

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING  
ROOM 113  
THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2000  
8:15 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Kathy Campbell, Chair  
Larry Hudkins  
Bob Workman  
Bernie Heier

Commissioners Absent: Linda Steinman

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer  
Dave Johnson, Deputy County Attorney  
Bruce Medcalf, County Clerk  
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

**AGENDA ITEM**

**1 APPROVAL OF STAFF MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2000**

**MOTION:** Heier moved and Workman seconded approval of the Staff Meeting minutes dated March 7, 2000. Heier, Workman and Campbell voted aye. Hudkins was absent from voting. Motion carried.

**2 ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

- a. Air Pollution Advisory Board Meeting Report
- b. Report on Nebraska Planners & Zoning Association (NPZA) Seminar Held in Kearney, Nebraska
- c. Replat of Lancaster County Juvenile Detention Center Property
- d. Vacation Request from Larry Van Hunnik, Lancaster Manor Administrator, for March 30-31, 2000
- e. Reappointment of Dan Heckman to Board of Zoning Appeals

**MOTION:** Heier moved and Workman seconded approval of the additions to the agenda. Workman, Heier and Campbell voted aye. Hudkins was absent from voting. Motion carried.

### **3 COMMISSIONERS MEETING REPORTS**

#### **a. Public Building Commission - Campbell, Hudkins**

Hudkins reported that the Downtown Lincoln Association (DLA) and the Mayor's Action Advisory Committee would like to proceed with a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Old Federal Building. He said Don Killeen, County Property Manager, and Steve Flanders, Public Building Commission Project Manager, have been assigned to assess office space in that building, as well as Trabert Hall and the Old Police Building.

Hudkins also reported that the DLA has requested input into the decision as to whether to relocate the Adams Street Center in the old Police Station Building.

Campbell reported that non-commissioned police officers have requested authorization to enter the Justice and Law Enforcement Center without having to proceed through security devices. She said a committee was formed to look at whether there should be exceptions to that policy.

#### **b. Board of Health - Hudkins**

Hudkins reported that a proposal to raise the fees for septic permits, licensing of septic tank installers, and the by-laws for the Board of Health were advanced.

### **4 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - Gordon Kissel, Legislative Consultant**

Gordon Kissel, Legislative Consultant, gave a legislative update noting the following:

- Governor Johanns supports the transfer of the Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility from the control of the State Department of Correctional Services to the Office of Juvenile Services (OJS) in LB 652, but reserves judgement on the issue of the State assuming the costs of out-of-home placements for juveniles following disposition. He said there appears to be sufficient support for an override, should the Governor veto the bill. Kissel added that the elimination of the Wilderness Challenge Program may impact the Governor's decision of whether to veto the legislation.

Hudkins arrived at the meeting.

- The Legislature advanced LB 968, which changes provisions relating to taxation of public property. Several Senators oppose the bill's voluntary provision that would allow the County Treasurer to set up a program of partial payments for property tax and plan to offer amendments on Select File.

- Bailiffs were dropped from LB 414, which provides for transition of the office of Clerk of the District Court to a State reimbursed position, due to cost factors.
- The Revenue Committee staff is working on changes in the county distribution formula in LB 1138, which changes provisions relating to State aid to political subdivisions. Changes being discussed include using actual, rather than taxable value and utilizing 1998 income data to determine poverty levels. These changes would reduce the loss to Lancaster County by \$600,000.

Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer, noted that the distribution formula is still flawed and suggested that the human service factor be lessened and the population factor be given additional weight.

Eagan noted concern that an interpretation that LB 652 is a transfer of a County responsibility to the State could result the cost being deducted from the County's restricted funds.

Kissel said this issue will be addressed in debate.

- The Revenue Committee killed LB 985 and LB 1074, inheritance tax bills.
- A series of amendments are proposed for LB 628, which requires provision of copies of public records at actual costs.

Brief discussion took place on the impact of the bill on the sale of Geographic Information System (GIS) maps. The Board indicated it would be preferable to have these records specifically exempted, rather than declaring them proprietary information.

Kissel also presented a list of legislative offices up for Election in 2000 (Exhibit B).

