

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
THURSDAY, JULY 2, 2020
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING
ROOM 112 – CITY/COUNTY CHAMBERS
8:30 A.M.**

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

Others Present: Kerry Eagan and Dave Derbin, Chief Administrative Officers; Ann Ames, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer; and Dan Nolte, County Clerk

Advance public notice of the Board of Commissioners Staff Meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board and the Lancaster County, Nebraska web site and provided to the media on July 1, 2020.

The Chair noted the location of the Open Meetings Act and opened the meeting at 8:33 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM

1. APPROVAL OF STAFF MEETING MINUTES FOR JUNE 25, 2020

MOTION: Vest moved and Yoakum seconded approval of the June 25, 2020 Staff Meeting minutes. Amundson, Schorr, Yoakum, Vest and Flowerday voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.

2. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – Joe Kohout and Brennen Miller, Kissel, Kohout, ES Associates LLC

Kohout and Miller were unavailable for this agenda item. A weekly legislative report was distributed (Exhibit 1).

Schorr suggested that the Tri-County meeting with Douglas and Sarpy Counties be held at the Lincoln Children's Zoo. Amundson mentioned the Lancaster Events Center as another potential site for the meeting. Danielle Buck, Administrative Secretary to the County Board, was asked to check the availability of these locations.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT

B. Claim for Review: Vouchers 689124 through 689136 to Attorney Candice Wooster, dated June 24, 2020, in the amount of \$19,388.30 for services performed in 2018 and 2019 in Juvenile Court

Derbin said the claim was for services provided but it was submitted late. A letter of

explanation by the vendor was included (see agenda packet). Amundson noted that it was not a budget issue as legal fees change annually. She noted the claim was about two years old. Derbin said the Board can either waive the ninety-day requirement or reject the claim.

MOTION: Schorr moved and Amundson seconded to deny the claim. Vest, Schorr, Yoakum, Amundson and Flowerday voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.

NOTE: The claim will be scheduled on the July 15th County Board meeting agenda at which time the vendor can appear to appeal the Board's decision.

3. NEW AMERICANS TASK FORCE SURVEY REPORT AND FINDINGS – Lee Kreimer, Programs Manager, Asian Community and Cultural Center

Kreimer, Co-Chair of the New Americans Task Force, appeared via Zoom and reviewed the data report (see agenda packet). She noted the importance of community input for developing services, including the cultural centers and the Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) bilingual liaison. She said MyCity Academy builds trust in local institutions and noted the importance of sustainable funding to address the concerns in the survey.

When asked about CareerLadder, Kreimer explained it provides resources to address challenges faced by immigrants seeking to re-establish their professional careers and includes licensing and educational components.

Yoakum noted that there were approximately 500 surveys taken.

DEPUTY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT

A. Lancaster County 2020 Priorities

Yoakum said the MyCity Academy may be renamed. A curriculum is being designed with both City and County official involvement, including the Mayor's Office and the Human Rights Commission. She said the budget is \$20,000 and the County may want to consider assisting with funding. The use of Joint Budget Committee (JBC) funds is being explored.

B. City-County Common Meeting Agenda

Flowerday suggested structuring the upcoming City-County Common meeting agenda with reports from the Lancaster County Sheriff and the Lincoln Police Department. He felt an overview of criminal justice components, including state and local jurisdictions, corrections, prosecutions and the criminal justice system, would be helpful.

4. BUDGET UPDATE – Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer

Meyer reviewed a comparison worksheet (see agenda packet), noting the revenue projections are down for the next fiscal year. These are based on a valuation increase of 2.75% which will result in about \$2,200,000 in additional property tax collections at the current levy. He noted there remains approximately \$11,000,000 more in budget requests than anticipated revenues. He said the General Fund has a \$6,700,000 increase in agency requests over the current year's budget. This includes \$4,100,000 for general government, \$2,000,000 for contingency funds, and a \$1,800,000 transfer to the County Engineer. He noted the amount remaining in fund balances will determine the amount transferred to the County Engineer's budget. Additionally, the current requested appropriations do not include body cameras.

