

March 11, 2025

Seward County Board of Equalization

State of Nebraska)
County of Seward) ss.

A regular meeting of the Seward County Board of Equalization was convened in open and public session at 8:30 a.m. on March 11, 2025 in the Commissioner's room at the Seward County Courthouse. Notice of the meeting was posted on the Courthouse bulletin board, on the Commissioner's Room door, on the Seward County website: sewardcountyne.gov and published in the Seward County Independent and the Milford Times. 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 Equalization convened on March 11, 2025 at 8:32 a.m. a.m.

Present:	Vice Chairperson: Darrell Zabrocki
	Members: Ken Schmieding, Scott Pekarek
	County Clerk: Sherry Schweitzer
	County Assessor: Marilyn Hladky
Absent:	Chairperson: Misty Ahmic

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 Hain and seconded by Pekarek to approve the minutes of February 25, 2025.
Affirmative Vote: Hain, Pekarek, Schmieding, Zabrocki Motion Carried

Moved by Hain and seconded by Schmieding to open the hearing at 8:30 a.m. for permissive exemption applications for the following:

Seward Living Center Inc.

Sunrise Country Manor – Sunrise Country Addition

Sunrise Country Manor – Betz Addition

Blue Heron

Milford Childhood Learning Center/Bellwood Mennonite Church

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of Seward

Vote: Hain, Schmieding, Pekarek, Zabrocki Motion Carried

Hladky gave information about the laws for permissive exemption applications.

No one was present for the Seward Living Center, Inc.

Seth Stauffer was present and answered questions about both applications for Sunrise County Manor.

Steve Laravie was present and answered questions about the application of Blue Heron.

No one was present for the Milford Learning Center/Bellwood Mennonite Church application.

No one was present for Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Moved by Hain and seconded by Schmieding to close the public hearing at 8:55 a.m.
Affirmative Vote: Hain, Schmieding, Pekarek, Zabrocki Motion Carried

Moved by Hain and seconded by Pekarek to approve the exemption for Seward Living Center at 43%, Sunrise Country Manor-Sunrise Country Addition 92.48%, Sunrise Country Manor-Betz Addition 92.48%, and for Blue Heron, Milford Childhood and Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Affirmative Vote: Hain, Pekarek, Schmieding, Zabrocki

Motion Carried

Moved by Pekarek and seconded by Hain to approve Tax List Correction # 446-24R for Wayne & Stacy Hartgerink.

Affirmative Vote: Pekarek, Hain, Schmieding, Zabrocki

Motion Carried

Hladky then updated the Commissioners on activities of her office.

Known items on the agenda for Board of Equalization on March 25, 2025 are as follows:

9:00 a.m.

1. Convene and announce Open Meetings Law
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Discuss/Action - Approve minutes of March 11, 2025
4. Discuss/Action – Assessor Information Update

Moved by Pekarek and seconded by Hain to adjourn at 9:01 a.m.

Affirmative Vote: Pekarek, Hain, Schmieding, Zabrocki

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 March 25, 2025

County Clerk

Chairperson

March 11, 2025

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 March 11, 2025 in the Commissioner's room at the Seward County Courthouse. Notice of the meeting was posted on the Courthouse bulletin board, on the Commissioner's Room door, on the Seward County website: sewardcountyne.gov and published in the Seward County Independent and the Milford Times. 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 Equalization convened on March 11, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. a.m.

Present: Chairperson: Darrell Zabrocki
Members: Raegan Hain, Scott Pekarek, Ken Schmieding
County Clerk: Sherry Schweitzer
Absent: Chairperson: Misty Ahmic

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 Hain and seconded by Pekarek to approve the consent agenda consisting of:

- a) Minutes of March 4, 2025
 - b) Accept the County Treasurer’s Certification of Tax Sale held on March 3, 2025
 - c) County Clerk Fee Report for February 2025 in the amount of \$17,383.75
 - d) Clerk of the District Court Fee Report for February 2025 in the amount of \$5,872.03
 - e) Sheriff Fee and Mileage Report for December 2024 in the amount of \$1,499.00 and \$1,161.90 respectively
 - f) Road Dept. Surplus Property Disposal Sheet for old equipment
- Affirmative Vote: Hain, Pekarek, Schmieding, Zabrocki Motion Carried

Moved by Schmieding and seconded by Pekarek to approve claims for the period through Feb 28, 2025.

