

**HARLAN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
From February 29th, 2024**

The Harlan County Board of Supervisor's met for a special session Thursday, February 29, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Harlan County Courthouse in Alma, NE, as advertised, with Supervisor's Chris Schluntz; Max Schultz; Mike Clements; Cindy Boehler; Jeff Bash; and Ron Imm present. Also, present were Clerk, DaLynn Burgeson; Deputy County Attorney, Whitney Schroeder; and Treasurer, Sandy Artz; Jennifer Kreutzer and Jessie Martin; two representatives from the Nebraska Department of Transportation, representatives from the Senior Center and a few citizens of Harlan County.

At 3:00 p.m., Chairman Schluntz called the special meeting to order, announced that there is a copy of the Open Meetings Act posted at the south end of the room and will be followed by the Board and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Corinne Donahue, AICP and Sarah Mullen were welcomed from the Nebraska Department of Transportation. The public attendees were welcomed also. Chairman Schluntz announced that this is a fact-finding meeting in regard to public transit services in Harlan County. Supervisor Boehler explained concerns regarding the County trying to transition the transit service to the County from the Senior Center. The Board asked Ms. Donahue and Ms. Mullen questions about how this would work from the Department of Transportation's aspect for the County to take on public transit services in Harlan County involving state and federal requirements, cost sharing, local match, etc.

Ms. Donahue asked Bonnie Kresser of the Senior Center a few questions to understand the reason that the Senior Center will no longer offer transit services. Discussions were held regarding options for the Senior Center to continue offering the service, state and federal funding, ownership of the transit vehicles, storage of the vehicles, and outsourcing the transit service through a contractor. There was further discussion regarding the timeline for the transition and timing, if the County was able to take over the service, to be fully functional. Ms. Kresser announced that the Senior Center had not been scheduling appointments for transit services and that as of the end of today the transit services were ending through the Senior Center due to the County not requesting an extension of time. It was expressed that the County Board was under the impression from prior conversations with Ms. Kresser that the Senior Center would give an extension of time to allow the County time for the transition, if the County was actively trying to find solutions to continue the transit services. Ms. Kresser was asked by Ms. Donahue if, as required, a public hearing was held announcing to the public that the transit services would be ending. Ms. Kresser advised that there was a public hearing. The Board further expressed concerns of there still being too many unanswered questions to make a decision at this time, budgeting questions, questions about adding additional County employees, insurance, timing, etc.

Supervisor Boehler expressed that she is very disappointed that Harlan County citizens are without transit and that this Board has been put directly in a situation that we did not ask to be put in. Boehler also expressed that the County Board has put forth an abundant amount of time and effort into trying to assist with keeping the public transit operating and that she is very frustrated as there were several options proposed to the Senior Center and all were denied by the Senior Center.

The County Board Transit Committee will meet with the Nebraska Department of Transportation to gather more information and will continue in the search for viable transit services. The Board expressed their gratitude for Ms. Donahue and Ms. Mullen's time, travel, and information.

With no further business or public comment, a motion was made by Bash to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Schultz. Roll call votes: Schultz-yes; Clements-yes; Boehler-yes; Bash-yes; Imm-yes; Schluntz-yes. Motion carried. Chairman Schluntz adjourned the meeting at 3:57 p.m.

The next regular meeting will be held March 5th, 2024, at 9:45 a.m. for consent agenda items and 10:00 a.m. for business agenda items.

ATTEST:

/s/ DaLynn Burgeson, County Clerk

/s/ Chris Schluntz, Chairman

Agenda & Minutes can be found on the County website: harlancounty.ne.gov