

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF
NIOBRARA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Tuesday, February 17, 2026
Commissioners' Office - Niobrara County Courthouse
424 S. Elm Street, Lusk, WY

The Niobrara Board of County Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 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 Bartlett representing *The Lusk Herald* and Lacey Winner Hanson.

Chairman Wade led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Road & Bridge- Foreman Fred Thomas met with the Commissioners and updated them on gravel and roads. He noted that the new pickups have arrived, and road and bridge is in the process of decommissioning the trade ins.

County Attorney- Attorney Anne Wasserburger met with the Commissioners and discussed appointing a deputy county attorney. Vice-Chair Griffith moved to authorize Ms. Wasserburger, as Prosecuting Attorney, to appoint Nathan Shumway as deputy county attorney, to assist in the prosecution on behalf of the people of Niobrara County in Docket 2026-CR-0178 filed in the Eighth Judicial District Court in and for Niobrara County. Commissioner Hanson seconded. Discussion was held and it was noted that Mr. Shumway will not be considered an employee and will be reimbursed for travel expenses as provided in the county attorney's budget. Chairman Wade called for the vote. All voted aye, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Hanson asked Attorney Wasserburger if he should recuse himself on any action or discussion concerning wind energy as he had been seen having lunch with individuals supporting wind energy and a representative of the wind energy consulting company. Ms. Wasserburger explained that it is important for people to get information and educate themselves. She noted that a conflict of interest would arise if the Commissioner was to benefit financially from a project. Should that happen, then it is necessary to recuse oneself.

Old Business-

Old Jail- It was noted that the project is moving forward with publications and letters being sent to adjacent landowners regarding the voluntary remediation project.

Community Juvenile Services Board- Vice-Chair Griffith said that the applicant will be meeting with Chair of the Community Juvenile Services Board about the job.

New Business-

Markus Ericksen, of the Eastern Wyoming Nature Center, met with the Commissioners via Zoom and provided an update on the status of Nature Center. He discussed fund raising, construction updates as well as future dinosaur builds. He hopes to officially open the Center in 2027.

School Reorganization Subcommittee Appointment- The Commissioners revisited the school reorganization topic and wanted to appoint a subcommittee. Commissioner Hanson moved to appoint a subcommittee comprised of Commissioners Elaine Griffith and Jeb Hanson, and County Treasurer Keri Thompson. Vice-Chair Griffith seconded, and the motion carried.

Leslie Stewart joined the meeting, and the group discussed the paperwork received from the DEQ regarding the public notices for the voluntary remediation project for the old jail.

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF
NIOBRARA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

Commissioners' Office - Niobrara County Courthouse
424 S. Elm Street, Lusk, WY

Copier Connection Agreement- Vice-Chair Griffith moved to sign the agreement between GreatAmerica Financial and Niobrara County for a Canon Imagerunner Advanced C5840 Copier for the Extension Office. Commissioner Hanson seconded, and the motion carried.

Consent Agenda- Commissioner Hanson moved to approve the consent agenda. Vice-Chair Griffith seconded, and the motion carried. Items on the consent agenda were the minutes of the February 3, 2026, meeting and receipts for January from the county clerk for \$3,835.85, from the clerk of court for \$465.00, and from the sheriff for \$305.00.

There being no further business, Chairman Wade adjourned the meeting.

NIOBRARA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Patrick Wade, Chairman



Becky L. Freeman, County Clerk