

July 2, 2019

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 8:30 a.m. on July 2, 2019 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 Equalization 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 July 2, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.

Present: Chairperson: John Culver
Members: Mike Mundhenke, Bob Vrbka, Becky Paulsen
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.

Those officials present for their monthly meeting were Maria Hatfield, Marilyn Hladky, Sherry Schweitzer, & Kathy Ruzicka.

Jonathan Jank, Executive Director of the Seward County Chamber Development & Partnership was present to update the Commissioners on activities of his organization.

Moved by Vrbka and seconded by Mundhenke to approve the minutes of June 25, 2019.
Affirmative Vote: Vrbka, Mundhenke, Paulsen, Culver Motion Carried

Moved by Paulsen and seconded by Vrbka to approve the minutes of June 28, 2019.
Affirmative Vote: Paulsen, Vrbka, Mundhenke, Culver Motion Carried

Commissioners Reports:

Commissioner Mundhenke reported he checked on many roads in his area.

Commissioner Vrbka reported he attended the NACO Budget Workshop, went to the WM. Seward Statue dedication event, and checked roads.

Commissioner Culver reported he attended a Blue Valley Community Action meeting, checked on road issues, attended the Wm. Seward Statue dedication, checked abandoned cemeteries, attended the special meeting for the Commissioners and worked on various correspondences.

Commissioner Paulsen reported she attended the NACO budget workshop, checked roads, and worked internally on some County business.

Moved by Vrbka and seconded by Mundhenke to accept Sheriff Fee and Mileage Reports for May 2019 in the amount of \$1,267.00 and \$865.69 respectively.
Affirmative Vote: Vrbka, Mundhenke, Paulsen, Culver Motion Carried

Moved by Vrbka and seconded by Paulsen to approve the Special Designated Liquor Permit for JUNTO LLC for an event on August 3, 2019.

Affirmative Vote: Vrbka, Paulsen, Mundhenke, Culver Motion Carried

Moved by Paulsen and seconded by Vrbka to approve the Special Designated Liquor Permit for JUNTO LLC for an event on September 6, 2019.

Affirmative Vote: Paulsen, Vrbka, Mundhenke, Culver Motion Carried

Moved by Paulsen and seconded by Mundhenke to approve the Special Designated Liquor Permit for JUNTO LLC for an event on October 11, 2019.

Affirmative Vote: Paulsen, Mundhenke, Vrbka, Culver Motion Carried

The Commissioners recessed at 8:49 a.m.

The Commissioners re-convened at 9:00 a.m.

Tom Nielsen of Soarin' Group updated the Commissioners on IT information for Seward County. He updated them on the Zuercher Project for the Detention Center.

Tom Bliss, Executive Director of Southeast Nebraska Development District and Trey Ertmer gave information on last year's activities and request for support next year.

Joe & Jessica Fehlhafer were present to ask for an oversized driveway on Old Cheney Rd. between 448th and 462nd Rd. The extra width is requested in order for semi-trucks to be able to access the property without problems. Matt Kline who was present for the Road Dept. presented the Highway Supt. recommendation which is 45-60 feet. He stated he does not want it to be a standard – meaning that each location needs to be looked at on a case by case basis. This location is at a crest of a hill so drainage is not a concern and a culvert will not be needed. Jon Eberspacher asked about driveway widths for those that already have a driveway (not new driveways).

Moved by Paulsen and seconded by Mundhenke to set the driveway width of 50 ft for the oversized driveway for Joe Fehlhafer on Old Cheney Rd. between 448th and 462nd Rd.

Affirmative Vote: Paulsen, Mundhenke, Vrbka, Culver Motion Carried

Scott Shafer was present to discuss the contract with Advanced Correctional Healthcare. He asked that the contract be reviewed because his son was admitted to the jail and he had medications that he took with him but the jail would not give them to him. There were many problems with the issuance of the medications even after being in the jail many days. Although his son is not incarcerated now, he asked that the contract be reviewed to see if changes can be made. Commissioner Mundhenke said that he felt it needed to be looked at. Maria Hatfield, Detention Center Director, said that HIPPA regulations need to be kept so she cannot speak specifically about it. She did say that the contract can be reviewed since there is a new administration and Mike Vance concurred.

Kevin Roth and Tyler Roth were present to discuss closed roads including Denton Road, 280th and 336th Road. He stated he is frustrated with the road conditions and wanted to know what is happening with the situation. Commissioner Culver stated that the conditions with flooding and frost have made it a year with many problems. Weather has made it a tough thing to overcome. There was much discussion with specific road repairs of the bad locations. Cecil Roth also commented about road repairs. Bill White also noted problems with the roads. Greg Roth agreed with the comments received.

