

WEBSTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The Webster County Board of Commissioners met at 8:30am on Tuesday, September 1st, 2020 for a regular business meeting at the Courthouse in Red Cloud. The following Board Members were present for roll call: Dan Shipman (District One), Trevor Karr (District Two), TJ Vance (District Three), Keith Buschow (District Four) and Gary Ratzlaff (District Five). Chairman Buschow gave notice of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act Laws. Motion was made by Ratzlaff, seconded by Vance to approve the minutes of the August 18th, 2020 meeting with a correction that no decision had been made specifically on transporting ambulance patients dismissed from the hospital to their homes by ambulance. Voting in favor: Buschow, Ratzlaff, Vance, Karr and Shipman. Voting no, absent or abstaining: None. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Shipman, seconded by Karr to pay claims and payroll. All members present voted in favor. Motion carried.

At 8:35am, Paul Stoner met with the Board. The crews are crushing concrete and piling it at Bladen for product to be used around tubes. They discussed several issues going on in the County and some equipment needing repairs.

At 9:15am the Board voted to transfer \$30,000.00 from General Fund to the Noxious Weed Fund. Motion was made by Karr, seconded by Shipman to approve Resolution 31-2020. Voting in favor: Buschow, Ratzlaff, Vance, Karr and Shipman. Voting nay, absent or abstaining: None. Motion carried. Resolution 31-2020 was signed and approved.

At 9:20am, Chairman Keith Buschow presented to the Board an Interlocal Agreement for All-Hazard Mitigation with all LBNRD's given by Emergency Manager, Ron Sunday to be signed. Motion was made by Karr, seconded by Shipman, to sign this Agreement. Voting in favor: Buschow, Ratzlaff, Vance, Karr and Shipman. Voting no, absent, or abstaining: None. Motion carried.

At 9:30am, Melanie Engelhardt spoke to the Board about requesting a moratorium on the Little Blue Windfarm Project and several letters from concerned citizens were also read on this matter. Documents from the Clerk's Office were shown to Melanie that she was not aware of and the matter was tabled until the public hearing at 2:00pm.

At 10:00am, Assessor Sonja Krueger met with the Board on a TERC hearing. Motion was made by Shipman, seconded by Vance to go into Board of Equalization Hearing. All members voted in favor. The subject was valuation change done on Plowshare, LLC,. Assessor Krueger had reviewed everything on this again and found no change could be done. She requested to the Board they send it back to him to see if he would resettle with the current valuation. Motion was made by Ratzlaff, seconded by Shipman to go out of Board of Equalization and return to the regular business meeting. Voting in favor: Buschow, Ratzlaff, Vance, Karr and Shipman. Motion carried.

At 10:05am, Deputy Assessor Tami Scheuneman gave the Board two reports to review concerning the Windfarm Project.

At 10:10am, a public hearing was held to finalize the 2020/2021 budget. Motion was made by Karr, seconded by Ratzlaff to approve the additional 1% increase in restricted funds authority. Voting in favor: Buschow, Ratzlaff, Vance, Karr and Shipman. Voting no, absent or abstaining: None. Motion carried. Motion was made by Vance, seconded by Karr to approve Resolution of Adoption and Appropriations 32-2020 to approve the budget as published in the newspapers. Voting in favor: Buschow, Ratzlaff, Vance, Karr and Shipman. Voting no, absent or abstaining: None. Motion carried. Motion was made by Karr, seconded by Ratzlaff to approve Resolution 33-2020 to set the property tax request for 2020/2021 at \$3,693,799, a decrease of 4% from prior year. Voting in favor: Buschow, Ratzlaff, Vance, Karr and Shipman. Voting no, absent or abstaining: None. Motion carried. Discussion followed relating to LB1107, which provides for the Nebraska Property Tax Incentive Credit aimed at providing relief from the burden of local property taxes through a refundable income tax credit. Resolutions 32-2020 and 33-2020 were signed.

At 10:20am, Melanie Engelhardt spoke again to the Board. Commissioner TJ Vance enlightened the group that a lot of phone calls have been made on this concerning this project and the Board is trying desperately to make the best decision for everyone. The Nextera representatives also spoke on the matter.

At 10:30am, Clerk Magistrate Jolene Duffy (not on the agenda) and Clerk Liz Petsch spoke to the Board on continuing the Contract with Cheyenne Knehans on a part-time basis on court days if and when the Board decides to have Covid protection for the courthouse. The Board will consider this at their next board meeting.

Gene Horne (not on the agenda) also met with the Board on the transportation of patients dismissed from the hospital with no means of getting back home.

At 11:20am, Chairman Buschow recessed the meeting until 2:00pm where they will have the public hearing at the Red Cloud Community Center.

