



# Otoe County Board Minutes



January 8, 2019

The Otoe County Board of Commissioners convened in regular session at 8:30 a.m. on January 8, 2019, to audit and sign regular claims and to take care of such other matters as are on the agenda for this meeting. Advance notice of this meeting was published in the Nebraska City News Press and posted in at least three public places, including the County's website. This meeting was open to the Public, and the agenda was kept current, and is on file for public inspection at the office of the Otoe County Clerk during regular business hours.

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Rick Freshman. Answering present at roll call were Commissioner Freshman, Commissioner Sornson, Commissioner Parsons, Commissioner Speth and Commissioner Thurman; none absent.

Commissioner Freshman informed the public in attendance that a current copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted on the south wall of the meeting room. Additional copies are available upon request.

Commissioner Parsons made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Speth to accept the minutes from the previous meeting and not have them read as each member was furnished with a copy of same. There being no further discussion, Commissioner Freshman called for a vote. Voting aye were Commissioners Freshman, Sornson, Parsons, Speth and Thurman. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Commissioner Parsons made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Speth to accept the agenda as posted. There being no further discussion, Commissioner Freshman called for a vote. Voting aye were Commissioners Sornson, Parsons, Speth, Thurman and Freshman. Nay – none. Motion carried.

The meeting was turned over to the County Clerk for the election of a Chairman of the Board for year 2019. The Clerk called for nominations from the floor. Commissioner Parsons nominated Commissioner Jerad Sornson as Chairman of the Board. There being no other nominations, Commissioner Parsons made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Freshman to cease nominations and to cast a unanimous ballot for Commissioner Jerad Sornson to be Chairman of the Board for year 2019. Voting aye were Commissioners Parsons, Speth, Thurman, Freshman and Sornson. Nay – none. Motion carried.

The Clerk called for nominations from the floor for election of a Vice-Chairman of the Board for year 2019. Commissioner Sornson nominated Commissioner James Parsons as Vice-Chairman of the Board. There being no other nominations, Commissioner Sornson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Speth to cease nominations and to cast a unanimous ballot for Commissioner James Parsons to be Vice-Chairman of the Board for year 2019. Voting aye were Commissioners Speth, Thurman, Freshman, Sornson and Parsons. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Chairman Sornson made the following miscellaneous board appointments for year 2019:

SEND D (Southeast Nebraska Development District): Commissioner Thurman will serve as Otoe County representative with Commissioner Sornson named as alternate.

NCAEDC (Nebraska City Area Economic Development Corporation): Commissioner Freshman will serve as the Otoe County representative with Commissioner Sornson named as alternate.

REGION V: Commissioner Speth will serve as the Otoe County representative with Commissioner Parsons named as alternate.

RC & D (Five Rivers Resource Conservation & Development): Commissioner Parsons will serve as the Otoe County representative with Commissioner Sornson named as alternate.



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Southeast District Health: Commissioner Parsons will serve as the Otoe County representative with Commissioner Sornson named as alternate.

Road & Bridge Committee: Commissioner Freshman and Commissioner Parsons will serve as representatives.

Commissioner Parsons made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Freshman to designate the Nebraska City News Press and the Otoe County Website as the official means of providing public notices during the year 2019. There being no further discussion, Chairman Sornson called for a vote. Voting aye were Commissioners Thurman, Speth, Freshman, Sornson, Hauptman and Parsons. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Commissioner Freshman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Thurman to re-appoint Jon Brinkman as Otoe County Highway Superintendent. There being no further discussion, Chairman Sornson called for a vote. Voting aye were Commissioners Freshman, Sornson, Parsons, Speth and Thurman. Motion carried.

Commissioner Parsons made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Freshman to appoint the following financial institutions as depositories for Otoe County in 2019: Arbor Bank, Premier Bank, American National Bank, Commercial State Bank, and First Nebraska Bank, all of Nebraska City; First Bank of Nebraska, Syracuse Branch; Countryside Bank of Unadilla; Tri-Valley Bank of Talmage; Farmers & Merchants Bank of Palmyra. There being no further discussion, Chairman Sornson called for a vote. Voting aye were Commissioners Sornson, Parsons, Speth, Thurman and Freshman. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Having reviewed the regular claims in advance of this meeting, Commissioner Parsons made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Freshman to approve payment of the regular claims. There being no further discussion, Chairman Sornson called for a vote. Voting aye were Commissioners Parsons, Speth, Thurman, Freshman and Sornson. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Jamy Prokopec, Syracuse Pool Manager, and Carolyn Gigstad were present to discuss the Syracuse Pool Bath House and inquire about the use of Keno Funds to assist in the funding for the construction of a new bath house. The current bath house was built in the early 1960's and is in need of repair. The foundation is deteriorating. The manager attempts to repair issues and upkeep the building. Currently the city has approximately \$150,000 in an account and these funds will be used for engineering, landscaping, etc. Funds need to be raised for the construction of the building. Currently, there is \$38,000 in pledges for construction. They are applying for a grant that will match if \$275,000 is raised. The estimated cost of the bath house is \$535,000. The pool was built with funds from a bond. The pool was completed, but the funds were depleted before the bath house could be started. Carolyn Gigstad stated the pool bond to construct the pool is not paid off. They are asking for \$10,000 of Otoe County Keno Funds. Discussion was had that the City of Syracuse has Keno funds as well and Jamy stated that they would be attending the next Syracuse city council meeting to request funding. County Attorney David Partsch and Commissioner Sornson stated that the county is working on an application and criteria for Keno fund requests. Commissioner Sornson stated that it could be tabled until then. Commissioner Parsons discussed the option to move forward with the \$10,000 request based on a matching amount from Syracuse Keno funds. Commissioner Parsons made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Freshman to approve \$10,000 for the Syracuse Pool Bath House from the Otoe County Keno funds, contingent on a \$10,000 match from the Syracuse City Keno funds and to suspend further Keno fund requests until a policy is in place. Commissioner Thurman expressed that he would like to see the policy in place first.



