

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

December 30, 2025

The Cherry County Board of Commissioners convened in regular session on December 30, 2025 in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the Cherry County Courthouse, as per notice in the Valentine Midland News every week, with the agenda being on file in the office of the County Clerk. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman McConaughey. Roll call was taken. Present for the meeting were Commissioners Mike McConaughey, Martin DeNaeyer, Nina Nelson, and County Clerk Samantha Leonard. The Open Meetings Act Poster was acknowledged by Chairman McConaughey and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Board of Commissioners' regular meeting minutes from December 9, 2025 were read. McConaughey moved and Nelson seconded to approve minutes with noted corrections. Roll call vote: Aye – DeNaeyer, Nelson, McConaughey. The motion carried.

Comments from the public were received during the allotted time.

Road Foreman Steve Stichka provided an update for District 2 re: routine equipment & road maintenance. Foreman Brent Collier provided an update for District 3 re: routine maintenance with roads & equipment, and the Cody building's walls are finished, electrical needs to be completed yet. Foreman Jay D Osburn with District 1 provided an update re: routine equipment & road maintenance.

Highway Superintendent Jay D Osburn reported the Abandonment of 908th Road Resolution is completed, will have the County Attorney review, and present at the January 13th meeting. The inspection on the privately owned bridge on Anderson Bridge Road has been completed by Manelli Wagner, and the county is now awaiting an inspection report.

Emergency Management Director Jessica Coyle provided an update re: Valentine Tower Road repairs need completed, radio issues, NACO Pet Region meetings, weather reporting, Applied Connective completed a firmware update, NCPET meetings, SOLOCOM maintenance agreement, Merriman Fire Grant, and Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Zoning Administrator Katie Ormesher provided an update re: approval of three cell phone tower upgrade permits, two permits have been received and awaiting additional information, Planning and Zoning board will meet in February.

The board discussed the CWDG Grant Application with EM Director Coyle. Ms. Coyle informed the board they anticipate a very short application window and wanted approval to apply for the grant prior to the application opening date. It was a consensus of the board for Ms. Coyle to send final documents to them prior to submission for grant. Ms. Coyle informed the board that after the grant has been applied for, if the county is granted the funds, we are not required to accept if the grant terms are not something they agree with. McConaughey moved and DeNaeyer seconded to authorize the Emergency Management Director to apply for the CWDG Grant. Roll call vote: Aye – Nelson, McConaughey, DeNaeyer. The motion carried.

The board discussed the 2027-2030 salary with elected officials. Assessor Bancroft presented data to the board based on valuations, NACO Survey Guide, and levies. The board expressed this is by position, not employee and a job that is elected and the current salary is approximately \$7,000-\$8,000 lower than other comparable counties. The board discussed the concern of triggering the joint public hearing postcard and need to be financially responsible to give wage increases to be comparable to other counties in increments. Elected Officials expressed their concerns about other county positions given 20-35% raises in the last 18 months and are aware most positions need to be caught up in wages to be comparable to other counties. McConaughey moved and Nelson seconded to set the 2027 Elected Officials Salary increase of 18% with a 3% cost-of-living increase for 2028, 2029, and 2030: excluding the Board of Commissioners. Roll call vote: Aye – McConaughey, Nelson. Nay – DeNaeyer. The motion carried.

The board recessed from 12:04 p.m. to 1:02 p.m.

The board discussed cost of living increases for county employees for 2026 and the employees that had received substantial increases in 2025. DeNaeyer moved and Nelson seconded to approve a 3% cost of living increase for 2026 for full time employees, effective January 2026 payroll. Roll call vote: Aye – DeNaeyer, Nelson, McConaughey. The motion carried. McConaughey moved and Nelson seconded to authorize the supervisor in each department to give cost of living increases to part time employees, up to 2% for 2026. Roll call vote: Aye – Nelson, McConaughey, DeNaeyer. The motion carried.

Clerk Leonard presented Resolution #2025-18 Fund Transfer. The Resolution is to transfer funds from Inheritance Tax Fund to General Fund as stated in the approved FY 2025-2026 Budget. Nelson moved and DeNaeyer seconded to approve Resolution 2025-18 and authorize the Chairman to sign. Roll call vote: Aye – McConaughey, DeNaeyer, Nelson. The motion carried.

The board recessed from 1:32 p.m. to 1:43 p.m. to convene as Board of Corrections.

DeNaeyer moved and Nelson seconded to approve claims as presented. Roll call vote: Aye – Nelson, McConaughey, DeNaeyer. The motion carried.