## **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

### **a. Air Pollution Advisory Board Meeting Report**

Workman reported that a draft of the Asbestos Demolition Renovation Civil Penalty Calculation Policy was approved. He noted there was no public attendance at a public hearing held on the proposed policy. Workman said he again urged that the matter be brought forward to the County Board, but was told that this was a change in policy, not rules, and County Board input is not required.

Dave Johnson, Deputy County Attorney, said the Board of Health maintains that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) gave them authority to establish their own regulations for the enforcement of asbestos. He added that a County Attorney's opinion on scope of authority of the Air Pollution Advisory Board is forthcoming.

Workman noted that discussion also took place on burn permits for the City and Three-Mile zoning jurisdiction. He said he requested that any changes that would impact the County be brought forward to the Board.

b. Report on Nebraska Planners & Zoning Association (NPZA) Seminar

Workman reported on a Nebraska Planners & Zoning Association (NPZA) Seminar he recently attended in Kearney, noting a presentation was given on Smart Growth.

**5 REVIEW OF LANCASTER COUNTY CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE REPORT** - Dale Gruntorad and Wayne Giebelhaus, Chair and Vice Chair of the Lancaster County Consolidation Committee

Dale Gruntorad, Chair of the Lancaster County Consolidation Committee, said the committee was formed in response to 1996 Nebraska Law LB 1085, which provided that a county may consolidate the office of the Clerk of the District Court, County Assessor, County Clerk, County Engineer, or Register of Deeds. The committee met with each of these elected officials and toured their offices to observe operations. Summaries of duties and responsibilities of these offices were also reviewed. The *Final Report and Recommendations of the Lancaster County Consolidation Committee* (Exhibit C) that was submitted to the County Board contained the following recommendations:

- 1: Merge County Assessor and Register of Deeds
- 2: Merge County Engineer and City Public Works Department
- 3: District Court Clerk functions should be assumed by the State
- 4: All county records management functions should be identified and consolidated into one centralized location and authority

Wayne Giebelhaus, Vice Chair of the Lancaster County Consolidation Committee, read the following statement from the committee into the record: "Consideration for consolidation of Lancaster County elected officials will not be based on turf protection, personalities or politics, but on the ability to create efficiency, non-duplication of services and tax savings to the citizens of Lancaster County."

Giebelhaus said he looked at the cost savings that would result from a merger of offices, which he said include the elimination of an elected official and possible reduction in personnel, elimination of benefits for those individuals, a reduction in office equipment and space, and the cost of election for that office. He noted, however, that sometimes "two heads are better than one" and mergers require the public to adjust to a different way of doing business.

Gruntorad said duplication of data entry was also considered, although there have been technological advances since the report was issued. He said common storage of data and compatibility of databases and equipment was also deemed crucial.

### **1: Merge County Assessor and Register of Deeds**

Gruntorad said it would be beneficial to have one source of information. He noted great strides have been made in improvements to these offices in the last few years, although further improvements could be made.

Gruntorad cautioned that it may be a decision of the County Board or Legislature to transfer assessment duties to the State at some point in the future.

Workman asked whether the committee assessed how a change in these services would affect the public.

Gruntorad said no, but noted that a lot of information relating to these departments is now available to the public on the Internet.

Hudkins agreed with Gruntorad's earlier comments that common data entry is crucial, noting this would benefit the Building and Safety Department as well.

In response to a question from Hudkins, Gruntorad said the Register of Deeds' time-race filing requirements and the need for accuracy in terms of assessment and the issuance of permits were discussed by the committee.

### **2: Merge County Engineer and City Public Works Department**

Gibelhaus said this recommendation was based on the duplication of service and equipment and situations where a road is built to County standards, then annexed by the City and must be brought up to City standards. He noted the concern that county roads will receive a lower priority if consolidation occurs was also discussed.

Gruntorad said it is important that the two departments work together in terms of long-range planning of infrastructure.

Hudkins voiced concern that pressure may be exerted on Public Work to concentrate efforts on urban areas in emergency situations, such as the winter storm of 1997, if the two departments are merged.

Campbell noted that the Public Works/Utilities Director is appointed by the Mayor and said she is concerned that the County Board would lose the ability to effectuate what will happen to the road infrastructure in the County, if these departments were merged.

Giebelhaus suggested it may be more appropriate to consolidate these functions under the County Engineer.

