

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2022 AT 8:30 A.M.  
COUNTY CITY BUILDING, 555 S. 10<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
ROOM 112 - CHAMBERS**

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

Commissioners Absent: Deb Schorr, Chair

Others Present: David Derbin, Chief Administrative Officer; Kristy Bauer, Deputy 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 the media on October 26, 2022. Notice was also published in the Lincoln Journal Star print and digital editions on October 24, 2022.*

The Vice Chair noted the location of the Open Meetings Act and opened the meeting at 8:35 a.m.

**AGENDA ITEM**

**1. APPROVAL OF STAFF MEETING MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 20, 2022**

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

**2. VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE DIRECTOR REPORT – Mark Lakamp, Veterans Service Officer**

Lakamp reviewed the director report (Exhibit 1). Since the report was compiled, three offers have been made for open Veterans Service caseworker positions, which is one additional employee than last fiscal year. The additional employee is in anticipation of updated federal rules which allow for expanded disability services for individuals with various negative long term health conditions that may have resulted from exposure to environmental toxins in foreign countries. He also discussed the continuing education and accreditation process through the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers.

Lakamp stated the transition to fully paperless records using the Vetraspec database has been very helpful. The Veterans Benefit Management System through the federal Veterans Administration will be available soon. This system will allow County Veterans staff to see the status of claims in real time and will allow for improved communication with Veterans Administration.

Concerning the number of veterans seen and claims filed, the County served over 2,600 clients with \$9,000 in County aid approved, \$175,000 in State aid approved as well as 16 approved Nebraska Veterans Home applications. Lakamp added the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs publishes fiscal year data in October. As of June 2021, there are an estimated 17,000 veterans in the County with 7,400 currently receiving Veterans Administration benefits. There are \$203,000,000 in federal

benefits for veterans in the County, including \$100,000,000 in compensation and pension, \$8,000,000 in education and vocational rehabilitation benefits, \$12,500,000 general operating expenses, \$1,000,000 insurance and indemnities and \$82,000,000 in medical care. He noted veterans receiving compensation will receive an 8.7% increase due to the increased cost-of-living index. Similarly, he noted Sarpy and Douglas Counties have 20,000 veterans receiving \$158,000,000 in compensation and pensions and 32,000 receiving \$145,000,000 in compensation and pensions, respectively.

Lakamp reviewed the department goals (Exhibit 1, pages 9-12).

When asked about the upcoming move to Victory Park, Lakamp said the office set up will be similar to the current space.

### **3. P-CARD AND TRAVEL TRAINING** – Chris Lollar, P-Card Administrator, Lincoln-Lancaster County Purchasing

Lollar presented Purchasing Card (P-Card) training (Exhibit 2). There are both department P-cards and individual employee P-cards. The P-card is to be used for most purchases unless a fee is charged and other charge accounts or personal credit cards should not be used without approval from the Board or Purchasing Agent. He noted the P-card is not intended to circumvent the purchase limit bid thresholds. Additionally, card holders are responsible for ensuring all exemption-applicable taxes are removed from the purchase prior to making a payment. Vendors may require a Form 13 or Form 13CCE for tax exempt status. These documents may be obtained from the Purchasing Department.

Concerning travel, Lollar stressed the importance of making sure the approved travel expenses including airfare, lodging, ground transportation, and parking are made on the P-card. Any rebate offers (hotel rewards, flight miles, fuel rewards, etc.) to the cardholder must be designated to the applicable County office for future purchases. If a rental vehicle is needed, Enterprise Rent-A-Car should be used as it is a contracted service.

Yoakum inquired how a tax-exempt purchase is made online. Lollar answered the best practice would be to contact the company to determine how to create a tax-exempt online profile. The City and County already have a business Amazon account that can be used.

Lollar reviewed travel reminders (Exhibit 3).

Yoakum asked about electronic airline tickets. Lollar said electronic tickets are acceptable as long as rewards accounts or seat upgrades are not added. He recommended using the airline websites as a guest as opposed to logging into the airline mobile application.

