

TRI-COUNTY RETREAT
METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Fort Omaha Campus - 32nd & Sorenson Parkway
Swanson Conference Center - Rooms E-F
Monday, November 14, 2016
8:30 A.M.

AGENDA

8:30 A.M. Light breakfast

9:00 A.M. Meeting begins

Noon Welcome by Randy Schmailzl, Metropolitan Community College President,
followed by lunch

Discussion Items:

1. Legislation

- Development of legislative priorities.
- Discussion of possible legislative changes to Board of Equalization process.

2. Mental Health/Criminal Justice Reform

- Detox/civil protective custody.
- Need for Psychiatric Emergency Room.
- Need for alternatives to housing the mentally ill in County jails.
- Discussion of the increased Corrections population and the causes.

3. Juvenile detention per diem

4. Discussion regarding employee and retiree health insurance

5. Discussion regarding Greenbelt – criteria used to approve/deny

6. Update on Strategic Planning priorities

7. Other topics

- Payroll systems
- Zero-based budgeting

8. Presentation on National Association of Counties (NACo) - Borgeson

**MINUTES
TRI-COUNTY MEETING
DOUGLAS, LANCASTER AND SARPY COUNTY BOARDS
METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE - FORT OMAHA CAMPUS
5600 NORTH 30TH STREET, OMAHA, NEBRASKA
SWANSON CONFERENCE CENTER - ROOMS E-F
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2016
8:30 A.M.**

Douglas County: Mary Ann Borgeson, County Board Chair; Chris Rodgers, County Board Vice Chair; Clare Duda, County Commissioner; Marc Kraft, County Commissioner; P.J. Morgan, County Commissioner; Patrick Bloomingdale, Chief Administrative Officer; Diane Carlson, Deputy County Administrator; Catherine Hall, Assistant County Administrator; Marcos San Martin, Intergovernmental and Labor Relations Specialist; Joe Lorenz, Budget & Finance Director; Leia Baez, Public Information Officer; Diane Battiato, Assessor/Register of Deeds; Michael Goodwillie, Compliance Officer, Assessor/Register of Deeds Office; Dan Esch, County Clerk/Comptroller; Ellen Sechser, Administrative Assistant, County Clerk's Office; Mike Kelley and Sean Kelley (Douglas County Lobbyists)

Lancaster County: Roma Amundson, County Board Chair; Todd Wiltgen, County Board Vice Chair; Bill Avery, County Commissioner; Deb Schorr, County Commissioner; Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer; Dennis Meyer, Budget and Fiscal Officer; Brad Johnson, Interim Corrections Director; Ann Taylor, Lancaster County Clerk's Office; Joe Kohout and Jonathan Bradford, Kissel/E&S Associates (Lancaster County Lobbyists)

Sarpy County: Don Kelly, County Board Chair; Brenda Carlisle, County Commissioner; Jim Thompson, County Commissioner; Jim Warren, County Commissioner; Brian Zuger, County Commissioner-Elect; Mark Wayne, County Administrator; Scott Bovick, Deputy County Administrator; Deb Houghtaling, County Clerk; Renee Lansman, Chief Deputy County Clerk; Fred Uhe, Director of Community and Government Relations; Brian Hanson, Fiscal Administrator; Dan Pittman, County Assessor; Nicole Spitzenberger, Deputy County Attorney; Mike Jones, Corrections Director; Tim Gay (Sarpy County Lobbyist)

Also in attendance: Larry Dix, Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) Executive Director; and Tim Hruza, Director of Policy and Research, Lincoln Independent Business Association (LIBA)

NOTE: A copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available.

A reception and light breakfast were held, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Mary Ann Borgeson, Douglas County Board Chair, opened the meeting at 9:03 a.m.

1 LEGISLATION

- **Development of Legislative Priorities**

- ▶ **Lancaster County**

Kerry Eagan, Lancaster County Chief Administrative Officer, presented 2017 Lancaster County Legislative Priorities and Lancaster County Legislative Proposals; 2017 Session (Exhibits A and B). He said there were other proposals that did not make the list and said one he believes is worth consideration is to strengthen prisoner litigation statutes to discourage frivolous lawsuits.

- ▶ **Sarpy County**

Fred Uhe, Sarpy County Director of Community and Government Relations, reviewed Sarpy County 2017 Legislative Proposals (Exhibit C).

Diane Battiato, Assessor/Register of Deeds, thanked Sarpy County for prioritizing the Register of Deeds Technology and Preservation Fund (see Exhibit C) and urged the other counties to lobby to have the January 1, 2018 sunset date lifted.

- ▶ **Douglas County**

Marcos San Martin, Douglas County Intergovernmental and Labor Relations Specialist, presented a draft of Board of County Commissioners; Douglas County, Nebraska; 2017 Legislative Agenda Priorities (Exhibit D).

Discussion took place regarding Priority No. 10, *Support revisions to Chapter §77 (Nebraska Revised Statutes) pertaining to Board of Equalization (BOE)*. With regards to the first bulleted item, Battiato said the Tax Equalization and Review Commission (TERC) holds single commissioner hearings in Omaha. Don Kelly, Sarpy County Board Chair, asked the rationale for the third bulleted item - *Prohibit County Assessors from appealing directly to TERC without local BOE approval*. Borgeson said that is frequently occurring in Douglas County, noting there is a cost factor. Kelly said he is bothered when the BOE makes a determination on a tax ruling and it is overturned by the Assessor's Office the next year. He said he would like to see a statute in place that protects that ruling so that property owners feel their claims are being taken seriously. Borgeson concurred, adding that has frequently occurred in Douglas County. She said some taxpayers have filed with TERC and the County Assessor has returned their value to the protested value the next year.

► **Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO)**

Larry Dix, Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) Executive Director, gave an overview of 2017 NACO Legislative Issues to Pursue (Exhibit E).

P.J. Morgan, Douglas County Commissioner, commented that Douglas County has had its tax base reduced by medical facilities that are not operating as charitable facilities (the buildings are removed from the tax rolls). He said some states have payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) to compensate local governments for some or all of the tax revenue that it loses because of the nature of the ownership or use of a particular piece of real property. Morgan cited Minnesota as an example and said if a hospital has doctor offices attached to its facility, that portion is taxed. Dix said Bryan Health has taken over a residential block in Lincoln and those properties are no longer on the tax roll. Morgan suggested formation of a small group to look at this issue further.

Patrick Bloomingdale, Douglas County Chief Administrative Officer, said he is very concerned about losing community-based aid (grant funds) for juvenile justice reform and alternatives to detention programs. Dix said he believes that issue will come before the Legislature this year. Chris Rodgers, Douglas County Board Vice Chair, said Senator Bob Krist has been involved in discussions. Todd Wiltgen, Lancaster County Board Vice Chair, said he and Lancaster County Commissioner Deb Schorr recently met with Senator Krist to discuss funding issues and said the message they received was that the counties have to demonstrate that the monies they receive are being put to good use and that there are quantifiable outcomes.

Dix suggested setting up an off-the-record meeting with the Chair of the Legislature's Revenue Committee, once that leadership has been determined, to discuss the counties' concerns. Morgan felt the issue of tax exemptions for medical facilities that are not operating as charitable facilities should be addressed and said he would like to be part of that discussion.

Tim Gay, Sarpy County's lobbyist, thanked Dix for all the assistance he has provided to counties and their lobbyists.

- **Discussion of possible legislative changes to Board of Equalization process**

See Item 1.

2 MENTAL HEALTH/CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

- **Detox/Civil Protective Custody**

Borgeson said Catholic Charities had provided detox/civil protective services to Douglas County through a Region 6 (Behavioral Health) contract but elected to no longer do so. She said Region 6 went out for an RFP and the transition to a new provider should take place January 1, 2017.

Eagan said Lancaster County has had an agreement in place for a number of years involving Bryan Health (Healthcare Company), Lancaster County Mental Health Crisis Center, Region 5 (Behavioral Health) and Cornhusker Place Detox.

- **Need for Psychiatric Emergency Room**

Borgeson said Region 6 is looking at the need for a psychiatric emergency room which should help alleviate some of the Emergency Room (ER) problems, i.e. individuals who are accessing the ER are not receiving psychiatric treatment but are waiting for a placement. She said they have looked at several models and like one in which a facility would serve as "the door" that everyone would enter for mental health issues. A quick assessment would be provided and then the individual would meet with a psychiatric team to develop a treatment plan. Borgeson said it is also believed it would help alleviate the problem of individuals with mental health issues being picked up by law enforcement and taken to jail. She said funding is an issue but they are moving forward with developing a business plan. Even individuals who are in police custody could be brought to the facility for an initial assessment before being taken to jail.

Wiltgen said Region 5 is looking at the lack of acute/subacute care after individuals are released from the Mental Health Crisis Center. He said the Lincoln Regional Center (LRC) does not have available beds so individuals needing long-term inpatient care are being sent to Mary Lanning Hospital in Hastings or the Richard Young Hospital in Kearney. Borgeson said Region 6 is not necessarily looking at a lack of beds, rather utilization of beds. She encouraged Region 5 to contact Dr. Scott Zeller, Chief of Psychiatric Emergency Services in Alameda County, California, who is an expert in this area.

- **Need for Alternatives to Housing the Mentally Ill in County Jails**

Borgeson said Douglas County is involved in the Stepping Up Initiative, a national initiative to reduce the number of individuals with mental illness in jails, and is working with Region 6 on developing alternatives to housing mentally ill individuals in jail. She said the Douglas County Board has also increased the number of mental health providers and resources within its jail. Borgeson said Douglas County is seeing individuals that need treatment longer than what is offered through acute/subacute care.

Borgeson also reported that Douglas County has had conversations with the Brain Injury Association because some individuals with those type of injuries are being treated for mental illness and said the director of that organization would like Douglas, Lancaster and Sarpy County to start a pilot program to screen individuals. She said Douglas County is also looking at establishing a pilot program for long-term injectable mental health medications to see if it would reduce recidivism.

- **Discussion of the Increased Corrections Population and the Causes**

Borgeson said the female jail population has “skyrocketed” in Douglas County, noting the majority are in for assault or drug related charges. She said the male population has more mental health issues.

Brad Johnson, Interim Lancaster County Corrections Director, said Lancaster County has also had a significant increase in its female jail population, mostly related to drug issues. He said he has noticed that females do not bond out as easily as males but is not sure why. They also tend to stay in the jail facility longer. Johnson said they had to open another pod this summer to house the additional females. That pod was intended to be a male unit. In terms of the males, the felony incarceration rate has increased dramatically. Length of stay has also increased. He felt the increases are partly due to the passage of Legislative Bill (LB) 605, which changed classification of penalties, punishments, probation and parole provisions, and provisions relating to criminal records and restitution. Johnson said there has also been an increase in the number of custodial sanctions, noting the County hasn’t yet seen the impact of post-release supervision from the state prisons as a result of LB 605. **NOTE:** Individuals who are released from prison and violate terms of their probation will be sent to county jail with sanctions under terms of the legislation.

Borgeson said Douglas County is working with the University of Nebraska-Omaha (UNO) on data sets to show the impact of LB 605.

