

MINUTES of the REGION 26 COUNCIL

August 26, 2025

Region 26 Council:

Present:

Blaine Co: Matt Eggert
Garfield Co: Diana Hurlburt
Greeley Co: Jordan Foltz
Loup Co: Dave Larson
Ord, City of: Branden Stoural
Thomas Co: Joseph Smith
Sherman Co: Tom Bandur, Vice-Chair
Valley Co: Theresa Petska, Alternate
Wheeler Co: Doug Pokorny
Law Enforce: Joel Bergman
Range Co. Municipalities:
Thomas, Blaine, Loup, Garfield, Wheeler
Paige Ryschon
Tri-Co Municipalities:
Valley, Greeley, Sherman
Jay Meyer, Chairman

Absent:

Staff Present: Alma Beland/Director, Virginia Michalski/Office Manager, Donna Steckel/Chief Dispatcher

Visitors Present: Greg Gehl, Ken Bock, Caden Johnson, Tamika Welke, Brayden Rhoades

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Meyer. Notice of the meeting and agenda were sent to County Clerks of each member county for posting and given in advance to all members of the Board.

Roll Call was taken with twelve (12) members present.

The meeting being duly posted and a quorum present, the Chairman proclaimed this meeting to be a legal meeting and acknowledged that the Open Meeting Act was posted in the meeting room.

Motion by Joseph Smith and seconded by Jordan Foltz to approve the amended agenda to include Introduction of new Board Member and Litchfield generator.

Ayes (12) Nays (0) Abstain (0).

Introductions were made for a new board member, Ord Police Chief Branden Stoural, who was appointed by the City Council of Ord to serve as their representative.

Motion by Diana Hurlburt and seconded by Joseph Smith to approve the July 29, 2025 Minutes.

Ayes (8) Nays (0) Abstain (4).

Public Comment: None

Motion by Tom Bandur and seconded by Dave Larsen to approve the July 2025 Financial Statement.

Ayes (12) Nays (0) Abstain (0).

Tower & Equipment Report: No quotes were received in for the Litchfield generator replacement other than Power Tech. Alma spoke with Pat Henry from Power Tech regarding the 14 KW Kohler generator and asked about going smaller and he did not support that due to how the smaller generators were designed with a vertical crankshaft. He offered his quote with a 10-year warranty, delivered and

installed. Jordan Foltz made a motion to accept the Power Tech bid with a second from Dave Larson. Ayes (12) Nays (0) Abstain (0).

Alma reported on the progress of the Garfield repeater project with the information received from Platte Valley Communications.

The NRIN Interlocal Agreement was up for renewal the end of this year. Alma presented the resolution to renew the counties in Region 26 with the NRIN (Nebraska Regional Interoperability Network) which will continue until withdrawal of the agency. Region 26 utilizes the network to carry our 911 traffic. Joel Bergman made a motion to approve the Resolution to renew the NRIN Interlocal Agreement with a second from Joseph Smith. Ayes (12) Nays (0) Abstain (0).

Brayden Rhoades, Dispatcher, announced that she is expecting a child early next year and asked the board to review the maternity leave policy in the personnel handbook and consider an increase in coverage. She requested 12 weeks of leave with full pay for that period. The board discussed the handbook and agreed to look into possible changes.

The Union Bank CD was soon maturing and Alma asked what changes the board would like to consider. Alma presented a few of the current rates around. After discussion Tom Bandur made a motion to have Alma select the best choice at the time it matures. Jordan Foltz seconded the motion. Ayes (12) Nays (0) Abstain (0).

The North Central PET Region meeting was held on August 21st. The PET Region board voted to keep Region 26 as the North Central PET fiscal agent. Mark from Custer County, who had been scheduled to take over in August as Fiscal Agent, was agreeable to it remaining with Region 26. Alma informed the board this would mean Region 26 would need to pay some of the grant purchases up front and show proof of payment before receiving reimbursement from NEMA. Large purchases by specific to counties would be covered by the respective county rather than Region 26 and then reimbursed.

