

June 18, 2024

The Otoe County Board of Commissioners convened in regular session at 8:30 a.m. on June 18, 2024, to audit and sign regular claims and payroll claims and to take care of such other matters as are on the agenda for this meeting. Advance notice of this meeting was published in the Nebraska City News Press and posted in at least three public places, including the County's website. This meeting was open to the public, and the agenda was kept current, and is on file for public inspection at the office of the Otoe County Clerk during regular business hours.

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Jerad Sornson. Answering present at roll call were Commissioner Sornson, Commissioner Freshman, Commissioner Parsons, Commissioner Crownover, and Commissioner Cole.

Commissioner Sornson informed the public in attendance that a current copy of the Open Meetings Act was located near the door of the courtroom.

Freshman made a motion, seconded by Parsons, to accept the agenda as posted. Voting aye were Sornson, Freshman, Parsons, Crownover, and Cole. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Cole made a motion, seconded by Crownover, to accept the minutes from the previous meeting and not have them read as each member was furnished with a copy of same. Voting aye were Commissioners Freshman, Parsons, Crownover, Cole, and Sornson. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Having reviewed the regular claims in advance of this meeting, Parsons made a motion, seconded by Freshman, to approve payment of the regular claims. Voting aye were Parsons, Crownover, Cole, Sornson, and Freshman. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Chad Miller, Otoe County Veteran Service Officer, presented the June 2024 Veteran of the Month honor to Mary Gimenez. Chad Miller spoke of Ms. Gimenez's military service and honors.

Melanie Stormer, District 1 Chief Probation Officer, was not able to attend the meeting as scheduled. The agenda item was tabled.

Nichol Scholting, representing Otoe Kids Club, presented information regarding a KENO application grant submitted for playground equipment. She explained the purpose of the club, described the volunteer work that the leaders and youth have provided to the Village of Otoe, and future ideas and plans for the organization. The park in the village currently has playground equipment geared toward smaller children and they would like to raise funds to install equipment that older children to enjoy also. Commissioner Cole stated that he and his wife recognized the work and improvements the group had made to the village and inquired how they could help. He stated that they had contributed for the playground equipment. The requested amount of the KENO grant was \$20,000.00 and the application was submitted with a letter stating that they had the required matching funding. A quote of the playground equipment was provided at the meeting. Parsons made a motion, seconded by Crownover, to approve a KENO grant application submitted by Otoe Kids Club in the amount of \$20,000.00. Voting aye were Crownover, Sornson, Freshman, and Parsons. Nay – none. Cole abstained. Motion carried. Ms. Scholting had also submitted a \$10,000.00 grant application. She explained that the club continues to do small volunteerism projects and it becomes difficult as a new organization to raise funds as a new group without continually asking the community to contribute funding. The kids have planted flowers, provided treat bags to care centers, donated food to the food pantry, and a variety of other activities for their community. The board commended the children and leaders for their efforts and encouraged them to continue but explained that the funds could not be distributed for unspecified expenses. There was discussion that if a specific project was presented with allowable expenses, the organization could reapply. Cole made a motion, seconded by Parsons, to deny a KENO grant application submitted by Otoe Kids Club in the amount of \$10,000.00. Voting aye were Cole, Sornson, Freshman, Parsons, and Crownover. Nay – none. Motion carried.

It was reported that two budgets would require a fund transfer to meet the financial obligations of FY 23-24. Cole made a motion, seconded by Crownover, to adopt resolution #6-18-24-16 authorizing the transfer of funds to

meet budgetary requirements for the County Board and Juvenile Diversion Services budgets. The resolution authorizes the transfer of \$416.41 for County Board and \$803.34 for Juvenile Diversion Services. All budgets are within the general fund and funds will be transferred from the General miscellaneous budget. Voting aye were Sornson, Freshman, Parsons, Crownover, and Cole. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Cole made a motion, seconded by Parsons, to award the bid to Jerad Sornson for a 2012 Chevrolet Malibu for \$3,825.00. The vehicle was being sold as surplus. The public bid opening occurred on June 17, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. The bids were as follows:

Bidder	Amount
Aric Bennett	\$3,450
Jerad Sornson	\$3,825

Voting aye were Freshman, Parsons, Crownover, and Cole. Nay – none. Sornson abstained. Motion carried.

Freshman made a motion, seconded by Cole, to adopt and authorize the Chairman to sign Resolution #6-18-24-17 approving the payment to ACE/Eaton Metal for the purchase of culvert materials from the FY23-24 budget. Chairman Sornson explained that the road department had gone out for bids for inventory materials. The material would not be delivered prior to the fiscal year end, so a resolution is required to authorize the use of funding. The amount authorized by the resolution is \$117,918.00. Voting aye were Freshman, Parsons, Crownover, Cole, and Sornson. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Jeff Walters, Otoe County Weed Superintendent, was present to discuss a newly created weed association. He explained that counties in Southeast Nebraska had previously belonged to Five Rivers for weed management. That organization no longer exists, and those counties were without a weed association. Mr. Walters worked with the County Attorney, Commissioner Cole, Nemaha NRD, and others to create the Southeast Weed Management Association. The parties involved include Johnson County, Nemaha County, Otoe County, Pawnee County, and Nemaha Natural Resource District. The creation of the association can aid in securing grant funding for those involved. There are currently four counties that were with Five Rivers that are still without a weed association and Mr. Walters stated that they will continue to work towards including more counties if needed. Nemaha NRD will be the fiscal agent of the Southeast Weed Management Association. Freshman made a motion, seconded by Parsons, to approve an interlocal agreement to create the Southeast Weed Management Association. Voting aye were Parsons, Crownover, Cole, Sornson, and Freshman. Nay – none. Motion carried.

There was discussion of the highway superintendent position. The position has not been filled to date. Chairman Sornson stated that the position will be re-advertised. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. He plans to add a wage amount to the advertisement based on experience. An email will be sent to employees to notify them for those wishing to apply in-house as well. There was discussion of the hours that Commissioner Sornson has provided to the department in the absence of the highway superintendent and whether compensation should be provided. The discussion ended that no additional compensation would be provided. Further discussion was that each commissioner should be fielding the phone calls and issues that are in relation with their district. Road Department Supervisors Chad Watkins and Ryan Neemann were present and spoke of their experiences since the position has been open. They both spoke about what would be helpful to them in the interim of hiring a superintendent.

Chad Watkins and Ryan Neemann, Road Department Supervisors, both gave Supervisor reports for their crews. They reported on projects that had been completed or that were currently being worked on.

At 9:35 a.m. the meeting was adjourned.

I, Jennifer Bassinger, County Clerk of Otoe County, do hereby certify that the above minutes were taken by me, and are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and I therefore set my hand and affix the county seal this 18th day of June 2024.

Jennifer Bassinger
Otoe County Clerk