Johnson said one of Lancaster County’s biggest issues is that mentally ill offenders refuse to take their medications or accept mental health resources and so they tend to deteriorate. Borgeson said Douglas County utilizes peer specialists which has helped with compliance issues. She said Douglas County has had problems with offenders not staying with their treatment plan once they are released and said they are collaborating with area shelters on how to address the issue. Borgeson also suggested the Nebraska Attorney General’s Office be asked to give a presentation on opioids at a future Tri-County Meeting because opioid use is increasing and is impacting jail numbers. Marc Kraft, Douglas County Commissioner, thought it would be a more effective use of time to have the presentation provided electronically, adding it could also provide an opportunity for more community involvement.

Mike Jones, Sarpy County Corrections Director, said Sarpy County has had 400 bed days just on the custodial sanctions. In terms of tracking LB 605 data, Jones said the State is the holder of the data and should be providing that information to the counties. He said Sarpy County has a 148 bed jail facility with a functional capacity of 126. Jones said their jail population is currently 143 and estimated that less than 25 are sentenced. Sarpy County also has approximately 200 individuals on pre-trial release. Jones said the driving force for Sarpy County is average length of stay, which is currently 17 days, and indicated plans to do a study the system from the point of arrest to point of sentencing to see if there are any efficiencies they could pick up. Borgeson said Douglas County is also dealing with longer lengths of stay. Kraft said part of the problem is that some individuals are unable to post bond.

The meeting was recessed at 10:45 a.m. and resumed at 10:58 a.m.

3 JUVENILE DETENTION PER DIEM

Eagan said Lancaster County has been chastised by the State because it has the highest per diem in the State. He said Lancaster County's Youth Services Center (YSC) Director contacted her counterpart in Douglas County to see why there was such a difference in the per diem rates. Eagan said it was determined that Lancaster County has a lower staff to youth ratio but said the biggest difference is that Lancaster County includes all of its direct costs (such as rent, workers' compensation, personnel, attorney and information services), as well as depreciation, in its per diem. Douglas County does not. Lancaster County's per diem is \$307 but the State is only paying \$276. Douglas County's per diem is \$225. He stressed the importance of including all costs in the per diem, noting not doing so skews the cost of post-adjudication, which is a State responsibility, and shifts costs to County taxpayers.

Schorr said Senator Bob Krist has indicated the possibility of the State closing youth rehabilitation treatment centers in Kearney and Geneva and rehousing those youth closer to their home communities. Senator Krist also made a reference to designing a regional system for juvenile justice. She said that makes an accurate representation of costs particularly important if the State could be reimbursing counties for housing youth in local facilities.

Brian Hanson, Sarpy County Fiscal Administrator, said Sarpy County's population numbers have decreased but staffing has not decreased accordingly. Sarpy County does include indirect costs in its per diem, which is \$639. He said the State is only paying \$256 per day.

Joe Kohout, Lancaster County's lobbyist, said the State may try to shift dollars from facilities to community aid, like it did with behavioral health reform. He said that aid has been cut systematically over the years and recommended counties "be on guard" for what that new system might look like.

4 DISCUSSION REGARDING EMPLOYEE AND RETIREE HEALTH INSURANCE

Bloomington said Douglas County is projected to have an 18% increase in employee and retiree health insurance premiums. He said the County will absorb half of that cost through its Health Insurance Reserve Fund. The remainder will be passed on to participants. The percentage that retirees contribute to premiums is also being increased. Bloomington said the County Board is looking at several options for employee and retiree coverage, such as contracting with one health care facility or providing funds for employees to buy their own coverage on the marketplace.

Borgeson asked whether Lancaster and Sarpy County offer insurance coverage to their retirees. Meyer said Lancaster County does not but has a Post Employment Health Plan (PEHP) that retirees can utilize for health care costs, such as insurance premiums.

Mark Wayne, Sarpy County Administrator, provided information on Sarpy County's insurance coverage, including that for retirees (Exhibit F). He said very few retirees take advantage of the retiree benefit, due to the cost.

Dix said he is not aware of any other counties in Nebraska that offers a retiree plan. He noted NACO recently contracted with First Concord Benefits Group to assist individuals in transitioning from their county plan as they reach retirement age. He said the program is being offered to all counties but each will have to have a process in place to compensate the employee in some way to leave their county plan.

Borgeson said one of Douglas County's unions suggested offering an incentive (\$1,000) to get more employees to enroll in the County's Health Savings Account (HSA) Program.

D. Kelly said he believes Sarpy County's plan is unsustainable and believes the ratios need to be more in line with the private sector. He suggested the three counties form a pool for insurance. Dix said NACO could also create a secondary pool for the three counties.

5 DISCUSSION REGARDING GREENBELT (CRITERIA USED TO APPROVE/DENY)

D. Kelly discussed why he believes there needs to be a statutory change to define what is a farm (see Nebraska Revised Statutes §77-1344 and §77-1359), citing one example of what he believes has been a misuse of the greenbelt exception in Sarpy County.

Dan Pittman, Sarpy County Assessor, said greenbelt was a pretty strict program at one time but has eroded through the years. He said there currently are no land size, continuous production, zoning or proof of income requirements but said the land must be located outside the jurisdiction of a city or a Sanitary Improvement District (SID)

and must be used for the commercial production of any plant or animal that is in a raw or unprocessed state. Pittman conceded there is a lot of niche farming occurring but felt there should be an income requirement and greater monitoring.

Michael Goodwillie, Compliance Officer, Douglas County Assessor/Register of Deeds Office, cautioned there may be instances where there is commercial production but it is not generating income yet, citing vineyard crops as an example.

The meeting was recessed at 11:55 a.m. and resumed at 12:01 p.m.

Randy Schmailzl, Metropolitan Community College President, welcomed attendees to the Metropolitan Community College campus.

The meeting was recessed at 12:04 p.m. and resumed at 12:37 p.m.

6 UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PLANNING PRIORITIES

Bloomington said Douglas County Board worked with a consultant to develop a strategic plan, which it approved in April. He said short-term and long-term priorities were identified, including:

- Study various types of enhanced budgeting processes, such as zero-based budgeting
- Assess the benefit system and possibly move to a paid time off (PTO) system
- Hire a public information officer and enhance citizen engagement
- Develop a plan to reduce pre-trial numbers and possibly merge the City and County Attorney's Offices
- Establish a mental health court
- Develop drawings for juvenile justice campus
- Pursue public/private health partnerships
- Enhance employee wellness program

Brief discussion took place regarding zero-based budgeting. Bill Avery, Lancaster County Commissioner, said the Lancaster County Board tried zero-based budgeting with two of the largest county departments in the past budget cycle but said it was unsuccessful. He felt one of the biggest challenges is changing attitudes towards how to build a budget. Avery said the best predictor of next year's budget is this year's budget plus some increment, because that is how it has always been done. He said that guarantees an increase in spending and at some point it becomes unsustainable. Kraft said it is difficult to factor in grants and programs funded by outside sources with zero-based budgeting. He felt it would be better to look for analytical budgeting and suggested counties study Oregon's budgeting process. Roma Amundson, Lancaster County Board Chair, stressed the need for an education process.

Schorr said the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County successfully merged the City and County Attorney's Juvenile Divisions last year. She also noted that Douglas and Sarpy County mentioned earlier that they incentivize their employees (gift certificates and premium reductions) for positive health decisions and said the Lancaster County Attorney's Office has indicated that offering incentives is a violation of law. Schorr questioned how the other counties are getting around that issue. Bloomingdale said it is not illegal but the incentives must be taxed. He said Douglas County plans to move to only offering premium incentives. Eagan said the County Attorney's Office is scheduled to address the issue further with the Board. Scott Bovick, Sarpy County Deputy County Administrator, said Sarpy County initially funneled incentives through their insurance broker. This year they informed employees they would have to pay tax on the gift cards they received. He said they are also offering time off for participating in the wellness program and felt it will increase participation.

Wayne gave an overview of Sarpy County Government; Strategic Plan for 2013-2016 (March, 2014 Update) (Exhibit G).

Borgeson asked Wayne to expand on what Sarpy County does in the economic development arena. Wayne said Sarpy County provides \$90,000 a year to support the Sarpy County Economic Development Corporation which is housed out of the Omaha Chamber of Commerce. He said they also provide assistance in the form of infrastructure, such as road and sanitary sewer improvements, and work with the State to try to get site and building fund dollars.

Eagan said Lancaster County does not have a strategic plan in place but engaged Robert Blair, Associate Professor, School of Public Administration, University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO); and Jerry Deichert, Director for the Center for Public Affairs Research, UNO, last year to facilitate strategic planning discussion. He said they focused on the critical external challenges that affect the future growth and development of the County and the most critical challenges facing the County Board. Eagan said the external challenges include infrastructure needs and financing, public safety, criminal justice, increasing efficiencies, the social safety net and taxes. Challenges facing the Board include budgeting, human resource management and organizational development, and unfunded mandates.

7 OTHER TOPICS

- **Payroll Systems**

Wiltgen said the company that provides the payroll system utilized by City of Lincoln and Lancaster County was purchased by another company, which is discontinuing support. He said the City and County are looking at new payroll systems and asked what Douglas and Sarpy County are using.

Dennis Meyer, Lancaster County Budget and Fiscal Officer, added that they are looking at systems that can provide Human Resources (HR) functions, such as time and attendance.

Dan Esch, Douglas County Clerk/Comptroller, said Douglas County uses Oracle for tracking time and labor. He said the City of Omaha also uses Oracle but not for payroll. Meyer asked whether Douglas County went through a request for proposal (RFP) process to select a payroll system. Esch said they did. Borgeson said the County is able to purchase different modules from Oracle, such as payroll and HR, but it is sometimes difficult to make changes within the system.

Uhe said Sarpy County uses a cloud-based system but does not have an HR package.

- **Zero-Based Budgeting**

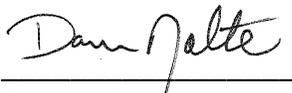
See Item 6.

8 PRESENTATION ON NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY OFFICIALS (NACo)

Borgeson, who serves on the National Association of County Officials (NACo) Board of Directors, discussed ways that NACo can assist counties, such as research.

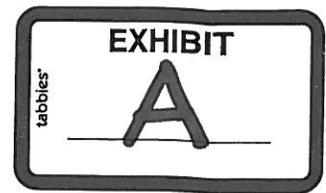
9 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:27 p.m.



Dan Nolte
Lancaster County Clerk





2017 LANCASTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Standing Priority - Property Tax Relief

Property tax relief continues to be the top legislative priority for Lancaster County. Pressure on the property tax can be reduced by diversifying revenue sources through legislative actions such as increasing State Aid to Counties, reinstating the State Prisoner Reimbursement Program, raising county fees to appropriate levels, and keeping the inheritance tax. Unfunded mandates which primarily benefit the State should be eliminated, and new unfunded mandates should not be imposed.

1. Monitor Adult and Juvenile Justice Reform

Counties are facing new unfunded mandates with the changes made to the adult criminal justice system under 2015 Neb. Laws LB 605. Lancaster County's jail population and probation housing costs have increased as a direct result of this Bill. Also, juvenile justice reform under 2013 Neb. Laws LB 561 is not being adequately funded, and the cost of State responsibilities for post adjudication detention is being shifted to the counties.