Alma brought the Region 26 By-Laws to the board and explained that a quorum has been counted as six members. With the new board member added, the quorum will now be seven, which is more than half as stated in the By-Laws.

Alma presented a quote for a new desktop computer for administration to replace one that is near it's end of life and was budgeted for. Applied Connective submitted a quote for the computer and installation in the amount of \$1,774.08. Joseph Smith made a motion to approve the Applied Connective bid, and the motion was seconded by Tom Bandur. Ayes (12) Nays (0) Abstain (0).

Branden Stoural requested to enter executive session to discuss personnel. He made the motion, seconded by Diana Hurlburt, and the board entered executive session at 7:43 p.m. Ayes (12) Nays (0) Abstain (0).

The board returned to regular session at 7:54 p.m. The outcome of the executive session was the approval of a raise of \$520 per month for the Director effective July 1, 2025.

Criminal Justice Board Report:

Sheriff Joel Bergman reported on the Law Enforcement meeting held on August 15th. Branden attended his first meeting, which Joel felt was productive. Dale King from Wheeler County was present and explained the communication issues he had. He answered questions, gave his side of the Wheeler situation, and then departed. There was also discussion with Greeley County about a radio traffic issue that he thought to be resolved during the meeting.

Game and Parks had four Game Wardens in attendance. One, new to the west counties, is bilingual and offered his help with translation in a situation if needed.

The trial period for the Genasys System that Region 26 will support for Law Enforcement for secure internal messaging has ended. The system will now be paid by how many users within the departments. Joel stated it will now be up to the individual departments to get in the system and get familiar using it. He also updated the board on the Flock camera system and the progress of the project.

Communications Center Report: Statistics breakdown for the previous month were handed out to the board. They had 1473 Status Checks, 379 Wants/Warrants/Registrations, 369 Traffic Violations, 365 Paging, 161 Messages 135 - 911 Accidental/Disconnect, 103 Rescue Calls, 96 Assist Other Agencies, 90 Minor Detail, 75 Weather, 68 Assist Citizen, 55 Standby for Events/Fire/Training, 45 Burn Permits, 40 Gun Permits, 35 Accidents, 32 Livestock Complaint, 28 Reckless Driver, 24 Animal calls, 24 Patient Transport, 22 Paper Service, 21 Disturbance/Harassment/Assault, 19 Motorist assist, 18 Fire Calls, 17 Alarms, 17 Check Welfare, 17 Traffic Hazard, 10 Arrests, 10 Check Area, 10 Siren, 10 Theft, 9 Miscellaneous Tasks, 9 Radio Test, 9 Suspicious Events, 7 follow Up, 7 Gas Drive-Off, 7 Suspicious Person, 6 Direct Traffic/Funeral/Escort, 6 Driving Under the Influence, 6 Suspicious Vehicle, 5 Civil Matters, 5 Minor in Possession, 5 Property Lost/Recovered, 5 Trespassing, 4 Keys Locked in Vehicle, 4 Prisoner Transport, 4 Suicidal Threats/Attempts, 4 Transfer 911 Call, 4 Utilities Complaint/Outage, 3 Missing Person/Juvenile, 2 Child Abuse/Neglect, 2 Littering/Dumping, 2 Mutual Aid, 2 Shots Fired, 2 Special Assignment, 2 Telephone Offenses, 1 Burglary, 1 Death Investigation, 1 Emergency Committal, 1 Fraudulent Activity, 1 Parole/Probation/Protection Order/Violation and 1 Terroristic Threat. Total number of contacts to the Communications Center for the month of July was 3895 including 410 - 911 calls and 1598 Administrative calls into Dispatch only.

Donna reported on the progress Jaimie has made in her training as the newest dispatcher, expressing that she is very pleased with Jaimie's growth and development in the role. Donna outlined the steps taken to gradually increase Jaimie's hours, helping her adjust to a full 12-hour shift.

Miki assisted by meeting with law enforcement at the quarterly meeting, providing valuable face-to-face time with departments to discuss suggestions and issues related to dispatch. Donna noted this was beneficial for departments to better understand the importance of relaying time-sensitive information directly to dispatchers. Since that meeting, traffic stops have shown noticeable improvement and are running much smoother.

