

# BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

## February 24, 2026

The Cherry County Board of Commissioners convened in regular session on February 24, 2026 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 10:03 a.m. by Chairman McConaughy. Roll call was taken. Present for the meeting were Commissioners Mike McConaughy, Martin DeNaeyer, Nina Nelson, and Clerk Samantha Leonard. The Open Meetings Act Poster was acknowledged by Chairman McConaughy and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Board of Commissioners' meeting minutes from February 10, 2026 were read. DeNaeyer moved and Nelson seconded to approve minutes as read. Roll call vote: Aye – DeNaeyer, Nelson, McConaughy. The motion carried.

No comments from the public were received during the allotted time.

Noxious Weed Superintendent Pat Hooper provided an update re: trainings, NWCA training & testing, and work is being completed on the new office at the Road District 3 Yard in Merriman.

Emergency Management Director Jessica Coyle provided an update re: assistance with vehicle accidents, active shooter preparation training, fires, radio issues are being fixed, LEOP workshop, 911 outages reported and did not impact Cherry County, storm spotter training, SEAT plane approved for another 5-year contract, and the Valentine Tower light is not working and equipment has been ordered to fix the light.

The board discussed the potential purchase of a cooling tent for emergency personnel with the use of PET Region grant funds. The grant funds cover a cooling tent and Salamander Credential tablets. Director Coyle stated the equipment would need to be purchased by the County, she would submit receipts to the PET Region, and the PET Region would submit them to the State for reimbursement. The reimbursement process would take approximately two months. Nelson moved and DeNaeyer seconded to authorize the Emergency Management Director to purchase equipment as presented by Director Coyle through the PET Region grant using Emergency Management funds. Roll call vote: Aye – Nelson, McConaughy, DeNaeyer. The motion carried.

At 10:31 a.m. the board discussed the Communications Budget and invoicing with Applied Connective and Boyd's Network with Director Coyle and elected officials. Director Coyle stated she has been receiving invoices for work done by both companies; however, had no knowledge of the companies doing the work as other offices have contacted the companies on their own for the issues they are having in their respective offices. Director Coyle asked that all issues be directed to her and she would contact the companies to keep track of billing and work completed. Clerk Leonard informed Director Coyle and the board that all of the billing is sent to Jessica; however, some offices have contacted one or both of the companies and there needs to be communications between Director Coyle and the office requesting services. This would eliminate the questions and if an office needs to pay an invoice from their own budget, Director Coyle needs to give the invoice to the respective office to be coded. Clerk Leonard also informed the board that a claim was paid twice out of the Communications budget with Boyd's Network. Clerk Leonard sent information to Director Coyle to contact Boyd's to discuss the credit on Cherry County Account. The board asked Director Coyle to send out a mass email to department heads for IT companies communication as discussed.

Road Foremen provided updates for their respective districts. Road District #1 Foreman Jay D Osburn updated re: routine maintenance, fixing equipment, hauling material, fixing blow outs, and trimming trees. Road District #2 Foreman Steve Stichka provided an update re: routine maintenance, hauling material, and fixing blow outs due to dry conditions. Road District #3 Foreman Brent Collier provided an update re: hauling rock, trimming trees, routine maintenance, preparing for a project on Mule Deer Road, potentially purchasing more materials, and discussion with Forest Services for tree removal.

Highway Superintendent Jay D Osburn provided an update re: working on the 1- and 6-year Highway Improvement Program with the Road Foremen and potentially receiving an update from Mainelli Wagner in the next couple days for the privately owned bridge inspections on Anderson Bridge Road.

The board discussed setting a date and time for the public hearing for the 1- and 6-year Highway Improvement Program with the Road Foreman. McConaughy moved and DeNaeyer seconded to set the 1- and 6-year Highway Improvement Program Public Hearing for March 31, 2026 at 11:00 AM CST. Roll call vote: Aye – McConaughy, DeNaeyer, Nelson. The motion carried.

