

January 6th, 2026
Antelope County Board of Commissioners
Neligh, Nebraska

The Antelope County Board of Commissioners convened in regular session on Tuesday, January 6th, 2026, at 9:00 AM in the County Commissioner's Meeting Room, Antelope County Courthouse Annex, Neligh, Nebraska. The meeting was called to order by Board Chairperson, Charlie Henery, with the following board members in attendance: Jacob, Dittrich, Krebs, Williby and Henery. Chairman stated that the open meeting laws are posted on the east wall of the Commissioner's Meeting Room with more copies available at the County Clerk's Office.

Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the three (3) county newspapers, legal newspapers printed and in general circulation in Antelope County, Nebraska as shown by proof of publication filed in the County Clerk's office. The agenda for said meeting was sent to all members of the County Board of Commissioners.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Agenda: Motion by Commissioner Jacob seconded by Commissioner Williby to approve agenda as presented. Voting aye: Jacob, Dittrich, Krebs, Williby and Henery. Nays none. Motion carried.

Public Defender: With the appointment of current Antelope County Public Defender as a county judge for the 7th Judicial District, Mr. Patrick Carney cannot continue as Antelope County Public Defender. He wrote a letter of resignation in mid-December shortly after his appointment by Governor Pillen. Today, Antelope County Attorney, Joe Smith, discusses with the Commissioners the process of selecting a new public defender. He has been contacting some potential candidates and will be visiting with one of those individuals tomorrow. In the meantime, Joe has been in contact with Mr. Martin Klein, of Antelope County to be the interim County Public Defender. Mr. Klein has agreed to this on a temporary basis. He is requesting the regular rate set at \$125.00 an hour. Discussion. Mr. Smith states he will be working with the County Clerk to get an advertisement placed for a permanent replacement Public Defender and would like to appoint two (2) Commissioners to help vet and interview potential candidates. Considering all this: A motion was made by Commissioner Williby, seconded by Commissioner Dittrich, to accept the resignation of Mr. Patrick Carney. Voting aye: Jacob, Dittrich, Krebs, Williby and Henery. Nays none. Motion carried. Motion by Commissioner Dittrich, seconded by Commissioner Jacob to appoint Mr. Martin Klein as interim County Public Defender at \$125.00 an hour, starting immediately. Voting aye: Jacob, Dittrich, Krebs, Williby and Henery. Nays none. Motion carried. Motion by Commissioner Krebs, seconded by Commissioner Williby to authorize the County Clerk to work the County Attorney, Joe Smith to advertise said position. Voting aye: Jacob, Dittrich, Krebs, Williby and Henery. Nays none. Motion carried. Motion by Commissioner Williby, seconded by Commissioner Jacob to appoint Commissioners Dittrich and Krebs as a subcommittee to review applicants upon receipt. Voting aye: Jacob, Dittrich, Krebs, Williby and Henery. Nays none. Motion carried.

9:15 AM (9:05 AM): Public Comment: Chairman Henery called for any public comments three (3) times. No comments were voiced.

9:15 AM: Weed Department: Bryan Cornett met with the Commissioners regarding wage increase for the Weed Applicators/Sprayers. The Antelope County Weed Board approved a \$0.50 wage increase. This item has been in discussion for a couple of months. Today it is presented for Board approval. Discussion. Motion by Commissioner Krebs, seconded by Commissioner Jacob to approve a \$0.50 increase in the spray applicators wages starting January 1, 2026. Voting aye: Jacob, Dittrich, Krebs, Williby and Henery. Nays none. Motion carried.

Storage Space at Weed Department Shop: Mr. Cornett discussed with the Commissioners the space available for inside the weed shop. During their meeting, the Weed Board discussed the space. They are requesting that by mid-April the shop space is freed up to continue to prepare for the spraying season. The Commissioners confirmed and agreed. Sheriff had talked to Mr. Cornett and Chairman Henery regarding getting a remote door opener so access will be smoother and easier. Sheriff Moore agreed to pay for it from the Law Enforcement Account. Mr. Cornett will also provide the Sheriff with a key to the shop. All favorable comments. Commissioners agreed to move forward and for the Weed Department to continue to work with Sheriff regarding the storage and actions to accommodate both.

Razor Tracking: Recently, tracking devices were installed in vehicles and equipment in the Weed Department. Because some of this equipment will not move for five (5) – six (6) months, the Weed Board was wondering about getting a suspension on the tracking – so as it is not costing. The Commissioners requested Road Superintendent to work with Razor Tracking regarding a suspension on the vehicles. It was also discussed and agreed the Road Department will pay for the tracking through the fiscal year. No further action today.

Minutes: Minutes of December 9th, 2025, Board of Commissioner Meeting: Motion by Commissioner Jacob, seconded by Commissioner Dittrich to approve minutes of December 9th, 2025, Board of Commissioner Meeting. Voting aye: Krebs, Dittrich, Jacob, and Henery. Nays none. Williby abstains. Motion carried.

Correspondence was Reviewed: Imprest Pledge Collateral-\$4,025,000.00; Bank Depositories and amounts; Carney resignation letter; thank you form Teammates for promotional sponsorship; Certificate of Liability Insurance Bryce Anderson, Anderson Concrete; Certificate of Liability Insurance JJK Construction LLC; Copy of change order and pay application for Dixon Construction; Highway 20 Law Enforcement Agreement; Northeast Nebraska Solid Waste Coalition monthly letter; NIRMA response to insurance values; interlocal agreement for comparison Village of Clearwater 2% tax levy.