CHERRY COUNTY CLAIMS LISTING

Claims were presented in the amount of	\$	297,812.59
and disallowed in the amount of	\$	
A warrant was ordered drawn on the General Fund in the amount of	\$	297,812.59
GENERAL FUND		
AFLAC	Withholdings/Insurance	\$2,871.12
AFLAC Dental	Withholdings/Insurance	\$2,453.66
Ameritas Life Insurance/Retirement	Withholdings/Retirement	\$22,491.36
Clearly Communications	Services	\$325.77
Credit Management Services	Garnishment	\$566.81
EFTPS	Withholdings/Taxes	\$40,162.56
J13 Enterprises LLC	Services	\$5,584.80
Medica Health Insurance	Withholdings/Insurance	\$66,904.88
AUL Health Benefit Trust	Health Reimbursement Arrangement Funding	\$5,100.00
NE Department of Revenue	Withholdings/Taxes	\$6,027.05
Security 1st Health Savings Account	Withholdings/Insurance	\$4,033.33
Vision Service Plan	Withholdings/Insurance	\$562.34
Andre, Andrea	Gross Wages	\$4,618.28
Bancroft, Melissa	Gross Salary	\$4,929.21
Blume, Ashley	Gross Wages	\$4,962.21
Brockley, Billie	Gross Salary	\$4,000.00
Bruning, Jerri	Gross Wages	\$3,191.25
Coates, Sonia	Gross Wages	\$4,607.43
DeNaeyer, Martin	Gross Salary	\$2,012.50
Dobbins, Cynthia	Gross Wages	\$3,623.54
Duffield, Janette	Gross Wages	\$4,935.68
Froning, Ellen	Gross Wages	\$2,657.19
Ghost Bear, Tamara	Gross Wages	\$5,466.45
Goodrich, Dustina	Gross Wages	\$3,652.53
Goodrich, Weston	Gross Wages	\$5,306.69
Greenough, Pat	Gross Wages	\$5,036.77
Hammond, Kathy	Gross Salary	\$4,929.21
Hanson, Jessica	Gross Wages	\$4,929.21
Hanson, Timothy	Gross Salary	\$2,464.60
Hesse, Sharon	Gross Salary	\$5,208.33
Hoefs, Jasmine	Gross Wages	\$4,593.22
Hooper, Patrick	Gross Wages	\$2,879.75
Jackson, Gary	Gross Wages	\$6,349.60
Johnson, Andrew	Gross Salary	\$3,608.25
Knox, Calvin	Gross Wages	\$4,932.71
Leonard, Samantha	Gross Salary	\$4,929.21
Lopez, Vincent	Gross Wages	\$2,538.20
Lutter, Tammy	Gross Wages	\$3,649.87
McConaughey, Michael	Gross Salary	\$2,012.50
McSweeney, Ryan	Gross Wages	\$6,215.30
Menze, Caitlyn	Gross Wages	\$2,962.75
Miller, Eve	Gross Wages	\$60.01
Nelson, Nina	Gross Salary	\$2,012.50
Ormesher, Katie	Gross Wages	\$1,747.99
Osborne, Joanie	Gross Wages	\$809.68
Osburn, Albert	Gross Salary	\$5,087.02
Peterson, Ehran	Gross Wages	\$3,433.95
Pier, Shelley	Gross Wages	\$3,959.46
Price, Cassandra	Gross Wages	\$5,626.85
Red Fish, Cheyenne	Gross Wages	\$6,391.26
Renning, Maxwell	Gross Wages	\$5,972.85
Scott, Eric	Gross Salary	\$5,551.16
Starr, Christopher	Gross Wages	\$3,964.75
Stec, Nicholas	Gross Wages	\$5,090.37
Stoeger, David	Gross Wages	\$5,157.38
Stolzenburg, Jane	Gross Wages	\$4,555.42
Thomsen, Clarissa	Gross Wages	\$4,332.03
Wickman, Erick	Gross Wages	\$6,056.00
	GROSS TOTAL	\$348,094.80
Adjustment for employees' share of withholdings		
	NET TOTAL	(\$50,282.21)
Claims were presented in the amount of	\$	\$297,812.59
and disallowed in the amount of	\$	
A warrant was ordered drawn on the Road Fund in the amount of	\$	137,301.91