### **3: District Court Clerk functions should be assumed by the State**

Campbell noted that the Board supports LB 414, which provides for transition of the office of Clerk of the District Court to a State reimbursed position.

### **4: All county records management functions should be identified and consolidated into one centralized location and authority**

Gruntorad said the "K" Street facility was being remodeled for centralized records management at the time the committee was engaged in discussion.

Eagan noted that Records & Information Management serves both the City and County and is currently expanding services to include imaging projects. He added that the County Board has enacted a policy requiring the involvement of Brian Pillard, Records & Information Manager, in the development of any County records projects.

Gruntorad suggested that some documents could be retained in a paperless format.

Eagan said an amendment of Nebraska Revised Statutes dealing with records retention would probably be necessary.

Campbell said a merger of the City Clerk and County Clerk may be appropriate in terms of records management.

Hudkins asked whether the committee had considered merger of the County Clerk with the Register of Deeds, noting this is a common practice in many of the smaller counties.

Eagan said there is not an overlap of statutory duties for these two offices. He added there is not a sufficient workload to support several offices in many of the smaller counties and so functions may be merged with the County Clerk's office, which serves as the support staff for the County Board.

Gruntorad said there is a commonality of database for the County Assessor and Register of Deeds.

In response to a question from Campbell, Gruntorad suggested that the County Board look to its auditor for an assessment of efficiencies that would result from the merger of offices.

Giebelhaus said many feel that City and County government should be merged and these mergers may be a first step in that process.

Board consensus to schedule additional discussion of the report on a future Staff Meeting Agenda and to include a report on the progress of meetings between the County Assessor and Register of Deeds.

**NOTE:** Also in attendance were Dan Nolte, Register of Deeds; Maura Tolzin, Deputy Register of Deeds; Dave Fall, Register of Deeds' Office; Norm Agena, County Assessor; Robin Hendricksen, Chief Administrative Deputy Assessor; Toni Drammeh, County Assessor's Office; Don Thomas, County Engineer; Larry Worrell, County Surveyor; and Terry Adams, Deputy County Treasurer

**6 EXPEDITER EVALUATION PROGRAM** - Kit Boesch, Human Services Administrator

Kit Boesch, Human Services Administrator, said many youth are detained 30 days or more in the Attention Center awaiting an evaluation or the results of an evaluation. She proposed piloting of a program through the Expediter to hire evaluators to perform 10 immediate full-blown evaluations, with results anticipated within 7 days (Exhibit D). Funding of these evaluations will be through the Expediter Services Grant. There may also be some funds available through the grant or the Juvenile Court for single focus evaluations.

Boesch said the Office of Juvenile Services supports the pilot program concept, but requires that evaluators be Medicaid and OPTIONS (Medicaid Managed Care Program) providers. She said Juvenile Court Judge Tom Dawson has also indicated support.

Heier suggested lack of clerical support may be one reason for evaluation result delays. He also questioned whether the Community Mental Health Center could assist with evaluations.

Campbell said the County contracts with Child Guidance for juvenile evaluations.

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Heier seconded to authorize the Chair to send a letter to the Juvenile Court Judges and the Office of Juvenile Services outlining the County's willingness to participate in a pilot project and qualifications for the evaluators, with the goal that evaluations will be completed within seven days, and requesting written responses to the proposal. Hudkins, Heier, Workman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

**7 COUNTY SPECIAL PERMIT 176, CHURCH AND RESIDENCE AT NORTHWEST 84<sup>TH</sup> STREET AND AGNEW ROAD; REPORT FROM PLANNING DIRECTOR** - Kathleen Sellman, Planning Director; Kent Morgan, Assistant Planning Director; Mike DeKalb and Terry Brinkman, Planning Department; Monsignor Timothy Thorburn, Carmel of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

County Special Permit 176

Mike DeKalb, Planning Department, reviewed County Special Permit 176, a request to construct and operate a monastery for cloistered nuns on a 21 acre parcel on Northwest 84<sup>th</sup> Street and Agnew Road (Exhibit E). He noted a recommendation of approval from the Planning Commission and a recommendation of conditional approval from Planning Staff.

Heier requested inclusion of a covenant prohibiting junked cars.

