

Proceedings of the Commissioners

The Sheridan County, Nebraska Board of Commissioners (BOC) met on Tuesday, July 9, 2024, at the County Courthouse in Rushville. Notice of the meeting was published on the county website sheridancounty.ne.gov. The meeting was open to the public and a ZOOM connection was also available. Present were Chairman James Krotz, Commissioners Dan Kling and Bruce Messersmith, County Clerk Sindy Coburn, and Treasurer Renee Thies.

Acting as the Board of Equalization (BOE) the Commissioners received from Assessor Tina Skinner a list of four “overvalued” parcels for which she proposed corrections. BOC approved the corrections.

Treasurer Renee Thies presented a resolution to approve the transfer of interest earned on AARP funds from the AARP Fund to the General Fund. The interest earned was \$59,658.

Grants made by the BOC from the now depleted Fund fall into the following categories.

Fire and Rescue: \$369,415 for new self-contained breathing apparatus for the Gordon, Rushville and Hay Springs Fire departments, and a new compressor and a “jaws of life” device for the Rushville Department.

Courthouse and Jail: \$356,311 for HVAC upgrades, security improvements in the Assessor’s and Treasurer’s Offices, and security upgrades in the Jail.

Roads: \$175,444 for the purchase of a snowblower.

Health Care: \$114,233: Gordon Memorial Hospital.

Law Enforcement: \$5,221 for the purchase of Tasers for the Sheriff’s Department.

The \$59,658 of interest earned on the original ARPA Fund will go into the General Fund and will help reduce the tax burden on local taxpayers in the days ahead.

The BOC approved the resolution authorizing the transfer of the interest to the General Fund.

Interim Road Superintendent Rod Norton reported that the anticipated cost of armor coating had been recalculated and would be \$83,088, some \$12,700 less than originally reported on 6-25.

Norton reported that a number of rural residents had called to complain about washboard problems on gravel roads. The Board would like to remind motorists that grading the roads when conditions are so dry will only serve to damage the integrity of the road surface and lead to greater problems. As soon as we get some rain the motor- graders will be out smoothing the roads. Till then we ask that you slow down and pray for rain.

Brant Pieper of the Hay Springs Rural Fire District appeared seeking clarification of the “Budget Authority” granted to the Department. The Commissioners weren’t much help because the rules for the County budget are different than those for Fire Districts. The Board suggested a call to the office of the State Auditor. Pieper stepped into the lobby, made the call, and returned to report Fire Department budget authority is limited to 3.5% of restricted funds or 10.5 cents in levy limit, whichever is less.

Chief Deputy Everett Langford appeared to request approval of a new contract for E-911 services with a new provider. The BOC approved the new contract with LUMEN.

Langford also requested the approval of a contract with TURNKEY corp. for commissary services for the Jail. There is no cost to the County for the services and jail staff will no longer have to shop for commissary items such as food and toiletries. The BOC approved the contract.

Trisha Loosvelt of the County Tourism Committee appeared seeking approval for the use of Tourism funds for new signage for Mari Sandoz sites. The Board expressed their support for the project which may cost in excess of \$2000.

Weed Superintendent Seth Tausen and Melissa Grover reported on forced control initiatives underway.

The Board reviewed and approved a request from Fuel Grill in Gordon to the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission for a Special Designated License (SDL) to serve beer at the Sheridan County Fair.

The Board approved the re-appointment of Gary Binger to serve as Chairman of the County Veteran’s Service Committee.

The Board approved a resolution authorizing SWANN (Solid Waste Agency of Northwest Nebraska) to issue bonds for up to \$2,600,000 for the purchase of a new baler and building expansion.

After lunch the Commissioners, acting as the BOE, received and reviewed property valuation protests from 14 owners. Protest hearings will continue on July 16 and 23.

The next meeting of the BOE/BOC is scheduled for Tuesday, July 16 at 9:00 a.m. Valuation Protest Hearings will begin at 1:00 PM.

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