

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY CITY BUILDING, 555 S. 10<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
ROOM 112 - CHAMBERS  
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2021  
8:30 A.M.**

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

Commissioners Absent: Deb Schorr, Vice Chair

Others Present: David Derbin, Chief Administrative Officer and 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 media on September 1, 2021, and published in the Lincoln Journal Star print edition and website on August 30, 2021.*

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 AUGUST 19, 2021**

**MOTION:** Yoakum moved and Flowerday seconded approval of the minutes. Flowerday, Amundson, Yoakum, and Vest voted yes. Schorr was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

**2. VPC PROMOTION GRANTS** – Jeff Maul, Vice President—Executive Director, Lincoln Convention & Visitors Bureau; and Aaron Stitt, Chair, Visitors Promotion Committee

Stitt and Maul reviewed the grant applications (see agenda packet) noting that the Visitors Promotion Committee (VPC) voted unanimously to approve them. All of the grant applications are for marketing expenses for the projects.

Derbin noted any Board approval would move the grants forward to a future Tuesday meeting for Board action.

**MOTION:** Amundson moved and Flowerday seconded approval to forward the grants to a Tuesday meeting. Amundson, Yoakum, Flowerday and Vest voted yes. Schorr was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

**3. TENANT ASSISTANCE PROJECT** – Mindy Rush Chipman, Director, Lincoln Commission on Human Rights; and Ryan Sullivan, Professor, University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Law

Rush Chipman and Sullivan discussed the Tenant Assistance Project (TAP) program (see agenda packet). During the pandemic when other court cases were postponed, eviction cases continued and 90% of tenants were being evicted from their homes. The Nebraska Lawyer Volunteers project has been providing free representation for tenants in eviction cases. Every household with an eviction

notice is visited to inform them of their rights and responsibilities. Through the TAP program, there is a 98% success rate on keeping people in their homes with negotiated alternative plans.

Amundson said this program is creating a necessary means to solve a problem. She asked how outreach is done. Sullivan stated a group of community lawyer and law student volunteers go to households who have upcoming eviction hearings. The benefit of this outreach is that many renters did not know they were being evicted. Nebraska law does not require they be provided notice of the eviction hearings. In many cases renters qualified for rental assistance and other support services. Amundson added many landlords appreciate the program as it allows them to directly receive their rent payments.

When asked about the future of the program, Rush Chipman said the program is applying for a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Eviction Prevention grant and looking for other funding. Another goal is to make the program more wholistic with partner programs for social workers and mediators. Sullivan added the project has become a gold standard nationally for rental assistance.

Flowerday inquired as to the average number of evictions and how can a social worker be connected to renters before the eviction process. Sullivan answered there are approximately 40 evictions per week. Between 2018-2019, there were over 1,900 filings per year. Policy changes regarding eviction notices would be beneficial to allow for more advanced notice so tenants can be wrapped in services. Additionally, there could be more requirements on landlords and that certain information and resources would become standard. These items could be sent out with the summons.

Yoakum asked how many individuals outside the City of Lincoln have been helped. Rush Chipman and Sullivan said that information could be gathered.

**4. ARPA PERFORMANCE REPORT** – Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer; Mikayla Johnson, Grant Coordinator, Budget and Fiscal Office

Meyer reported a page for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds is on the County's website under the Budget and Fiscal Department.

Johnson reviewed the reports (see agenda packet). The reports will be updated and kept current on the County's website. Meyer added the grant applications for the non-profit entities will be due September 9. Also, the first payment to the Convention Visitors Bureau will be on the next report. Projects that are currently moving forward are the HVAC at the Youth Services Center and the women's' assistance program with the Indian Center.

The Board expressed their appreciation for the efforts.

Meyer stated a resolution will be brought forward in the future to name Johnson as the authorized representative for the funds for ease of continuity with Board member changes.

5. **EXECUTIVE SESSION (UNION NEGOTIATIONS AND LEGAL ADVICE)** – Doug McDaniel, Director, Nicole Gross, Compensation and Classification Manager, and Amy Sadler, Human Resource Specialist, Lincoln-Lancaster County Human Resources; Kristy C. Bauer and Jenifer Holloway, Deputies County Attorney; and Henry Wiedrich, Cline Williams Wright Johnson & Oldfather, L.L.P

**MOTION:** Amundson moved and Yoakum seconded to enter Executive Session at 9:19 a.m. for the purposes of receiving legal advice, union negotiations, and to protect the public interest.

