



# Otoe County Board Minutes



November 8, 2021

The Otoe County Board of Commissioners convened in regular session at 8:30 a.m. on November 8, 2021, to audit and sign regular claims and payroll claims and to take care of such other matters as are on the agenda for this meeting. Advance notice of the 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 Chairman Jerad Sornson. Answering present at roll call were Commissioner Sornson, Commissioner Freshman, Commissioner Thurman, and Commissioner Parsons. Absent – Commissioner Crownover.

Commissioner Sornson 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.

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

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

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

Freshman made a motion, seconded by Parsons, to audit and sign payroll claims. Voting aye were Thurman, Sornson, Freshman, and Parsons. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Mike Ziskey, Otoe County Public Defender, spoke to the board regarding the salaries for county elected officials for the 2023-2026 term. Chairman Sornson encouraged elected officials to email the board with their thoughts on setting the salaries. The commissioners will set the future salaries before January 15, 2022.

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 \$23,091.44 for the month of October 2021. Said report will be filed in the County Clerk's Office.

Parsons made a motion, seconded by Freshman, to cancel check #210013999 payable to Blue Cross/Blue Shield. The check was an overpayment of the health insurance premium. Voting aye were Sornson, Freshman, Parsons, and Thurman. Nay – none. Motion carried.

County Clerk, Jenny Bassinger, stated that the County recently changed payroll systems and the process of paying claims has changed. She proposed opening a new imprest fund for payroll use only. She stated that the new account would be used for payroll expenses and would allow for the claims/expenses to be tracked and reconciled outside of the regular imprest fund. Parsons made a motion, seconded by Thurman, to approve opening a new payroll imprest fund with Jennifer



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Bassinger, County Clerk, and Jerad Sornson, Board Chairman, as the authorized signers of the account. Voting aye were Freshman, Parsons, Thurman, and Sornson. Nay – none. Motion carried. Parsons made a motion, seconded by Thurman, to add the new payroll imprest fund to the current online portal. Voting aye were Parsons, Thurman, Sornson, and Freshman. Nay – none. Motion carried. Thurman made a motion, seconded by Thurman, to authorize Jennifer Bassinger, Co. Clerk, Mary Bennett, Deputy County Clerk, Nicki Kreifels, Co. Treasurer, and Jerad Sornson, Board Chairman, to be able to have access to view the account information. Voting aye were Thurman, Sornson, Freshman, and Parsons. Nay – none. Motion carried. Bassinger explained that the current imprest fund has dual control, and the new account would be set up the same. The bank offers several options for this and will be used as much as possible but asked for permissions to make payments with one signature if required. Examples would be phone or online payments. Parsons made a motion, seconded by Thurman, to approve Jennifer Bassinger and Mary Bennett to have authorization to initiate ACH transactions, bill pay, and check by phone. Voting aye were Sornson, Freshman, Parsons, and Thurman. All claims for payment are presented to the Board of Commissioners before payments are initiated.

Parsons made a motion, seconded by Freshman, to approve a conservation easement application submitted Ralph E. Welte Living Trust and Betty A. Welte Living Trust. Voting aye were Freshman, Parsons, Thurman, and Freshman. Nay – none. Motion carried.

Dan Mauk, Nebraska City Area Economic Development Corp. presented a proposal for the use of Otoe County ARPA funds for housing within Otoe County. The proposal includes a \$9,000 grant per qualified unit. To qualify, a builder would need to build three or more structures within two years to qualify. The new housing would assist in the housing shortage across the county and would benefit tax rolls, schools, employment, etc. Patrick Wehling, Neb. City Parks Commissioner and Lou Leone, Nebraska City, City Administrator, spoke in favor of using ARPA funds for housing. The City of Nebraska City also received ARPA funds and Mr. Leone noted that the housing proposal will be discussed at a city council meeting. Mr. Mauk stated that he would also be attending a Syracuse City Council meeting in the future. No action was taken.

Bids were opened publicly on November 5, 2021, for the construction of four concrete box culvert projects in the presence of Commissioner Sornson, Highway Superintendent Jon Brinkman, Jeff Wagner, Mainelli Wagner & Associates, Inc. and Brenda Cooper, representing Vogtscapes, Inc. The projects are referred to as C-66(587) and C-66(662) located in Otoe County and C-64(317) and C-64(334) located in Nemaha County. Vogtscapes was the only bid received. Jon Brinkman, Highway Superintendent, stated that the engineers were requesting more time to review the bid and check on concrete pricing. Parsons made a motion, seconded by Thurman, to table awarding the bid until the November 22, 2021, meeting.

Highway Superintendent, Jon Brinkman, presented the supervisor's report: Project (665) C Road Paving: the floor is poured, and the contractor is working on framing the walls for the box culvert; utilities are working on moving out. The construction crew completed road top work and ditching at King & 10 South; finished ditching and seeding at Q & 62 West; and installed driveway culvert at J & 56 W. Both crews have been grading and hauling rock, working on culvert inventory, trimming trees around signs and bridges and maintaining equipment.

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 9:14 a.m. The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, November 22, 2021.



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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 8th day of November 2021.

Jennifer Bassinger  
Otoe County Clerk