Meyer recommended the Board require more information before approving mid-year budget requests. He suggested the Board discuss and take action on new position requests at the next County Board Staff Meeting. The proposed expense is more than \$800,000 with \$450,000 of that amount coming from Corrections.

Regarding COVID-19 expense reimbursements, \$200,000 is anticipated from Cares Act funding and \$200,000 from the Crime Commission.

5. COVID-19 UPDATE AND RESPONSE

Flowerday said Pat Lopez, Interim Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department Director, estimated the cost of flu shots at \$6,700,000. Schorr noted the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) is exploring potential reimbursement of those expenses.

6. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT

A. Legislative Retreat Date: August 20; August 27; or September 3

It was suggested to hold the retreat on August 27, 2020.

B. Claim for Review: Vouchers 689124 through 689136 to Attorney Candice Wooster, dated June 24, 2020, in the amount of \$19,388.30 for services performed in 2018 and 2019 in Juvenile Court

This item was moved forward on the agenda.

7. DEPUTY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT

A. Lancaster County 2020 Priorities

B. City-County Common Meeting Agenda

These items were moved forward on the agenda.

8. DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS ATTENDED

A. Chamber Coffee – Flowerday/Yoakum

Flowerday noted the budget implications of COVID-19 for the City, County and the University of Nebraska. He reported that census completions for the County are down .4% from 2010.

9. SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS

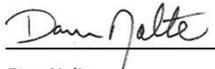
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10. EMERGENCY ITEMS

There were no emergency items.

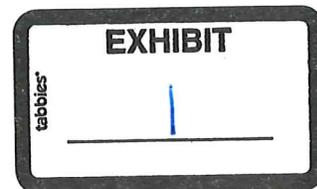
11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Schorr moved and Vest seconded to adjourn at 9:48 a.m. Schorr, Amundson, Yoakum, Vest and Flowerday voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.



Dan Nolte
Lancaster County Clerk





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LEGISLATIVE MEMORANDUM

TO: Lancaster County Board of Commissioners

FROM: Joseph D. Kohout
Brennen L. Miller

DATE: July 2, 2020

RE: Weekly Report

Good Morning. Please accept this as your weekly report for the 2020 session of the Legislature for the date noted above. Since the last report on June 24, 2020, the Legislature has remained in recess due to COVID-19 concerns. However, Speaker Scheer has announced that the Legislature will reconvene on July 20th and will adjourn Sine Die on August 13th.

Further, the Speaker has published a memorandum which outlines how the Legislature will reconvene. Among other things, the memorandum states that Senators wishing to speak with lobbyists must exit the Chamber through the back north door and re-enter through the back south door. Further, it states that Senators will want to utilize text messaging, their cell-phone (in a phone booth), and their intercom for communication with persons outside the Chamber. The memorandum was sent via email last week and reattached with last week's update.

SCHEDULING

Brennen has been working with Mr. Derbin and Mr. Eagan on the scheduling of the Tri-County Breakfast during the 2021 session. We have scheduled Monday, January 11, 2021 from 8-10am at NACO's offices. Both Sean Kelley and Tim Gay were notified of the dates and we will be following up in the coming months for invitations to go out from their respective clients.

We would recommend that we start looking at a date for Lancaster County 101 for the fall. Historically, we have set this meeting for after Thanksgiving for introduction of new Senators to Lancaster County and our priorities. I would recommend that we look at either the Monday or Tuesday within two weeks after the elections for a possible meeting – ideally falling on one of the following:

November 9, 2020
November 10, 2020
November 16, 2020

November 17, 2020
November 18, 2020

Please let us know how you would like to proceed.

INTERIM STUDIES

We have mentioned in previous reports that we should pull together ideas for interim studies. Here is what has been received:

1. 24/7 Sobriety;
2. Review of fees and fines;
3. LR183 follow up;
4. Move the cost of housing HHS Offices back to the state; and
5. Minimizing barriers for individuals being released from the County Jail to obtain a state ID

We attached draft versions of the interim studies to reports in weeks past. We encourage you to review the reports for action.

