

# April 16, 2024

## Seward County Board of Commissioners

State of Nebraska)  
County of Seward) ss.

A regular meeting of the Seward County Board of Commissioners was convened in open and public session at 9:00 a.m. on April 16, 2024 in the Commissioner's room at the Seward County Courthouse. Notice of the meeting was posted on the Courthouse bulletin board and on the Commissioner's Room door. The agenda for all meetings is kept continually current and is available for public inspection at the County Clerk's Office during normal business hours. The agenda is held open until one business day prior to the meeting for appearance before the Board. The Board of Commissioners has the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

The Seward County Board of Commissioners convened on April 16, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

Present: Chairperson: Misty Ahmic

Members: Raegan Hain, John Culver, Darrell Zabrocki

County Clerk: Sherry Schweitzer

Absent: Member: Ken Schmieding

The Chairperson noted that the public meeting information is posted as required by law and available for public distribution if requested.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Moved by Culver and seconded by Zabrocki to approve the minutes of April 9, 2024.  
Affirmative Vote: Culver, Zabrocki, Hain, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

During public comment time, Tony Brown was present and commented on a culvert that was installed near his property. Highway Supt., Jon Regnier responded that the old culvert was very old and mostly hidden by overgrowth, but because of drainage issues, needed to be replaced.

Regnier also updated the Commissioners on activities of his department.

Building and Grounds Supt., Eric Hofer was present to give information about installing another actuator for handicap accessibility at the West Wing.

Moved by Hain and seconded by Culver to approve the quote for installation of an actuator for handicap accessibility at the West Wing and the electrical that needs to be done in the amount of \$4,169.26 to be paid out of the Commissioners Building and Grounds fund.

Affirmative Vote: Hain, Culver, Zabrocki, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

Hofer also updated the Commissioners on work at the Building & Grounds Dept.

County Treasurer, Jake Zlatkovsky was present to give the Commissioners information about mold he has discovered in the basement vault of his office. He stated he feels that the mold started in the last 6-12 months. Hofer was present and said nothing has changed with the HVAC system in the last year to cause this.

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded by Hain to add an emergency item to the agenda due to health issues "Mold in the basement vault of the Treasurer's Office."

Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Hain, Culver, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

Moved by Hain and seconded by Culver to seek out a remediation company to address the mold issues in the Treasurer's Office immediately.

Affirmative Vote: Hain, Culver, Zabrocki, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

The Commissioners recessed at 9:41 a.m.  
The Commissioners reconvened at 9:45 a.m.

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded by Culver to open the public hearing at 9:45 a.m. to consider an increase of fares for Public Transit.

Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Culver, Hain, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

Public Transit Director, Brandy Hafer and Asst. Director, Alex Sommerfeld gave information about raising the fares. Disseminating the information about the change was discussed.

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded by Hain to close the public hearing at 9:53 a.m.

Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Hain, Culver, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

Moved by Culver and seconded by Zabrocki approve the increase of fares of Public Transit effective April 17, 2024.

**Passenger Fares (2024 Proposed Fares)**

City of Seward	<b>\$2.00</b> (per boarding)
< within 5 Miles of County Courthouse	
Seward County	<b>\$4.00</b> (per boarding)
> more than 5 miles from the County Courthouse (All per boarding)	
Bee	<b>\$4.00</b>
Beaver Crossing	<b>\$4.00</b>
Cordova	<b>\$4.00</b>
Garland	<b>\$4.00</b>
Goehner	<b>\$4.00</b>
Milford	<b>\$4.00</b>
Pleasant Dale	<b>\$4.00</b>
Staplehurst	<b>\$4.00</b>
Utica	<b>\$4.00</b>
Outside Seward County with transit <b>To/From</b> Seward (Return trip included when same day)	
Dorchester	<b>\$ 10.00</b>
Dwight	<b>\$ 10.00</b>
Waco	<b>\$ 10.00</b>
Crete	<b>\$ 14.00</b>
Friend	<b>\$ 14.00</b>
York	<b>\$ 14.00</b>
Transit from Seward County <b>To/From</b> Lincoln (Return trip included when same day)	
West of 48 <sup>th</sup> St and North of O St	<b>\$16.00</b>
East of 48 <sup>th</sup> St and South of O St	<b>\$20.00</b>
Omaha	<b>\$60</b>

**All Other Trips Billed @ \$1.50 Per Mile**

**Reviewed and approved by Seward County Board of Commissioners:**

Misty Ahmic, Chairperson    04/16/2024

Affirmative Vote: Culver, Zabrocki, Hain, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

Hafer and Sommerfeld were present for the next agenda items concerning Public Transit.