2. Raise Population Threshold to 400,000 for Creation of a Civil Service Commission

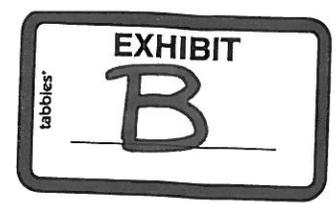
2016 Neb. Laws LB 742 addressed most of Lancaster County's concerns regarding changes required upon reaching the 300,000 population threshold. However, the mandated requirement of changing the County's existing civil service system to a Civil Service Commission was removed from LB 742 at the last moment. The County has three main objections to moving to a Civil Service Commission: the political structure of the Civil Service Commission is likely to result in employment decisions based on partisan politics; County directors will become merit employees under the new system; and the County will lose statutory authority to protect employee rights and benefits when state functions are transferred to the County.

3. Eliminate Responsibility of Counties to Pay HHS rent

After the State assumed responsibility for welfare, a legislative provision was added requiring counties to maintain facilities for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as they existed on April 1, 1983. See Neb. Rev. Stat. §68-130. Although some relief from this antiquated statute was provided in 2011 Neb. Laws LB 234 (allowing payment reductions for HHS space eliminated since 1983 and determining whether additional space can be eliminated), the use of local property tax to pay for HHS facilities should be eliminated in its entirety. This is especially true in light of the State's total elimination of state aid to counties. LB 61 will accomplish this purpose.

4. Allow financing of County Bridges under Neb. Rev. Stat. §23-120(3)(b)

The number of structurally deficient county bridges in Nebraska is increasing at an alarming rate. In Lancaster County alone there are twenty (20) structurally deficient bridges and five (5) functionally obsolete bridges. §23-120(3)(b) allows counties to levy up to 5.2¢ for bonded indebtedness related to county buildings. Amending §23-120(3)(b) to include county bridges could provide a steady source of revenue for addressing this important public safety issue.



LANCASTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS 2017 SESSION

INTRODUCTION

The 2016 Nebraska Legislature passed a number of Bills which will benefit Lancaster County:

- LB 742 raises the 300,000 population threshold to 400,000 and clarifies how reaching the threshold is determined
- LB 960 increases State funding for county roads and bridges
- LB 774 exempts agricultural societies from paying sales tax
- LB 136 prohibits flying lanterns
- LB 1038 provides funding for riparian vegetation management
- LB 1000 opens up grand jury records to the public

Lancaster County's legislative agenda was significantly advanced by the passage of LB's 742 and 960. Addressing the 300,000 population threshold was a top priority for the County going into the 2016 session. LB 742 took care of almost all of the County Board's concerns with regard to the threshold. However, the final version of LB 742 left the civil service statutes covered under the 300,000 threshold. The County will consider introducing legislation to address this omission.

The County's ongoing priority of reducing pressure on the property tax is addressed by LB 960, which provides a steady stream of State funding for county road and bridge projects. Another Bill which will help reduce pressure on the property tax is LB 774. By exempting agricultural societies from paying sales tax, LB 774 will lead to lower county fair expenses, thereby allowing more to be done with the existing levy.

However, the County still faces a number of old and new challenges in achieving its top legislative priority of property tax relief:

- Medicaid reform under LB 1032, which could have relieved the County of \$2.1 million in General Assistance medical costs, failed to advance out of committee.
- No action was taken on LB 61, which would have relieved all counties from the obligation of providing office space for Health and Human Resources, a savings of more than \$300,000 for the County.
- LB 894 creates a new unfunded mandate for counties with a population over 150,000 by expanding the obligation to provide legal counsel in juvenile court proceedings, a possible annual fiscal impact on Lancaster County of \$65,000 to \$75,000.
- Adult criminal justice reform under 2015 Neb. Laws LB 605 appears to be causing an increase in the population of the Lancaster County Jail, and the County is providing additional office space for Adult Probation.
- Inadequate State funding for post adjudication community-based programs is resulting in longer stays at the Youth Services Center, and the per diem paid by the State is not adequate to cover the County's cost of providing detention services.

A number of property tax reduction Bills were introduced during the 2016 session with a variety of different approaches to limiting the growth of property taxes:

- Governor Pete Rickett's plan for property tax relief, introduced by Senator Gloor under LB 958, is based on tightening budget lids and limiting the ability of local governments to exceed levy limits. The Governor's plan also contained a provision to limit the amount of unused restricted funds which could be carried forward to 3%.
- LB 717 holds 2016 property valuations to the 2015 values and lengthens the time period for inclusion of comparable sales to help smooth out valuation increases.
- LB 940, entitled the Tax Stabilization Act, holds valuations to values determined as of January 1, 2016 for three-year period, and ties levy increases for political subdivisions to the same percentage increase or decrease in the State budget.
- Several Bills proposed limiting agricultural values to 65% of market value (LB's 293 and 350).

The only action taken by the Legislature in 2016 for property tax relief was to increase funding under the Property Tax Credit Act for 2017 to \$224 million. However, many of the proposals to control property taxes by limiting levies and valuations are likely to return in 2017. As discussed above, limiting available revenue for counties can be problematic, especially if unfunded mandates continue to increase. LR 588 is intended to identify best practices in drafting tax legislation and determine the fiscal impact of tax policies. Lancaster County will need to make its voice heard during these discussions.

NEW PROPOSALS

1. **Allow financing of County Bridges under Neb. Rev. Stat. §23-120(3)(b)**

The number of structurally deficient county bridges in Nebraska is increasing at an alarming rate. In Lancaster County alone there are twenty (20) structurally deficient bridges and five (5) functionally obsolete bridges. Amending §23-120(3)(b) to include county bridges could provide a steady source of revenue for addressing this important public safety issue.

2. **Strengthen Prisoner Litigation Statutes to Discourage Frivolous Lawsuits**

Frivolous litigation filed by state and local prisoners is time consuming, expensive, and a waste of limited judicial resources. The deliberate filing of frivolous lawsuits by prisoners could be discouraged if all prisoners were required to have some financial stake in filing an action. Federal statutes governing civil rights actions of prisoners require that a prisoner seeking to proceed in forma pauperis is still required to pay the full amount of the filing fee. Along with the affidavit seeking to proceed in forma pauperis, a prisoner is also required to submit to the court a certified copy of their institutional trust fund account for the six month period immediately preceding the complaint or notice of appeal. The prisoner may then be allowed to pay the filing fee over time based on a

payment formula in the federal statutes. Federal law also gives judges greater discretion in dismissing actions filed by prisoners which the court determines to be frivolous, malicious, or fail to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.

Presently, Neb. Rev. Stat. §25-3401(2)(a) provides, “A prisoner who has filed three or more civil actions, commenced after July 19, 2012, that have been found to be frivolous by a court of this state or a federal court for a case originating in this state shall not be permitted to proceed in forma pauperis for any further civil actions without leave of the court...” This statute should be amended to include the federal law provisions which require the prisoner to pay the filing fee and which provide greater discretion to judges to dismiss frivolous or malicious claims.

3. Lancaster County Treasurer Proposals

- a. Amend Neb. Rev. Stat. §77-1807 to give counties the option to conduct tax sales through an online auction. §77-1815 would also need to be amended to reflect this change.
- b. Amend Neb. Rev. Stat. §77-1701 to give parcel owners the option of receiving statements, reminders, and notices of delinquency by electronic communication.
- c. Amend Neb. Rev. Stat. §77-1736.06 to add the following provisions:
 - (1) Raise the threshold from \$200 to \$500 for notifying political subdivisions regarding distribution reductions due to tax refunds; and
 - (2) Allow notifications to political subdivisions to be sent by electronic communication.
 - (3) Add clarifying language addressing refunds involving parcels within tax increment financing (TIF) districts where an owner has entered into a contract promising not to appeal property values.
 - (4) Amend Neb. Rev. Stat. §77-1901 to establish a minimum delinquency value before pursuing foreclosure.

See Attachment A.

4. Amend Neb. Rev. Stat. §28-929 to Include Mental Health Technician and Other Support Staff Under the Definition of Health Care Professional

In 2012 LB 677 amended Neb. Rev. Stat. §28-929 to make it a felony to assault a health care professional while working in a hospital or clinic. The Lancaster County Mental Health Crisis Center is included under the definition of a hospital. However, the definition of health care professional does not include front line Crisis Center employees such as mental health technicians and other employees with direct patient contact. §28-929 should be amended to cover these employees.

EXISTING PROPOSALS

1. Increase the Cigarette Tax

The average cost per pack of cigarettes in the United States is \$1.49, and the Nebraska tax on a pack of cigarettes is only 64¢. There are numerous health and economic benefits to raising the cigarette tax. Statistics indicate price increases on cigarettes cause adults to quit smoking and prevent teenagers from starting to smoke. LB 1013 would have raised the cigarette tax to \$2.14 per pack, but the Bill did not advance out of the Revenue Committee during the 2016 session. The Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department strongly supports increasing the cigarette tax, and the County should again support future legislative attempts to increase the tax.

2. Increase Original Certificate of Title Fee for Vehicles Transferred to Nebraska from Another State

The statutory fee for titling motor vehicles in Nebraska is low compared to other states. As a result, the Lancaster County Treasurer receives a disproportionate number of requests to issue original certificates of title for out of state vehicles. LB 765 was introduced in 2016 to raise the fee for an original title for a vehicle being titled in Nebraska from another state or country from \$10 to \$25. This Bill also increased the amount retained by the county issuing the title from \$3.25 to \$12. Although LB 765 did not advance from the Transportation and Communications Committee, Lancaster County should continue to support an increase of this fee.

3. Tax Increment Financing

The Nebraska Redevelopment Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. §58-501 et seq. is intended to encourage economic growth through redevelopment of blighted and substandard areas within cities. The Act generates funds for redevelopment projects by creating tax increment financing (TIF) districts. TIF is widely used by cities and villages to finance community redevelopment projects. Essentially, two land values are established for tax parcels lying within the boundaries of a project: the value of the parcel prior to redevelopment and the value of the parcel after redevelopment. Property tax increases within the TIF district attributable to the project are placed in a special fund to be used solely to pay the principal, interest, and premiums on any bonds, loans, notes, or other indebtedness incurred to finance the redevelopment project. Lancaster County has identified the following concerns with TIF:

A. Clarify Who is Entitled to the Proceeds in a Tax Increment Financing Special Fund Upon Payment of All Bonds, Loans and Other Indebtedness for a Redevelopment Project

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 18-2147(1)(b)(Reissue 2007) provides, “ When such bonds, loans, notes, advances of money, or indebtedness, including interest and premiums due, have been paid, the authority shall so notify the county assessor and county treasurer and all ad valorem taxes upon taxable real property in such a redevelopment project

shall be paid into the funds of the respective public bodies...”

A question has arisen regarding whether a city has the authority to amend a redevelopment project after all indebtedness has been paid, and thus continue using the proceeds in the special fund for redevelopment purposes instead of distributing the balance of the special fund to the respective public bodies which levy on the property. Legislation is needed to clarify whether a city or village has the authority to amend a redevelopment project after the original indebtedness has been paid.

B. County Input in the Approval of Tax Increment Financing Districts Which Affect the County Tax Base

Other taxing entities in the county where the TIF district is located lose the benefit of the property valuation increase for the entire district during the period the project is financed. In recent years there has been a sharp increase in the number of TIF districts created by the City of Lincoln. TIF districts often encompass a large area, regardless of the size or number of the individual projects within the TIF, and regardless of whether the entire district is blighted or substandard. Since the other taxing entities, including counties, are being denied essential tax revenue, they should have direct input into the establishment of TIF districts. This would help guarantee TIF districts are actually targeted to blighted or substandard areas and do not unnecessarily remove growth from the assessed valuation for other taxing entities.

