

## **BUTLER COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

April 6, 2026

A meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Butler County, Nebraska, was held on the 6th day of April 2026 at the Butler County Courthouse in David City, Nebraska at 9:00 a.m.

Present were the following: Scott Steager, Tony Krafka, Scot Bauer, Scott Griess, Robert Coufal, Brad Vandenberg.  
Absent: 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. The Chairman called the meeting to order and announced that a complete copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted in the meeting room.

### **BOARD OF EQUALIZATION (SEE SEPARATE MINUTES)**

Moved by Coufal, seconded by Griess, to move into the Board of Equalization at 9:00 a.m. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: NONE.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

Moved by Bauer, seconded by Griess, to exit the Board of Equalization at 9:02 a.m. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: NONE.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

### **County Clerk Monthly Fee Report**

The County Clerk fee report for the month of March 2026 was accepted and placed on file.

### **Clerk of the District Court Monthly Fee Report**

The Clerk of the District Court fee report for the month of March 2026 was accepted and placed on file.

### **Monthly Sheriff Report**

The Monthly Sheriff Report for the month of March 2026 was accepted and placed on file.

### **Review/Approve early payroll for separated employees**

Moved by Coufal, seconded by Krafka, to approve early payroll for separated employees. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

**Discussion/Possible action – approve City of Schuyler floodplain map revision/update**

Floodplain Administrator Breann Whitmore appeared before the Board to review and request approval of a floodplain map revision/update for the City of Schuyler. They added a hydraulic plant and obtained a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) and need concurrence from Butler County in order to get approval from FEMA. Moved by Vandenberg, seconded by Coufal, to approve the City of Schuyler floodplain map revision/update. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

**HR Update**

None.

**Discussion/Possible action – appointment of Brittney Dailey as Senior Center Interim Director**

HR Director Aida Hickman and Supervisor Vandenberg reported that Dailey is doing extremely well so far. They recommended Dailey be appointed Interim Director with a pay increase from \$18.50/hour to \$25.00/hour, retroactive from March 25, 2026, until a new director is hired. Moved by Bauer, seconded by Coufal, to appoint Brittney Dailey as Senior Center Interim Director with pay of \$25.00/hour retroactive from March 25, 2026, until a new director is hired. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

**Discussion/Possible action – authorize County Treasurer Karey Adamy to open new account at Bank of the Valley with \$400 petty cash**

County Treasurer Karey Adamy appeared before the Board to request authorization to open a new petty cash account for the Senior Center at Bank of the Valley. This will make it easier to manage since all of the County's other accounts are there. Bank of the Valley is more local than First National Bank of Omaha (FNBO) and easier to deal with. If approved, she will submit a claim for petty cash to fund the account. Moved by Vandenberg, seconded by Coufal, to authorize County Treasurer Adamy to open a new account for the Senior Center at Bank of the Valley with \$400 petty cash. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

**Review/Approve Resolution 2026-06 – Senior Center Petty Cash Fund – open Bank of the Valley account**

Moved by Coufal, seconded by Vandenberg, to approve Resolution 2026-06 as presented. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

A copy of Resolution 2026-06 is on file at the County Clerk's office.

**Residential project update and road maintenance request for County Road 28 between Roads T and V**

Nathan Suehl appeared before the Board to request that County Road 28 between Roads T and V be changed from minimum maintenance to a maintained road. He and his wife purchased a parcel of land and intend to start construction on a new house in October. Highway Superintendent Randy Isham noted that his crews had previously been ready to go, but the project has been off and on, so they moved on to other projects. Chairman Steager asked if a floodplain permit

was required; Isham stated that the property is not near the floodplain, so a permit is not required. Supervisor Vandenberg noted the significant expense to make a minimum maintenance road a County road. Isham stated that he needs to know from the Board whether to put in culverts and do the dirt work, adding that this work was not originally scheduled or budgeted. Chairman Steager advised Suehl to put in water and a driveway first, then talk to Oak Creek Township, and they will reach out to Isham. Suehl said he would be in touch as soon as he gets those things accomplished.

#### **Review/Approve Resolution 2026-08 – Designation of Signers on Senior Center Account at Bank of the Valley**

County Treasurer Adamy will be an authorized signer with all access to the Senior Center account. Interim Director Brittney Dailey will be an authorized signer with a debit card and ability to make deposits. Joanna Brandenburgh will be an authorized signer with a debit card for the kitchen. Two signatures will be required on checks and withdrawals. Moved by Coufal, seconded by Bauer, to approve Resolution 2026-08 as presented. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

A copy of Resolution 2026-08 is on file at the County Clerk's office.