GENERAL FUND: Ameritas Life Insurance Corp (Retire)-\$417.02; Bockstadter & Glen Law, LLC (Contract)-\$1805.00; Katie Bolte (Expense)-\$91.41; Ron Brumbaugh (Contract)-\$1766.67; Busch Construction (Mowing)-\$100.00; Consolidated Management Co (Training)-\$34.96; DAS State Accounting/Central Finance (Fee)-\$448.00; S.S. (Fica)-\$470.09; Eakes Office Solutions (Supply)-\$1265.73; Energized Electric LLC (Utility)-\$360.00; First National Bank Omaha (Supply)-\$104.03; Michael Goebel (Expense)-\$443.51; Great Plains Communications (Phones)-\$1163.40; Hometown Leasing (Lease)-\$129.00; Elisabeth Janning (Expense)-\$263.32; Jared's Auto Expert (Repairs)-\$107.43; Cheyenne Knehans (Contract)-\$1200.00; Brealynn Lockhart (Expense)-\$44.76; Lutz (Budget)-\$3500.00; Sydney O'Daniel (Expense)-\$192.56; Alexa Pedersen (Expense)-\$77.72; Red Cloud Chief (Publish)-\$434.24; City of Red Cloud (Utility)-\$1415.93; Theobald Law Office (Counsel)-\$1235.00; Turner Technology (Supply)-\$157.50; Webster Co Clerk Dist Crt (Fees)-\$101.00; Webster Co Crt (Crt Costs)-\$116.00; Webster Co Sheriff's Dept (Fees)-\$83.95; Webster Co Treasurer (Transfer)-\$30,000.00; Williams Exterminating, Inc (Pest Control)-\$88.00; Woodward's Disposal Service (Utility)-\$20.00. **ROAD/BRIDGE FUND:** Ace/Eaton Metals (Culverts)-\$4589.20; Ameritas Life Ins Corp (Retire)-\$130.41; City of Blue Hill (Utility)-\$81.59; S.S. (Fica)-\$147.79; Eakes Office Solutions (Supply)-\$84.86; First National Bank Omaha (Supply)-\$43.08; Fleetpride (Repairs)-\$90.01; Great Plains Communications (Phone)-\$49.76; Linda Grummert (Prior Service)-\$57.00; Hometown Market (Supply)-\$56.32; Hydraulic Equipment Service (Repairs)-\$753.38; John Deere Financial (Repairs)-\$214.03; LRNRD Rural Water Project (Water)-\$22.21; Nebraska Machinery

Company (Repairs)-\$1367.42; Olson Enterprises LLC (Fuel)-\$6908.13; R&M Disposal LLC (Utility)-\$53.50; Red Cloud Chief (Publish)-\$7.10; C. Ardell Talkington (Prior Service)-\$42.00; Webster County Hospital (Fee)-\$107.00; Windstream (Phone)-\$74.83.

ROAD/BRIDGE CONST FUND: Contech Construction Products (Gravel)-\$38,574.99. SELF-INSURED DENTAL FUND: Hastings Family Dental 1, LLC (Dental)-\$176.80; Minden Dental Clinic (Dental)-\$978.00; Chad Uden D.D.S. (Dental)-\$71.20. NOXIOUS WEED FUND: J&A Auto Supply (Repairs)-\$5.88; Ramada Kearney (Lodging)-\$78.00. AMBULANCE FUND: Bound Tree Medical LLC (Supply)-\$95.97; S.S. (Fica)-\$199.94; Great Plains Communications (Phone)-\$49.03; Petsch Billing (Contract)-\$400.00. Total wages - \$10,778.33.

At 2:00pm, Chairman Buschow reconvened their board meeting at the Red Cloud Community Center for the public hearing on the Little Blue Windfarm Project to hear and review applicant petition, consider recommendation of Planning Commission, review comments by the public and act to approve or disapprove the request and sign Preliminary Application for Conditional Use Permit on the Little Blue Wind Project, LLC.

Topics discussed were 71 turbines placed proportionately within the guidelines of safety in Webster County and Franklin County. Representatives from the Wind Farm Project spoke on benefits for the county in placing these turbines in the designated areas. Chairman Buschow opened the discussion to residents present to voice their pros and cons of the project. Several citizens did so in a kind and friendly manner and concerns were taken into consideration by the Board of Commissioners. The Board of Commissioners and the Planning & Zoning Committee had done a lot of research and put a lot of time into this Application so as to make a sound judgment and informed decision on this project to benefit all citizens of the County. Everyone was very cordial and willing to listen to all aspects of this venture progressing. Chairman Buschow again read letters sent to the Commissioners from concerned citizens.

Motion was made by Vance, seconded by Ratzlaff to approve the Preliminary Application for Conditional Use Permit on the Little Blue Wind Project, LLC and sign Resolution 35-2020. Voting in favor: Buschow, Ratzlaff, Vance, Karr and Shipman. Voting no, absent or abstaining: None. Motion carried unanimously. Resolution 35-2020 was signed. Progression is sometimes hard but the citizens of Webster County can come together and exchange pros and cons of things in a calm and concerned manner which in turn establishes the uniformity and ability to work together on all issues that confront us.

Chairman Keith Buschow thanked everyone present for taking the time to come and share their feelings on this matter and all the hard work that has gone into the decision made.

Being no further business, Chairman Buschow adjourned the meeting at 3:00pm. The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 18th, 2020 at 8:30am. A current agenda and complete minutes are on file in the County Clerk's Office and at www.co.webster.ne.us.

Dated this 1st day of September, 2020
Webster County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST: Louise Petsch
Webster County Clerk