

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
THURSDAY, JULY 6, 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 July 3, 2023. Notice was also published in the Lincoln Journal Star print and digital editions on July 5, 2023.*

The Chair noted the location of the Open Meetings Act and opened the meeting at 8:32 a.m.

**AGENDA ITEM**

**1. APPROVAL OF STAFF MEETING MINUTES FOR JUNE 29, 2023**

**MOTION:** Flowerday moved and Vest seconded approval of the minutes. Vest, Amundson, Flowerday and Yoakum voted yes. Schulte abstained. Motion carried 4-0 with one abstention.

**2. YOUTH SERVICE CENTER BUDGET OVERVIEW** – Steven Wesley, Director, Youth Services Center

Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer, led discussion on the item. He displayed the online Transparency Portal (see agenda packet). Meyer asked Melissa Hood, Youth Service Center (YSC) Administrator, what projected revenues will be for this fiscal year. Hood answered it depends on the rates and the number of youths served, but she estimated \$2.1 million. If youth served stays at the current number of three, revenue would be \$360,000, but she expects the number served to increase.

Meyer asked how the budget is affected if the Department projects \$1.8 million in revenue. The number of youths served under that projection would require three housing units and more staff. Meyer and Hood continued to discuss revenue and expense projections. Wesley stated the number of youths will decrease due to transfers to adult court.

Wesley and Meyer discussed how to project the number of staff needed when the number of youths served is unknown. Meyer suggested leaving revenue and expense projections where they are and waiting to discuss adding staff positions until a later date.

Schulte asked if the current budget includes the ten requested additional staff, and Meyer answered no. Wesley expressed concern that the number of youths could spike in a short time, and the YSC would be short-staffed. The youths removed from the YSC under Nebraska State Probation could

return at any point.

Amundson stated she is in favor of waiting to hire additional staff. Meyer noted the Board could act quickly if needed. Flowerday stated he supports hiring a transport officer soon. Vest stated he is concerned about the time it would take to hire staff.

Vest asked Wesley if the YSC was fully staffed, and Wesley answered the Department has two vacancies. Yoakum asked how long the onboarding process is, and Wesley answered it is too long. Yoakum and Wesley discussed the length of time it takes to train staff. Wesley noted some candidates take other jobs in the time it takes to hire.

Vest suggested allowing Wesley to hire staff now rather than waiting until numbers increase. Schulte said the County should not expect the youths under State Probation to return, but Board members said there were current discussions to have them return. Board members, Wesley and Hood continued to discuss the length of time it takes to hire and train staff.

Wesley clarified the staffing need is higher than what the Department currently has budgeted. Board members and Wesley continued to discuss staffing needs.

Vest said he supports leaving the projections where they are, but that the Board needs to monitor the numbers closely. Meyer told Wesley to keep him updated and that the Board could act quickly if needed.

### **3. QUARTLERLY JUVENILE PROBATION UPDATE** – Beverly Hoagland, Chief Probation Officer, District #3J Probation Office

Hoagland stated there are 480 youth on probation and 200 more pending. Numbers are increasing, especially truancy cases. The Office tries to not mix the truancy cases with other youth and tries to connect them with social workers. The Office has two staff vacancies. The Robert F. Kennedy National Resources Center for Juvenile Justice conducted a statewide assessment that is available on the Supreme Court Website. The report is open for public comment until August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Vest asked if Hoagland is seeing any changes in behavior. Hoagland answered numbers are typical for the time of year, but there has been an increase in 12-year-old youth. Vest asked what the Office needs more than anything else. Hoagland answered she wished there was a high-quality facility for mental health. Flowerday asked how many beds would be needed, and Hoagland answered about eight. Amundson asked what the percentage of youth who have mental illness is, and Hoagland estimated 75 to 80 percent.

Hoagland commended her staff and the judges they work with for their work. Hoagland noted the Office continues to manage cases even if the youths are transferred out of their facilities. There are currently nine youths who are offsite. Hoagland stated the number of youths in the facility sometimes depends on transportation available. Amundson asked how youths are transported and Hoagland explained.

Vest and Amundson stated they appreciate Hoagland and her staff for their work. Hoagland said she would send the statewide assessment report to the Board.

#### **4. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- A. Pending Litigation;**
- B. Potential Litigation (Which is Imminent as Evidenced by Communication of a Claim or Threat of Litigation to or by the Public Body);**
- C. Real Estate Purchases; and**
- D. Legal Advice.**

Vest moved and Amundson seconded to enter Executive Session for the purposes of pending litigation, potential litigation, real estate purchases, legal advice and to protect the public interest at 9:10 a.m. Flowerday, Vest, Amundson, Schulte and Yoakum voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.

Yoakum restated the purposes for entering Executive Session.

Schulte moved and Amundson seconded to exit Executive Session at 10:00 a.m. Schulte, Flowerday, Vest, Amundson and Yoakum voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.