A request for a new Public Transit van was requested. They have riders that are not being able to be served due to their present van being utilized. Seward County would be responsible for 10% of the new van.

Moved by Hain and seconded by Culver to approve the purchase of a Ford Transit van with a rear wheelchair lift to be paid in the amount of \$8,500.

Affirmative Vote: Hain, Culver, Zabrocki, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

Safe Fleet Cameras in the Public Transit/County Vehicles were then discussed. Hafer had provided quotes but didn't know for sure if it was a reimbursable cost through Nebraska Dept. of Transportation (NDOT). She will get a quote to include the fleet vehicles and with the newly approved van and report back at a future date.

The Commissioners then discussed the continuation of Public Transit Services providing the transporting of students to and from the Seward Public Schools. Currently students are picked up from their homes and taken to all three public schools in Seward. After school, the students are taken home by a Public Transit bus. There are also students taken to Centennial School in Utica. Hafer said there is an issue of the drop-off/pick-up area for the schools and the behavior of the students. There is also an issue of the vans being used by the students and so other residents that have doctor appointments are not being served due to having to pick up the students from school. There also are challenges with the drop-off/pick-up area at the middle school. Zabrocki stated that the school has stated the Public Transit van cannot be in the "bus" area and therefore, the Public Transit van has to be with the cars/vehicles. It was stated that they do not go to the other communities and pick up students. Hafer stated the Public Transportation bus/van doesn't have the "stop arm" as school buses do. Zabrocki stated that he and Hafer did have a meeting with a representative of the Seward School and the school didn't have an interest in providing an additional service if Public Transit does not pick up students. Commissioner Hain said she feels that it is a benefit for those parents who have jobs, etc. and cannot get their kids to school. Culver questioned how daycares handle transportation with their vans. Ahmic stated that for the rest of the school year, a Seward school representative will be asked that the Public Transit bus be allowed to pick up students in the bus area. Discussion for the next school year will be discussed before that time comes up.

Commissioner Hain led discussion on the Opioid Settlement Funds item on the agenda. She stated that previously, the funds received by Seward County were directed to the state opioid fund. She stated there are funds coming again to Seward County in the near future and asked that if new funds could remain with Seward County to be utilized for mental health in the detention center. Hain said that she is waiting to hear if Seward County were to keep the future funds if Seward County would be able to apply for grants from the state opioid fund in the future. No definitive answer was given to Hain at this time. More discussion will occur once she hears answers to her questions.

Human Resource Director, Roxanne Knutson and Assistant Human Resource Director, Tiffany Allen were present to discuss the health insurance costs share. She stated that according to IRS regulations, costs for health insurance must meet "minimum essential coverage." With Seward County offering health insurance at a 90% county/ 10% employee cost for the single premium, we would be within the regulations.

The Commissioners discussed starting wages and merit raises for employees. Knutson stated that a plan to raise the starting wage needs to be implemented in future years. For this year, the Commissioners considered what percentage the starting wages should be raised and what percentage the merit raises should be. Different percentage amounts were suggested for the various raises.

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded by Hain for budget year 24-25 increase starting wages 3%.

Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Hain, Culver, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

Moved by Culver and seconded by Zabrocki to approve a 3% maximum merit raise for employees effective 7/1/2024.

Affirmative Vote: Culver, Zabrocki, Hain, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

Moved by Hain and seconded by Zabrocki to set the individual health insurance cost share at 90% county cost and 10% employee cost effective June 1, 2024.

