

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF
NIOBRARA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, May 6, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
Commissioners' Office - Niobrara County Courthouse
424 S. Elm Street, Lusk, WY

The Niobrara Board of County Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at 9:02 a.m. Those present were Chairman Patrick Wade, Vice-Chair Elaine Griffith, Commissioner Jeb Hanson, and County Clerk Becky L. Freeman. Members of the audience included Brandie Collins with the *Lusk Herald*.

Chairman Wade led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Road & Bridge- Foreman Fred Thomas met with the Commissioners and discussed road and bridge business.

He said he attended a pre-construction meeting with WYDOT regarding the Hwy 85 project. He thought it would begin around July 1st, and run from the north end of town to the Hat Creek turnoff, approximately thirteen miles.

He noted that Whetsell Construction came down and did some grinding on the floor pan on 20 Mile Road, but nothing else.

County Attorney Anne Wasserburger joined the meeting.

Executive Session- Commissioner Hanson moved to enter executive session at 9:09 a.m. with Foreman Fred Thomas and Attorney Anne Wasserburger pursuant to W.S.S. (a)(vii)-consideration of real estate transactions. Vice-Chair Griffith seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Hanson moved to leave executive session at 9:45 a.m. Vice-Chair Griffith seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. No action was taken on the matter.

County Attorney- Attorney Anne Wasserburger updated the Commissioners on the Community Juvenile Services Board and the letter they received from Kyle Borger with WyoHelp. The letter stated that WyoHelp (who administers the CJSB grant on behalf of Niobrara County) planned to end the grant agreement with the Department of Family Services and WyoHelp effective June 30, 2025.

Community Juvenile Services Grant- Vice-Chair Griffith moved to proceed with the application to the Department of Family Services on behalf of Niobrara County for the Community Juvenile Services Board grant funding for FY26. Commissioner Hanson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Wasserburger asked to table liquor license discussions until the next meeting.

Elected Officials- Treasurer Keri Thompson said her office has been busy collecting property tax and assisting people with the property tax refund program.

Clerk of Court Chrisanna Lund said it was business as usual in her office. She said a jury trial is scheduled for July but might not come to fruition.

Assessor Teri Stephens said the 30-day appeal period is over Friday. There have been many inquiries on property tax programs.

Undersheriff Kelly Dean said he has been meeting with different vendors for an E911 recorder.

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Extension Educator Kellie Chichester said she heard back from Visionary Broadband, and was told that they would be able to tie into fiber optic for a slightly higher cost than what the extension office currently pays. She also said that interviews had been held for the 4-H position.

Assessor Teri Stephens updated the Board on the purchase of a 2022 Nissan Frontier to be used by the assessor for the field reviews and the county clerk for elections. She said the 2007 assessor's vehicle and the 2004 Dodge pickup used for elections were traded in for a total of \$4,800.00. The price of the pickup after trade-ins was \$27,452.00. There was also the option of purchasing an extended warranty of 10 years/150,000 miles but the Commissioners chose not to pursue that option. She said that paperwork would need to be signed before Fremont Motors released the vehicle. Commissioner Hanson moved to approve payment of \$27,452.00 to Fremont Motors, and to authorize Teri Stephens to sign the purchase agreement on behalf of Niobrara County for the vehicle. Vice-Chair Griffith seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Old Business- There was nothing new to report on the old jail at this time.

Malt Beverage Permits- Vice-Chair Griffith moved to approve two (2) 24-Hour Malt Beverages for Legends Bar and Grill to sell malt beverages at the Ranch Rodeo on July 25 and July 26, 2025, at the fairgrounds. Commissioner Hanson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Dan Ritter and Mark Groh joined the meeting.

Commissioner Scholarship- The Commissioners received four applications for three new commissioner scholarships and one application for the commissioners' renewal scholarship. After review, Commissioner Hanson moved to award the new scholarships to Ridge Kupke, Lainey Single, and Quentin Bieri, and award the renewal scholarship to Camden Rose. Vice-Chair Griffith seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Pat Wade opened the floor to public comment. Dan Ritter and Mark Groh inquired why Commissioner Hanson thought the wind turbines were a good idea for Niobrara County. Commissioner Hanson explained he could see both sides of the argument, such as revenue and jobs for the county. He did acknowledge that water was a concern. Mr. Groh raised concerns that there was a conflict of interest on Commissioner Hanson's part, and that he should recuse himself from any action being taken on the matter.

