

COMMISSIONERS APPROVE ROAD PLAN

The Sheridan County Board of Commissioners met via ZOOM on February 23, 2021 as advertised on the County website sheridancountyne.gov. Since the meeting was held electronically no quorum of the public body was physically present and there was no public, in-person attendance. Members of the public and media were informed of the meeting and invited to attend via ZOOM.

Present were Chairman Loren Paul, Commissioners Bruce Messersmith and James Krotz, Deputy County Clerk Geri Ann Landreth, Treasurer Renee Thies and Road Superintendent Richard Cross.

There was no business to come before the Board of Equalization (BOE).

Chairman Paul reported that a recent listener poll on a local radio station indicated that, among the listeners to that program, there was significant support for a county resolution of support for the second amendment of the US Constitution and the Nebraska Constitution. Paul reminded those present that the Commissioners have no legislative authority and that such resolutions are primarily expressions of support. Krotz pointed out that the Commissioners and all county officials have sworn an oath to support the Constitution. Dewey Ashmore appeared to express his support of such a resolution. Messersmith moved and Krotz seconded a motion that calls for the Commissioners to proceed with the development of a resolution of support of the 2nd Amendment to the US Constitution and the Nebraska Constitution, for consideration at some future date.

Clerk of the District Court Carol Stouffer presented a Sub-Award-Agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services for the reimbursement of costs incurred by the County in child support cases. After review, the BOC approved the Agreement and authorized the Chairman to sign.

The BOC voted to approve a letter of engagement submitted by Caleb Johnson for budget preparation service for the next two fiscal years at a cost of \$3,500 per year.

Sheriff Jeff Brewer and Chief Deputy Everette Langford discussed a citizen request for re-imbursement of towing cost. The Commissioners agreed that, unless a citizen submits a formal claim to the County, the BOC has no basis for involvement.

The BOC approved a resolution of recognition for Larry Dix the long-time, recently retired Director of the Nebraska Association of County Officials.

The BOC convened a duly advertised Public Hearing on the proposed One- and Six-Year Road Plan continuing on ZOOM. Five citizens attended the in-person hearing offered at the Road Department office.

Road Superintendent Richard Cross presented the Plan, which anticipates costs of \$705,000 and includes:

- Armor-coating 6 miles of 440 Road immediately west of Hwy 87 at an estimated cost of \$200,000.
- Build-up and gravel of 1 mile of 510 Road between 470 Lane & 460th Lane at an estimated cost of 20,000.
- Build-up and gravel 2 miles of Beaver Creek Road from Sherbarth bridge to Vahrencamp's at an estimated cost of 120,000.
- Build-up and gravel 2 miles of 600 Road west of Hwy 87, and 0.75 miles of 600 Road between 390th Lane & 380th Lane at an estimated cost of 85,000.
- Build -up and gravel 2 miles of 690 Road east of Hwy 27 at an estimated cost of 40,000.
- Replace the Gordon airport bridge with two six-foot tubes at an estimated cost of 75,000.

Weather permitting, all these projects are to be completed in 2021. After hearing comments by the public, the BOC approved the Plan.

Jonnie Kusek COO of Senior Services Incorporated (SSI) & Panhandle Trails, and Karen Eisenbarth, CEO of Northwest Community Action Partnership (NCAP), appeared to present the proposed agreement and budget for SSI to assume the management of Sheridan County Transportation (Handi-Bus). Eisenbarth originally suggested this transfer of management because transportation is such a small program area for NCAP and the agency has been nearly overwhelmed with new program responsibilities due to the pandemic. Transportation is the primary concern of Panhandle Trails.

The presentation was favorably received and the Commissioners will vote on approval of the grant application to the Nebraska Department of Transportation and the commitment of the County to matching funds, on March 9. If the grant is approved, SSI will take over the project in June. Service to Sheridan County residents will be unchanged and perhaps expanded. More information on SSI and Panhandle Trails can be found at panhandletrails.com

The next meeting of the BOE and BOC is scheduled for Tuesday, March 9 at 9:00 on the ZOOM platform and will be open to the public. Watch the County website Public Notices site for meeting ID and passcode information. Those lacking a reliable internet connection can join the meeting by telephone using the number posted there.

The minutes of this and all meetings of the Board of Commissioners will be available to the public at the office of the Sheridan County Clerk and now are available online at sheridancounty.ne.gov. All meetings of the Board of Commissioners are held in compliance with Nebraska Open Meetings Act and the public is always welcome.