SEWARD COUNTY CLAIMS THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2025					
ADAMS CO SHERIFF	SE	\$18.50	VERIZON WIRELESS SERV	UT	\$1,664.14
ADVANCED CORR HLTHCR	SE	\$15,898.00	VIRTUAL IMPRESSIONS	SE	\$36.00
LYNNE ALBIN	SE	\$3,100.80	VISUAL EDGE IT	SE	\$44.94
ALLEN LEGAL, P.C.	SE	\$143.75	WATER ENGINEERING	SE	\$210.00
ALLO COMMUNIC	UT	\$4,908.08	WYTHERS LAW	SE	\$3,945.50
AMAZON CAPITAL SERV	SE	\$145.31	BARCO MUNICIPAL PROD	SU	\$1,417.99
AMERITAS LIFE INS	FE	\$22,953.16	BEATRICE CONCRETE	SU	\$5,830.95
BENCHMARK GOVT SOL	SE	\$643.45	BEAVER HARDWARE	SU	\$224.94
BERN'S BODY SHOP	SE	\$1,000.00	CROUCH'S FARM	SU	\$94.08
BLACK HILLS ENERGY	UT	\$5,764.08	KRIHA FLUID POWER	SE	\$619.76
BLUE RIVER ELECTRIC	SE	\$162.50	LOWER PLATTE WEED MGT	FE	\$200.00
BRENNAN, NIELSEN LAW	SE	\$11,236.17	MEDICAL ENTERPRISES	SU	\$36.00
CEDARS	SE	\$468.00	MGX EQUIP SERV	SE	\$488.05
CENTURY BUSINESS	SU	\$220.68	MIDWEST AUTO PARTS	EQ	\$501.56
CERRIS SYSTEMS	SE	\$1,105.38	MURPHY TRACTOR	EQ	\$14,750.00
CLERK OF DIST CRT	SE	\$290.00	NE PUBLIC POWER DIST	UT	\$232.44
CULLIGAN	SE	\$57.25	NEXTLINK AIS	UT	\$51.07
HLTH & HUMAN SERV	SE	\$200.00	POMP'S TIRE SERV	S	\$183.71
E 911	SE	\$39,183.83	SEWARD CO TREASURER	FE	\$10.00
EAKES OFFICE PLUS	SU	\$409.62	VILLAGE OF UTICA	UT	\$55.04
FEHLHAFERS	SE	\$49.75	JOHNSON SAND & GRAVEL	SU	\$8,090.46
FGH LAW OFFICE	SE	\$9,865.40	SOUTHWEST GRAVEL	SU	\$6,579.73
HOMETOWN LEASING	SE	\$514.20	KOLTERMAN, CLARK	SE	\$94.90
JONES BANK (FICA)	FE	\$23,166.11	MILES PARTNERSHIP	FE	\$3,000.00
KOTIK & MCCLURE LAW	SE	\$9,950.71	PAC N SAVE	SU	\$604.10
LANCASTER CO SHERIFF	SE	\$85.59	VALENTINO'S SEWARD	SU	\$102.33
LIBERTY LAW GROUP	SE	\$2,625.00	CORI J STAVA	SE	\$187.50
JULIE LISKA	SE	\$436.55	FIRST WIRELESS	UT	\$534.60
MID-AMERICAN INS	FE	\$46,502.31	GREAT PLAINS UNIFORMS	SE	\$357.85
MIPS INC	SE	\$2,264.46	HERPOLSHEIMERS	EQ	\$2,104.59
MORROW, POPPE LAW	SE	\$2,338.44	HOBSON AUTO AND TIRE	SE	\$340.00
NAYLOR & RAPPL LAW	SE	\$1,712.50	LEE'S REFRIGERATION	SE	\$209.00
NE ASSN CO OFFICIALS	FE	\$80.00	MOTOROLA	EQ	\$300.20
NE LAW ENFORC TRAIN	FE	\$15.00	TRANSUNION RISK & ALT	EQ	\$1,260.80
NE STATE FIRE MARSHAL	SE	\$72.00	URIBE REFUSE SERV	SE	\$156.00
ONESOURCE	SE	\$308.00	HAILEY BEHLEN	SE	\$625.00
OREILLY AUTOM	SU	\$40.78	FELSBURG HOLT& ULLEVIG	SE	\$8,983.75
PAPER TIGER SHREDDING	SE	\$195.00	CONNIE LANGUAGEIN	SE	\$40.00
PETTY CASH FUND	FE	\$30.10	NORRIS PUBLIC POWER	UT	\$260.00
CA MARKETING	SE	\$568.78	US IMAGING SYSTEMS	EQ	\$458.24
POINT C HEALTH	FE	\$132.00	CENTURYLINK	EQ	\$4,586.11
POLLACK AND BALL	SE	\$11,506.25	GOVWORX	SE	\$6,200.00
QUILL CORP	SU	\$293.19	CIDNET	SE	\$2,968.73
SEWARD CO HLTH CLM FND	FE	\$261,603.20	WELLBEING INITIATIVE	FE	\$1,000.00
SEWARD CO INDEPENDENT	SE	\$54.36	SALARIES		\$325,654.39
SEWARD CO ROAD FUND	FE	\$600,000.00	GROSS SALARIES INCLUDE DEDUCTIONS TO:		

