

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES**  
**LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2023 AT 8:30 A.M.**  
**COUNTY CITY BUILDING, 555 S. 10<sup>TH</sup> STREET**  
**ROOM 112 – CITY COUNTY CHAMBERS**

Commissioners Present: Christa Yoakum, Chair; Sean Flowerday, Vice Chair; Roma Amundson, Matt Schulte and Rick Vest

Others Present: David Derbin, Chief Administrative Officer; Kristy Bauer, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer; and Courtney Lyons, Deputy County Clerk

*Advanced public notice of the meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board and the Lancaster County, Nebraska, website and emailed to the media on June 21, 2023. Notice was also published in the Lincoln Journal Star print and digital editions on June 19, 2023.*

The Chair noted the location of the Open Meetings Act and opened the meeting at 8:29 a.m.

**AGENDA ITEM**

**1. APPROVAL OF STAFF MEETING MINUTES FOR JUNE 15, 2023**

**MOTION:** Vest moved and Amundson seconded approval of the minutes. Vest, Amundson and Yoakum voted yes. Schulte and Flowerday abstained. Motion carried 3-0.

**2. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – Joe Kohout, Sarah Wagelie and Jack Russell, Kissel, Kohout, ES Associates LLC**

Kohout provided an updated list of priority bills (Exhibit #1), a list of all bills of interest (Exhibit #2) and a list of interim studies of interest (Exhibit #3).

Kohout provided a legislative update, which included a summary of the recently adjourned legislative session (Exhibit #4). He reported senators largely focused on social issues, but that over 300 bills eventually passed. Senators passed a fiscally conservative budget and Kohout believes budgets will be similar in the future.

Kohout updated the Board on their legislative priorities. The bill regarding the East Beltway did not pass, but Senator Ballard introduced an interim study. The County Bridge Match Program was extended and given additional funding. The bills on service facilities and joint public agencies did not advance out of committee, but Senator Linehan plans to work on them over the interim. Bills to repeal the inheritance tax and to pass a consumption tax did not advance. Federal funding was allocated for a second water source in Lancaster County. County Agricultural societies can now apply for shovel-ready grant funding.

Kohout discussed the following interim studies that may impact the County:

- LR130 (Interim study to examine the potential construction of the proposed East Beltway administered jointly by the city of Lincoln and Lancaster County)

- LR186 (Interim study to examine issues raised in LB820, 2023, relating to valuation of land in Nebraska)
- LR192 (Interim study to examine the relationship between joint public agencies and public education matters)
- LR194 (Interim study to research, through collaboration among various stakeholders, ways to address juvenile justice reform)
- LR235 (Interim study to examine the delinquent tax sale and tax deed process for delinquent real property taxes)
- LR247 (Interim study to examine issues raised in LB133, 2023, relating to laws regarding the use of eminent domain by state agencies, boards, commissions, and other political subdivisions)

Senators amended LB254 to include changes to a previous study to evaluate the Lincoln Regional Center. Kohout will monitor that bill's implementation for the Board.

Board members commented on the session and Kohout discussed predictions for next session.

Kohout and Board members discussed senators and the number of bills they introduce.

Flowerday and Yoakum thanked Kohout and his team for their work during the session.

The Board moved to Item 9A.

## **DEPUTY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT**

### **Register a Voting Delegate for the 2023 NACo Annual Business Meeting (July 21-24)**

Bauer stated there is a need to register a voting delegate for the upcoming meeting.

**MOTION:** Vest moved and Amundson seconded to nominate Yoakum to serve as the delegate. Flowerday, Vest, Amundson, Schulte and Yoakum voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.

Yoakum noted she will notify the staff at the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO).

### **3. QUARTERLY HR UPDATE AND BUDGET OVERVIEW** – Barb McIntyre, Director, Lincoln-Lancaster County Human Resources

McIntyre provided a quarterly Human Resources (HR) update (Exhibit #5). Topics covered included: a new onboarding process, a new talent acquisition process, an increase in requests to the Total Rewards division, a remediation of the benefits and payroll software, a roll out of paid parental leave, healthcare plan participation, a new diversity, equity and inclusion training for corrections staff, a toolkit for managers for how to use results from an employee engagement survey, the County leadership academy and demographics of County employees.

McIntyre reported HR is reviewing and updating County department policies. HR is also delivering various trainings to individual departments.

Schulte asked about metrics on employee hiring and retention and McIntyre discussed the topic. McIntyre emphasized the need to train managers in order to increase retention of those they supervise. Other retention methods are to focus on the mission and values of a career with the County, to allow employees to have autonomy and to challenge employees. Yoakum stated taking initiative is important.

McIntyre reported all Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) work is now being handled by a leave manager. Other duties such as drug testing have been moved to Risk Management and a new employee was hired.

McIntyre stated she is still finalizing next year's budget. She anticipates a focus will be on employee development programs. Flowerday requested she return with a budget report in a week, and she agreed. McIntyre reviewed the way the County reimburses the City for HR services.

Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Director, and McIntyre discussed this year's cost to the County compared to the previous year. McIntyre stated the cost increased due to filling vacancies, new positions and having employees devoted fulltime to the County.

Schulte asked how many employees the County has and McIntyre answered over 1,000.

#### **4. RURAL WATER UPDATE** – Jordan Bang, District Manager, Lancaster Rural Water District No. 1

Bang provided an update on the County's new booster station and service areas. Terry Kuhl, Assistant Manager, was also available for the discussion. Using funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), they awarded a bid to Judds Brothers Construction Company.