The board discussed two Request to Occupy County Right-of-Way Permits submitted by Great Plains Communications. The permits are for projects near Crookston and Wood Lake to remove hardwire and replace with fiber optic lines. DeNaeyer moved and Nelson seconded to approve Right of Way Permits for Great Plains Communications for the Wood Lake and Crookston projects and authorize the Chairman to sign. Roll call vote: Aye – DeNaeyer, Nelson, McConaughy. The motion carried.

At 11:00 a.m. Shawn Jacobs with the National Weather Service recognized Cherry County as a Storm Ready County and presented a Weather Ready Nation Certification as formal acknowledgement that we work together as force multipliers in the area to prepare the community of weather changes. Mr. Jacobs thanked Cherry County for being a partner of the National Weather Service.

The board discussed the shortage of funds in the Bookmobile Fund. Clerk Leonard shared an email stating SRS Funds are being dispersed to counties for the shortage received in FY 2024 and 2025; however, we are unaware of when these funds will be received. McConaughy moved and Nelson seconded to submit a fund transfer of \$11,540.46 from the 2500 Grant Fund into the 2050 Bookmobile Fund to cover the March and April 2026 expenses per the Interlocal Agreement. Roll call vote: Aye – Nelson, McConaughy, DeNaeyer. The motion carried.

At 11:32 a.m. the board met with Tonya Huber via Zoom to discuss the second round of the Kilgore Road Grant Project. Ms. Huber informed the board the first application submitted by the Rosebud Sioux Tribe ranked high in all categories with the office of the Secretary of Transportation; however, the application for the grant was not approved. Ms. Huber is asking Cherry County, again, for their support of collaboration for the project for a second submittal. This submission of a letter of support would be for the planning phase only. If approved, the board will meet with Ms. Huber to discuss construction options and next steps in the project. If Cherry County does not agree with the construction plans, Cherry County is not obligated to continue with the project for the portion of Kilgore Road in Cherry County. Ms. Huber informed the board she included a clear statement in the letter of support stating Cherry County currently owns and maintains its portion of the road, and it will remain the same after the project is completed, if approved and finished. It was a consensus of the board to consult with County Attorney Eric Scott prior to submitting the letter of support. No board action taken.

Nelson moved and DeNaeyer seconded to enter executive session for the discussion of a potential real estate purchase for the State of Nebraska Maintenance Yard with Road District 1 Foreman Jay D Osburn, the Board, and Clerk Leonard to remain in the room. Roll call vote: Aye – McConaughy, DeNaeyer, Nelson. The motion carried. At 11:48 a.m. the public was asked to exit the room, and the meeting doors were closed. At 12:05 p.m. the public was allowed to re-enter. McConaughy moved and DeNaeyer seconded to exit executive session. Roll call vote: Aye – DeNaeyer, Nelson, McConaughy. The motion carried. It was a consensus of the board not to pursue this purchase and to inform the State of Nebraska, so they are able to move forward with the sale of the property. Nelson moved and McConaughy seconded to inform the State of Nebraska that Cherry County is not engaging in the purchase of the State Maintenance Yard. Roll call vote: Aye – Nelson, McConaughy, DeNaeyer. The motion carried.

