

Proceedings of the Commissioners

The Sheridan County Board of Commissioners (BOC) met on Tuesday, June 24, 2022, at the County Courthouse. Notice of the meeting was published on the county website sheridancountyne.gov. The meeting was open to the public and a ZOOM connection was also available. Present were Chairman Bruce Messersmith, Commissioners Dan Kling and James Krotz, Deputy County Clerk Paige Rager, and Treasurer Renee Thies.

The Commissioners, convened as the Board of Equalization (BOE) and Assessor Tina Skinner presented a list of 30 over/undervalued parcels for correction. The BOE approved the list as presented.

Assessor Skinner advised the Board regarding the post-card notification that must be mailed for every parcel as required by the LB-644. This new, unfunded mandate, will cost the County about \$5,000.

The Board of Commissioners (BOC) audited and approved claims for payment.

The Board approved the appointment of Trevor Ginkens of Hay Springs to the County Extension Board.

Bernard Strong appeared to request gravel for a ¼-mile section of 390th Lane north of Hwy 20.

Road Superintendent Richard Cross reported that the Department had declined delivery of two tankers of contracted fuel because there was so little need for snow removal this past winter. The BOC asked Cross to explore the cost of an additional fuel storage tank.

Cross advised the Board that he had carefully reviewed the Department budget and found that there were sufficient remaining funds for the purchase of a new motor-grader. The BOC voted to approve the purchase of a John Deere 772G, six-wheel drive grader under terms of the State Contract Bid. The machine will cost \$353,203 with delivery expected in December.

Cross and the Board discussed the possibility of working with other counties in a collaborative effort led by the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) to secure grants funded by the federal 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill. The BOC agreed to submit a list of infrastructure needs to the working group and to further consider participation in the grant application project.

Cross reported on a dispute between neighbors regarding access to an open section line over which one party has moved cattle for a number of years. The BOC agreed that the declaration of a prescriptive easement is not within the authority of the Board. It is a matter to be brought before the District Court.

Building Superintendent Jeff Davis reported that the new furnace has been installed in the District Courtroom and that the installation of the new back-up generator for the Public Safety Building was nearly complete.

Deputy County Attorney Jamian Simmons met with the BOC to discuss a formal process for agencies and organizations to apply for ARPA funds to be distributed by the County. Simmons will draft a resolution that sets forth the concerns raised in the discussion.

Jerry Feist of the USDA Wildlife Program and Tim Brewer, Sheridan County animal control specialist, presented the proposed contract for 2022-23. The cost to the county will increase from \$29985 to \$32985. The Board approved the contract and urged the USDA to find a cost-sharing process that would fund Brewer's position with full benefits.

Caleb Johnson, the County Budget consultant, briefed the Board on what seems likely to happen with regard to LB-644. It appears that the rising cost of fuel and health insurance will require a budget increase that will, in most counties, exceed the threshold established by statute. If that happens the county will be required to hold an additional public hearing on the tax increase. Johnson left the Board to consider who would chair such a hearing and who would be the telephone contact person listed on the notification post-card.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Tuesday, June 121.

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