Vest inquired what is the process for handling flight upgrades that have been charged to the County. Lollar stated that is outside of his area of expertise. Flowerday thought the upgrade process does not happen at the same time that the tickets are purchased, but that it would require additional steps after the original purchase. Lollar added there have been times where an employee would reimburse the County for flight upgrades.

**4. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO NEBRASKA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, TITLE 25, CHAPTER 10, NOXIOUS WEED REGULATIONS** – Brent Meyer, Superintendent, Weed Control Authority

Meyer reported Falls City has a wastewater treatment plant that uses phragmites in its processes. There is a proposed change to the Nebraska Administrative Code exempting the water treatment plant from the Noxious Weed Control Act. He distributed proposed testimony opposing the change (Exhibit 4) which, if approved, would be submitted electronically.

**MOTION:** Flowerday moved and Amundson seconded to support Meyer’s testimony. Vest, Amundson, Flowerday and Yoakum voted yes. Schorr was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

**MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

**D. CLAIMS FOR REVIEW**

Karen Wobig, County Extension Office Unit Leader, stated, in the claim for Jaclynn Foged, the P-card was forgotten. The claim for Karen Wedding was for supplies purchased for a conference training.

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

**DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS ATTENDED**

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

Neither Amundson nor Vest attended the meeting.

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

Yoakum reported Catholic Social Services is adding case workers for refugees while Lutheran Family Services is short staffed. Also, Ukrainian humanitarian parolees are experiencing driver’s license issues.

**C. District Energy Corporation (DEC) Meeting** – Flowerday/Schorr

Flowerday stated there were discussions on DEC staff changes, capital projects and natural gas prices.

**D. LIBA Elected Officials Forum** – Schorr/Yoakum

Yoakum said there was a presentation on the new proposed bus transfer station and there was discussion on the fires in the County.

**E. Monthly Meeting with Chair, Vice-Chair and Planning Department – Schorr/Yoakum**

Yoakum reported a draft of proposed special permit changes was discussed.

**F. Steering Committee – Amundson**

Amundson was unable to attend the meeting.

**G. KENO Grant Review – Vest**

Vest stated Keno fund distributions were discussed and approved.

**H. OTHER MEETINGS ATTENDED SINCE THE LAST STAFF MEETING**

No meetings were reported.

**5. EXECUTIVE SESSION (PENDING AND POTENTIAL LITIGATION AND LEGAL ADVICE)**

**MOTION:** Vest moved and Amundson seconded to enter Executive Session at 10:18 a.m. for the purposes of pending and potential litigation, receiving legal advice, and to protect the public interest.

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

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

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

**MOTION:** Amundson moved and Flowerday seconded to exit Executive Session at 10:23 a.m. Flowerday, Amundson and Yoakum voted yes. Schorr and Vest were absent. Motion carried 3-0.

Vest returned to the meeting at 10:24 a.m.

**6. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

**A. COVID-19 UPDATE AND RESPONSE**

No updates were given.

**B. GRASS FIRES UPDATE AND RESPONSE**

Jim Davidsaver, Emergency Management Director, reviewed the list of emergency responders (see agenda packet). The area of the fire was between 9,000-10,000 acres. The reason for the disaster declaration request was due to the need for aerial support. The damage threshold the County must meet for federal aid is \$1,300,000 to public property and critical infrastructure. Damage to private property cannot be used towards the threshold. He added the American Red Cross and Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) made resources available for the community.

The Board expressed their thanks and appreciation to Davidsaver for his leadership as well as the leadership of various other departments and agencies.

### **C. PRIOR CLAIMS FOR REVIEW**

**NOTE:** The following claims were discussed previously at the September 15, 2022 staff meeting.

Concerning the reimbursement claim from Kim Etherton, Community Corrections Director, it was noted that seat selection or upgrade costs are not specifically addressed in the County's travel policy (R-21-0053), although the policy does state that "travelers shall exercise reasonable judgement to acquire all travel necessities at the lowest reasonable cost to the County."