SEWARD CO SHERIFF	SE	\$30.60	AMERITAS DENTAL
SHELBY CO SHERIFF	SE	\$32.00	AMERITAS VISION
JOY SHIFFERMILLER	SE	\$750.00	COLONIAL SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE
SOARIN GROUP	SE	\$7,306.25	MID AMERICAN CO WISCONSIN
ST OF NE DAS STATE ACCT	SE	\$265.00	POINT C FSA
ST OF NE DAS COMMUNIC	SE	\$1,382.40	WADDELL & REED
SUMMIT FOOD SERVICE	SE	\$4,818.47	

Affirmative Vote: Schmieding, Pekarek, Hain, Zabrocki Motion Carried

Highway Supt., Jon Regnier updated the Commissioners on activities of his department.

Regnier gave information about a bridge project.


Moved by Hain and seconded by Schmieding to authorize the Highway Supt. to request sealed bids for Project C-80 (677) Bridge Deck Replacement on Bridge # 8011235 located at Branched Oak Road east of 266th Road (Bridge Match Project).

Affirmative Vote: Hain, Schmieding, Pekarek, Zabrocki Motion Carried

Roxanne Knutson, HR Director, was present to discuss requested changes to five personnel policies, namely, Time Keeping, Overtime, Pay Period, Work Hours and Cellphone Usage.

Moved by Pekarek and seconded by Hain to approve the changes to the following policies:

Time Keeping, Overtime, Pay Period, Work Hours and Cellphone Usage.

	Seward County Employee Policy
	Policy Name: Time Keeping Policy
	Revised Date: March 2025
	Approved By: Seward County Board of Commissioners

TIME KEEPING POLICY

The following procedures and guidelines have been created to ensure accurate record keeping within Seward County. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and comparable state law requires Seward County to maintain accurate time records for employees.

A. Electronic Time and Attendance

All hourly employees are required to use the electronic time-keeping system to record his/her hours worked. The County Board has determined that the electronic time keeping system for Seward County is ADP. ADP is an electronic time-keeping system used to record hours worked through an electronic device such as a computer, laptop, tablet, or smart phone. All employees and supervisors will be properly trained by Human Resources staff to use ADP.