Receipts: Nebraska Telephone Company - \$576.51 – Road and Bridge
Mr. S's Tobacco License – \$10.00 – General

Interlocal Agreement-2% Tax Rate: During recent months the Village of Clearwater asked the Commissioners to sign a local agreement to help meet their obligations to be able to levy higher sales tax. In December, they presented a sample local agreement. At that time, County Attorney Joe Smith was going to reach out to Village Attorney, Kyle Petersen to discuss and review. Mr. Smith reports today, they have reviewed it and Mr. Petersen intends to make some additions and changes to the proposed agreement. There is no action necessary currently. Mr. Petersen, and or the Village will reach out in the future.

Quarterly Jail Inspection: Commissioners Jacob and Dittrich will conduct Jail Inspection after today's meeting.

Road Closing 512th Avenue between 846th and 847th Road: This discussion is in follow-up to the public hearing held in November regarding closing this stretch of road and reverting land back to adjacent landowners. Because the west side of the road currently is owned by three (3) different listed names (although all variations of the same). Because the middle landowner would not have access to land (land locked) Brian McDonald, Highway Superintendent recommends not passing the resolution without an easement or a deed between the current landowners – placing ownership in the same name filed in the Register of Deeds Office. The landowners do intend to file a deed to change the middle parcel to the same entity as either the north or south property. Today, Mr. McDonald recommends no action. Hopefully the landowners will get a deed filed within the next couple of months, at which time we can take action on the road closing. No action.

Change Order #1 – Dixon Construction – Brunswick Northwest and Royal North: Today the change order is presented for additional pile and pile splices needed to reach required bearing. This is a \$4,655 change order to the final project. Motion by Commissioner Williby, seconded by Commissioner Jacob to approve the change order as presented. Voting aye: Dittrich, Krebs, Williby, Jacob and Henery. Nays none. Motion carried.

Contractors Application for Payment – Dixon Construction – Brunswick Northwest and Royal North \$216,600.71: A pay application for \$216,600.71 is presented today. Mr. McDonald has forwarded the application to the Commissioners. Antelope County would owe half of this application \$108,300.36. Motion by Commissioner Williby, seconded by Commissioner Jacob, to approve and authorize chairman to sign pay application and for the claim to be coded for payment next week. Voting aye: Dittrich, Williby, Jacob, Krebs and Henery. Nays none. Motion passed.

- **Clay capping roads:** Mr. Kluthe reports the Road and Bridge Team is currently clay capping roads that were closed because of shape and soft spots. The roads will be opened up once they are completed.
- **Belly Dump Truck:** Side split - Switzer's are welding various cracks and wears in multiple areas on the belly.
- **Sign Truck:** broke down – strong smell of anti-freeze
- **Flat Bed Ford:** the clutch is out.
- **Excess Inventory:** Mr. Kluthe is currently working on a list of outdated, unusable equipment for auction.
- **MSHA Training for Road and Bridge Employees:** offered by NIRMA is tomorrow, at the courthouse.

Official Wages 2027-2030: Today, an approximate 90-minute discussion on the Official Wages for 2027-2030. By statute the wages for elected officials shall be set by January 15th of the election year (even numbered years). The Commissioners discussed the value of the insurance benefits - \$36K +/- . With the insurance benefit and current wages, they did not see any need for wage increases and discussed the want for continued insurance benefits. Opposition regarding the 'no wage increase' was voiced by several elected officials in attendance. At one point, Commissioner Krebs suggested setting Assessor, Treasurer, Clerk of the District Court, and County Clerk wages at \$80,000.00 for 2027 and a 4% increase annually – bringing the 2030 wage to about \$90,000.00. More discussion. No action. The Commissioners discussed the need to gather more information, and requested tabling decision until next week, while they gathered more information. The Clerk requested some information to prepare the resolution:

- Chairman to continue at \$100.00 a meeting/\$1,200.00 a year.
- Budget continues at \$2,000.00/annually.
- Deputies at 66% of Official wage, except for the Sheriff deputy's as per last resolution.
- Assessor - \$2,500.00/annually – if no appraisal company is used.
- Sheriff: Emergency Manager \$2,500.00/annually and Jail Administrator \$7,500.00/annually.

The clerk will prepare a resolution for plug and play. The Commissioners will discuss official wages and incidentals as needed shortly after 8:00 am on Tuesday, January 13th, 2026. No further action today.

Employee Handbook: During October, November and December many hours were spent updating, writing and reviewing the Employee Handbook. Today, it is presented for final draft and approval.

Changes discussed and approved today:

- Bereavement Leave: change days to hours-up to 5 days = up to 40 hours
change days to hours-up to 3 days = up to 24 hours
- Road and Bridge holiday weeks can be paid out at 37.5 hours as a full week. No vacation, sick or compensatory time has to be used to fill the week out to 40 hours.
- Compensatory Time – can be encouraged at 'supervisor or commissioner'.

Discussion. The Employee Handbook is ready for implementation. The Commissioners agreed this is a living document and if fixes or inconsistencies are in the current issue the Board of Commissioners may change or update as needed. Motion by Commissioner Williby, seconded by Commissioner Jacob to adopt and implement the handbook with the changes presented. Voting aye: Jacob, Dittrich, Krebs, Williby and Henery. Nays none. Motion carried.

Adjournment: Motion was made by Commissioner Williby seconded by Commissioner Jacob to **adjourn**. Voting aye: Jacob, Dittrich, Williby, Krebs and Henery. Nays none. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:48 PM.

ANTELOPE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

By: _____
Chairman of the Board, Charlie Henery

Attest: _____
County Clerk, Lisa Payne