Etherton indicated she would reimburse the County \$437.96 for the seat upgrades. Vest asked the Board if this is the resolution they expected. Amundson and Flowerday said yes. Etherton noted the reimbursed funds will need to be applied to a grant fund.

Regarding out of contract rental car charges with Hertz from Steven Wesley, Youth Services Director, Vest said there are multiple charges including charges for additional insurance, additional operators, fuel and service as well as a late return fee. He questioned the additional operator charge. Wesley answered there were six individuals on the trip and he felt an additional operator was necessary. Additionally, the reason the vehicle was returned late was because the flight was cancelled and rescheduled for the next day. Melissa Hood, Youth Services Administrator, added the vehicle was refueled at the airport the morning of the rescheduled flight as there was not time to find a gas station elsewhere.

Amundson asked Hood and Wesley if they have taken the P-card training. Hood answered yes.

Vest questioned again about the additional driver. Hood responded the Enterprise contract allows for an additional driver at no extra charge.

Vest stated these travel issues were brought up at an electoral candidate meeting as evidence of waste, fraud and abuse by Lancaster County.

Flowerday inquired how the County retrieves the data from the iCloud storage if there were a public record request due to the Freedom of Information Act. Wesley had been requested to discuss data storage needs with Information Services (IS) after the September 15, 2022 staff meeting. Wesley replied the iCloud storage was cancelled the day the claim was originally discussed, but he did not know how the data could be accessed. Hood said access to the data will be discussed with IS next week.

**MOTION:** Amundson moved to forward the claim to a Tuesday meeting.

Derbin stated there is nothing to move to a Tuesday as this item was for P-card charges that have already been paid. Amundson withdrew the motion.

Derbin noted there is also a reimbursement claim for an airline ticket for Wesley for travel on September 26, 2022 to Louisville, Kentucky (see agenda packet).

**MOTION:** Flowerday moved and Amundson seconded to set Steve Wesley's claim for reimbursement for a flight from Atlanta to Louisville on September 26, 2022 to the next regularly scheduled Lancaster County Board Tuesday meeting for action by the County Board of Commissioners.

Vest asked for clarification if the motion is asking for approval of the reimbursement. Flowerday said it is to move the reimbursement to a Tuesday meeting which would presumably be approved with the other claims.

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

Amundson pointed out an additional motion was not made. The Chief Administrative Officer informed the Board that the motion should be made now.

**MOTION:** Amundson moved and Flowerday seconded to require the Youth Services Center, its director and all employees, to seek approval from the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners prior to traveling or making any travel plans outside Lancaster County, including booking, scheduling, or otherwise, for any training or employment purposes through the end of fiscal year 2022-2023. Amundson, Vest, Flowerday and Yoakum voted yes. Schorr was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

Derbin said he would let Wesley know about the last motion. Flowerday suggested two Commissioners be involved in that discussion.

#### **D. CLAIMS FOR REVIEW**

Item moved forward on agenda.

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

- A. Lancaster County Ag Society – Amundson/Vest**
- B. New Americans Task Force Meeting – Yoakum**
- C. District Energy Corporation (DEC) Meeting – Flowerday/Schorr**
- D. LIBA Elected Officials Forum – Schorr/Yoakum**
- E. Monthly Meeting with Chair, Vice-Chair and Planning Department – Schorr/Yoakum**
- F. Steering Committee – Amundson**
- G. Keno Grant Review – Vest**
- H. Other meetings attended since the last staff meeting**

Items moved forward on agenda.

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

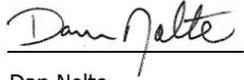
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#### **7. EMERGENCY ITEMS**

There were no emergency items.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Flowerday moved and Amundson seconded to adjourn at 10:43 a.m. Vest, Flowerday, Amundson and Yoakum voted yes. Schorr was absent. Motion carried 4-0.



Dan Nolte  
Lancaster County Clerk