In response to a question from Hudkins, Monsignor Timothy Thorburn, representing Carmel of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, said the remainder of the property may be used for an orchard or a garden, but will not be income producing.

Report from Planning Director

Kathleen Sellman, Planning Director, briefly reviewed the following (Exhibit F):

- *Stevens Creek Basin Planning Initiative*
- *Stevens Creek Basin Initiative Community Involvement*

Sellman said urban, rural and environmental land use goals and a planning framework for the Stevens Creek Basin will be developed by the end of the process. These will contribute to the Infrastructure Study that Public Works is conducting on how to pay for public improvements that are required by new development.

Monthly progress reports will be provided to the City/County Common. A joint City/County press conference on the Stevens Creek Basin Planning Initiative will also be held.

Campbell suggested that the Waverly News and Hickman Voice newspapers and County Extension's NEBLINE also be kept apprised.

**8 FAMILIES FIRST & FOREMOST (F<sup>3</sup>) GRANT PROGRAM SUPPORT STAFF** - Sheryl Schrepf, Families First & Foremost (F<sup>3</sup>) Grant Director; Denise Bulling, Special Grants Administrator; Gus Hitz, Assessment Center Director

Sheryl Schrepf, Families First & Foremost (F<sup>3</sup>) Grant Director, explained that clerical support is needed for the F<sup>3</sup> Program.

Denise Bulling, Special Grants Administrator, said the job description for a Clerk Typist III most accurately matches the required duties of the position.

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Workman seconded to authorize hiring of a Clerk Typist III position for the Families First & Foremost (F<sup>3</sup>) Grant Program. Hudkins, Heier, Workman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

Schrepf reported that Renee' Dozier, Detention Expediter, has accepted the position of Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator. She also reported on stakeholder meetings that are taking place in the community, including those held with youth detained in the Attention Center.

**9 RURAL TRANSIT APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL FUNDING** - Tim Howell, Rural Transit Director

Tim Howell, Rural Transit Director, presented the following (Exhibit G):

- *Lancaster County Rural Transit Budget Proposal*
- *Lancaster County Rural Transit Operating Budget Proposal for Continuing Service for 2000-2001*
- *Lancaster County Rural Transit Total Mileage/Boardings, FY 1998/1999*
- *Lancaster County Rural Transit Total Mileage/Boardings, FY 1999/2000*
- A pamphlet detailing Lancaster County Rural Transit services, schedule and fees

Howell reported an increase in federal funding of the program and increased usage of the handicapped lift-equipped van. He also noted coordination of in-town service with the Blue River Area Agency on Aging.

**10 COUNTY ASSESSOR'S BUDGET**- Norm Agena, County Assessor; Robin Hendricksen, Chief Administrative Deputy Assessor

Robin Hendricksen, Chief Administrative Deputy Assessor, reviewed *County Assessor's Request for Additional Fiscal Year Purchases* (Exhibit H), noting an additional \$1,400 is needed for COGO (Coordination Geography) licenses for the Geographic Information System (GIS).

Hendricksen also reported that a third pickup truck is needed for the Rural Real Estate Division, noting sufficient funds remain in the budget to fund this item.

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Workman seconded approval of the County Assessor's additional budget request, including \$1,400 for COGO licenses. Hudkins, Workman, Heier and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

#### **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

c. Replat of Lancaster County Juvenile Detention Center Property

Board consensus to propose the name "Lancaster" for the plat.

d. Vacation Request from Larry Van Hunnik, Lancaster Manor Administrator, for March 30-31, 2000

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Heier seconded approval. Hudkins, Workman, Heier and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

e. Reappointment of Dan Heckman to Board of Zoning Appeals

Eagan said this item will be scheduled on the March 21<sup>st</sup> County Board of Commissioners Meeting agenda.

#### **11 PAYMENT SCHEDULE FOR LANCASTER COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY - Chris Beardslee and Jim Hille, Sinclair Hille & Associates Inc.; Bob Bruner, Cheever Construction**

Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer, reviewed the following (Exhibit J):

- *Juvenile Detention Facility Estimated Cash Flow*
- *Use of Bond Proceeds for Detention Facility*
- *Juvenile Detention Facility: Estimated Cash Flow*

Jim Hille, Sinclair Hille & Associates Inc., said it appears that the payouts will not meet the spend-down schedule, without accelerated pre-payments. He said it may be feasible to meet the first deadline of March 29<sup>th</sup>, but larger payout gaps will exist further down the line. As a result, \$100,000 of arbitrage will be returned to the federal government.