LR 439 was introduced by Senator Crawford to examine the use of TIF by municipalities. Although the primary purpose of LR 439 is to examine the use of TIF for residential properties, Lancaster has had the opportunity to express these concerns in a meeting with Senator Crawford,

4. Increase County Treasurer’s Sales Tax Collection Fee Charged to the State

Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §§77-2703(1)(i) and 77-2703(2)(d)(Reissue 2009), counties are entitled to retain a sales tax collection fee of 2.5% on the first \$3,000 of sales tax remitted each month to the State. This fee is collected separately for (a) motor vehicles, semitrailers and trailers registered with the County, and (b) motorboats registered with the County. Based on this formula, last year Lancaster County collected a fee of \$1,800. During the same year the County remitted \$30.6 million of sales tax to the State.

In contrast, the amount of time and resources devoted by the Lancaster County Treasurer’s Office to collection of the State sales tax is staggering. The twenty-eight (28) clerks in the Treasurer’s motor vehicle division spend more than 10% of their work day processing sales tax returns, while the four (4) supervisors spend nearly 10% of their time working on sales tax issues. This amounts to an annual expenditure by the County of \$116,473. Under these circumstances, a higher sales tax collection fee is clearly justified.

In 2016 LB 724 was introduced to increase the tax collection fee from 2.5% of the first \$3,000 collected to 5% of the first \$6,000 collected. Under this Bill the County’s collection fee would have gone from \$1,800 to \$7,200. LB 724 did not get out of the Revenue Committee.

For a list of other uncompensated services provided to the State see Attachment B.

5. Amend Neb. Rev. Stat. §29-2022 to Give Trial Courts Discretion with Regard to Sequestered Juries in Criminal Cases

Defendants in criminal cases have the right to keep a jury sequestered until a verdict is reached, regardless of the severity of the case or the actual risk the jury members may be influenced by improper contact or communications. Neb. Rev. Stat. §29-2022. When a jury is sequestered counties are responsible for paying all the costs of housing and feeding the jury members, as well as the costs of providing security. These expenses can be significant. Additionally, sequestration can result in a substantial hardship to the members of the jury. This statute should be amended to give the trial court discretion in deciding whether a jury in a criminal case should be sequestered until a verdict is reached, based on the actual potential of the jury being improperly influenced.

2016 Neb. Laws LB 976 would have given trial courts discretion on jury sequestration. However, it was withdrawn prior to consideration by the Judiciary Committee.

6. Reasonable Fees for Services Provided by the County Engineer for Issuance of Driveway Permits, Right-of-Way Utility Permits, Subdivision Reviews, and Load Permits

The Lancaster County Engineer's Office spends a significant amount of time issuing driveway permits, right-of-way permits for utilities, vehicle load permits, and reviewing proposed land subdivisions. These services primarily benefit individual companies or persons. Enabling legislation is necessary to give counties the authority to charge a reasonable fee to these services.

7. Limit Workers' Compensation Awards to Retirement Age

Rising workers' compensation costs are a concern to the County. Awards for permanent disability are expensive and can extend an indefinite period into the future. Limiting disability awards to the age of retirement would still benefit the injured worker by helping replace lost wages during wage-earning years. At retirement other revenue sources, such as social security and pensions, then become available to support the injured worker. The benefit to the County would be lower costs and a greater ability to manage workers' compensation cases.

8. Clarify Management Right to Select Benefit Providers without Negotiating

Recent court decisions have held that government employers cannot change providers for a benefit plan (health insurance, dental insurance, pensions, health retirement savings plans, etc.) without first negotiating with unions. See Scottsbluff Police Officers Association, Inc., F.O.P. Lodge

38 v. City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska, 282 Neb. Reports 676 (2011). The County believes this requirement infringes on a traditional management right to make such business decisions. Recently, Lancaster County changed providers for its post employment health plan after issuing an RFP and carefully analyzing the proposals with the help of a specialist. Although the data clearly indicated the County selected the best provider, one of the unions decided to remain with the old provider. The County is now forced to maintain two plans, which creates inefficiencies, additional costs, and weakens the County's bargaining authority with existing and potential providers. The law should be clarified that government employers do not need union approval to change providers for benefit plans.

9. Extend Deadline for Issuing Greenbelt Valuation Notice

When a property owner simultaneously has a pending board of equalization valuation protest and an application for special Greenbelt valuation, it is possible that a landowner will receive conflicting valuation notices. This problem can be solved by amending Neb. Rev. Stat. §77-1345.01(2) to extend the final date for the board of equalization to send a notice of special valuation from July 22nd to August 15th.

10. Provide Flexibility with Regard to Treasurer's Obligation to Invest County Funds on a Pro Rata Basis with Banks, Capital Stock Institutions, and Qualifying Mutual Financial Institutions

Neb. Rev. Stat. §77-2314 imposes a duty on county treasurers to invest county funds on a pro rata basis with a list of banks, capital stock institutions, and qualifying mutual financial institutions, as that list is determined by the county board as of December 31. However, some of the financial entities on the list are refusing to accept county funds over the FDIC guaranteed amount because of narrow interest rate spreads and the added cost of collateral requirements. This makes it very difficult if not impossible for some treasurers to meet the pro rata requirements of §77-2314. This statute should be amended to provide treasurers with more flexibility with regard to the investment of county funds. Additionally, the treasurer should be given discretion to work with their county board to add financial entities to invest with which are not on the annual list because they are new or have a name change.

11. Clarify How Funds Raised under Neb. Rev. Stat. §33-109 Can be Used to Modernize Technology Related to the Preservation and Maintenance of Register of Deeds Records

2012 Neb. Laws LB 14 created a special fund to be used exclusively for the purposes of preserving and maintaining public records in the office of the register of deeds and for modernization and technology needs relating to those records. The additional fees used to create the fund will sunset January 1, 2018. Different counties have different modernization and technology needs relating to register of deeds records. §33-109 should be clarified to allow each county to benefit fully from the fund.

12. Increase the Indigent Defense Fee

Neb. Rev. Stat. §33-156 provides for a three dollar indigent defense fee which is taxed as costs for each case filed in each county court and district court, and credited to the Public Advocacy Operations Cash Fund. Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §29-3933, this Fund is used to reimburse counties for a portion of their indigent defense system expenditures. Increasing the indigent defense fee would help defray the growing cost of providing indigent defense.

13. Tax Incentives for Compressed Natural Gas (CNG)

The County is investigating the possibility of converting a portion of its motor vehicle fleet to CNG. However, conversion costs are high and state tax incentives could help speed the switch to this more efficient fuel.

14. Clarify Funding Source When Courts Assign Non-IV-D Cases to a Child Support Referee

Under Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-1610 funding for a child support referee shall be provided by the county and state to the district Court, separate juvenile court, and county court. Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-1611 provides these courts may by rule or order assign any matter regarding the establishment and collection of child, spousal, or medical support, paternity matters, and protection orders to a child support referee. However, when a child support referee is assigned non-IV-D cases federal funds may not be used to cover the cost. Since the courts have complete discretion in assigning cases to a child referee, it is possible the county may incur additional costs under the IV-D program over which it has no control. The statutes should be clarified to provide state funding will be used in this situation rather than county funding.

15. Corrections Booking Fee

A significant portion of the cost for housing inmates is incurred during the booking process. The Lancaster County Corrections Department has recommended the imposition of a booking fee to help recoup these expenses. However, legislation is needed to create statutory authority for the County to charge booking fees.

16. Modify Strict Liability Provisions of Neb. Rev. Stat. §13-911 When a Vehicular Pursuit Is Terminated by a Law Enforcement Officer

As interpreted by the Nebraska Supreme Court, a political subdivision can be held strictly liable under §13-911 for damages to an innocent third party caused by a fleeing motorist, even after a pursuing law enforcement officer has stopped the pursuit. §13-911 should be amended to eliminate strict liability when the damages are caused by the fleeing motorist after the pursuit has been terminated by the officer. This amendment would provide an incentive to law enforcement to stop pursuits which have become dangerous to innocent third parties.

17. Increase Funding for Sex Offender Treatment and Tracking

All sex offenders are transferred to the Lincoln Regional Center prior to release from state custody. This policy results in a disproportionate number of sex offenders in our community. Since state policy is increasing the number of sex offenders in the County, additional funding should be provided by the State to address this problem.

Also, the Lancaster County Sheriff is statutorily required to register sex offenders under the Sex Offender Registration Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. §29-4004 (Reissue 2008). The Sheriff devotes a full time employee to perform this mandated function. Likewise, the Corrections Department has additional duties under §29-4007. To help defray these costs sex offenders should be required to pay a registration fee.

18. Review and Revise the Criminal Code Regarding Appropriate Use of Jail Time

LR 272 was enacted by the Legislature for the purpose of studying the fiscal impact of the criminal law on counties, especially new criminal laws and procedures. LR 272 will also examine if the criminal law is effectively addressing the problems it is trying to solve, and whether a cost-benefit analysis could be performed prior to enacting new criminal offenses and enhanced criminal procedures. Criminal offenses which carry jail time increase county costs for jails and indigent defense, and the Legislature very seldom if ever appropriates funding to assist counties with these costs. The criminal justice system continues to grow at an alarming rate, and Lancaster County could benefit from a sensible approach to the creation of new jailable offenses, as well as a review of the effectiveness of the imposition of jail time on existing offenses.

19. Amend Neb. Rev. Stat. § 43-278 to Give the Juvenile Court Discretion to Allow Evidentiary Hearings Telephonically or by Videoconferencing

Conducting juvenile court sessions by videoconferencing saves money, reduces risk, and improves the efficiency of the court. At the same time, all precautions must be taken to protect the rights of our youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Under existing law, all non-evidentiary hearings may be heard by the court telephonically or by videoconferencing. However, evidentiary hearings cannot be heard telephonically or by videoconferencing without the stipulation of all parties. Many attorneys are reluctant to stipulate, thereby requiring their clients be in the courtroom for every evidentiary hearing, regardless of whether the due process rights of their clients can be protected by videoconferencing. § 43-278 should be amended to eliminate the requirement that all parties must stipulate before an evidentiary hearing can be heard telephonically or by videoconferencing. The juvenile court judges are in the best position to decide whether the physical presence of the youth at an evidentiary hearing is necessary to protect their rights.

20. Provide Statutory Guidance on Enforcement of Insurance Subrogation Clauses

In the case of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, Inc. v. Dailey, 268 Neb. 733 (2004), the Nebraska Supreme Court held a subrogation clause in the insurance contract could not be

enforced against the insured under the equitable made whole doctrine. The Dailey case involved an employee covered under an insurance contract between his employer, the Nebraska Association of County Officials, and Blue Cross. The employee was injured as a result of the negligence of a third party, and subsequently recovered a one-time payment of \$1,225,000 and monthly payments of \$10,000 for life against the third party. Even though the contract clearly provided Blue Cross would be entitled to recover approximately \$794,000 it had paid on behalf of the insured for injuries caused by a third party, the Supreme Court held Blue Cross was not entitled to recover these funds because the insured had not yet been made whole for the injuries. A statutory solution is needed to provide for the enforcement of reasonable subrogation clauses to help control health insurance costs.