ROAD FUND

AFLAC	Withholdings/Insurance	\$1,569.52
AFLAC Dental	Withholdings/Insurance	\$1,065.18
Ameritas Life Insurance/Retirement	Withholdings/Retirement	10196.03
EFTPS	Taxes/Withholdings	\$19,477.15
Legal Shield	Services	\$33.90
Medica Health Insurance	Withholdings/Insurance	\$30,586.40
AUL Health Benefit Trust	Health Reimbursement Arrangement Funding	\$2,100.00
NE Department of Revenue	Taxes/Withholdings	\$3,005.39
Security 1st Health Savings Account	Withholdings/Insurance	\$1,800.00
Vision Service Plan	Withholdings/Insurance	\$215.59
Buechle, Jordan	Gross Wages	\$5,998.70
Bunner, Bradley	Gross Wages	\$4,950.00
Cash, Tyler	Gross Wages	\$5,414.25
Coetzee, Daniel	Gross Wages	\$4,607.75
Collier, David	Gross Salary	\$5,063.57
Egger, Garrett	Gross Wages	\$4,727.13
Fernau, Bradly	Gross Wages	\$4,921.82
Graeff, Randy	Gross Wages	\$6,428.81
Hampton, Donald	Gross Wages	\$1,662.12
Hart Benjamin	Gross Wages	\$368.46
McWhirter, Bentz	Gross Wages	\$5,818.41
Olson, Arnold	Gross Wages	\$1,602.08
Osburn, Jay D	Gross Salary	\$5,750.00
Pearman, Terry	Gross Wages	\$5,980.50
Reese, Kay	Gross Wages	\$2,477.78
Songer, LeRoy	Gross Wages	\$5,098.56
Szakacs, Ryan	Gross Wages	\$4,736.32
Stichka, Steven	Gross Salary	\$5,000.00
Thompson, Shawn	Gross Wages	\$5,685.00
Vest, Daniel	Gross Wages	\$4,740.27

GROSS TOTAL \$161,080.69

Adjustment for employees' share of withholdings (\$23,778.78)

NET TOTAL \$137,301.91

Claims were presented in the amount of \$ 7,154.69

and disallowed in the amount of \$

A warrant was ordered drawn on the Visitors Promotion Fund in the amount of \$ 7,154.69

VISITORS PROMOTION FUND

AFLAC	Withholdings/Insurance	97.37
AFLAC Dental	Withholdings/Insurance	55.63
Ameritas Life Insurance/Retirement	Withholdings/Retirement	\$704.73
EFTPS	Taxes/Withholdings	\$1,249.16
NE Department of Revenue	Taxes/Withholdings	\$161.88
Vision Service Plan	Withholdings/Insurance	\$31.84
Braun, Regina	Gross Wages	\$4,740.26
Graeff, Lynn	Gross Wages	\$1,524.07

GROSS TOTAL \$8,564.94

Adjustment for employees' share of withholdings (\$1,410.25)

NET TOTAL \$7,154.69

Claims were presented in the amount of \$ 286.59

and disallowed in the amount of \$

A warrant was ordered drawn on the Health Claims Fund in the amount of \$ 286.59

HEALTH CLAIMS FUND

Cherry County Clerk	Health Insurance Claims	\$286.59
	TOTAL	\$286.59

Claims were presented in the amount of \$ 9,665.99

and disallowed in the amount of \$

A warrant was ordered drawn on the Emergency Management Fund in the amount of \$ 9,665.99

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FUND

AFLAC	Withholdings/Insurance	143.39
AFLAC Dental	Withholdings/Insurance	77.81
Ameritas Life Insurance/Retirement	Withholdings/Retirement	\$707.34
EFTPS	Taxes/Withholdings	\$1,398.22
Medica Health Insurance	Withholdings/Insurance	\$2,155.10
NE Department of Revenue	Taxes/Withholdings	\$194.90
Security 1st Health Savings Account	Withholdings/Insurance	\$500.00
Vision Service Plan	Withholdings/Insurance	\$31.84
Coyle, Jessica	Gross Salary	\$4,888.00
Reese, Kay	Gross Wages	\$1,399.46

GROSS TOTAL \$11,496.06

Adjustment for employees' share of withholdings (\$1,830.07)

NET TOTAL

\$9,665.99

Sheriff Rusty Osburn presented the Highway 20 Law Enforcement Interlocal Agreement for 2026. Mr. Osburn informed the board no changes have been made to the contract from 2025. Nelson moved and DeNaeyer seconded to approve the 2026 Highway 20 Law Enforcement Interlocal Agreement. Roll call vote: Aye – McConaughey, DeNaeyer, Nelson. The motion carried.

At 1:49 p.m., Chairman McConaughey adjourned the meeting.

State of Nebraska,)
) SS.
County of Cherry,)

I, Samantha Leonard, the undersigned County Clerk of Cherry County, Nebraska, do hereby certify the foregoing minutes are true and are part of the official records of this office. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal this 13th day of January 2026.

Samantha Leonard

Samantha Leonard
Cherry County Clerk



Mike McConaughey

Mike McConaughey, Chairperson
Cherry County Board of Commissioners