Hudkins asked whether the County can pre-pay and take delivery of construction items. Kroeker said the bond counsel has indicated that use of a bonded warehouse, with a certificate of insurance, will satisfy the expenditure requirements.

Bob Bruner, Cheever Construction, said he is concerned with protecting construction materials that are paid for ahead of schedule. He said subcontractors have expenses to meet and may oppose use of a bonded warehouse, adding approximately 15-20 subcontractors would be affected.

Hudkins proposed rewarding contractors for moving the schedule up.

Bruner said the larger subcontractors may be interested in doing so.

Campbell cautioned that the County does not want to get into a situation where costs are disallowed.

Kroeker said delaying payments will generate additional revenue to the County (See Exhibit J, Page 2), noting a three month delay of the project would offset the arbitrage amount.

Bruner said project delays are not anticipated.

Hille said he did not recommend accelerated pre-payments, as it could create too many problems on the job site.

In response to a question from Hudkins, Bruner said utilities are more crucial than road construction at the site.

Hille also reported that furnishing purchases for the Lancaster County Juvenile Detention Center will be coordinated with Purchasing, eliminating the need for a furnishings consultant.

## **12 ACTION ITEMS**

- a. Operation ABLE Older Worker Awards Luncheon Attendance

Campbell, Hudkins and Workman indicated that they will attend.

### **13 CONSENT ITEMS**

- a. Microcomputer Request C#2000-086, \$1,470.22 from the Noxious Weed Control Authority Budget for Five (5) Palm Pilot III, Four (4) 32 meg SIMM Memory Modules, and One (1) Each Compaq 16 meg and 32 meg DIMM Memory Upgrade

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Workman seconded approval. Hudkins, Heier, Workman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

### **14 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT**

- a. Food Bank's Campaign Against Hunger

**MOTION:** Workman moved and Heier seconded to participate in the Food Bank's Campaign Against Hunger and appointed Cori Beattie, County Board Administrative Secretary, to serve as the coordinator for the County employees' food drive. Heier, Workman and Hudkins voted aye. Campbell abstained from voting. Motion carried.

- b. Ecological Advisory Committee Recommendation

Board consensus to hold this item and request that a representative of Nebraska Game & Parks Commission and the Chair of the Ecological Advisory Committee appear at a Staff Meeting to discuss the Ecological Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Salt Creek Tiger Beetle and Saltwort be added to the State Endangered Species List and the Massasuga Rattlesnake and Small White Lady's-Slipper be added to the State Threatened Species List.

- c. Office Phones

Cori Beattie, County Board Administrative Secretary, presented a handout from ALLTEL Communications detailing and pricing analog and digital telephones that have a voice mail message indicator (Exhibit I).

Hudkins asked Beattie to investigate whether Panasonic has phones that feature this option.

Board consensus to upgrade the telephones for Commissioner Hudkins; Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer; Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer; and Kit Boesch, Human Services Administrator.

d. Meeting with Mayor Wesely

Doug Ahlberg, Emergency Management Director, reported that *Fact Sheet, Lancaster County, Nebraska*, information on provision of services to rural residents, (Exhibit K) and rural fire district maps will be distributed with *Informational Material and Supplemental Questionnaire for Ambulance Services* (On file in the County Clerk's Office with the minutes of the March 7<sup>th</sup> Staff Meeting).

Ahlberg also reported on a meeting held Monday with representatives of medical providers. He said the Lancaster County Medical Society wants to ensure the following:

- Medical control operated under independent medical oversight as approved by the Lancaster Medical Society
- Unified Lancaster and City of Lincoln coverage area
- Unified system integrating emergency medical transport efficiently with non-emergency medical transport at an advanced life support level
- An efficient method of providing emergency medical transportation

Ahlberg noted that a regional medical transportation system was also proposed.

**15    ADJOURNMENT**

By direction of the Chair, the meeting was adjourned.

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Bruce Medcalf  
Lancaster County Clerk