- a. All non-exempt employees must clock in and out for payroll and attendance purposes. Exempt employees are required to use ADP to track days present and leave accrued and used. *Elected Officials are exempt from recording hours worked in ADP.* Employees are required to use ADP to request vacation, sick leave, comp time, or any other leave. It will be the supervisor’s responsibility to make sure accurate data is logged. Employees are responsible for verifying the accuracy of the hours on his/her timecard. Any discrepancies between hours worked and/or leave taken should be reported to the employee’s supervisor and/or Human Resources immediately. *Window for Clocking In and Out*

It is a job requirement that all hourly employees must clock in and out at the start of their work day, during lunch breaks, and at the end of their work day. Employees are expected to clock in and out at their regularly scheduled times. Under certain conditions (such as trainings at an off-site location) when an employee cannot clock in and out at his/her worksite, the employee should report time worked to their supervisor so that the time can be manually entered.

The time clock will round the time up or down to the nearest 15-minute interval of the regular start time and quitting time. All other clock in/clock out times are actual time. Employees should not clock in more than seven minutes before their regular starting time or seven minutes after their regular quitting time.

If an employee misses the window for clocking in or out of the timekeeping system, the employee should notify his/her supervisor as soon as possible so the employee's work hours can be entered manually. Employees who repeatedly clock in or out late without supervisor approval will be subject to disciplinary action.

B. Lunch Periods

All hourly employees are entitled and expected to take a lunch period each day. The lunch period should be a minimum of 30 minutes in length. The lunch period is considered unpaid time and employees must clock in and out. Due to the nature of some positions, exceptions to the lunch period may be made with the approval of his/her supervisor.

The time clock will automatically deduct 30 minutes from the employee's time card. The employee must immediately notify the supervisor if he/she did not take a 30 minute lunch period or if he/she took longer than 30 minutes for the lunch period.

C. Breaks

1. Hourly employees are allowed paid breaks during their work day as defined by our Seward County breaks policy. Employees do not need to clock in and out for breaks.

2. Nursing Mothers Policy

Employers are required, under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) section 18d, as amended by the Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act, P.L. 117-328, to provide reasonable break times and a private place for an employee to express breast milk, as needed, for her nursing child for one year after the child's birth. Employers are required to provide a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, which may be used by an employee to express breast milk. Seward County subscribes to the following policy:

a. Employee Notification to Supervisor

An employee who has a child up to one year of age shall notify their immediate supervisor that they would like to express their breast milk during work hours.

b. Employees shall be provided a place to express breast milk.

A private space (not a toilet stall or restroom) will be available for an employee to express milk using a breast pump. The space will have:

- a. Electrical outlet
- b. Table and chair
- c. Nearby sink for washing hands and rinsing pump parts
- d. A lock on the door
- e. Employees may use their *private* office area for milk expression, if applicable. The supervisor shall notify the employee of the area designated to express breast milk.

The supervisor shall have the assistance of the County Board in designating the location, if needed.

c. A refrigerator will be available for safe storage of expressed breast milk.

Employees may temporarily store their breast milk on the premises. A refrigerator will be available for safe storage of breast milk. Employees should provide their own containers, clearly labeled with name and date. Employees may store milk in their own cooler/ ice chest. Employees using the refrigerator are responsible for keeping it clean.

d. Flexible breaks to accommodate milk expression.

A breastfeeding employee shall be provided a flexible schedule for expressing breast milk for the child. A flexible schedule shall include consideration for the frequency of breaks and duration of each break for each time the employee needs to express the milk. Mothers are not required to use any paid leave or adjust their work schedule while taking time for expressing milk, and will work with their supervisor to coordinate reasonable break time needed to pump.

e. Coworkers are expected to provide support for breastfeeding employees.

Coworkers of the breastfeeding employee shall provide an atmosphere of support for breastfeeding employees.

d. Applicability

The Nursing Mothers Policy will be applicable to exempt and non-exempt employees.

D. Unreported Hours

All hours worked must be reported using the time clock. Any time spent working while not clocked in (a.k.a. "working off the clock") is strictly prohibited.

Employees are required to clock in before performing any work and are not permitted to clock out until all work has stopped. Employees that underreport or fail to report hours worked are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Examples of "working off the clock" may include:

- Forgetting to clock in or out.
- Voluntarily continuing to work at the end of regular working hours.
- Taking work home to complete on the weekend or in the evening without supervisor approval.
- Checking/reading/reviewing work-related emails or listening to work-related voicemail messages while away from the office or workplace.
- Answering phones, emails, or attending to customers while clocked out for a lunch break.