Executive Session- Vice-Chair Griffith moved to enter executive session at 11:26 a.m. pursuant to W. S. S. 16-4-(a)(iii)- proposed litigation. Commissioner Hanson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. Vice-Chair Griffith moved to leave executive session at 12:11 p.m. Commissioner Hanson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. No action was taken on the matter.

Ground Sterilization at Public Health- Commissioner Hanson moved to authorize Brett Roetman to sterilize the ground at the public health nurse building and on the north side of the detention center for weed and grass control. Vice-Chair Griffith seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Vice-Chair Griffith said that Melanie Pearce, Public Health Nurse Regional Supervisor, reported that there had been a request to rent the public health office on Saturdays to the chiropractor that comes to Lusk twice a month. Following discussion, the commissioners denied the request.

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Consent Agenda- Vice-Chair Griffith moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Hanson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. Items on the consent agenda were the minutes of the April 15, 2025, meeting, and receipts for April from the County Clerk for \$3,582.52, the Clerk of Court for \$1,703.50 and the Public Health Nurse for \$7,031.25.

Payroll and the following vouchers were approved for payment: Bills are listed in the following format: Vendor- Department- Description- Amount- April Payroll- \$141,835.62, 14 County Tire- Various- Vehicle repairs- \$55.00, Aflac- Various- Supplemental insurance- \$6,543.46, Allbright's True Value- Various- Supplies, parts- \$94.89, AlSCO- Various- Supplies, shop towels, coveralls, floor mats- \$488.66, Anne Wasserburger- Various- Supplies- \$1,040.12, BenchMark of Torrington- Various- P & Z rewrite, Land Use Plan Update, Road Rehab Engineering fees- \$3,096.22, Black Hills Chemical & Janitorial- Various- Supplies- \$1,650.04, Black Hills Energy- Various- Utilities- \$1,204.14, Bob Ruwart Motors, Inc.- Sheriff- Tire repairs- \$29.16, Boldon Diesel Service, LLC.- Road & Bridge- Equipment repairs- \$102.93, Budd-Falen Law Offices- Commissioners- Legal review of Land Use Plan- \$350.00, Canon Financial Services- General County- Copier Service Agreements- \$330.00, CenturyLink- Various- Telephones- \$1,414.77, CenturyLink Business Services- Various- Telephones- \$71.57, Communication Technologies, Inc.- Emerg. Mgmt.- Radio repairs- \$300.00, Connecting Point Computer Centers- Various- Copier service agreements- \$471.90, Cory Wilcox- Coroner- Monthly stipend- \$150.00, Crimson Fire Protection- Various- Fire extinguisher inspections- \$637.99- Delta Dental of WY- Various- Dental insurance- \$864.90, Decker's Market- Various- Inmate medical, supplies- \$23.57, Dennis C. Meier- Circuit Court Magistrate- Office rent- \$1,000.00, Dept. of Health- Public Health Nurse- Co's quarterly share of public health nurse salary- \$9,815.88, Dooley Oil- NE- Road & Bridge- Oil- \$1,962.90, Double A Properties, LLC.- Various- Office rent- \$1,500.00, Empower Trust Company, LLC.- General Co.- Deferred Compensation- \$20,390.00, Floyd's Truck Center, Inc.- Road & Bridge- Equipment repairs- \$286.82, Frank Parts Co.- Road & Bridge- Parts- \$76.65, Fusion Cloud Service- Various- Telephones- \$1,200.08, Geographic Innovations- Various- Professional mapping services- \$1,500.00, GreatAmerica Financial Services- Sheriff- Copier service agreement- \$103.00, Hiway Brake & Alignment- Sheriff- Vehicle repairs- \$429.23, Honey Badger Towing & Recovery, LLC.