

Commissioners Appoint New Public Defender

Proceedings of the Commissioners

The Sheridan County Board of Commissioners met via ZOOM at 9:00 a.m. on March 9, 2021 as advertised on the County website sheridancountyne.gov

Present were Chairman Loren Paul, Commissioners Bruce Messersmith and James Krotz, County Clerk Sindy Coburn, Assessor Tina Skinner, Treasurer Renee Thies, Chief Deputy Everette Langford and Road Superintendent Richard Cross.

Meeting as the Board of Equalization (BOE) the Commissioners convened but had no business to consider.

The Board of Commissioners (BOC) debated a resolution in support of the 2nd Amendment drafted by the Board. Chief Deputy Langford spoke on behalf of Sheriff Brewer. There was no other public testimony. The BOC voted unanimously to approve the following Resolution.

Whereas, the 2nd amendment to the Constitution of the United States provides that “A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.” and

WHEREAS Article 1 section 1-1 of the Nebraska Constitution also provides the right To keep and bear arms, specifically “for security or defense of self, family, home, and others and for lawful common defense, hunting, recreational use, and all other lawful purposes” and also provides that such right shall not be infringed; and

WHEREAS THE United States Supreme Court affirmed an individual’s right to possess firearms, unconnected with service in a militia, for traditional lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home and,

WHEREAS the Sheridan County Commissioners took an oath to support and defend the United States and Nebraska Constitutions; and

WHEREAS, It is the desire of the Sheridan County Commissioners to declare their support of the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article 1 Section 1-1 of the Nebraska Constitution:

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sheridan County Commissioners hereby declare that we support the rights and liberties of all the Sheridan County citizens guaranteed by the United States and Nebraska Constitutions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Board affirms its support for the duly elected Sheriff of Sheridan County Nebraska, and his continuing efforts to uphold the United States and Nebraska Constitutions.

Road Superintendent Richard Cross reported that work on 440th Road crack-sealing should be completed by this Friday. Armor coating and rock chips will be applied in June. Road crews are working hard to repair frost-damaged spots before the next round of snow expected in the next week.

The BOC approved a bid from Sherburn Trucking of 14.4 cents/mile for the contract hauling of gravel, in 29-ton loads, from Maverick SD to Sheridan County. Sherburn hauled material for 10 miles of county road last year.

Faith Mills, Executive Director of Panhandle Partnership and Keith Mills, Athletic Director & Assistant Principal of GRHS appeared to request BOC approval of a Memorandum of Understanding expressing support for the proposed Comprehensive Services Plan to be supported by a criminal justice grant from the State. The grant has, in past years, supported the School Resource Officer program but funding from that source will not be available next year. The BOC approved the Memorandum.

Marie Nelson, Extension Assistant for 4-H made her periodic report on her recent activities and plans for the summer months. She reported that 15 new families have signed up for the 4-H program so far this year.

Chief Deputy Everette Langford presented the Sheriff Department update.

The BOC approved and authorized the Chairman to sign Resolution 2021- 05 committing \$10,415 as the Local Funding (County) match for the Sheridan County Transportation Project (SCTP Handi-Bus) for fiscal year 2022-2023. The Commitment of local match funds will enable Senior Service Inc. (SSI) to proceed with their application to the NDOT for a grant underwriting the largest part of the project cost.

The BOC reviewed and expressed approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between SSI and Northwest Community Action Partnership (NCAP) that will authorize the use of certain supplemental Federal Covid Relief funds received by Northwest Community Action to enable SSI to provide public transportation services to residents of Sheridan County living along the HWY 2 corridor. The MOU will continue until management of the program transitions to SSI in July 2021.

Treasurer Renee Thies requested funds for the replacement of two old computers in her office at a cost 2,800. The BOC approved the payment out of Miscellaneous General Computer Fund and Thies agreed to pay mileage and labor costs for installation out of her office budget.

Deputy County Attorney Jamian Simmons appeared before the BOC representing the Policy Board which had been appointed earlier this year to screen applicants for the position of Public Defender. Simmons recommended and the Commissioner approved the appointment of Andrew Pope as Sheridan County Public Defender for the remainder of the current elected term. Mr. Pope succeeds longtime Public Defender Michael Varn who retired at the end of 2020.

Weed Superintendent Seth Tausen appeared to discuss continuing education requirements. The Covid pandemic made it impossible to meet the 20-hour requirement last year but Tausen reported that there are numerous opportunities available in the coming months. The recent review of the Weed Department by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture yielded a score of 1,000 out of 1,000 possible points.

Jeremy Harris of Manna Systems joined the meeting to discuss IT concerns, there was little to discuss.

Building Superintendent Jeff Davis reported that the Courthouse Cleaning Service, Helping Hand on Demand, will end their contract with the County at the end of the month. Davis was directed to proceed with hiring a new provider.

The Commissioners agreed to continue meeting on the ZOOM platform through the end of March as permitted by the Governor's Executive Order.

The next meeting of the BOE and BOC is scheduled for Tuesday, March 16, 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.

Submitted by James Krotz