Once an employee has clocked in, he/she is responsible for starting work. When a workday has been completed, it is the employee's responsibility to clock out. With the exception of breaks, employees conducting personal business or simply not working while clocked in could be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

E. Time Clock Exceptions

Any corrections to time require immediate notification to the employee's supervisor. The employee's supervisor will make necessary changes to the employee's time. Any delay in this process could result in an inaccurate paycheck.

F. Prohibited Time Clock Actions

The following infractions are prohibited and may be subject to disciplinary action. *See Discipline & Discharge policy.*


- Using another employee’s user id/password to clock in and out for another employee.
- Any attempt to tamper with the timekeeping software.
- Unreported hours as described in (D) above.

G. Shift Differential

Non-exempt employees who are scheduled to work during evening and night shifts on a regular or rotating basis may be eligible for shift differential at an additional .75 cents per hour. Employees shall receive shift differential in accordance with their department’s schedules. When an employee is scheduled for an eligible shift, the Department Head will complete a Change of Status form and submit to Human Resources.

H. Trainer Rate

Non-exempt employees who are actively training new hires may be eligible for a trainer rate. The additional trainer hourly rate depends upon the department, as approved by the Board of Commissioners. The length of time for the training depends upon the department and specific employee being trained. The timecard supervisor for the department will add the trainer rate to the trainer’s timecard in ADP, with guidance from Human Resources.

	<p>Seward County Employee Policy</p> <p>Policy Name: Overtime Policy</p> <p>Revised Date: March 2025</p> <p>Approved By: Seward County Board of Commissioners</p>
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OVERTIME POLICY

Department Heads and supervisors allowed to give such authorization may approve reasonable periods of overtime work to meet operating needs. Non-exempt employees must receive approval prior to working overtime hours. Failure to seek such prior approval may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

PROCEDURES

Non-Exempt Employees

- 1. Rate of Accrual:** Non-exempt employees required to work more than 40 hours in a given work week (hereinafter referred to as “overtime hours”) shall receive compensation for overtime hours in the form of overtime pay or compensatory time, depending upon their election. The overtime pay rate is one and one-half (1 ½) times the employee’s regular hourly rate. Compensatory time is accrued at the rate of one and one-half (1 ½) times the employee’s regular hourly wage for hours worked in excess of 40. For the purpose of this policy, see explanation of “work week” under the “Definitions” section of the Seward County Employee Personnel Manual. Unpaid or paid leave, such as vacation, sick leave, comp time taken, holidays, etc., will not be included in the calculation of hours worked for purposes of overtime accrual.
 - a) *Special Rule for Certified Law Enforcement Officers:*** Non-exempt certified law enforcement officers required to work more than 80 hours in a given pay period shall accrue overtime only for the hours worked beyond 80 hours. See explanation of “pay period” for Certified Law Enforcement Officers under the “Definitions” section of the Seward County Employee Personnel Manual.
- 2. Employee Annual Election:** Between March 1st and March 31st of each year, each non-exempt employee shall elect their preferred method of compensation for overtime hours during the next fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends on June 30th. The employee may elect compensation in the form of either overtime wages or compensatory time. The employee’s election will be applied to all overtime hours,

subject to the terms of this policy, and may not be split. The election may not be changed after March 31st. The election period for new employees shall be at time of hiring. Failure to make an election will result in the employee accruing compensatory time for overtime hours, subject to the terms of this policy.