- Sheriff- Abandoned Vehicles- \$115.00, Jameson Cleaning & Maintenance- Facilities- Fairgrounds & public health building cleaning contracts, fairgrounds event booking contract- \$8,960.00, Jub Jub, Inc.- General County- IT expense- \$60.00, Kassidy Miller- Prevention Grant- Training & IT expense- \$182.80, Lexie Painter- Extension- Contract labor- Fair board bookkeeping- \$600.00, Long Building Technologies- Facilities- Boiler maintenance- \$7,219.82, Lusk Herald- General County- Publications- \$1,330.89, Lusk Outdoors, LLC.- Facilities- Snow removal- \$2,510.00, Lusk State Bank- General Co.- Payroll taxes- \$41,297.10, Lynette Clark- Sheriff- Travel expense- \$322.70, Merri Keller- Public Health Nurse- Travel expense- \$77.00, Michelle Jackson- Prevention Grant- Travel expense, training- \$699.78, NCIC Inmate Communications- Detention- NCIC Tablets- \$244.38, Niobrara County Assessor- Sheriff- County Maps- \$75.00, Niobrara County Fair Board- Various- Quarterly tax allocation in lieu of mill levy, supplies- \$14569.38, Niobrara County Hospital District- 1% Option tax- \$19,377.19, Niobrara County Library- Various- Reimburse for deferred comp, copies, quarterly tax allocation in lieu of mill levy- \$43,652.83, Niobrara County Public Health- Prevention Grant- Indirect costs- \$302.59, Niobrara Electric Association- Various- Radio tower electricity- \$59.06, Office Depot- Various- Supplies- \$63.32, Olson Tire Co.- Sheriff- Tires- \$1,058.32, Quadient Leasing USA, Inc.- General County- Quarterly postage meter lease payment- \$1,202.19, Rawhide Drug- Detention- Inmate medical- \$82.79, Security Insurance Services- General County- Bonds- \$2,210.00, Smith Psychological Services- Detention- Employee medical- \$400.00, Stephens-Peck, Inc.- County Clerk- Supplies- \$125.00, Swanson Services Corp.- Detention- Inmate commissary account- \$383.57, The Master's Touch, LLC.- Assessor- Bulk mailing service- \$640.13, Thomson Reuters-West- County Attorney- Law library- \$194.75, Town of Lusk- Various- Utilities- \$3,191.19, Traci Bruegger- Facilities- CH, Library, Justice Center cleaning contract- \$4,300.00, Tyler Technologies- Treasurer- Computer expense- \$82.69, UW Extension- Extension- UW car expense- \$410.04, Verizon Wireless- Various- Phones, base charge \$426.37, Visa- Various- New equipment, schools, supplies, inmate medical, travel expense, postage, commissary account, vaccines, IT expense- \$3,363.38, Vision Service Plan- Various- Vision Insurance- \$428.37, Visionary Broadband- Various- IT expense- \$469.14, Warehouse 21- Prevention Grant- Supplies- \$335.00, Westco- Road & Bridge- Fuel- \$6,007.99, Wex Bank- Road & Bridge- Fuel- \$806.03, WY Dept. of Health, Public Health Lab- Public Health- Medical supplies- \$174.00, WYDOT-

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Financial Services- Sheriff- Fuel- \$1,651.06, Wyoming Assoc. of County Officers- Various- Dues- \$400.00, Wyoming Educators' Benefit Trust- Co Admin- Health & life insurance- \$26,067.51, Wyoming Dept. of Workforce Services- General County- Quarterly worker's comp. payment- \$5,396.15, Wyoming Machinery Company- Road & Bridge- Equipment repairs, parts- \$1,380.44, Wyoming Network, Inc.- General County- IT expense- \$200.00, Wyoming Office of Guardian ad Litem- Clerk of Court- Co share of GAL fees- \$1,432.39, Wyoming Women's Center- Detention- Inmate Meals- \$1,833.65, Xerox Corp.- Co admin- Copier service agreement- \$128.11, April Total- \$406,398.74

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

NIOBRARA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Patrick Wade, Chairman



Becky L. Freeman, County Clerk