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Chairman Sornson called for a vote. Voting aye were Commissioners Speth, Freshman, Sornson and Parsons. Voting Nay was Commissioner Thurman. Motion carried.

County Attorney David Partsch discussed the Drug Court Expansion in District 1. The west part of our district has had drug court since 2007. An application is submitted to the drug court team from the defendant, defense attorney and county attorney. The first year implementation would be a minimum of \$1,000 and the rest would be based on population. The following years would be based on the number of people approved for drug court. Otoe, Nemaha, Richardson, Pawnee and Johnson counties would make up the eastern portion and the cost split between the counties. The cost of drug court is \$26,400. The state will provide a bulk of the funding. Otoe County has 36.7% of the population in the area and the county's cost would be approximately \$10,000 if all five counties participate. The drug court would initially start in Nemaha County and all participants would need to commit to reporting to Nemaha Co. Transportation will be up to the defendant. Security will be present and is included in the cost. There was concern of filling the jail if a defendant needed remanded. If needed, the defendant would report back to the originating county jail. Mr. Partsch stated that the program is three years and other counties have had success with drug court with 70-80% graduation rate. Commissioner Freshman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sornson to support Otoe County's participation in the Drug Court expansion. Mr. Partsch clarified that this is a pledge for showing interest and budget reasons and he will return before the board with an interlocal agreement in the future. Commissioner Sornson called for a vote. Voting aye were Commissioners Freshman, Sornson, Parsons, Speth and Thurman. Voting Nay – None. Motion carried.

Sarah Purcell, Extension Educator, spoke about the job positions at the extension office in Syracuse, NE. The county has paid for two employees, one office manager and one support staff. She would like to retain the office manager's role and update the support staff position and title. She proposed changing the 4-H support staff position to the 4-H Extension Assistant.

The goal would be to decrease desk time and increase outreach into the communities with school visits, after school activities and summer workshops. 4-H members and leaders now enroll online and many functions have become more efficient with technology that would allow more time for the community outreach. The extension board voted in favor of the update 6-1 on January 7, 2019. Commissioner Parsons asked if not having a college degree would exclude someone from the position. Mrs. Purcell stated that she would prefer someone with a degree if they will be going into schools to teach. Commissioner Freshman inquired if there would be a salary difference for the proposed new position. Mrs. Purcell stated that a state paid UNL Extension Assistant annual salary is \$35,816 and the county has \$35,048 budgeted.

Commissioner Parsons made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Freshman to approve and update the position to 4-H Extension Assistant. There being no further discussion, Commissioner Sornson called for a vote. Voting aye were Commissioners Sornson, Parsons, Speth, Thurman, and Freshman. Voting nay – None. Motion carried.

Pursuant to State Statute 33-106.02, Chairman Sornson acknowledged receipt of the monthly report from the Clerk of the District Court certifying fee collections in the amount of \$14,955.32 for the month of December 2018. Said report will be filed in the County Clerk's Office.

Pursuant to State Statute 33-117 Chairman Sornson acknowledged receipt of the quarterly report from the County Sheriff denoting the amount of certain fees collected, from whom and for what service. The total amount received in the fourth quarter of the year was \$11,425.59.



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Chairman Sornson acknowledged receipt of the financial reports for quarter ending December 31, 2018, of the petty cash accounts held by Janene Bennett, County Clerk; Gregg Goebel, Emergency Management; Teresa Johnson, Child Support Officer; Jan Reed, Register of Deeds; Jim Gress, Sheriff; Dave Partsch, County Attorney; Janis Riege, Clerk of the District Court and Cindy Cich, County Court Magistrate. Said reports will be kept on file in the County Clerk's Office.

Highway Superintendent Jon Brinkman reported the contractor on Project (55) at G & 60 North, Nebraska City Northwest is digging holes for piling and pouring concrete. Project (625), P & 60 South, Julian Northwest, the pre box construction channel work is done and as of Friday, JKK is onsite to begin the box construction. Both crews have been hauling rock, working on pot holes, trimming trees and removing beaver dams.

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, and since all items on the agenda have been disposed of, Chairman Sornson declared this meeting adjourned at 9:26 a.m. The next regular meeting will be held on January 22, 2019.

I, Jennifer Bassinger, County Clerk of Otoe County, do hereby certify that the above minutes were taken by me, and are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and I therefore set my hand and affix the county seal this 8<sup>th</sup> day of January 2019.

Jennifer Bassinger  
Otoe County Clerk