3. **Compensation Over 80 Hours: Employees may not accrue more than 80 hours of compensatory time.** If an employee's accrued compensatory time balance exceeds 80 hours at the end of a pay period, the employee shall be paid overtime wages for the hours which exceed 80.
4. **Utilization of Accrued Compensatory Time:** A non-exempt employee with accrued compensatory time will be permitted to use such time within a reasonable period after making the request, provided that the request does not unduly disrupt the operations of Seward County. Any compensatory time used will be paid at the employee's hourly rate at the time of usage.
5. **Department Transfer Payout:** When a non-exempt employee transfers to another department within Seward County, their overtime balance will be paid out on the paycheck that compensates the employee for their last hours worked in the original department. and will be paid out of the budget of the department in which the overtime hours were accrued.
6. **Reduction in Employment Status:** If a non-exempt employee reduces their hours from full-time to part-time or on-call, their overtime balance will be paid out on the paycheck that compensates the employee for their last hours at full-time status.
7. **Termination of Employment:** A non-exempt employee shall be paid for any unused compensatory time off upon termination from employment. Payment shall be made at the employee's current hourly rate or at the average rate for the final three years of employment, whichever is higher.

Maintenance of Overtime Records

Seward County shall maintain overtime records in accordance with the recordkeeping requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Safe Harbor Provisions

Employees who believe their paycheck was calculated in error or did not receive credit for compensatory time earned according to this policy should follow these procedures:

1. Immediately contact their Department Head to report the possible error.
2. The Department Head will investigate to determine whether an error was made.
3. If an error has been made by Seward County, the following action will be taken (as applicable):
 - a. *Payroll Error:* A correction will be made on the next paycheck.
 - b. *Compensatory Time Bank Error:* The employee's compensatory time bank will be adjusted accordingly.
4. If an employee believes an acceptable resolution was not reached by addressing his/her concern with the Department Head, then the employee is asked to immediately follow the "Grievance Procedures" as outlined in the Seward County Employee Personnel Manual.
5. If an employee believes a satisfactory resolution was not received through the Seward County Grievance Procedure, employees may contact the following enforcement agency: Nebraska Department of Labor.



Seward County Employee Policy

Policy Name: Pay Period and Work Hours

Revised Date: March 2025

Approved By: Seward County Board of Commissioners

PAY PERIOD AND WORK HOURS

A. PAY DAY

Pay day for all County employees will occur biweekly, on alternating Fridays. If a holiday falls on a Friday pay day, the pay date will occur on the last working day prior to the holiday. The County is required by federal law to make certain deductions from wages. Such deductions include Social Security and Medicare taxes, federal and state income tax, and any local withholdings. These required deductions, as well as deductions for County retirement, child support, and garnishments will be deducted from each paycheck. Additionally, voluntary deductions authorized in writing will be made as directed by the employee. The county will deduct voluntary deductions, such as health, dental, vision, FSA, LTD (long term disability), 457(b), and other such supplemental benefits, from 24 pay checks each year. In any month where three Friday pay dates occur, no voluntary benefit deductions will be deducted from the third payment.

B. ELECTRONIC PAY

Seward County processes payroll through ADP, an electronic time and attendance system, and direct deposit will be required of all full-time, part-time, or temporary employees. Updates can be made to payroll account information by contacting Human Resources.

C. WORK HOURS

The work week will begin Saturday at 12:00 a.m. and ends Friday at 11:59 p.m. If an employee travels for county business on a day other than their normal workdays, the time shall be treated as regular work hours. All such travel shall be work-related and preapproved by the employee's supervisor. A full-time work week typically consists of 40 hours per week; however, certain positions have regular work weeks with fewer than forty hours. An employee's weekly hour requirement will be the total of hours worked, and any vacation, comp time, sick leave, holiday hours, bereavement leave, or other leave approved consistent with the Seward County employee manual. Unpaid time will only be allowed in circumstances where no paid benefits are available and shall be at the discretion of the Department Head. See the Employee Manual for policies regarding military unpaid leave guidelines, FMLA leave, and Leave of Absence Policy.

D. CLOSING OF A PAY PERIOD

Supervisors are required to notify Payroll/Human Resources via email that payroll is complete by 10:00 a.m. on the Monday after the Friday pay period ends. If that Monday falls on a holiday, payroll is due the next work day by 10:00 a.m. Timecard exceptions that only Human Resources can make must be emailed to Human Resources for tracking purposes. It is highly recommended that supervisors check their employees' records (leave requests and time punches) on at least a weekly basis to assure accuracy and efficiency.

