

BUTLER COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

March 2, 2026

A meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Butler County, Nebraska, was held on the 2nd day of March 2026 at the Butler County Courthouse in David City, Nebraska, at 9:00 a.m. Present were the following: Scott Steager, Tony Krafka, Scott Griess, Bob Coufal, Brad Vandenberg. Absent: Scot Bauer, Jan Sypal.

Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by Publication, a designated method for giving notice, as shown by the Proof of Publication attached to the minutes. Notice of this meeting was given to all members of the Board and a copy of their acknowledgement of receipt of notice and the agenda is attached to the minutes. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice and in the notice to all members of the board of this meeting. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Chairman Scott Steager called the meeting to order and announced that a complete copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted in the meeting room. The Chairman declared the minutes from the previous meeting shall stand approved as presented.

David Begley, Attorney – Information regarding solar energy systems

David Begley, Omaha attorney, spoke to the Board about Sandhills Energy. He referenced the recent open house in David City, hosted by Sandhills Energy/Butler County Solar, where many residents expressed opposition to solar projects. He stated that solar is inefficient (25% maximum efficiency) and using valuable farmland for solar is wasteful. He further stated that even though Butler County does not yet have zoning, the Board can outright ban wind and solar. He provided Board members with copies of a Knox County resolution banning wind and solar, as well as an article about solar land use. The Board listened to his concerns but took no immediate action.

Discussion/Possible action – adding a 2nd NCIC terminal

911 Coordinator Sharon Codr and Sheriff Tom Dion appeared before the Board to request an additional NCIC terminal for the second dispatch station. The current NCIC terminal costs \$537.60/month. The additional terminal would cost another \$307.20/month for a total of \$844.80/month. Sheriff Dion indicated his current year budget could accommodate the expense for the remainder of this fiscal year, and they will explore cost-sharing with the City for next fiscal year. Supervisor Krafka expressed concern about the cost; Chairman Steager noted that the cost was less than he expected it to be, and Supervisor Coufal explained that a second terminal would be helpful when there are multiple events happening at the same time. Moved by Coufal, seconded by Vandenberg, to add a second NCIC terminal. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

Aye: Coufal, Vandenberg, Krafka, Griess, Steager.

Nay: None.

Absent: Bauer, Sypal.

Motion carried.

Certificate of Service

Tabled until the next meeting.

Approve 2025 Noxious Weed Program Evaluation

Weed Superintendent Max Birkel presented the 2025 Nebraska Dept. of Agriculture's evaluation of Butler County's Noxious Weed Program. Birkel reported that the department had no deficiencies and no open files. He stated the evaluation needs to be approved by the Board and signed by the Chairman. Moved by Coufal, seconded by Krafka, to approve the evaluation and to authorize Chairman Steager to sign the evaluation report. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

Aye: Coufal, Griess, Krafka, Vandenberg, Steager.

Nay: None.

Absent: Bauer, Sypal.

Motion carried.

Discussion/Possible action – 2026 NAISMA Conference Assist Grant Application

Birkel requested permission to apply for 2026 NAISMA Conference Assist Grant to attend the NAISMA conference in Virginia in mid-October. He indicated he would like to attend, but only if he was awarded the Nebraska Weed Association's \$1000 assist grant. County Attorney Julie Reiter referenced the employee handbook (page 20) which requires prior approval for out-of-state travel, so if Birkel receives the grant, he will need to appear before the Board again to request permission to attend the conference. Conference registration is \$425, plus lodging and airfare. Moved by Vandenberg, seconded by Coufal, to approve Birkel's application for the Nebraska Weed Association's 2026 NAISMA Conference Assist Grant. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

Aye: Vandenberg, Coufal, Griess, Krafka, Steager.

Nay: None.

Absent: Bauer, Sypal.

Motion carried.

Discussion/Possible action – review informal bids and approve purchase/mounting of steel box on Mack gravel truck

Highway Superintendent Randy Isham presented two informal bids received for the purchase and mounting of a steel box on the Mack gravel truck. Larsen International submitted a bid for \$48,780; Klute submitted a bid for \$21,400. The Mack gravel truck is a 2006 with 456,000 miles; it has been a good, reliable truck. Isham stated that if approved, the aluminum box could be brought back to sell. Moved by Krafka, seconded by Vandenberg, to accept Klute's bid of \$21,400 to replace the existing aluminum box with a steel box, and to bring the old box back to be sold. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

Aye: Krafka, Vandenberg, Coufal, Griess, Steager.

Nay: None.

Absent: Bauer, Sypal.

Motion carried.

Update on Roads

Isham provided updates on road department activities. The new CAT motor grader was delivered last Thursday. It came with a ripper that they do not need and will take to Kobza Auction to sell. They are starting to gravel roads before potential rain. Bridge work is progressing on Bone Creek and by AGP. Isham received a letter from NIRMA regarding a resident who received letters from Read Township and Seward County. He will forward them to County Attorney Reiter for review. He is also working on the ROW letter and will have County Attorney Reiter review it before bringing it to the Board. Chairman Steager noted that beavers are plugging up some of the culverts. Isham said they can get an ongoing permit from NE Game & Parks, but they will have to pay someone to get rid of them. He will have Greg Brecka call around and find out what other counties are paying.

Jim Rerucha expressed concern about the efficiency of a County-owned gravel pit and suggested a private accounting firm be hired to analyze the data. Isham defended the cost-effectiveness of a County-owned gravel pit, stating it saves enough money to keep employees who might otherwise be laid off. Discussion was also held about the quality of gravel. Galen Juranek noted that good quality gravel will stay in place, while poor quality gravel will need to be replaced more quickly and often. Chairman Steager noted that no decisions have been made regarding the gravel pit and that the Board would continue to gather information about costs and benefits before deciding.