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

February 27, 2026

CHERRY COUNTY CLAIMS LISTING

Claims were presented in the amount of	\$	265,752.32	.
and disallowed in the amount of	\$	-	.
A warrant was ordered drawn on the General Fund in the amount of	\$	265,752.32	
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>			
AFLAC	Withholdings/Insurance	\$3,142.16	
AFLAC Dental	Withholdings/Insurance	\$2,487.90	
Ameritas Life Insurance/Retirement	Withholdings/Retirement	\$19,651.89	
Credit Management Services	Garnishment	\$495.97	
EFTPS	Withholdings/Taxes	\$33,222.44	
Lincoln Financial Group	Withholdings/Insurance	\$371.16	
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	\$4,466.63	
Security 1st Health Savings Account	Withholdings/Insurance	\$4,033.33	
Vision Service Plan	Withholdings/Insurance	\$562.34	
Andre, Andrea	Gross Wages	\$3,770.34	
Bancroft, Melissa	Gross Salary	\$5,077.09	
Blume, Ashley	Gross Wages	\$4,212.49	
Brockley, Billie	Gross Salary	\$4,120.00	
Bruning, Jerri	Gross Wages	\$3,028.77	
Coates, Sonia	Gross Wages	\$3,995.62	
DeNaeyer, Martin	Gross Salary	\$2,012.50	
Dobbins, Cynthia	Gross Wages	\$3,019.18	
Duffield, Janette	Gross Wages	\$4,211.90	
Fraser, Ann	Gross Wages	\$564.40	
Ghost Bear, Tamara	Gross Wages	\$4,367.69	
Goodrich, Dustina	Gross Wages	\$3,039.02	
Goodrich, Weston	Gross Wages	\$4,037.50	
Greenough, Pat	Gross Wages	\$4,065.15	
Hammond, Kathy	Gross Salary	\$5,077.09	
Hanson, Jessica	Gross Wages	\$5,077.09	

Hanson, Timothy	Gross Salary	\$2,538.54
Hesse, Sharon	Gross Salary	\$5,364.58
Hoefs, Jasmine	Gross Wages	\$3,727.51
Hooper, Patrick	Gross Wages	\$2,517.94
Jackson, Gary	Gross Wages	\$5,295.42
Johnson, Andrew	Gross Salary	\$3,716.50
Knox, Calvin	Gross Wages	\$4,106.55
Leonard, Samantha	Gross Salary	\$5,077.09
Lopez, Vincent	Gross Wages	\$1,534.57
Lutter, Tammy	Gross Wages	\$3,002.15
McConaughey, Michael	Gross Salary	\$2,012.50
McSweeney, Ryan	Gross Wages	\$4,671.24
Menze, Caitlyn	Gross Wages	\$1,993.84
Millar, Eve	Gross Wages	\$60.01
Nelson, Nina	Gross Salary	\$2,012.50
Ormesher, Katie	Gross Wages	\$3,533.74
Osborne, Joanie	Gross Wages	\$787.61
Osburn, Albert	Gross Salary	\$5,239.63
Peterson, Ebran	Gross Wages	\$2,854.20
Pier, Shelley	Gross Wages	\$3,221.95
Price, Cassandra	Gross Wages	\$4,133.56
Red Fish, Cheyenne	Gross Wages	\$4,726.32
Renning, Maxwell	Gross Wages	\$4,992.96
Scott, Eric	Gross Salary	\$5,717.69
Starr, Christopher	Gross Wages	\$4,724.08
Stec, Nicholas	Gross Wages	\$3,982.43
Stoeger, David	Gross Wages	\$4,425.38
Stolzenburg, Jane	Gross Wages	\$3,688.57
Thomsen, Clarissa	Gross Wages	\$3,534.77
Wickman, Erick	Gross Wages	\$5,083.97
	<b>GROSS TOTAL</b>	<b>\$308,392.33</b>
	Adjustment for employees' share of withholdings	(\$42,640.01)
	<b>NET TOTAL</b>	<b>\$265,752.32</b>

Claims were presented in the amount of \$ **121,645.98**  
and disallowed in the amount of \$ -  
A warrant was ordered drawn on the Road Fund in the amount of \$ **121,645.98**