In regard to the salary committee item on the agenda Chairman Culver read a statement into the record as follows:

First off, I would like to thank those on the committee that worked so hard to try and collect information and come up with an idea to start to try and help the pay situation for their fellow employees. I also apologize in that I put you in a position where I never would have thought you would be subjected to the cruel, unappreciative and abusive language, downright bullying and borderline harassment tactics from some about

what you were trying to do for them. People here have quickly forgotten that this group was tasked with coming up with an idea to alleviate the pay compaction and unexplainable pay scale rate variances. They were not going to be the final say and it had to come before the board for review and possible acceptance. It was just a starting point and a chance for local input for pay rate without spending thousands on an outside source who ultimately would be unaccepted as the "Job Description wasn't the same as mine so it is unfair" remarks. Some people acted as if this group was the final say and put excessive pressure and even verbal assault with foul language and relentless calls to committee members.

I am dissolving the committee and discarding all the hard work they have done as a result of the constant threats from the County Attorney office of legal action against them and the Board of Commissioners. The onslaught has taken a toll on the members of the committee in a negative hostile direction. The request of records and emails to the members of the committee, from a person who is not a department head, is another attempt at obstructing and denying their fellow employees the ability to be heard and hopefully earn a better wage. Even though they have the right, what kind of employee would stoop to these levels to burden fellow employees? I can see no useful reason I can come up with why they would need to require such a time consuming and labor intensive request, still just shows a vindictive and hostile attitude towards the subcommittee and ultimately the Board of Commissioners. It gives me, personally, the feeling that the Attorney office conspired to derail and deny this subcommittee the ability to proceed and present the hard work they have tried to accomplish to the Board for personal reasons. This is too much for volunteers to bear and be subjected to this relentless attack at what they are trying to accomplish. I feel it is a concerted effort by some to stonewall any sort of progress we would make to get any improvements in the current pay scale and job wages. With all the tools and tricks of the trade of law, I feel anything we try to do will be met with some sort of threat of legal retribution, more records requests, or who knows what.

That, and several department heads have grouped together to also cause undue pressure on the committee feeling they are not getting what they think they should. Going as far as to threaten, "if I don't get what I want I am quitting."

When I started this, I never dreamt it would turn into this situation of people responding with hostility, foul language and obstruction to progress so much. For the most part, the majority of the response from people and department heads was very respectful and accepting of the committee's results and I thank them for being team players and understanding that this is Government and we are stewards of the tax payers. Also, we are not Lancaster County, and some trying to compare their position to one there is not realistic. Here they run or supervise a staff fractionally smaller and far less complex, along with we do not have the tax base or higher tax levies that they do so as not to burden our taxpayers with high taxes. We cannot now, and probably not in the future, be able to compete with them one on one with the pay scale for somewhat similar jobs. So be it, the data and information they gathered outside of the morrow and associates report will all be discarded as to not cause issues in the future.

As of right now, for next year's Budget, we are directing the Department Heads they can allow a 3% merit raise or nothing, at their discretion, based on performance evaluations of their employees.

Moved by Mundhenke and seconded by Paulsen to allow up to a maximum 3% raise for each employee based on merit for the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year.

Affirmative Vote: Mundhenke, Paulsen, Vrbka, Culver

Motion Carried

Comments were received from Wendy Elston, County Attorney, stating she felt blaming her office is unfair. Bob Dahms feels that a separate legal opinion should be sought because the County Attorney has a vested interest in it. Hatfield felt there was no cohesiveness or openness with all involved. Dahms thanked the committee for their work on the project. Sheriff Vance and Jeff Baker, Veteran's Service Officer, also commented on the issue.

Known items on the agenda for Board of Equalization on July 9, 2019 are as follows:

8:30 a.m.

1. Convene and announce Open Meetings Law
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Discuss/Action - Approve minutes of June 25, 2019
4. Discuss/Action – Assessor Information Update

8:30 a.m. Discuss/Action – Protest Valuation Hearings

Known items on the agenda for Board of Commissioners on July 9, 2019 are as follows:

9:00 a.m.

1. Convene and announce Open Meetings Law
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Discuss/Action - Approve minutes of June 2, 2019

Other Business Matters to Address When Time Allows

4. Discuss/Action - Public/Officials/Boards
5. Commissioners Reports
6. Discuss/Action – Agenda for July 16, 2019

9:30 a.m. Discuss/Action - Open bids for Supplying and Hauling of Gravel

9:45 a.m. Discuss/Action - Quotes for Refinancing Bonds for Detention Center

10:00 a.m. Discuss/Action – Authorize Emergency Manager Director to apply for 2019 Emergency Management Performance Grant

Moved by Mundhenke and seconded by Vrbka to adjourn at 10:48 a.m.

Affirmative Vote: Mundhenke, Vrbka, Paulsen, Culver

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 9th day of July 2019.

County Clerk

Chairperson