Discussion/Possible action – set date/time for public hearing and special meeting regarding a land development moratorium during the comprehensive planning process

Planning Commission Chairman Roger Topil shared that the Planning Commission held a public hearing on February 25th regarding moratoriums. Based on community survey results, the Planning Commission recommends moratoriums on five items: commercial wind farm energy systems, commercial solar farm energy systems, battery energy storage systems, data processing centers, and landfills. Moved by Griess, seconded by Vandenberg, to hold a public hearing on March 16, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. regarding a land development moratorium during the comprehensive planning process. Supervisor Krafka noted that the Planning Commission excluded projects that are already under physical construction from the moratorium. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

Aye: Griess, Coufal, Vandenberg, Krafka, Steager.

Nay: None.

Absent: Bauer, Sypal.

Motion carried.

Moved by Griess, seconded by Vandenberg, to hold a special meeting immediately following the public hearing. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

Aye: Griess, Coufal, Vandenberg, Krafka, Steager.

Nay: None.

Absent: Bauer, Sypal.

Motion carried.

Planning Commission Chairman Topil stated that the Planning Commission meeting originally scheduled for March 11th has been rescheduled for March 18th.

Meeting recessed at 9:59 a.m. Meeting reconvened at 10:06 a.m.

Executive Session

Moved by Vandenberg, seconded by Coufal, to enter into Executive Session at 10:08 a.m. for the purpose of discussing Senior Center issues, inviting in County Attorney Reiter. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

Aye: Vandenberg, Coufal, Griess, Krafka, Steager.

Nay: None.

Absent: Bauer, Sypal.

Motion carried.

Moved by Coufal, seconded by Griess, to come out of Executive Session at 10:55 a.m. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

Aye: Coufal, Griess, Krafka, Vandenberg, Steager.

Nay: None.

Absent: Bauer, Sypal.

Motion carried.

Moved by Coufal, seconded by Griess, to have County Treasurer conduct an audit of the Senior Center. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

Aye: Coufal, Griess, Krafka, Vandenberg, Steager.

Nay: None.

Absent: Bauer, Sypal.

Motion carried.

Moved by Krafka, seconded by Coufal to have Supervisor Vandenberg and HR conduct an investigation of the Senior Center and bring recommendations back to the Board for final approval. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

Aye: Krafka, Griess, Coufal, Steager.

Nay: None.

Abstain: Vandenberg.

Absent: Bauer, Sypal.

Motion carried.

Public Comment

Galen Juranek appeared before the Board regarding the solar project. He stated that he was told by the NRD that it would be best to put the land back to grass due to high nitrates. He said he had originally been approached about leasing, but he does not lease, so that is how his land sale came about. He asked the Board how much taxpayer money is being spent on zoning. Chairman Steager stated the consultant fee for developing the comprehensive plan and zoning was \$57,000. He also encouraged Juranek to attend the public hearing on March 16th at 6:00 p.m.

Brian Boerner, Sandhills Energy, appeared before the Board to request time to present a project update for Butler County Solar. He will be added to the March 16th meeting agenda. Supervisor Krafka noted that it is important for Sandhills Energy/Butler County Solar to work with the roads department and townships.

Claims

Chairman Steager stated that they need to start having two Board members come in 20 minutes early to review claims on those meeting dates at which claims are to be approved. Chairman Steager and Supervisor Griess will review the claims before the March 16th meeting.

FY2024-2025 Audit Report

Chairman Steager, County Attorney Julie Reiter, County Treasurer Karey Adamy, County Clerk Lori Aschoff, County Assessor Vickie Donoghue, Clerk of the District Court Sandy Hoeft, and Sheriff Tom Dion participated in an Audit Exit Interview telephone conference with Jeff Shreier, Audit Manager, Nebraska Auditor of Public Accounts. Issues were noted with “hold checks” and township billing. County Attorney Reiter clarified that Nebraska statute allows for the issuance of checks before receiving goods, but a resolution is required. If the item to be purchased is not expected to be delivered within 1-2 weeks, it should be budgeted and paid for out of the next fiscal year’s budget.

CAD Interlocal including Fillmore County

Board members reviewed the CAD Interlocal with Zuercher. County Clerk Aschoff noted that it is the same as the one previously approved by the Board, except it now includes Fillmore County. Moved by Vandenberg, seconded by Coufal, to approve the CAD Interlocal with Zuercher, now including Fillmore County. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

Aye: Vandenberg, Coufal, Griess, Krafka, Steager.

Nay: None.

Absent: Bauer, Sypal.

Motion carried.

Recording Board meetings

County Clerk Aschoff noted that she was testing the recording equipment during the current meeting. Discussion was held regarding the benefits of recording Board meetings; however, concerns were raised regarding retention requirements, server space, and costs. The issue was tabled pending more information on retention requirements and costs.

Correspondence

Butler County Development Board – January 2026 minutes

Aging Partners – January 2026 minutes

Aging Partners – February 2026 agenda

Congressman Flood 2027 Community Project Funding information

Hruska Memorial Public Library Newsletter – March 2026

Discussion

Supervisor Krafka referenced the Congressman Flood 2027 Community Project Funding information and said that he and Highway Superintendent Isham discussed the possibility of applying for this federal funding. The deadline is March 9th, so too soon for this year but worth thinking about for next year.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 11:28 a.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Supervisors will be March 16, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

Lori L. Aschoff
County Clerk

Scott Steager
Chairman