21. Create the Position of Magistrate

In 2009 the Legislature passed LR 183 to examine the creation of a specialized magistrate for the State's largest courts. The magistrate would have authority to issue search warrants, subpoenas, arrest warrants, summonses, and set bail. The purpose for creating this position is to help reduce jail populations, as well as reduce the need for new judges.

22. Occupation Tax on Wineries

Neb. Rev. Stat. §53-132(4) gives authority to cities, villages and counties to charge an occupation tax on retail, craft brewery, and microdistillery licenses. However, no such authority exists for farm winery licenses. Given the growing number of farm wineries, it may be advisable to authorize an occupation tax on farm winery licenses.

23. Amend Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-1,103.04 to Provide for the Appointment of a Private Attorney Rather than the Public Defender

When the Office of Parole Administration determines an amendment of the conditions of community supervision is necessary for an individual subject to lifetime supervision, if the person requests legal counsel and is indigent, an attorney from the public defender office is appointed. Since this proceeding is civil in nature, appointment of the public defender is not appropriate. Also, the cost of appointing a private attorney should be borne by the State.

ATTACHMENT A

77-1807.

Real property taxes; delinquent tax sale; how conducted; sale of part; bid by land bank; effect.

(2)(a) This subsection applies beginning January 1, 2015.

(d) The county treasurer shall announce bidding rules at the beginning of the public auction, and such rules shall apply to all bidders throughout the public auction.

* Would like to add the option that a county can choose to conduct tax sale through online auction.

77-1815.

Real property taxes; county treasurer; attendance at tax sale; penalty.

If any treasurer fails to attend any sale of real property as required by sections 77-1801 to 77-1814, either in person or by deputy, he or she shall be liable to a fine of not less than fifty nor more than three hundred dollars to be recovered by an action in the district court in the name of the county against the treasurer and the person issuing the treasurer's bond.

*Would like to clarify the ability to conduct an online auction.

77-1701.

Collection of taxes; county treasurer tax collector; statements; contents; special assessments; de minimis amount; how treated.

(1) The county treasurer shall be ex officio county collector of all taxes levied within the county. The county board shall designate a county official to mail or otherwise deliver a statement of the amount of taxes due and a notice that special assessments are due, to the last-known address of the person, firm, association, or corporation against whom such taxes or special assessments are assessed or to the lending institution or other party responsible for paying such taxes or special assessments. Such statement shall clearly indicate, for each political subdivision, the levy rate and the amount of taxes due as the result of principal or interest payments on bonds issued by the political subdivision and shall show such rate and amount separate from any other levy. Beginning with tax year 2000, when taxes on real property are delinquent for a prior year, the county treasurer shall indicate this information on the current year tax statement in bold letters. The information provided shall inform the taxpayer that delinquent taxes and interest are due for the prior year or years and shall indicate the specific year or years for which such taxes and interest remain unpaid. The language shall read "Back Taxes and Interest Due For", followed by numbers to indicate each year for which back taxes and interest are due. Failure to receive such statement or notice shall not relieve the taxpayer from any liability to pay such taxes or special assessments and any interest or penalties accrued thereon. In any county in which a city of the metropolitan class is located, all statements of taxes shall also include notice that special assessments for cutting weeds, removing litter, and demolishing buildings are due.

*As an option to parcel owners to those who choose to participate, would like to add electronic communication of statements, reminders and notices of delinquency

77-1736.06.

Property tax refund; procedure.

The following procedure shall apply when making a property tax refund:

(1) Within thirty days of the entry of a final nonappealable order, an unprotested determination of a county assessor, an unappealed decision of a county board of equalization, or other final action requiring a refund of real or personal property taxes paid or, for property valued by the state, within thirty days of a recertification of value by the Property Tax Administrator pursuant to section 77-1775 or 77-1775.01, the county assessor shall determine the amount of refund due the person entitled to the refund, certify that amount to the county treasurer, and send a copy of such certification to the person entitled to the refund. Within thirty days from the date the county assessor certifies the amount of the refund, the county treasurer shall notify each political subdivision, including any school district receiving a distribution pursuant to section 79-1073 and any land bank receiving real property taxes pursuant to subdivision (3)(a) of section 19-5211, of its respective share of the refund, except that for any political subdivision whose share of the refund is two hundred dollars or less, the county board may waive this notice requirement. Notification shall be by first-class mail, postage prepaid, to the last-known address of record of the political subdivision. The county treasurer shall pay the refund from funds in his or her possession belonging to any political subdivision, including any school district receiving a distribution pursuant to section 79-1073 and any land bank receiving real property taxes pursuant to subdivision (3)(a) of section 19-5211, which received any part of the tax or penalty being refunded. If sufficient funds are not available or the political subdivision, within thirty days of the mailing of the notice by the county treasurer if applicable, certifies to the county treasurer that a hardship would result and create a serious interference with its governmental functions if the refund of the tax or penalty is paid, the county treasurer shall register the refund or portion thereof which remains unpaid as a claim against such political subdivision and shall issue the person entitled to the refund a receipt for the registration of the claim. The certification by a political subdivision declaring a hardship shall be binding upon the county treasurer;

*Would like to change from two hundred dollars or less to five hundred or less in counties with greater populations than 250,000

* Also add notification can be sent through electronic submission to the political subdivision

*This is also where the complicated issue of TIF refunds should be discussed when there are contracts not to appeal tax values while in a TIF.

77-1901.

Tax liens; delinquency; order of county board directing foreclosure.

Counties shall have a lien upon real estate within their boundaries for all taxes due thereon to the state, any governmental subdivision of the state, any municipal corporation, and any drainage or irrigation district. After any parcel of real estate has been offered for sale and not sold for want of bidders, the county board shall make and enter an order directing the county attorney to foreclose the lien for all taxes then delinquent, excluding any lien on real estate for special assessments levied by any sanitary and improvement district which special assessments have not been previously offered for sale by the county treasurer, in the same manner and with like effect as in the foreclosure of real estate mortgages, except as otherwise specifically provided by sections 77-1903 to 77-1917.

*Put a tax value minimum on pursuing county foreclosures at the disclosure of the county board and county attorney (Doug Cyr would have insight into this issue)

ATTACHMENT B

Lancaster County, Nebraska Services Provided to the State of Nebraska

**Budget Year
2016-17**

		<u>Updated Information</u>	
County Treasurer	The Treasurer collects sales tax and remits to the State through the motor vehicles division. Collected \$29,238,776 in FY12 and collections fees kept by the county were \$1,800.	Collected \$38,086,753 in FY16 and collection fees kept by the county were approximately \$2,700	
West O Building	Lancaster County provides 4,075 square feet to the State for Drivers License Examiners. This includes utilities and custodial services. The cost per sq/ft at West O is \$14.88.	The cost per sq/ft at West O is \$18.50 (2016-17)	\$ 75,388
Motor Vehicle Building	Lancaster County provides 1,651 square feet to the State. This includes utilities and custodial services. The cost per sq/ft is \$7.47.	The cost per sq/ft is \$9.72 (2016-17)	\$ 16,048
Register of Deeds	The Register of Deeds does all of the work required to file land records yet is required to send a portion of the documentary stamp tax to the state to fund other programs. County keeps 22.22% and the State receives 77.78%. Based on \$2 million collected - state receives \$1,555,000. (76-903)	Calculated amount is still reasonable	\$ 1,555,000
Election Commissioner	Billable costs for elections are not allowed to be billed to the state. Costs are passed down to other political subdivisions but not to the state. State costs would range from 50% to 60% of billable costs. Last primary billable costs were \$356,000.		
County Court (BU 6280)	Lancaster County is required to remit certain court costs to the State. If those fees cannot be collected from defendants, the County must pay.	Court Costs (All 3 courts have been combined)	\$ 305,000

Lancaster County, Nebraska
 Services Provided to the State of Nebraska

ATTACHMENT A

		<u>Updated Information</u>	<u>Budget Year 2016-17</u>
County Treasurer	The Treasurer collects sales tax and remits to the State through the motor vehicles division. Collected \$29,238,776 in FY12 and collections fees kept by the county were \$1,800.	Collected \$38,086,753 in FY16 and collection fees kept by the county were approximately \$2,700	
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Motor Vehicle Building	Lancaster County provides 1,651 square feet to the State. This includes utilities and custodial services. The cost per sq/ft is \$7.47.	The cost per sq/ft is \$9.72 (2016-17)	\$ 16,048
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Election Commissioner	Billable costs for elections are not allowed to be billed to the state. Costs are passed down to other political subdivisions but not to the state. State costs would range from 50% to 60% of billable costs. Last primary billable costs were \$356,000.		
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Lancaster County, Nebraska
Services Provided to the State of Nebraska

		<u>Updated Information</u>	<u>Budget Year</u> <u>2016-17</u>
County Court	All County Court staff are state employees. Lancaster County pays for operating expenses, computers, and office equipment.		\$ 470,852
	Lancaster County is required to provide for office space and courtrooms. Cost includes custodial services, utilities, security, and parking. 29,195 sq/ft at a cost of \$14.72 per sq/ft. (New Courtroom is under construction)	31,422 sq/ft @ \$15.45 plus parking	\$ 490,870
Juvenile Court	Juvenile Court Judges are state employees. The County pays for a Court Administrator, 3 Clerk Typists, and 4 bailiffs. (Personnel Costs)		\$ 617,783
	Lancaster County also pays for Court Appointed Attorneys, Boarding contracts, and other operating expenditures.	LB 894 has increased budget by \$75,000 due to appointing attorneys for all juveniles in court.	\$ 1,231,012
	Lancaster County is required to provide for office space and courtrooms. Cost includes custodial services, utilities, security, and parking. 12,632 sq/ft at a cost of \$14.72 per sq/ft.	12,500 sq/ft @ \$15.45 plus parking	\$ 197,805
District Court	Lancaster County is required to remit certain court costs to the State. If those fees cannot be collected from defendants, the County must pay.		-
	District Court Judges are state employees. The County pays for a Court Administrator, 2 Law Clerks, and 8.75 bailiffs. (Personnel Costs)		\$ 1,214,103
	Lancaster County has had a District Court Referee		

Lancaster County, Nebraska
Services Provided to the State of Nebraska

Budget Year
2016-17

Updated Information

for many years. State Statute states the county and state should pay for the costs. IV D pays for 2/3 of the costs but the state pays zero.

Lancaster County also pays for Court Appointed Attorneys, juror fees, and other operating expenditures.

\$ 1,016,731

Lancaster County is required to provide for office space and courtrooms. Cost includes custodial services, utilities, security, and parking. 33,524 sq/ft at a cost of \$14.72 per sq/ft.

33,524 sq/ft @ \$15.45 plus parking

\$ 525,506

County Sheriff

Special Services Division provides security for the courtrooms. This cost is incorporated into the cost per sq/ft in rent calculations.

The Civil Division is responsible for the process of writs and documents. Sheriff does receive revenue but it does not offset the cost of performing the service.

Register sex offenders and complete handgun registrations in the Administrative Support Division. 2 employees - does not include supervisor time.

Corrections

The Jail has provided 859 DNA tests for the State over the last 2.5 years.

The Jail has completed 7,175 full sets of fingerprints for the State system (NSP) over the last 2 years.

Lancaster County, Nebraska
Services Provided to the State of Nebraska

Budget Year
2016-17

Updated Information

The Jail has completed 22 sex offender registrations over the last 2 years.