#### **5. 1005 "O" STREET PURCHASE AGREEMENT – Candace Berens, Deputy County Attorney**

Berens stated the previous purchase agreement for the property expired. She has a new purchase agreement for Board members to review (see agenda packet). The anticipated purchase price is \$500,000, and the assessed value is \$2.5 million.

Randy Jones, Aging Partners Director, said there has been one formal offer. The purchase agreement states a minimum purchase price of \$500,000 but they could accept a higher offer. Flowerday stated there may have been a second offer, but it expired.

Berens reviewed the previous and current closing cost provisions. The current purchase agreement states the County is responsible for half of the closing costs. The first agreement capped closing costs at \$20,000. Amundson asked if closing costs are divided between the buyer and seller. Berens answered the City and County will split closing costs. The new purchase agreement does not have a cap on closing costs, but she suggested capping them at \$7,500. Board members agreed.

The closing date on the current draft is set for September 30, 2023. The County will need to provide a 30-day notice and hold a public hearing before signing the new purchase agreement. She suggested extending the closing date to December of 2023.

Berens stated the next step is for the Board to set a public hearing. Derbin questioned whether a public hearing was required, and Berens agreed that just notice was required.

#### **6. BUDGET OVERVIEW – Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer**

Meyer displayed the online General Government Transparency Portal (see agenda packet). He stated General Fund revenues are \$1.4 million less than a year ago and discussed causes, which include a reduction in federal grant money and lower interest rates. General Fund expenditures are \$4.5 million higher than last year. Schulte asked if that number includes additional Department requests, and Meyer answered no. Meyer said Board members will decide which staff positions to add next week.

There is a \$6 million shortfall. Meyer and Schulte discussed tax revenue amounts and setting the tax levy. Flowerday asked what the limit is before pink postcards notices are sent to residents, and Meyer answered 2 percent plus growth, which is around 4 percent.

Meyer noted he sent Board members a revised copy of staff requests, which total 33 positions at \$2.8 million per year (see agenda packet).

Meyer summarized the General Government Fund budget proposal (see agenda packet). This is the fund used for transfers of funds. Transfers include transfers to the fund for roads and bridges, the Crisis Center, the Noxious Weed Control Program and for workers' compensation. Other expenses include audit costs, services to remove dead animals, lobbying costs and a contract with the Humane Society. Meyer reviewed other costs labeled miscellaneous and General Government. Expenses are lower than last year due to fewer transfers.

Schulte asked for clarification on the decrease in transfers. Meyer reviewed the change in transfers, much of which was driven by funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Meyer displayed and discussed the online Justice Miscellaneous Transparency Portal (see agenda packet). Expenses include a contract with Legal Aid, juvenile justice prevention grants, court costs and sheriff fees. There was an increase in the Legal Aid contract.

Meyer displayed and discussed the online Health and Human Services Transparency Portal. There is a 4.4 percent increase for this year. Expenses include the County's portion of the Health Department and Aging Partners, County Rural Transit, Regional Center expenses and Joint Budget Committee (JBC) expenses. Meyer, Flowerday and Schulte discussed the funds under the JBC.

Meyer stated the next Tuesday staff meeting will include a discussion of the County Engineer's proposed budget and the Keno Fund. Meyer discussed options for funding set aside for the East Beltway project. Schulte asked if the County must acquire the right-of-way for the entire project, and Derbin answered the County has to acquire the corridor for the entire project. Meyer described how the County has spent Keno Fund revenue in the past. Flowerday clarified there are two Keno funds. Schulte asked if that is the result of the County's decision and Derbin stated it was created by an interlocal agreement. Meyer added the County gives a portion to the City for the City to maintain.

Meyer reviewed the upcoming budget setting process. Meyer stated Tuesday's meeting will also include a discussion on the gaming tax and federal aid projects. Thursday's staff meeting will include discussion on additional staff requests, the building fund and the Countywide sinking fund. The meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> will include items on fund balances and cash reserves.

## **7. DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS ATTENDED**

### **A. Annual Investor Meeting and Reception (LPED)**

Amundson reported the Mayor spoke on concerns about housing and water. Attendees also discussed the proposed Lincoln convention center, a new ballfield, and housing developments supported by tax increment financing. There was a panel of entrepreneurs who discussed job sharing, senior care living, animal shelters, management programs and work management software. Vest noted the brightness of the panel members.

## **B. Other Meetings Attended Since Last Staff Meeting**

Vest stated he attended two events during the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday: A barbeque hosted by a nonprofit that helps youth recovering from drug abuse and the opening of the Waverly pool.

## **8. SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS**

See agenda.

## **9. EMERGENCY ITEMS**

None.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Vest moved and Flowerday seconded to adjourn at 10:50 a.m. Amundson, Schulte, Flowerday, Vest and Yoakum voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.



Matt Hansen  
Lancaster County Clerk