E. SAFE HARBOR

Employees who believe their paycheck was calculated in error or did not receive credit for compensatory time earned according to this policy should follow these procedures:

1. Immediately contact their Department Head to report the possible error
2. The Department Head will investigate to determine whether an error was made.

3. If an error has been made by Seward County, the following action will be taken (as applicable):
 - a. *Payroll Error*: A correction will be made on the next available paycheck.
 - b. *Compensatory Time Bank Error*: The employee's compensatory time bank will be adjusted accordingly.
4. If an employee believes an acceptable resolution was not reached by addressing his/her concern with the Department Head, then the employee is asked to immediately follow the "Grievance Procedures" as outlined in the Seward County Employee Personnel Manual.
5. If satisfactory resolution is not received through the Seward County Grievance Board, employees may contact the Nebraska Department of Labor.

F. FLSA EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

Exempt employees are an exception to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requirement to receive overtime for any work performed over 40 hours per week. Each position is carefully analyzed by the County Attorney's Office and Human Resources to determine if the position is exempt or non-exempt. The County's expectation is that exempt employees are to work at least 40 hours per week. It is recognized that there are times when an exempt employee will need to work over 40 hours a week. As such, exempt employees are provided more flexibility than non-exempt employees in their work practices, meaning that they are generally able to flex out their workday schedule based on their workday needs, as pre-approved by their supervisor. For instance:

- a) *An exempt employee may come to work at 9:00 a.m. and work until 6:00 p.m.*
- b) *An exempt employee may have a night meeting from 7p.m. - 9 p.m., and therefore may report to work at 10:00 a.m. that morning to adjust.*
- c) *An exempt employee has a doctor's appointment from 3pm - 5p.m., so the employee may come in early that morning or work an extra hour or two throughout the week to adjust.*

i. Timecard Protocols

While exempt employees do not have to clock "in and out", it is important for the County to ensure that exempt employees record all their daily hours worked. The hours reported on the timecard must be in .25 increments. If an exempt employee receives work calls or responds to e-mails before or after their regular workday schedule for a considerable amount of time, it is expected that the exempt employee include those hours in their reporting.

ii. Flexing Out Time Each Week

The County utilizes the weekly "look- back" method to determine if, and how much, exempt employees need to draw from their vacation or sick leave for that week. Exempt employees can adjust their schedules as needed for work-life balance during the workweek, with approval of their supervisor. At the end of the week, supervisors will review total hours worked and request adjustments to leave requests if hours for an employee exceed 40 hours. *Example: On Monday, an employee submits a request for an 8-hour vacation to be taken on Wednesday. Throughout the week, the exempt employee ends up physically working 35 hours total. That time off request can then be modified from 8 to 5 hours.*



Seward County Employee Policy
 Policy Name: Cell Phone Usage Policy
 Revised Date: March 2025
 Approved By: Seward County Board of Commissioners

CELL PHONE USAGE POLICY

The purpose of the Policy is to establish guidelines and standards regarding the business and personal use of cell phone services for Seward County business. County employees who carry personal cell phones with them while on County time or while using County equipment are subject to the following restrictions:

It shall be the policy of the County that:

1. Employees who are able to justify the need for a cell phone should obtain the approval of the department head/elected official. Seward County will reimburse employees who have been pre-approved at a rate of \$35.00 per month. Employees must fill out a Reimbursement Form, attach a copy of their phone bill for that month, and turn into Human Resources in order to get reimbursed.
2. Employees shall refrain from using cell phones or other portable communication equipment while driving for business of Seward County. The employee's greatest responsibility is for his/her personal safety and the safety of the other drivers, pedestrians, and passengers. If the job requires instant communication, a headset or hands-free phone should be used.
3. The department head/elected official is responsible for maintaining documentation regarding county-owned cell phones assigned to their department. Documentation shall include the number of cellphones, cell phone numbers, and the employees authorized to use each phone.
4. Seward County will not be responsible for the loss of personal cell phones.
5. Personal phone calls (both incoming and outgoing) should be avoided unless absolutely necessary. Any personal phone calls can be made during scheduled breaks or lunch periods

Affirmative Vote: Pekarek, Hain, Schmieding, Zabrocki

Motion Carried

Commissioners Reports:

Commissioner Schmieding reported he has a Visitors Committee and Blue Valley Community Action meeting. He also contacted a Natural Resource District about the Arbor Day celebration. He also checked roads and visited with Commissioner Hain about abandoned cemeteries.