**ROAD FUND**

AFLAC	Withholdings/Insurance	\$2,303.36
AFLAC Dental	Withholdings/Insurance	\$1,065.18
Ameritas Life Insurance/Retirement	Withholdings/Retirement	8661.47
EFTPS	Taxes/Withholdings	\$15,548.98
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	\$2,143.07
Security 1st Health Savings Account	Withholdings/Insurance	\$1,800.00
Vision Service Plan	Withholdings/Insurance	\$215.59
Buechle, Jordan	Gross Wages	\$5,050.22
Bunner, Bradley	Gross Wages	\$4,271.41
Cash, Tyler	Gross Wages	\$4,664.47
Coetzee, Daniel	Gross Wages	\$3,946.72
Collier, David	Gross Salary	\$5,150.00
Egger, Garrett	Gross Wages	\$4,017.72
Fernau, Bradly	Gross Wages	\$4,073.86
Graeff, Randy	Gross Wages	\$5,294.17
Licking, Jeffrey	Gross Wages	\$161.28
McWhirter, Bentz	Gross Wages	\$4,541.05
Olson, Arnold	Gross Wages	\$969.68
Osburn, Jay D	Gross Salary	\$5,900.00
Pearman, Terry	Gross Wages	\$5,117.09
Reese, Kay	Gross Wages	\$2,081.96
Songer, LeRoy	Gross Wages	\$4,278.62
Szakacs, Ryan	Gross Wages	\$3,787.75
Stichka, Steven	Gross Salary	\$5,150.00
Thompson, Shawn	Gross Wages	\$4,778.57
Vest, Daniel	Gross Wages	\$4,156.00
	<b>GROSS TOTAL</b>	<b>\$141,848.52</b>
	Adjustment for employees' share of withholdings	(\$20,202.54)
	<b>NET TOTAL</b>	<b>\$121,645.98</b>

Claims were presented in the amount of	\$	6,977.03	
and disallowed in the amount of	\$	-	
A warrant was ordered drawn on the Visitors Promotion Fund in the amount of			\$ 6,977.03
<b>VISITORS PROMOTION FUND</b>			
AFLAC	Withholdings/Insurance		97.37
AFLAC Dental	Withholdings/Insurance		55.63
Ameritas Life Insurance/Retirement	Withholdings/Retirement		\$687.26
EFTPS	Taxes/Withholdings		\$1,200.98
NE Department of Revenue	Taxes/Withholdings		\$141.46
Vision Service Plan	Withholdings/Insurance		\$31.84
Braun, Regina	Gross Wages		\$4,732.95
Graeff, Lynn	Gross Wages		\$1,376.08
	GROSS TOTAL		\$8,323.57
	Adjustment for employees' share of withholdings		(\$1,346.54)
	NET TOTAL		\$6,977.03

Claims were presented in the amount of	\$	9,583.66	
and disallowed in the amount of	\$	-	
A warrant was ordered drawn on the Emergency Management Fund in the amount of			\$ 9,583.66
<b>EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FUND</b>			
AFLAC	Withholdings/Insurance		151.04
AFLAC Dental	Withholdings/Insurance		77.81
Ameritas Life Insurance/Retirement	Withholdings/Retirement		\$699.30
EFTPS	Taxes/Withholdings		\$1,360.82
Medica Health Insurance	Withholdings/Insurance		\$2,155.10
NE Department of Revenue	Taxes/Withholdings		\$171.94
Security 1st Health Savings Account	Withholdings/Insurance		\$500.00
Vision Service Plan	Withholdings/Insurance		\$31.84
Coyle, Jessica	Gross Salary		\$5,034.64
Reese, Kay	Gross Wages		\$1,181.37
	GROSS TOTAL		\$11,363.86
	Adjustment for employees' share of withholdings		(\$1,780.20)
	NET TOTAL		\$9,583.66

The board recessed from 12:08 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The board recessed from 1:01 p.m. to 1:42 p.m. to convene as a Board of Equalization.

The board recessed from 1:45 p.m. to 1:52 p.m. to convene as a Board of Corrections.

At 1:53 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 on this 10<sup>th</sup> day of March 2026.

Samantha Leonard  
 Samantha Leonard  
 Cherry County Clerk

Mike McConaughey  
 Mike McConaughey, Chairperson  
 Cherry County Board of Commissioners

