

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
THURSDAY, JULY 27, 2023, AT 8:30 A.M.
COUNTY CITY BUILDING, 555 S. 10TH STREET
ROOM 112 – CITY COUNTY CHAMBERS**

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

Others Present: David Derbin, Chief Administrative Officer; Kristy Bauer, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer; Leslie Brestel, County Clerk's Office

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 26, 2023. Notice was also published in the Lincoln Journal Star print and digital editions on July 24, 2023.

The Chair noted the location of the Open Meetings Act and opened the meeting at 8:37 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM

1. APPROVAL OF STAFF MEETING MINUTES FOR JULY 20, 2023

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

2. COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT – Nicole Gross, Total Rewards Division Leader, Lincoln-Lancaster County Human Resources

Gross stated the unrepresented employees include employee classes C and E, Attorneys I and II, District Court staff attorneys, law clerks, Emergency Management Specialists and Deputy Sheriff Captains. Data from comparable counties shows a 4.85% average increase. Gross noted an increase of 1% is approximately \$275,000. The average cost of living adjustments in the union contracts is 3%.

Derbin said this item will be on an upcoming Tuesday agenda.

3. BRIDGE N-114 – John Juricek, Trustee, Village of Denton Board of Trustees

Item moved to later in agenda.

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

A. ARPA Budget Update – Nikki Suesz, Grant Coordinator, Budget and Fiscal Office

Meyer reviewed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) budget (see agenda packet). He noted projects must be approved by June 2024 with funds spent on those projects by December 2026. There was discussion on having a mid-year ARPA budget meeting to check in on projects' progress.

Schulte asked what is the cancellation opportunity on the contracts if progress is not being made? Meyer answered contracts have the ability to have amended budgets or cancelled if necessary.

Schulte voiced his concern about project progress reports not being provided to the Board in a timely manner.

Suesz stated the culvert and broadband projects are picking up which will show an increase in expenses associated with those projects.

Meyer noted the expenditures for the Malcom bridge and part of South 14th Street are using ARPA funds so there was no issue with matching federal funds with federal funds.

Flowerday inquired how much in ARPA funds was used last year. Meyer answered approximately \$15,000,000.

BRIDGE N-114 – John Juricek, Trustee, Village of Denton Board of Trustees

Pam Dingman, County Engineer, was also available for discussion on the item.

Juricek said the bridge is a main structure for critical needs for the Village including access to their wellfields. He said the County has paid for other structures that have benefited other entities and felt the Board should do the same for Denton.

Amundson inquired as to what other structures Juricek was referring. Juricek said there was one structure on Agnew Road and North 27th Street among others in the southern part of the County.

Schulte said he visited Denton and saw the bridge and felt it is essential to the Village. If the bridge were to fail, there is no other way to do well checks or maintenance. Juricek added daily checks are conducted on the well because there is radium in the water. This year there has been over \$30,000 spent on a repair for the well.

Amundson agreed that the bridge is necessary for access to the wells. She proposed the County and the Village of Denton enter an interlocal agreement that states that after the County replaces the bridge, it would be turned over to Denton to continue the maintenance of the bridge and surrounding road. Additionally, she proposed a contribution of \$100,000 from Denton to the County to be payable over the course of 10 years at a 7% interest rate.

Schulte felt the Natural Resources District (NRD) will not want to contribute financially if the bridge will be given to the Village. Flowerday asked how much it costs to maintain a bridge. Dingman said bridges require inspections every 2 years unless there would be reasons for more frequent inspections. The cost of general maintenance is not significant in the first 10 to 20 years.

Schulte stated Denton has 200 residents and has an approximate property tax collection of \$40,000. The request of \$100,000 over 10 years is 25% of their yearly tax collection. Juricek added there is an additional \$45,000 in collections for a water and sewer bond. The Village is facing a \$1,300,000 sewer expansion. There is the possibility of a \$250,000 cost to fix the current sewer system before expanding. Juricek added the Village receives \$2,000 in highway fund allocations. Additionally, the Village is at their levy lid.

Flowerday inquired if Denton has a sales tax. Juricek answered there is no sales tax and that there are not enough entities to make the sales tax viable. Denton does have Keno funds, which have dropped, and there is concern with how the surrounding casinos will impact future Keno funds.

Amundson asked if Denton has considered conducting a capital campaign. Juricek responded they have not.

Flowerday agreed with Schulte that a contribution of \$250,000 from Denton is out of reach.