Bang stated they recently implemented a mandatory 50 percent reduction in water use due to a shortage and provided a handout (Exhibit #6). Bang and Board members discussed the effects of the water shortage. Bang reported rate increases for overuse were not fixing the overuse, especially for lawn watering. Lawn watering is considered residential use.

Bang reviewed statistics on water use and noted that a small number of users are using a large portion of the available water. Flowerday proposed a legislative change of taking lawn watering out of the list of allowed residential uses. Kuhl noted the Rural Water Board is considering additional regulations. Flowerday asked Derbin to include this issue on a future agenda.

Schulte asked what the timeline is for the new booster station. Bang answered they are waiting on the prefabricated station to arrive, but progress will move faster now that a bid was awarded. He expects the project to be mostly complete in a year.

Vest asked how to prevent water overuse of watering lawns and Bang and Kuhl discussed rate options. Yoakum asked about a recent news story of a family having no access to water and Bang described the situation. Kuhl explained a solution using a hookup from Cass County.

Vest asked Bang to describe the benefits of the \$2,000,000 in ARPA funding, and Bang explained the benefits of the new booster station.

**5. QUARTERLY PLANNING UPDATE AND BUDGET OVERVIEW** – David Cary, Director, Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning

Vest and Schulte left the meeting at 9:54 a.m.

Cary reported on Planning Department updates in the last quarter, including an annexation, updating County regulations on private roadways and new residential developments, special permit regulations changes, updating committee memberships, a workshop with Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) staff, finalizing plats, zoning changes and tracking a special permit for The Shed.

Vest returned to the meeting at 9:57 a.m.

Cary reviewed plans for next quarter and noted the Department is always open to requests from Board members.

Schulte returned to the meeting at 9:59 a.m.

Vest asked about plans for preventing new roads in Lancaster County. Cary answered the County will not be creating any new public roads. Schulte asked about maintenance of private roads and Cary answered they continue to monitor and evaluate who is responsible for maintenance. Schulte asked if the Department is monitoring any current solar energy projects and Cary answered no.

Cary described the interlocal agreement for cost sharing for the Department between the City and County and described the benefits. He does not predict a large increase in budget needs, but they have seen an increase in applications. Vest and Cary discussed the percentage split of costs between the City and the County.

Meyer asked Cary to discuss next year's budget and Cary answered he did not anticipate any changes to the second year of the two-year budget.

**6. LIBRARY BUDGET OVERVIEW** – Ryan Wieber, Director, Lincoln City Libraries

Paul Jones, Lincoln City Libraries Accountant, was also available for the discussion.

Meyer asked Wieber to summarize the library's budget process. Wieber outlined the budget process as well as library services available to County residents. Amundson asked and Wieber answered how many resident utilize book mobile services. Amundson asked if residents can call to request books and Wieber answered yes.

Wieber reported library visits and circulation increased this year and that 13 percent of year-to-date circulation is from County residents. Wieber noted the benefits of the cost sharing of library services between the City and County.

Wieber reviewed plans for the upcoming year, including a website update, development of a strategic plan, hiring a consultant to develop a public engagement campaign, opening a new branch, facility improvements, new book mobiles and security upgrades.

Vest asked if Waverly residents have access to the libraries and Wieber answered yes. Meyer explained how the rural library services are funded. Yoakum stated there should be an effort to increase digital services usage among County residents and Wieber agreed.

**7. PURCHASING BUDGET OVERVIEW** – Peter Kroll, Purchasing Agent, Lincoln-Lancaster County Purchasing

Flowerday left the meeting at 10:24 a.m.

Kroll described how the City and County split costs and services and the services the County gets for the cost. Services include access to Purchasing Department staff and cost savings from vendors.

Flowerday returned to the meeting at 10:26 a.m.

Kroll noted the benefits of having one set of purchasing processes for both the County and the City. Meyer noted that the City and County are now using the same software system and Kroll discussed the benefits of working collaboratively with the County.

**8. DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS CANDIDATE DISCUSSION**

Laura Leppky, Talent Acquisition Division Leader, reported on candidate interviews and meet and greet sessions and asked if the Board had questions before making a decision. Amundson asked if candidates are eligible for a veterans preference and Leppky answered two of them are. Leppky stated she asked County staff for additional feedback and she will forward to Board members.

Leppky explained she will process background checks on the candidates except for one candidate who is located in Florida where background checks cannot be processed until after an offer is made.

Board members noted updating the job title and holding meet and greet sessions improved the hiring process.

**9. DEPUTY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT**

**A. Register a Voting Delegate for the 2023 NACo Annual Business Meeting (July 21-24)**

Item discussed earlier in the agenda.

**10. DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS ATTENDED**

**A. SENDD - Schulte**

Schulte reported they are working on a broadband initiative.

**B. Lancaster County Ag Society – Amundson / Vest**

Neither attended.

**C. New Americans Task Force Meeting – Yoakum**

Yoakum reviewed resettlement statistics covered in the meeting and stated the task force is formalizing their structure.

**D. Mutual Aid – Flowerday / Yoakum**

Neither attended.

**E. Other Meetings Attended Since Last Staff Meeting**

None discussed.

**11. SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS**

See agenda.

**12. EMERGENCY ITEMS**

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Vest moved and Flowerday seconded to adjourn at 10:41 a.m. Schulte, Flowerday, Vest, Amundson and Yoakum voted yes. Motion Carried 5-0.



Matt Hansen  
Lancaster County Clerk