The Jail has had to answer 138 Ombudsman's request with time spent researching, interviewing, making repeated phone calls, and email contacts with the Ombudsman's office over the last 2 years.

The Jail has completed approximately 18,000 warrant checks on offenders before releasing over the last 2 years.

Time and staff effort to send inmate medical files to the State of Nebraska over the last 2 years.

Jail Reimbursement - housing of prisoners on behalf of the State. The State's rate was only \$35 per day and funding would run out during the fiscal year. Funding ended after FY11.

Amount billed FY00-FY11	15,696,765
Amount collected	8,626,242

\$ 7,070,523

Amount unable to be billed because funding ended:	
FY12	1,809,255
FY13 - 10-31-12	669,305

Amount unable to be billed because funding ended:
 (through June 30, 2016)

\$ 9,392,425

Juvenile Probation

Juvenile Probation staff are state employees. Lancaster County pays for operating expenses, computers, and office equipment. This also includes contracts with the State Probation Office. The Juvenile Drug Court was funded by the State with grants but the County started funding in FY05.

Computer Request
 (County is no longer funding Drug Court after September)

\$ 82,804
 5,410

Lancaster County, Nebraska
Services Provided to the State of Nebraska

		<u>Updated Information</u>	<u>Budget Year</u> <u>2016-17</u>
	Lancaster County provides space for the department and the juvenile drug court. Cost includes custodial services, utilities, security and parking. 3,736 sq/ft at a cost of \$14.72 per sq/ft.	Heritage Square thru March 605 Building After April (14,181 sq/ft @ \$15.45 plus parking)	\$ 218,768
Adult Probation	Adult Probation staff are state employees. Lancaster County pays for operating expenses, computers, and office equipment. This also includes a contract with the State Probation Office.	Computer Request	\$ 176,690 \$ 13,322
	Lancaster County provides space at the Jail and office space at Trabert Hall. Cost includes custodial services, utilities, security and parking. 6,323 sq ft at a cost of \$11.75 per sq/ft at the jail and 17,572 sq ft at a cost of \$10 per sq/ft at Trabert Hall.	K Street - 2,254 sq/ft @ \$11.75 plus parking 605 Building - 20,405 sq/ft @ \$15.45 plus parking Trabert Hall New Reporting Center at MSC	\$ 316,812
Community Corrections	Drug Court - reimbursement for employees. Dollar amount of reimbursement has not changed over 6 years - despite Kim's request. Employee Costs - \$276,156 (salaries only) State Reimb - \$183,839	The state has increased their reimbursement by \$65,000 to \$248,839. Still does not cover employee costs (\$446,851)	
Youth Services Center	The state does not reimburse the county for the cost of care for youth detained and/or in an alternative to detention post adjudication and beyond. The requirement is only when the youth is committed to HHS/OJS and should be adjudicated youth in juvenile court. The state should also be responsible for the cost of care for youth who are detained due to a violation of probation pre-adjudication status.	State Probation does not cover actual costs Staff Secure has been eliminated in FY16-17	

Lancaster County, Nebraska
Services Provided to the State of Nebraska

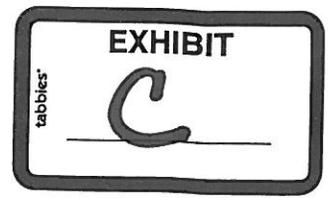
Budget Year
2016-17

Updated Information

General Assistance	Lease agreement with Health & Human Services - 41,267 square feet x 13.60 per sq ft. x 51.62% nonfederal share = \$289,707.55 (Included on legislative list)	\$ 277,933
County Fees	A number of county statutory fees have not been raised for many years. Fees are not allowed to be increased to cover costs. A few examples: locksmith license marriage license handgun permits motor vehicle inspection fees Treasurer fees	
Other Court Related Costs	Clerk of the District Court	\$ 1,781,294
	Jury Commissioner	\$ 153,744
	Mental Health Board	\$ 141,260

Note: List was started in FY12-13 and updates have been added throughout the years.

**Sarpy County 2017 Legislative Proposals
Tri-County Meeting, November 14, 2016**



Property Tax Relief/State Budget Issues

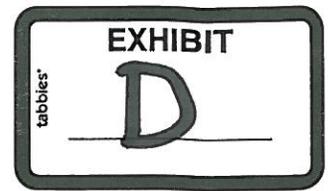
Sarpy County is supportive of providing property tax relief to our citizens. However, in light of the State budget deficits we realize the ability to provide such relief may be limited. We will resist any efforts at the State level that passes more unfunded mandates onto our taxpayers and seek to protect our current revenue streams.

Priorities

- 1) Continuation of the Register of Deeds fee collected for records preservation and modernization by striking the January 1, 2018 sunset date.
- 2) Clarify the requirements for agricultural/horticultural special valuation (greenbelt).
- 3) Amend County Sales Tax Statutes (13-319, 320, 322) to include a public infrastructure component to include roads, bridges, storm sewers, sanitary sewers and wastewater treatments plants. It is NOT our intent at this time to propose a county sales tax but rather to start the discussion on adding another tool for potential future use.
- 4) Adding law clerks and students to the definition of unclassified service in the County Civil Service Act.
- 5) Removing the requirement that bids for roads projects have to be opened before the County Board and to allow them to be treated as other bid openings.
- 6) Eliminating the requirement that Sarpy County Planning Commissioners have to file personal financial statements with Accountability and Disclosure. Only counties over 100,000 are faced with this requirement. These are the only local planning commissions subject to such a requirement.
- 7) Personnel Policy Board District Court Clarification (23-2522), remove the requirement that requests for enforcement orders be made to the District Court of Lancaster County instead of just to the District Court.
- 8) We are currently experiencing long waiting periods in the State Drivers Testing area (2-4 hours). We are working with DMV and the Governor's Office to address this issue. We will support any legislation, budget requests, etc. that will facilitate their creation of a new service center and the vacation of their current space in our courthouse.

Monitor

- 9) State Budget Deficits, ensure that solutions to the State budget shortfall don't result in additional costs or unfunded mandates to the County
- 10) Ensure that any purported property tax relief is fair, equitable and sustainable, unlike previous attempts in this area, i.e. State aid, Jail reimbursements, etc.
- 11) Protect Juvenile Community Aid funding
- 12) Justice reform, clarify and eliminate restrictions found in rules/regulations
- 13) State takeover of the Clerk of the District Court



**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DOUGLAS COUNTY, NEBRASKA
2017 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA PRIORITIES**

STANDING SHARED SUPPORT ITEMS

1. Support criminal justice reform, address rising jail costs, and mitigate the fiscal impact to county jails as of result of LB605 (104th).
2. Eliminate unfunded/underfunded mandates on Counties by the State; examples: eliminate the responsibility of counties to pay HHS office space(s) [prev. proposed LB61-Bolz, 104th] and Probation office space(s) [prev. proposed LB427-Groene, 104th].
3. Counties to share proportionally in the automotive sales tax revenue collected by County Treasurers [prev. proposed LB391-Crawford, 104th].

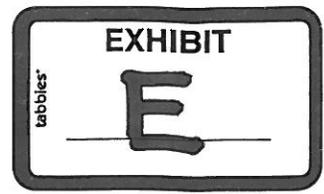
2017 LEGISLATIVE ITEMS

1. **SUPPORT** a legislative effort to provide statewide uniformity in the collection of 911 surcharges; allow counties containing a city of the metropolitan class the ability to collect the same surcharge amount per active telephone number as those counties not containing a city of the metropolitan class.
2. **SUPPORT** a legislative initiative to expand Medicaid coverage to eligible individuals in the County's jail custody until their sentencing and/or post-adjudication; **SUPPORT** requiring private health insurers in Nebraska to continue to provide health coverage to insured individuals in the County's jail custody until their sentencing and/or post-adjudication (applicable to individuals who enter the County's custody covered by a private health insurance policy). [prev. proposed LB341-Howard, 104th]
3. **SUPPORT** an initiative to revise section(s) §2-224, or appropriate section, to allow County Fair Board members to serve 'at-large', rather than being bound that not more than two members of a County Fair Board be residents of the same township, village, precinct, or city at the time of appointment to a fair board.
4. **SUPPORT** an initiative to revise section(s) §§ 32-814 and 32-815, or appropriate section, relating to the printing of election ballots, to eliminate the current requirement providing for the 'rotation of candidate names'.

DRAFT 11/2016

5. **SUPPORT** an initiative to revise section(s) §§18-2101 through 18-2144 known as the *Community Development Law*, or appropriate section, to require the State of Nebraska to fund all TIF (Tax Increment Financing) backed projects as part of Nebraska's statewide responsibility of economic development.
6. **SUPPORT** an initiative to revise section(s) §§28-929 through 28-934, or appropriate section, to increase the penalties for the crime of an assault on a correctional officer.
7. **SUPPORT** legislation to expand Counties' ordinance making authority (grant 'home-rule' authority); allow counties containing a city of the metropolitan class, the ability to pass laws and ordinances to appropriately address their own unique needs and to more efficiently provide services to residents.
8. **SUPPORT** legislation to remove as a duty of County Treasurer offices the receiving, storing and in-person issuance of license plates and to require that the State of Nebraska directly issue by mail, all license plates in a uniform and statewide manner (preferably from a single, central state facility).
9. **SUPPORT** an initiative to revise *Neb. Const. art. VIII-3* and section(s) §77-1902, or appropriate section, to allow counties containing a city of the metropolitan class the option to choose on a case-by-case basis whether to pursue a '5-week redemption period' for tax foreclosure purposes on properties that are abandoned and delinquent on taxes, rather than the current system of allowing abandoned properties to deteriorate for a period of 3-4 years before they are sold via the tax foreclosure process.
10. **SUPPORT** revisions to *Chapter §77* pertaining to Board of Equalization (BOE):
 - Tax Equalization and Review Commission (TERC) hearings to be held in Omaha in addition to Lincoln
 - Consider the repeal of TERC
 - Prohibit County Assessors from appealing directly to TERC without local BOE approval
 - Better define the type of relief/discretion that a BOE may exercise when reviewing property owners' (appellants') appeals of denied property tax exemptions/ homestead exemptions, when the reason for the denial is due to a late filing

2017 NACO Legislative Issues to Pursue



- Remove Highway Allocation Funds from the definition of restricted funds
- Remove requirement for tonnage signage for bridges
- Change filing location of school district treasurer's bonds
- Parcel identification numbers on replatted parcels
- Valuation of real property related to renewable energy generation facilities
- Electronic Certification of Value to Taxing Entities
- Update antiquated district court statutes – LB848 (2016)
- Update jury terminology statutes – LB847 (2016)
- Eliminate sunset on filing fees used for technology – LB492 (2015)
- Provide grace period for interest on rejected homestead exemption applications – LB797 (2016)
- Dark store method of valuing big-box stores
- Reimburse counties for office space provided to the Department of Health and Human Services

Not Prioritized by NACO but Additional Work Needed

- **Lancaster Priority --** Reimburse counties for office space provided to the Department of Health and Human Services
 - Work with Joe Kohout, Bolz will re-introduce previous bill
 - Work on amendment allowing federal reimbursement
- Dark store method of valuing big-box stores
 - use education -- national speaker, continued contact with TERC & PTA
- Request continued funding for riparian noxious weed control
 - Work with Appropriations to put in budget, not legislation
- Add transparency to TERC show cause hearings
 - Larry deliver language to McCollister adding county board as recipient of R&O, as far as NACO will go

Removed from List

- Authorize internet bidding
- Eliminate treasurer's tax deeds
- Increase dollar amount for submitting uncashed county checks as unclaimed property
- Examine motor vehicle exemption after vehicles are 14 years old
- Allow valuation of improvements before attachment
- Clarify and revise reporting requirements for the County Justice Reinvestment Grant Program



Sарy County Human Resources

East Annex, 1261 Golden Gate Drive, Suite 4E
Papillion, NE 68046-2845
(402) 593-4465 FAX: (402) 593-5781

To: Sarpy County Board of Commissioners
From: Bonnie Moore, Human Resources Director
Date: November 3, 2016
RE: BCBS Health Insurance Renewal

For your consideration on Tuesday are two options¹ for the County's Health Insurance Renewal. Information about both options is shown below.

