, seconded by Supr. Pierce to close at 12:03 p.m. the closed session held on discussion of the North Fork Wind lawsuit. By roll call vote. Ayes Districts #1, #2, #3, #4, #6 and #7. Nays none. Absent was District #5. Motion carried.

GENERAL FUND. Salaries, 105,062.87; Applied Connective Technologies LLC, network switch, 475.00; Bob Barker Company, jail supplies, 53.09; Bomgaars, paint, 13.98; Candlewood Suites, lodging, 489.85; COIX Health, medical records, 20.00; CMart LLC, gas, 53.72; Collector of Internal Revenue, Social Security County pays, 8,175.09; Crofton Journal/Niobrara Tribune, publishing, 464.00; Crowne Plaza Kearney, lodging, 124.95; DAS State Accounting-Central Finance, radios, 161.00; DAS State Accounting-Central Finance, teletype, 1,075.20; Eakes Office Solutions, copier agreement, 245.55; Election Systems & Software Inc., election, 4,443.88; First National Bank Omaha, office supplies/meals/gas/postage, 5,535.11; Grafex Shoppe, graphics for patrol vehicle, 404.88; John Thomas, mileage, 241.20; Knox County Sheriff, paper fees, 2.00; Knox County Treasurer, transfer from General Fund to Road Fund and Flowage Easement Fund, 432,212.70; Kustom Signals Inc., signals, 1,806.56; MIPS Inc., joint public hearing postcards, 1,199.00; Moody Motor Company, repairs, 77.25; NACT, office supplies, 360.00; Plainview News, publishing, 64.00; Police Officers' Association of Nebraska, dues, 20.00; Quill Corporation, office supplies, 67.77; Retirement Plans Div. of Ameritas, retirement County pays, 7,479.96; Tyler Technologies, Vetraspec subscription, 449.00; University of Nebraska-Lincoln UNL AEM Business Center, salary, 17,959.42; Verdigre Eagle, publishing, 84.00; Verdigre Printworks, printing, 570.00; Village of Center, water/sewer/garbage, 516.00.

ROAD FUND. Salaries, 36,805.98; Black Hills Energy, heating fuel, 196.98; Bomgaars, shop supplies/repairs/oil/tools, 652.38; Cedar-Knox Public Power District, electricity, 117.53; City of Bloomfield, water, 25.00; CMart LLC, gas, 80.10; Collector of Internal Revenue, Social Security County pays, 2,815.68; First National Bank Omaha, subscription, 239.88; Grossenburg Implement, repairs, 815.79; Herbert Feed & Grain Co., gas, 891.00; Hrbek Construction, equipment rental, 10,780.00; Kayton International Inc., equipment rental, 2,626.00; Nebraska Public Power District, electricity, 134.28; Retirement Plans Div. of Ameritas, retirement County pays, 2,428.70; Steffen's Service Station, gas, 325.99; Vakoc Excavating LLC, gravel, 51,053.45; Village of Center, water/sewer, 34.00; Willow Creek Sand & Gravel, gravel/haul, 8,991.09.

CHILD SUPPORT FUND. First National Bank Omaha, zoom subscription, 168.69.

COUNTY WELLNESS FUND. Knox County Treasurer, transfer from County Wellness Fund to General Fund, 250,000.00.

C&C DEVELOPMENT FUND. Salaries, 1,779.55; First National Bank Omaha, gas/postage/meals, 517.09.

INHERITANCE FUND. Elder Law and Estate Planning, special attorney fees, 21,958.37; Knox County Treasurer, transfer from Inheritance Fund to General Fund, 303,240.92.

TOTALS

General Fund	\$589,907.03
Road Fund	119,013.83
Child Support Fund	168.69
County Wellness Fund	250,000.00
C&C Development Fund	2,296.64
Inheritance Fund	325,199.29
Total	\$1,286,585.48

Chairman Sokol, Jr. adjourned the Knox County Board of Supervisors at 12:04 p.m. on October 30, 2024 until Wednesday, November 13, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. for a regular meeting.

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

ATTEST:

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



COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
 OF KNOX COUNTY, NEBRASKA

By *James Sokol, Jr.*
 James Sokol, Jr., Chairman