#### **Certificates of Service**

Certificates of Service were presented to Bill Drozd (Sheriff Department – 15 years), Max Birkel (Weed Superintendent – 15 years), Elliott Rech (Roads Department – 10 years), and Bob Coufal (County Board – 5 years).

#### **Review/Approve Resolution 2026-09 – Designation of Signers on Senior Center Account at FNBO**

The past director and assistant director need to be removed from the Senior Center account at FNBO. County Treasurer Adamy will be authorized representative/signer and Brittney Dailey will be an authorized signer. Moved by Vandenberg, seconded by Griess, to approve Resolution 2026-09 as presented. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

A copy of Resolution 2026-09 is on file at the County Clerk's office.

#### **Annual Update for Apace**

Apace CEO Matt Kasik appeared before the Board to provide an update on the past year. He distributed a Year in Review booklet to Board members. Apace is funded solely by Medicaid, so Kasik did not have a funding request for 2026-2027. He thanked Supervisor Griess for his service and thanked the Board for supporting Apace for 50 years.

#### **Annual Update for Region 5 Systems**

Region 5 Systems Regional Administrator Patrick Kriefels appeared before the Board to provide an update on the past year and request funding for 2026-2027. He recognized Supervisor Griess for serving on their governance board. The focus of Region 5 is mental health care. He provided several handouts regarding the service area demographics, services provided, governance, and policymakers. He reviewed their funding request, noting that this year's request is the same as last year's funding request, even though expenses have increased. Kriefels stated that Butler County's return on investment is \$3 for every \$1 invested. The statutory county match due is \$16,707. Chairman Steager asked what the additional \$2,601 requested was for. Kriefels replied that it was for administrative funds, employee salaries, direct services, and all coordination components.

#### **Discussion/Possible action regarding tax sale certificates**

County Treasurer Adamy provided Board members with a list of taxes not sold during the tax sale and requested authorization to issue tax certificates so the County can foreclose on them if the taxes are not paid. She also noted two

parcels that are coming up on foreclosure. Moved by Coufal, seconded by Krafka, to authorize the issuance of tax certificates. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

#### **Review/Approve Resolution 2026-10 – Senior Center Petty Cash Fund – close FNBO account**

County Treasurer Adamy noted a typo in the resolution. Tabled until later in the meeting to allow County Clerk Lori Aschoff to make the correction.

#### **Update on Roads**

Highway Superintendent Randy Isham provided an update on Roads, including the temporary closure of the Bone Creek Bridge due to recent rain and the ongoing backfilling process on another bridge, expected to reopen in early May. He said he will add the tree removal cleanup letter to the next meeting agenda. He expressed appreciation for Louise Niemann's help in applying for grants through the offices of Congressman Mike Flood and Senator Deb Fischer totaling \$11.2 million for the paving of River Road. Isham will check with Hawkins Construction regarding any small asphalt projects and report back to the Board regarding estimated costs. He noted that they are not currently buying gravel; they are hauling it from one of the County's stockpiles and getting caught up on orders.

#### **Senior Center Issues**

Tara Stephens appeared before the Board to express concerns about the Senior Center. She began working at the Senior Center on February 6th and resigned on April 1st. She said she made multiple attempts to get proper training and that instead of working alongside the Kitchen Lead, she was tasked with washing dishes. She stated that on March 27th she messaged the Interim Director at 8:56 a.m. that she would be late for her shift starting at 9:00 a.m., but that she was otherwise always early to work. She also referred to a meeting with HR and a slotted spoon that was not in the drawer. Chairman Steager interrupted Stephens and told her that the appropriate next step would be to file a grievance. County Attorney Julie Reiter explained that there is a grievance committee and recommended that Stephens follow the grievance policy in the employee handbook.

#### **Review/Approve Resolution 2026-10 – Senior Center Petty Cash Fund – close FNBO account**

Moved by Coufal, seconded by Griess, to approve Resolution 2026-10 as corrected. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

A copy of Resolution 2026-10 is on file at the County Clerk's office. County Treasurer Adamy will close the FNBO account once everything has cleared and the new account at Bank of the Valley is ready to go.

#### **Consideration/Approval of 2026 FTA Title VI Plan for Butler County Rural Transit**

County Attorney Reiter has reviewed the plan and has no issues with it. Moved by Vandenberg, seconded by Coufal to approve the 2026 FTA Title VI Plan for Butler County Rural Transit pending changes to the Director's contact information. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

**Review/Approve Visitors Promotion Fund request for the Butler County Parade**

County Clerk Aschoff presented a request for funds by the Parade Committee for the 2026 Butler County Parade, approved by the Visitors Committee. Moved by Coufal, seconded by Bauer, to approve the Parade Committee's request for up to \$1000 for radio ads for the 2026 Butler County Parade. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

**Discussion/Possible action – Region 5 request for additional matching funds in the amount of \$2,601**

Tabled until the next meeting.