Option 1:

- Based upon current enrollment data, the increased cost to the County is \$815,086.
\$500 deductible for individual and \$1,000 deductible for family.
Once the applicable deductible is met, the employee would pay 50% until the maximum out-of-pocket is reached.
Out-of-pocket maximum for individual is \$3,500 and \$7,000 for family.
Premium amounts are noted below²:

Table with 5 columns: OPTION 1, County's Share, Employee's Share, TOTAL, Increased cost for Employee. Rows include Employee, Employee/Child, Employee/Spouse, and Family.

Option 2:

- Based upon current enrollment data, the increased cost to the County is \$877,755.
\$500 deductible for individual and \$1,000 deductible for family.
Once the applicable deductible is met, the employee would pay 30% until the maximum out-of-pocket is reached.
Out-of-pocket maximum for individual is \$4,000 and \$8,000 for family.
Premium amounts are noted below³:

Table with 5 columns: OPTION 2, County's Share, Employee's Share, TOTAL, Increased cost for Employee. Rows include Employee, Employee/Child, Employee/Spouse, and Family.

Includes EBS cost

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

Handwritten signature of Bonnie Moore

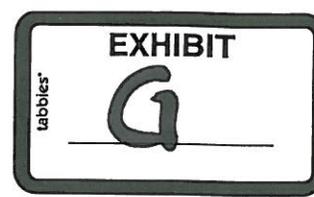
Bonnie Moore, Human Resources Director

1 The deductible and out-of-pocket amounts shown are for in-network services.
2 Includes EBS fees.
3 See footnote 2.

RETIREE Health Insurance Continuation ("Retirement Program") as of January 1, 2017

GROUP	Years of Service	AGES	County Pay %	Approval Date
Employees' Association	15 years	62-65	75% - single 50% - other levels	CBA
AFSCME Local 251	15 years	62-65	75% - single 65% - EE/SP 50% - Family	CBA
FOP-Sworn A	15 years	55-59	50% all levels	CBA
FOP-Sworn* B	15 years	60-65	100% - single 50% - other levels	CBA
FOP-Non Sworn A	15 years	60-61	0%	CBA
FOP-Non Sworn B	15 years	62-65	75% - single 50% - other levels	CBA
FOP-Communications	15 years	62-65	75% - single 50% - family	CBA
Salaried/Management A	15 years	55-59	50% all levels	Res 2011-384
Salaried/Mgt B	15 years	60-65	100% - single 50% - other levels	Res 2011-384
Elected/Chief A	15 years	55-59	50% all levels	Res 2013-129
Elected/Chief B	15 years	60-65	100% - single 50% - other levels	Res 2013-129
Non-Union/Hourly	15 years	62-65	75% - single 50% - other levels	Res 1996-282

Sarpy County Government
Strategic Plan for 2013-2015
(March 2014 Update)



Preferred Future for Sarpy County Community

- **Managed, smart growth continues to drive a thriving local economy.**
 - The County population exceeds 200,000.
 - Business development parks are populated with high-technology firms.
 - A lively retail sector offers diverse choices for residents and attracts destination shoppers.
 - Offutt Air Force Base remains fully operational and an important foundation of the local economy.

- **The County has a national and regional reputation as a community of choice.**
 - High quality, livable neighborhoods are a positive factor in the successful recruitment of new business and industry.
 - Residential newcomers continue to be attracted by high quality public schools.

- **Modern highways, and well designed and maintained roads support the community.**
 - An expanded Platteview Road serves residents and provides a connector loop for the metro region.
 - 180th Street is a key north/south County road.
 - County collector and arterial roads effectively connect more areas of the County.

- **Recreation facilities, entertainment venues and other tourist attractions are a community signature.**
 - County has formed a partnership to develop a new recreation area along the Platte River.
 - Residents make use of the County's extensive walking and biking trails.
 - Visitors and tourists are drawn to the County's high-quality leisure amenities.

- **A spirit of cooperation among local governments benefits residents and businesses.**
 - Sarpy County communities compete in recruitment of new businesses, but also are able to cooperate for mutual County-wide benefit.
 - Local governments have maximized the use of cooperative service agreements for delivery of public services.
 - Local elected officials regularly confer in a formal way to seek new opportunities for mutual gain.

- **County government has a positive reputation as a leader in efficient services and innovative initiatives that benefit the community.**
 - The majority of residents can transact County business through on-line services.
 - Living in the County is more affordable because property taxes as a portion of total County revenues have declined measurably over the past decade.
 - State government has granted additional discretionary decision making authority to the County.
 - The County has achieved a flatter, more streamlined organizational structure.

7 Strategic Goals and Key Objectives

1. Contribute to sustaining and strengthening the local economy.

- a. In collaboration with community economic development partners, facilitate the creation of a vision for the growth of Sarpy County.
- b. Review the County's business incentive policy and revise as needed to align with the community's vision for growth.
- c. Obtain purchase options for land that represents prime sites for new business locations.
 - i. **Encourage SCEDC to set up a process for securing options**
- d. Initiate development of a new Comprehensive Plan.
 - i. **County Board approved small area study for Highway 50 Corridor**
 - ii. **Budgeted for first half of Comprehensive Plan this fiscal year and second half next fiscal year**
 - iii. **Development of a Request for Qualifications for a consultant is underway**
- e. Work with community partners to support the present functions of Offutt Air Force Base and champion all efforts to keep the base off the closure list.
 - i. **Sarpy staff will be involved in upcoming Offutt Joint Land Use Study (JLUS)**
 - ii. **Planning Director Bruce Fountain remains in contact with Omaha Chamber on how we can help**

2. Maximize stewardship of County revenues and broaden the use of non-property tax revenues to fund services.

- a. Expand alternative revenue sources for financing road maintenance and improvements.
 - i. **ASIP program in development**
- b. Expand the use of debt financing for County road improvements.
 - i. **Fiscal Administrator Brian Hanson prepared an analysis report on debt financing issues**
- c. Study the feasibility of charging local units of government for the cost of incarcerating their prisoners in the County jail and initiate action accordingly.
- d. Seek legislative authorization to increase existing County service fees in order to fully recover the cost of providing individual services.
 - i. **Sarpy bill introduced by Sen. Crawford for County to receive larger share of motor vehicle fees**
- e. Identify additional opportunities for new service fees for financing County services and pursue implementation strategies.
- f. Develop a longer-range plan for voter approval of a dedicated County sales tax to finance one or more public safety initiatives.
- g. Expand options for credit card payments for County fines and user fees.
 - i. **Working to identify which departments could benefit from credit card payments (such as Pre-Trial, Community Service, Tow Lot, District Court, Planning & Building, etc.)**
 - ii. **A barrier to expanded use of credit card payments is that the payer has to agree to pay the credit card processing fee in order to use a credit card, or the County would have to absorb that cost**
- h. Pursue the use of alternative fuels to reduce the County's energy costs.
 - i. **Recently awarded approximately \$600,000 grant to convert approximately 10 vehicles to natural gas and be a partner in the development of a new natural gas station.**

3. Provide for infrastructure improvements that support the growth of the community and enhance quality service to County residents.

- a. Update the 2006 Wastewater and Water Infrastructure Study to determine the need for a new sewer service for underdeveloped areas of the County.
 - i. **Study underway to update the cost estimates to current numbers**
- b. Initiate actions for the formation of a separate governmental entity for providing expanded sewer services.
 - i. **Study underway with expected completion date by end of 2014**
- c. Prioritize County road improvements based on feedback from key stakeholder groups at an annually-convened Road Summit.
 - i. **Recently held second annual Road Summit with representatives from Public Works, County Board, Sheriff's Office, Planning, Administration, and Planning Commission present**
- d. Develop an inventory of needed facility improvements and adopt a long-term County Facilities Plan that estimates costs of individual facility improvements and prioritizes projects.
 - i. **Master Plan adopted in April 2013 which recommended a Criminal Justice Programs Study**
- e. Adopt and implement a County Technology Plan that reduces courthouse foot traffic and advances progress toward a virtual county government.
- f. Create and implement a long-term County Capital Improvement plan for investments in infrastructure, facilities and major equipment.
 - i. **A consolidated plan of capital improvements is prepared each year by Fiscal Administrator**
 - ii. **Once adopted, it will be shared with Department Heads and the public**

4. Enhance the effectiveness of the County's criminal justice services.

- a. Expand the use of alternative programs to prevent incarceration in the County jail.
- b. Implement technology to enable video arraignment of persons charged with a crime and detained in the County jail.
 - i. **Committee has been working with technology provider Avaya on options**
 - ii. **Committee will be visiting Lancaster County courts and new jail in March 2014 to witness their video arraignment and video visitation programs**
- c. Improve juvenile justice programs by developing alternative programs to prevent detention and beginning implementation of a plan for adequate juvenile justice facilities.
 - i. **Juvenile Detentions Alternative Initiative (JDAI) is on-going**
- e. Enhance cooperation in the delivery of law enforcement services with other agencies in the County.
- f. Achieve a successful transition to the Board of Corrections for management of the County jail.

5. Expand partnerships in the County and wider region to leverage resources, eliminate service redundancies and improve local influence in state legislative decisions.

- a. In consultation with community partners, identify the most mutually beneficial prospects for joint service delivery programs and forge three new cooperative service delivery agreements.
- b. Pursue additional study of the benefits and technical feasibility of a regional approach to the provision of emergency communication services (9-1-1 services) and take action accordingly.
 - i. **Matrix study close to being finalized and discussions with partners is on-going**
- c. Expand coordination of planning and zoning decisions between and among municipalities in the County.

- d. Facilitate development of a shared state legislative agenda with cities in the County and dedicate County lobbying resources to advance the agenda.
 - i. **Legislative representatives for the cities and County are in contact before and during session**

6. Improve communication to inform the community about County services and initiatives, and expand citizen engagement.

- a. Adopt a public communication plan and dedicate resources to its implementation.
- b. Enhance the County website to create additional avenues for citizen engagement.
 - i. **Information Systems will request funds in the FY 2015 budget for a complete website redesign**
- c. Implement a County media policy that directs who speaks for the Board of Commissioners and the departments under the Board's authority.
 - i. **Communications Policy adopted by County Board**
 - ii. **Fred Uhe has been designated as Communications Coordinator**
 - iii. **Communications Committee continues to hold meetings**
- d. Adopt public communication standards that achieve uniform messaging and graphic design for the County website and other communication venues.
- e. Increase communication with County employees to keep them informed about County services and decisions.