Commissioner Pekarek reported he will have meetings with the Road Personnel and the Emergency Manager later today and a Veteran's Service Committee meeting tomorrow. He spent yesterday with Commissioner Hain, worked with the Planning & Zoning Administrator and will work with the Planning & Zoning Board to schedule a meeting in Garland with Lower Platte South about the water aquifer.

Commissioner Hain reported she received calls about roads and snow fence after the storm last week, received an email from a representative from the Well Being Initiative, received a call from a constituent about county data online, met with the County Attorney, received decals for new county vehicles, spent time with several departments about budgets and other various matters and received a phone call from a village board member about right of way.

Commissioner Zabrocki reported he attended a Seward City Council meeting, attended a Nebraska Intergovernmental Risk Management Assn. (NIRMA) meeting, NIRMA Roundtable Session, Seward City Planning Commission, reported he is on a search committee for a new Executive Director for NIRMA, attended Region V and Apace meetings, a BRIDGES meeting, and will attend the Southeast District of Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) meeting on Thursday.

The Commissioners recessed at 09:42 a.m.
The Commissioners re-convened at 9:45 a.m.

Gary Jewell, representing American Legion Post #4775, requested to have a flag burning ceremony on March 29, 2025 in front of the courthouse. He gave information on the process of properly disposing of a flag. He will bring two fire extinguishers with him. He also said he would like to have a ceremony in June for Flag Day.

Moved by Hain to approve the request to have a Veteran's Memorial Ceremony/Burning of the flags on the North side of the Courthouse pending liability insurance form being received.

Affirmative Vote: Hain, Pekarek, Schmieding, Zabrocki Motion Carried

Moved by Schmieding and seconded by Pekarek to authorize the County Clerk to advertise for the mowing of abandoned cemeteries.

Affirmative Vote: Schmieding, Pekarek, Hain, Zabrocki Motion Carried

The Commissioners recessed at 9:57 a.m.
The Commissioners re-convened at 10:00 a.m.

Weed Supt., Marcus Kallhoff was present to discuss estimates he received for an HVAC System for the Weed Building.

Moved by Hain and seconded by Pekarek to approve the estimate from H & S Plumbing, Heating and AC for a furnace, air conditioner and installation for a total of \$9,950 to be paid out of the Commissioners sinking fund for buildings.

Affirmative Vote: Hain, Pekarek, Schmieding, Zabrocki Motion Carried

During the legislative update on the agenda, Commissioner Hain reported that there is activity in the Legislature about the abolishment of Inheritance Tax. She gave information and examples of when Seward County has utilized the Inheritance Tax Fund and if we didn't have it, taxes would have to be levied to pay for projects such as a new elevator in the courthouse, etc.

Known items on the agenda for Board of Commissioners on March 18, 2025 are as follows:
9:00 a.m.

1. Convene and announce Open Meetings Law
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Discuss/Action - Approve minutes of March 11, 2025

Other Business Matters to Address When Time Allows

4. Discuss/Action – Public/Organizations/Officials
5. Commissioner's Reports
6. Discuss/Action - Grant Writer contract with 11th House
7. Discuss/Action - Update on Daughter's of the Revolution and their work with Abandoned Cemeteries of Seward County
8. Discuss/Action - Assign Abandoned Cemeteries
9. Discuss/Action - Authorize Chair to sign Mid-American Franchise Agreement with Spectrum AKA Charter Communications
10. Discuss/Action - Legislative Update

Moved by Pekarek and seconded by to adjourn at 10:26 a.m.

Affirmative Vote: Pekarek, Hain, Schmieding, Zabrocki 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 18th day of March 2025.

County Clerk

Chairman