As we have previously mentioned, we will need to be cognizant of is how much time we have post-adjourment to do interim studies. With session adjourning on August 13, 2020 and elections in November, the window for interim studies will be abbreviated.

CARES ACT FUNDING

On May 27, 2020, during his daily press conference, Governor Ricketts announced how he intends the state to spend the federal CARES Act dollars distributed to Nebraska. Please note that below is a general outline of what was announced, and the PowerPoint utilized by the Governor was attached to the email that contained the May 28, 2020 report. Here is how he intends to distribute the funds:

GOVERNMENTS: \$180 MILLION

State Government - \$80 Million; Local Governments - \$100 Million

Dollars will be for reimbursement of direct costs associated with COVID including PPE, overtime, sanitizing spaces, dedicated payroll for COVID public safety employees.

Counties, in order to be eligible, must have 'business as usual' by June 8th (open public offices and services). Subsequent to that report, NACO has indicated that the Governor has agreed to push this back one week to June 15, 2020.

COMMUNITY CARES PROGRAM: \$85 MILLION

Behavioral Health Regions - \$5 Million; Community Collaboratives - \$20 Million; Providers and/or Non-Profits demonstrating increased demand and lower donations \$40 Million; Shelters and/or Housing - \$20 Million

Specifics of this program were announced by the Department last Thursday afternoon. Our notes from that press conference were sent out last Thursday afternoon. They money will be divided into programs that will be essentially used to provide those providers of services with assistance. We would be happy to provide our notes again at your request. We would note that the timeline for the dollars to be distributed are very aggressive.

SMALL BUSINESSES/LIVESTOCK STABILIZATION: \$392 MILLION

Small businesses between 5-49 employees; Livestock operations between 1-10 employees

The funds will be distributed in \$12,000 grants to all qualified. The Governor hosted Press Conference which focused on this component on Friday, June 12, 2020. Those who joined him at the podium included Director of Economic Development Tony Goins and Director of Agriculture Steve Wellman. There were many, many questions and the applications became active this week.

REMOTE ACCESS, WORKFORCE RETRAINING, GALLUP: \$62 MILLION

Rural broadband development - \$40 Million; Workforce Retraining - \$16 Million; Gallup Training - \$1 Million

Rural broadband development with Impacting 26,285 households in 41 communities of 1,000-5,000 in population and workforce retraining will include \$1,100 grants for students (up to 12,000 total) and Career Coaches, administration and faculty at a total of \$2.4 Million. The Department of Economic Development has hosted two meetings for parties interested in the \$40 Million being deployed for broadband coverage the last two Fridays.

UNEMPLOYMENT TRUST FUND: \$427 MILLION

PLATTE INSTITUTE WEBINAR

Yesterday, the Platte Institute held a webinar entitled 'Back in Session' with Speaker Jim Scheer, and Executive Board Chair Senator Mike Hilgers serving as panelists. Questions presented to the two ranged from tax relief and business incentives, to the 2021 session.

We emailed our notes on the presentation yesterday afternoon but you will also find our notes from this presentation attached to this report. Please keep in mind that these are rough notes paraphrasing the questions and answers during the hour-long discussion. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

We hope that you find this information helpful. The full recorded webinar will be provided in our weekly 'Session Update' which will hit your inbox later this week.

This concludes our report for this week.

PLATTE INSTITUTE WEBINAR
'BACK IN SESSION WITH SPEAKER SCHEER AND SENATOR HILGERS'
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1ST, 2020

Q: Can we expect to see any legislation on business liability in the wake of COVID-19?

Scheer: There is no work on one that I am aware of, but no matter what federal action may or may not take place, one is likely on the state level in January from a member senator..

Q: What legislation can we expect to see when the session reconvenes?

Scheer: Priority bills will take precedence when we reconvene.

Hilgers: Likely work going on to amend to remove any fiscal notes on priority bills.

Scheer: New ideas will have to have a hearing, as usual. Christmas trees are allowed following this rule.