Schulte said his understanding of financial contributions was that the NRD would contribute \$100,000 and the Lincoln Parks Department would contribute \$100,000. There will be a trail shared on the road. Dingman added there are no other locations in the County in a public right-of-way where the County shares a trail on a gravel road. This road would be used twice daily by a local superintendent who would be aware that the trail is shared between vehicles and pedestrians.

Yoakum asked if Denton would still have access to the trail if the County vacates the road to the NRD and Parks.

Dingman gave an overview on past efforts to fund repairs on the bridge. There was general discussion on the financial contributions from the Lincoln Parks Department and the NRD and the willingness to include a vacation to Denton in an interlocal agreement. Schulte noted he had an email communication indicating a financial contribution of \$200,000 from Lincoln Parks and NRD.

Vest reiterated that the County wants to see partnership in this project. Juricek asked if the County charges each entity that has a single entrance for a bridge. Flowerday said those bridges have not been rebuilt. Schulte added there are other examples where a specific community benefits from repairs to bridges. The road to Denton's wellfield is a road owned by, and should be maintained by, the County. Schulte proposed using \$800,000 from gaming funds to repair the bridge.

Flowerday asked if Denton would contribute any funds to the bridge. Juricek responded it is not likely to contribute due to looming expenditures.

Schulte inquired how many County dollars were set aside for this particular project in previous budget discussions? Meyer answered around \$950,000. Dingman added the amount is \$950,000 assuming the county bridge match program agreement for \$250,000 is signed, which would be a net cost to the County of \$700,000.

Yoakum wanted to see obligations from the NRD and the Lincoln Parks Department before making any decisions. Schulte added the county bridge match program has a date on it. Dingman said the county bridge match program agreement has been in the office for eight months. The State did not put a deadline on the offer.

Flowerday asked if Denton is against the County vacating the road and bridge. Juricek stated Denton does not have the resources to maintain the gravel road or a bridge.

Vest said he felt it was safe to accept the county bridge match program grant and proceed to repair the bridge. Dingman noted the agreement would be brought to a Tuesday meeting for Board action.

Amundson stated she would like to see a letter of commitment from the NRD and Lincoln Parks as opposed to just an email. Yoakum agreed.

RETURNING TO ITEM 4

Meyer reviewed the ARPA compliance report (see agenda packet). Suesz added there has been an increase in spending of funds. Meyer noted the County is still paying bid fees and marketing grant contracts for the Visitors Promotion Committee. He also reviewed the recovery plan (see agenda packet).

Meyer reviewed the proposed County budget (see agenda packet). The budget will be filed with the Clerk's Office and will be posted on the County website.

5. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT

A. Start Time for Tuesday, October 10, 2023, Regular Board Meeting.

It was the consensus of the Board for the start time of the meeting to be 9:30a.m. to accommodate the State of the City address.

B. Appointment of Vanessa Emlich to the Community Mental Health Center Advisory Committee for a three-year term commencing August 1, 2023.

Item will be moved to a Tuesday meeting.

C. Reappointment of Richard Campbell and Gloria Eddins to the Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Commission for terms to expire August 24, 2029.

Schulte asked about their length of service. The item will be moved to Tuesday meeting.

6. DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS ATTENDED

A. NACo Annual Conference

Yoakum and Flowerday gave updates on the various workshops and committees available at the conference.

Vest exited the meeting at 9:48 a.m.

B. Ag Society

Amundson was unable to attend the meeting.

C. New Americans Task Force

Yoakum did not attend the meeting due to the NACo conference.

Vest returned to the meeting at 9:51 a.m.

D. LIBA

Schulte said there were conversations about parking requirements for commercial properties.

E. Monthly Meeting with Chair, Vice-Chair, and Planning

Derbin stated there is a Community Unit Plan (CUP) in the approval process. There was also a private road amendment discussed.

F. Serve Lunch at People's City Mission

It was noted all of the Commissioners attended the service project.

G. Other Meetings Attended Since Last Staff Meeting

Vest said he attended a Zoom call with Governor Pillen in which the Governor was fielding questions from attendees.

7. SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS

See agenda.

8. EMERGENCY ITEMS

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Vest moved and Flowerday seconded to adjourn at 9:59 a.m. Schulte, Vest, Amundson, Flowerday and Yoakum voted yes. Motion carried 5-0.



Matt Hansen
Lancaster County Clerk