The Chair said it has been moved and seconded that the Board enter Executive Session.

**ROLL CALL:** Yoakum, Flowerday, Amundson, and Vest voted yes. Schorr was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

The Chair restated the purpose for the Board entering Executive Session.

**MOTION:** Amundson moved and Yoakum seconded to exit Executive Session at 10:15 a.m. Yoakum, Flowerday, Amundson, and Vest voted yes. Schorr was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

## 6. **COVID-19 UPDATE AND RESPONSE**

It was the consensus of the Board to resume Lancaster County COVID briefings with the State senators throughout the special session.

Amundson exited the meeting at 10:18 a.m.

Derbin noted the vaccine incentive will be before the Personnel Policy Board today.

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

#### **A. Lancaster County Fairgrounds Joint Public Agency (JPA) Meeting and Budget Hearing – Vest / Amundson**

Vest stated the meeting was not held.

#### **B. New Americans Task Force – Yoakum**

Yoakum reported the Gateways to Growth surveys were completed and there was discussion on the arrival of Afghan refugees. She said the City expects to receive 120 refugees.

Amundson returned to the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

#### **C. Monthly Meeting with Chair, Vice-Chair and Planning Department – Vest / Schorr / Derbin**

Vest said there were discussions on the solar energy hearing, language updates regarding special permits, soil mining, and Planning Department application fee increases.

**D. MPO Technical Committee Meeting – Amundson**

Amundson indicated she did not attend the meeting.

Vest noted Interstate 80 will be expanded to three lanes further to the west.

**E. KENO Advisory Board Meeting – Vest**

Vest reported current grants were discussed. A meeting will be held in October to review the upcoming grant applications.

**F. Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development (LPED) Meeting – Vest / Schorr**

Vest indicated he did not attend the meeting.

**G. Chamber Coffee – Vest / Flowerday**

Vest stated there were presentations on non-profit entity funding, the National High School Rodeo Finals impact on the community, an airport grant for direct flights from Lincoln to Texas, and Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) funding challenges. Flowerday added the LPS budget constraints are due to the fact that that the state funding decreased even while property valuations increased.

**7. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT**

**A. YSC Director Interview Dates Week of September 20<sup>th</sup>**

1. Conflict: September 21st, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Derbin reported there will be three finalists for the Youth Services Center (YSC) Director position. He proposed the day of the interviews the candidates will have a morning tour of the facility and have interviews in the afternoon.

It was the consensus of the Board for Derbin to check with Zelle LLC to conduct interviews on Friday, September 24, 2021.

**B. One and Six Meeting Date (previously scheduled October 12th at 6:30 p.m.)**

1. October 14th at 6:30 p.m.

It was the consensus of the Board to hold the One and Six Meeting on either October 19 or 21 pending the County Engineer's availability.

**C. DRAFT: 2022 Legislative Priorities**

Derbin reviewed the draft (see agenda packet). Vest noted there was a meeting with Joe Kohout and Brennen Miller, Kissel, Kohout, ES Associates LLC, regarding county fee increases. The fees for engineering could be determined by interlocal agreements. Concerns on any other fees should come directly from the elected officials.

Flowerday felt asking the Legislature for a fee increase would not look good this year.

It was the consensus of the Board to move the legislative priorities to a Tuesday meeting.

## 8. DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS ATTENDED

- A. **Lancaster County Fairgrounds Joint Public Agency (JPA) Meeting and Budget Hearing** – Vest / Amundson
- B. **New Americans Task Force** – Yoakum
- C. **Monthly Meeting with Chair, Vice-Chair and Planning Department** – Vest / Schorr / Derbin
- D. **MPO Technical Committee Meeting** – Amundson
- E. **KENO Advisory Board Meeting** – Vest
- F. **Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development (LPED) Meeting** – Vest / Schorr
- G. **Chamber Coffee** – Vest / Flowerday

Items A-G moved forward on agenda.

## 9. SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS

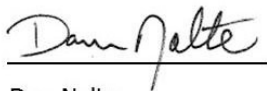
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## 10. EMERGENCY ITEMS

There were no emergency items.

## 11. ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION:** Flowerday moved and Amundson seconded to adjourn at 10:40 a.m. Yoakum, Amundson Flowerday, and Vest voted yes. Schorr was absent. Motion carried 4-0.



Dan Nolte  
Lancaster County Clerk