Hilgers- senators have to be in person. Access likely to be addressed next session (I.E, senators in person). Hilgers thinks they should remain in person going forward.

Q: You both have been involved with the group meeting to work towards property tax relief- can you provide any update? (AKA The Gang of 10)

Scheer: no consensus right now. Current proposal has pluses and minuses on both prop tax and incentives. There are not 33 votes for the property tax bill, and not 33 for incentives. 1084 has been discussed but I don't think it has 33 right now either. Combination agreement needed to move these items forward. 2 of 3 items are prioritized and can move on their own, but it is to be seen if that will happen— that's up to the introducer.

Q: Who/what is holding up movement on property taxes?

Scheer: It's not that, it's that it's change and big discussion. Is the change worth while? These bills are big changes, and sometimes beliefs are not compromisable.

Q: Any conversation with Nebraska's federal delegation on dollars being able to be used towards any state budget shortfall?

Scheer- yes with a couple of the members. I don't anticipate any action before we enter the session, or even by time we end the session. However it's a very fluid situation on the federal level.

Hilgers: Anything more than a week old (information wise) is stale.

Q: Will there be a consent calendar for non-controversial legislation?

Scheer: I'm not planning on it right now. If things move quickly I will consider it as it would be nice to have non controversial things able to move, but focus will be on priorities with the short time we have left in session. We can usually work until midnight, however 10:00 pm will be drop dead time to quit each day in order to have the chamber sanitized. (No midnights will shorten time to pass things). Chance of consent smaller rather than larger.

Q: Incentives?

Scheer: Reality is we have to have an incentive package. No state is going to be flush money-wise to recruit businesses from other states, but we need something in place. Property taxes go along with that. But we need to find 33.

Hilgers: Turmoil in urban settings may put Nebraska in a good position to gain population. We need to be creative, business incentives go with that. We need to get more money into people's pockets too.

Q: Has there been any discussion of using LB1034 to extend Nebraska Advantage (current incentive package)

Scheer: I'm sure that will be considered by someone at some point, but it's not prioritized so would have to be amended onto another bill that is germane. Less of a probability than possibility.

Hilgers: Nothing to add, however I don't think there's a majority interest in putting more into property tax relief fund (to move towards compromise)

Scheer: if we are going to pay an incentive for employees, they should live in Nebraska. (Highlighting some issues with Nebraska Advantage)

Q: Should we review filibuster rules?

Scheer: That's issue by issue in popularity depending on what side you are on. 25 senators can be put together easily, especially when it may offer support or opposition relief to a separate issue they are working on. What we have now- which I didn't like as much when I started - helps the minority be heard. If that number should be adjusted, I don't know. It can be changed, but it serves a purpose.

Hilgers: important speed bump. Supports some changes like 2/3rd vote rule and others. The Idea of no filibuster is a bad one- majority rule every time would be the norm.

Q: Will legislature review unappropriated federal COVID funds?

Scheer: I don't know what changes there could be on budget, which would take 25 votes. COVID related or not, I expect some changes will be brought.

Hilgers: Senator Stinner is one of the next Platte Institute webinars, so that is a good question to ask him.

Scheer it's the governor's authority via emergency declarations. Ultimately we don't have control, and we gave him control.

Q: Could the 2021 session be delayed due to COVID or other pandemic?

Scheer: I'm not sure, and anything on that is pure speculation. The speaker would do that, but as I am term limited, the new speaker won't be elected until it starts. I'm not sure if they could convene for a day to elect the speaker and suspend.

Hilgers: Constitutionally we have to start on the specific date, not when the speaker says. But no mandate for when we end. Would have to elect leadership first and anything more is speculation. Nebraska cases are going down, but the country is rising. We will see how any future waves, and the possible vaccine works out. Likely momentum to not shut down the economy again. But we could see a meteor of death in December or something so who knows...

Q: What are you doing to ensure a full stadium for Nebraska football?

Scheer: I'm not doing anything. It's not my call. However, that's a lot of people in a small area.