**Claims**

None.

**Committee Reports**

None.

**Correspondence**

Butler County Development (BCD) Board meeting minutes from February 2026.

Meeting recessed at 10:16 a.m. Meeting reconvened at 10:21 a.m.

**Discussion/Possible action – letter of support for Lawrence Welk Show 70th Anniversary**

Moved by Griess, seconded by Coufal, to decline writing a letter of support from the Board for the Lawrence Welk Show 70th Anniversary. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

**Discussion/Possible action – set public hearing date regarding Livestock Friendly County program**

Discussion was held regarding whether it would be more appropriate for the Livestock Friendly County designation to be considered by the Planning Commission rather than the Board. It was noted that the community survey results favored the County seeking Livestock Friendly County designation. Moved by Krafka, seconded by Vandenberg, to hold a public hearing regarding the Livestock Friendly County program on April 20, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. Supervisor Bauer noted that we are already livestock friendly, we just do not have the formal designation. Supervisor Griess suggested that the Board leave it to the Planning Commission and let them incorporate the livestock friendly recommendations into the comprehensive plan and zoning. Chairman Steager wondered if the County would be more likely to be approved if we have a comprehensive plan and zoning in place. Supervisor Krafka questioned what it hurts to have a public hearing about it now, noting that it could inform the comprehensive plan and zoning process. Supervisor Griess stated that he felt the Board is overstepping in this matter; Supervisor Bauer agreed. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

Aye: Krafka, Vandenberg, Coufal, Steager.

Nay: Griess, Bauer.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

**Executive Session – Butler County Solar/Sandhills Energy threatened litigation**

Moved by Coufal, seconded by Vandenberg, to go into Executive Session at 10:41 a.m., inviting County Attorney Reiter. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

Moved by Griess, seconded by Coufal, to come out of Executive Session at 11:54 a.m. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

### **Public Comment**

Chairman Steager invited public comment, imposing a 3-minute time limit per person.

Jeremy Schriber, Farmers National Company, spoke on behalf of two different landowners who are selling land to the solar company, the Smith and Meyer families. He read letters from both families in favor of Butler County Solar/Sandhills Energy.

Mike Ebel, Columbus, owns land in Butler County and leases land to Butler County Solar. He questioned why Butler County Solar/Sandhills Energy has not been able to get on a Board meeting agenda. He referred to the high nitrates and said the ground is not good for farming. Ebel said not excluding Butler County Solar from the moratorium will be costly financially to him and others; they have been paying him rent for seven years. No one opposed to the project has contacted him (Ebel).

Brian Boerner, Sandhills Energy, provided Board members with a packet of information including written statements. He noted the Board issued a unanimous letter of support of the project in December 2019. Butler County Solar/Sandhills Energy has conducted numerous site studies and executed power purchase agreements and lease agreements. They have mobilized solar construction crews to move solar panels to the site and have invested over \$25M in the project. He said they also have \$145M in irreversible purchase orders.

John Brown, Senior VP, Sandhills Energy, shared the benefits of the solar project, including name plate capacity tax, property tax revenue to the County, schools, and Bellwood Rural Fire Department. The project encompasses 900 acres and there will be vegetation in front of the solar panels. Brown noted that the project will provide temporary construction jobs and permanent jobs once the plant is up and running. He said Sandhills Energy had previously discussed the road with the township boards.

Eric Johnson, President, Sandhills Energy, assured the Board that other communities in which Sandhills Energy has projects all have good things to say about them. He told Board members that they have his number if anything is needed. There is a lot at stake here financially; his banker wants him to call immediately following the meeting.

David Levy, Baird Holm Law Firm, represents Sandhills Energy/Butler County Solar. He said the project has been going on for seven years, and from a non-legal standpoint, it is unfair to change the rules during the same. They made the investments before the rules were changed. He said they are not here to get in the way of the comprehensive plan and zoning; the request is to allow them to continue the project. He noted a road use agreement is a great thing. The project will use County roads, so a roads agreement is appropriate, and the County will get a lot of road improvements. Decommissioning is another issue, but his three minutes was up.

### **Discussion/Possible action – remove Butler County Solar/Sandhills Energy from moratorium**

Chairman Steager read aloud Resolution 2026-11. He explained that Butler County Solar/Sandhills Energy is not currently exempt from the moratorium, but the resolution would exempt them from the moratorium. He stated any road agreement would be a separate issue. Moved by Krafka, seconded by Coufal, to approve Resolution 2026-11 as presented. Upon roll call vote the following voted:

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

Nay: None.

Absent: Sypal.

Motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 12:22 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Supervisors will be April 20, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

Lori L. Aschoff  
County Clerk

Scott Steager  
Chairman