Affirmative Vote: Hain, Zabrocki, Culver, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

**Commissioners Reports:**

Commissioner Hain reported she participated in the Opioid Steering Committee meeting last week, met with the Jail Administrator and a representative of the Stepping Up Initiative, participated with the Hwy Dept. staff and with an engineering firm in regard to grant writing, attended the Village of Beaver Crossing Trustee meeting, worked on the options for allocation related to the opioid funds, and is getting a working group together to address the grant writer position.

Commissioner Culver reported he participated in the League of Women Voters Candidates Night, attended the Pleasant Dale village board meeting, went to the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) meeting in York, judged the skills of high school students in a competition, went to the Planning and Zoning meeting, and received calls about the condition of roads from the recent rain.

Commissioner Ahmic reported she participated in a Zoom meeting with Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) and others about the Broadband Ready Initiative, attended the Beaver Crossing Trustee meeting, had a conversation with Senator Fischer's Office about grants, sat in on a meeting with an engineering firm and Hwy Dept. staff, participated in Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) road safety program, spent time in the zoning office, attended the Planning Commission meeting, met with Jonathan Jank about solar projects, received calls about roads and talked to a York Commissioner.

Commissioners Zabrocki reported he attended a Suicide Prevention Coalition meeting, had a Public Transit meeting about a driver safety program, participated in the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) webinar, met with Commissioner Schmieding about an employee evaluation, attended the League of Women Voters Candidates Night, checked roads and checked abandoned cemeteries.

Commissioner Ahmic led discussion about the Region V Systems Budget Request item on the agenda. She stated she had asked the Sheriff's Office about how they use Region V. Deputy Melby stated the Detention Center used Region V for mental health programming. Ahmic stated counties are required to contribute to Region V and that Region V has asked that the county to contribute more than required. Discussion about Region V Services, now known as Apace, and the expenses and the future funding of the organizations.

Commissioner Ahmic led discussion out Seward County Pipeline Regulations. She said there is nothing in our Zoning regulations currently about them and feels the topic needs to be addressed. Using the Conditional Use Permit process was suggested.

During the Legislative Update item on the agenda, it was mentioned that bills are being passed that have many bills attached to them and it is frustrating.

In regard to Grant Funds being sought by Seward County, Commissioners Hain and Ahmic talked about various grants including the upcoming Tire Recycling Grant event on April 19 & 20, 2024 from 8 am to 5 pm at the Seward County Fairgrounds.

Moved by Culver and seconded by Zabrocki to go into Executive Session for potential litigation at 12:18 pm.

Affirmative Vote: Culver, Zabrocki, Hain, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

The Chairman stated the Executive Session was for potential litigation.

Moved by Culver and seconded by Zabrocki to go out of Executive Session at 12:49 p.m.

Affirmative Vote: Culver, Zabrocki, Hain, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

**Known items on the agenda for Board of Equalization on April 23, 2024 are as follows:**

8:30 a.m.

1. Convene and announce Open Meetings Law
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Discuss/Action - Approve minutes of April 9,2024
4. Discuss/Action – Assessor Information Update

**Known items on the agenda for Board of Commissioners on April 23, 2024 are as follows:**

9:00 a.m.

5. Convene and announce Open Meetings Law
6. Pledge of Allegiance
7. Discuss/Action - Approve minutes of April 16, 2024

**Other Business Matters to Address When Time Allows**

8. Discuss/Action - Public/Officials/Boards
9. Commissioners Reports
10. Discuss/Action – Consider Changing Seward County’s Direct Share of the Opioid Settlement from the Nebraska Opioid Recovery Fund to Seward County
11. Discuss/Action – Change the Administrator of the Seward County Opioid Settlement Fund
12. Discuss/Action – Grant Funds being Sought by Seward County
13. Discuss/Action – Agenda for April 30, 2024

Moved by Zabrocki and seconded by Hain to adjourn at 12:52 p.m.

Affirmative Vote: Zabrocki, Hain, Culver, Ahmic                      Motion Carried

State of Nebraska)  
County of Seward) ss.

I, Sherry Schweitzer, the undersigned County Clerk of Seward County, Nebraska do hereby certify the foregoing minutes are true and are part of the official records of this office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of April 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Clerk

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Chairperson