7. Provide for a high performing County workforce to deliver services.

- a. Expand opportunities for employee learning and professional development.
- b. Capture administrative efficiencies through expansion of interdepartmental cross training.
- c. Sustain a high-skilled County workforce through implementation of succession planning.
- d. Combine administrative service units and functions to achieve more efficient use of human resources.
- e. Administer fair and competitive compensation practices across all departments.
- g. Evaluate the need for a compensation policy that rewards high performance and expand the use of non-financial employee recognition practices.
- h. Increase employee performance feedback accountability through implementation of a performance appraisal program.

2013-2014 Strategic Plan Action Items and Performance Measures



Strategic Goal #1

Contribute to sustaining and strengthening the local economy.

Goal Facilitator: Mark Wayne, County Administrator

Key Objectives:	Responsible Parties	Initiation Date	Completion Date	Performance Measures:
a. In collaboration with community economic development partners, facilitate the creation of a vision for the growth of Sarpy County.	Mark Wayne, Bruce Fountain, County Board	7/1/2013	on-going	1. Maintain or increase financial support to SCEDC and the local chambers in their work to retain and create new business opportunities in the community. 2. number of jobs created. 3. sales and property tax base increases 4. building permits issued
b. Review the County's business incentive policy and revise as needed to align with the community's vision for growth.	Mark Wayne, County Board, Denny Wilson	7/1/2013	on-going	1. plan sanity sewer outfall expansion to generat planned growth. 2. increase road infrastructure funds (ASIP and RTSD)
c. Obtain purchase options for land that represents prime sites for new business locations.	Mark Wayne, Toby Churchill	7/1/2013	on-going	1. Work with SCEDC to select rail site and data center site 2. obtain purchase options on land.
d. Initiate development of a new Comprehensive Plan	Bruce Fountain	1/1/2014	5/1/2015	1. prepare request for qualifications 2. select consulting firm
e. Work with community partners to support the present functions of Offutt Air Force Base and champion all efforts to the keep the base off the closure list.	Bruce Fountain, SCEDC, County Board	7/1/2013	on-going	1. base grows and does not close



2013-2014 Strategic Plan Action Items and Performance Measures

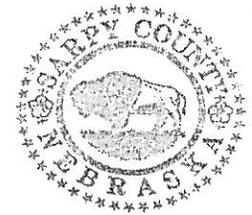
Strategic Goal # 2

Maximize stewardship of County revenues and broaden the use of non-property tax revenues to fund services.

Goal Facilitator: Brian Hanson, Fiscal Administrator

Key Objectives:	Responsible Parties	Initiation Date	Completion Date	Performance Measures:
a. Expand alternative revenue sources for financing road maintenance and improvements.	Bruce Fountain, Denny Wilson	7/1/2013	on-going	1. Approve Arterial Street Improvement Fee 2. Establish Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD)
b. Expand the use of debt financing for County road improvements.	Brian Hanson, Denny Wilson	7/1/2013	on-going	1. outline a road improvement program of major arterials that need bond funds to build
c. Study the feasibility of charging local units of government for the cost of incarcerating their prisoners in the County jail and initiate action accordingly.	Sheriff Davis, County Board			1. create jail revenue stream
d. Seek legislative authorization to increase existing County service fees in order to fully recover the cost of providing individual services.	Brian Hanson, Fred Uhe	11/1/2013	6/1/2014	1. obtain legislation for higher service fees
e. Identify additional opportunities for new service fees for financing County services and pursue implementation strategies.	Brian Hanson, Fred Uhe	7/1/2013	on-going	1. obtain legislation if necessary
f. Develop a longer-range plan for voter approval of a designated County sales tax to finance one or more public safety initiatives	Mark Wayne, Fred Uhe			1. obtain city support for the tax 2. obtain voter approval
g. Expand options for credit card payments for County fines and user fees.	Brian Hanson, Mark Walters			1. identify potential fines and fees that could be paid by credit card
h. Pursue the use of alternative fuels to reduce the County's energy costs.	Denny Wilson			1. obtain a grant to purchase/convert vehicles. 2. build a Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) station

2013-2014 Strategic Plan Action Items and Performance Measures



Strategic Goal # 3

Provide for infrastructure improvements that support the growth of the community and enhance quality service to County residents.
 Goal Facilitator: Scott Bovick, Deputy County Administrator

Key Objectives:	Responsible Parties	Initiation Date	Completion Date	Performance Measures:
a. Update the 2006 Wastewater and Water Infrastructure Study to determine the need for a new sewer service for underdeveloped areas of the County.	Mark Wayne, Denny Wilson	7/1/2013	on-going	1. hire consultant to update study
b. Initiate actions for the formation of a separate government entity for providing expanded sewer services.	Denny Wilson, Fred Uhe, Mike Smith			1. begin discussions with city mayors and staff. 2. develop the structure of sewer authority. 3. create a long range sewer development plan and connection fee schedule.
c. Prioritize County road improvements based on feedback from key stakeholder groups at an annually convened Road Summit.	Denny Wilson			1. develop the list of projects. 2. determine the funding stream.
d. Develop an inventory of needed facility improvements and adopt a long-term County Facilities Plan that estimates costs of individual facility improvements and prioritizes projects.	Scott Bovick, Ross Richards	2/1/2013	Completed 4/23/2013	1. Complete criminal justice programs study as an addendum to the Facilities Master Plan
e. Adopt and implement a County Technology Plan that reduces courthouse foot traffic and advances progress toward a virtual County government.	Scott Bovick, Mark Walters			1. conduct a study to identify options in technology improvements that could reduce courthouse traffic. 2. seek legislative changes if necessary. 3. purchase necessary software/hardware
f. Create and implement a long-term County Capital Improvement Plan for investments in infrastructure, facilities and major equipment.	Scott Bovick, Brian Hanson, Ross Richards, Denny Wilson			1. set a portion of tax levy or other revenue stream aside for capital improvements

2013-2014 Strategic Plan Action Items and Performance Measures



Strategic Goal # 4

Enhance effectiveness of the County's criminal justice services

Goal Facilitator: Scott Bovick, Deputy County Administrator

Key Objectives:	Responsible Parties	Initiation Date	Completion Date	Performance Measures:
a. Expand use of alternative programs to prevent incarceration in the County jail.	Dan Williamson, Danielle Richler,			1. conduct study and evaluate alternatives to incarcerations.
b. Implement technology to enable video arraignment of persons charged with a crime and detained in the County jail.	Dan Williamson, Mark Walters			1. evaluate equipment requirements. 2. install necessary hardware/software systems. 3. get judges approval.
c. Improve juvenile justice programs by developing alternative programs to prevent detention and beginning implementation of a plan for adequate juvenile justice facilities.	Dick Shea, Jean Brazda, Jodi York			1. develop treatment programs and determine facility requirements.
d. Enhance cooperation in the delivery of law enforcement services with other agencies in the County.	Greg London,			1. identify services that could be shared by departments.
e. Achieve a succesful transition to the Board of Corrections (BOC) for management of the County jail.	Sheriff Davis, Mark Wayne, Mike Smith			1. pass resolution creating the BOC. 2. develop policies. 3. appoint Corrections Director

2013-2014 Strategic Plan Action Items and Performance Measures

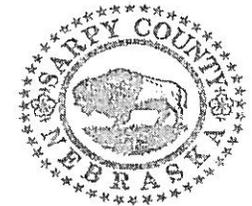


Strategic Goal # 5

Expand partnerships in the County and wider region to leverage resources, eliminate service redundancies, and improve local influence in state legislative decisions.

Goal Facilitator: Fred Uhe, Community and Government Relations Director

Key Objectives:	Responsible Parties	Initiation Date	Completion Date	Performance Measures:
a. In consultation with community partners, identify the most mutually beneficial prospects for joint service delivery programs and forge three new cooperative service delivery agreements.	Fred Uhe			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. meet with partners to discuss possibilities. 2. draft proposals. 3. implement agreements.
b. Pursue additional study of the benefits and technical feasibility of a regional approach to the provision of emergency communications services (911 services) and take action accordingly.	Mark Wayne			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. complete Matrix study
c. Expand coordination of planning and zoning decisions between and among municipalities in the County.	Bruce Fountain			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sarpy planners meet regularly. 2. Share proposed development information with other jurisdictions. 3. Include city planning directors on Comp Plan steering committee.
d. Facilitate development of a shared state legislative agenda with cities in the County and dedicate lobbying resources to advance the agenda.	Fred Uhe			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. lobbyists meet to discuss legislative agendas. 2. select city legislation to support.



2013-2014 Strategic Plan Action Items and Performance Measures

Strategic Goal # 6

Improve communication to inform the community about County services and initiatives, and expand citizen engagement.

Goal Facilitator: Scott Bovick, Deputy County Administrator

Key Objectives:	Responsible Parties	Initiation Date	Completion Date	Performance Measures:
a. Adopt a public communication plan and dedicate resources to its implementation.	Scott Bovick, Fred Uhe			1. form a committee to develop a plan and prepare a budget if needed.
b. Enhance the County website to create additional avenues for citizen engagement.	Mark Walters, Fred Uhe			1. identify best practices for website designs.
c. Implement a County media policy that directs who speaks for the Board of Commissioners and the departments under the Board's authority.	Scott Bovick, Fred Uhe			1. review and update plan as needed.
d. Adopt public communication standards that achieve uniform messaging and graphic design for the County website and other communication venues.	Scott Bovick, Fred Uhe, Mark Walters			1. review department policies on facebook and texting. 2. have the communications committee select the appropriate brand for website, business cards, etc.
e. Increase communication with County employees to keep them informed about County services and decisions.	Karen Buche, Scott Bovick, Fred Uhe			1. create newsletter and press releases to share county information with employees.

2013-2014 Strategic Plan Action Items and Performance Measures



Strategic Goal # 7

Provide for a high performing County workforce to deliver services.

Goal Facilitator: Karen Buche, Human Resource Director

Key Objectives:	Responsible Parties	Initiation Date	Completion Date	Performance Measures:
a. Expand opportunities for employee learning and professional development.	Karen Buche			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. encourage use of education reimbursement. 2. publish web conferences for employees. 3. increase on-site training opportunities.
b. Capture administrative efficiencies through expansion of interdepartmental cross training.	Karen Buche			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. identify potential cross training opportunities.
c. Sustain a high-skilled County workforce through implementation of succession planning.	Scott Bovick, Karen Buche			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. identify potential leaders in the organization. 2. develop a leadership training program that includes skill development along with formal and informal mentoring relationships.
d. Combine administrative service units and functions to achieve more efficient use of human resources.	Karen Buche, Scott Bovick			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. create a county efficiency committee.
e. Administer fair and competitive compensation practices across all department.	Scott Bovick, Karen Buche			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. perform a comprehensive classification review and salary survey.
f. Evaluate the need for a compensation policy that rewards high performance and expand the use of non-financial employee recognition practices.	Scott Bovick, Karen Buche			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. develop a plan to review pay for performance practices. 2. develop an employee recognition program.
g. Increase employee performance feedback accountability through implementation of a performance appraisal program.	Scott Bovick, Karen Buche			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. develop 360 degree perf. appraisal system. 2. revise the performance appraisal forms to better reflect the functions and expectations of the employee.