In September, the State Patrol will be providing protection order training at no cost, with Region 26 hosting the session. We have several dispatchers that will be taking the training.

The teletype system was successfully updated to a cloud-based platform with a smooth transition.

There was an afternoon and evening where internet service was down. Applied Connective sent a technician to address the issue, which was traced to the firewall. As this was the second recent issue with the firewall, Alma stated they are reviewing the costs of changing or upgrading the firewall.

Branden Stoural offered for dispatchers to participate in a ride-along with the Ord Police Department, noting he would be willing to pick someone up to give them experience of law enforcement operations from that side. Donna said they have been wanting to pursue this opportunity but have struggled with staffing coverage but is still interested in doing that.

Virginia reported on the use of the Language Line in dispatch, sharing with the board the variety of languages encountered. While Spanish is the most frequent, they have also handled calls in Chinese, Russian, Mongolian, Portuguese, Arabic, and Japanese. We do not always know the language spoken until we receive the billing.

Director's Report:

- Region 26 had a booth at the Burwell Bash (Aug. 5). Despite windy conditions preventing the tent setup, a few people signed up to receive CodeRED alerts.
- Alma attended multiple County Commissioner meetings to secure NDOT permit agreements for Flock cameras and to renew the Interlocal Agreement. The project timeline is slightly delayed due to the need for City Council approvals on camera locations within city limits.
- Region 26 hosted the quarterly Law Enforcement meeting in August.

- Alma attended Thomas County Board Meeting to approve updated LEOP and planning to meet with Wheeler County EM on their county emergency plan.
- Hosted Law Enforcement training on MOCIC. (Mid-States Organized Crime Information Center)
- Hired Catie Larsen (Burwell) as Deputy Emergency Manager; starts Sept. 15. She will attend Elected Officials/Incident Command training in Grand Island on September 9th.
- Region 26 hosted the North Central PET Meeting; by-laws updated and officers elected. Catie was nominated as Training Officer Alternate to assist with Homeland Security training funds.
- Virginia and Alma will attend credentialing/badging equipment training at Loup Basin Health Department this Thursday.

Other Business: Jay Meyer reported on attending the Wheeler County Commissioner meeting yesterday and was able to visit with Sheriff Dale King. Dale expressed willingness to have discussion with the board and also to have a meeting with us to work through some issues that he was having in communications. He would like to use the Statewide Radio System and had sent a radio over for us to take to Platte Valley to look at since we were going to be in Kearney for an NRIN meeting. He would also like to meet with two of our board members that he specified as well as Jay bringing two board members to discuss negotiating a contract. What we have now is Interlocal and he has concerns with training, enough personnel and possible other things. Jay stated that he had opened the door to talk and we need to take the opportunity to try and work things through. Further discussion was held with the plan to set up the meetings with Sheriff King this month if possible.

Alma reported on Jordan Foltz presenting a \$1300 check tonight from the Greeley Fire Department for donation to Region 26's fund for equipment. Jordan, when presenting the check said the Fire Department had made the decision to donate back half of the funds to Region 26 that we had helped to recover for them on a mutual aid fire.

Next regular meeting date will be September 30, 2025 at 7:00 pm.

Chairman Meyer adjourned the meeting at 8:40 pm.

Alma Beland, Director/Coordinator

ACRONYMS

ALI – Automatic Location Identification (for 911)
ANI – Automatic Number Identification (for 911)
APCO – Assoc. of Public Communications Officials
ASR # – Antenna Structure Registration (Tower ID #)
CAD – Computer Aided Dispatch
CC – Communications Center
CERT – Community Emergency Response Team
CJIS – Criminal Justice Information System
COADs – Community Organizations Active in Disasters
COOP – Continuity of Operations Planning
COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019
C.R.I.M.E.S. – Calls & Records Information Management Software (part of Justice Data Solutions)
DEE – Depart. of Environmental & Energy (State)
DHHS – Department of Health & Human Services (State)
DHS – Department of Homeland Security
DR – Disaster Recovery
DOT – Department of Transportation - (NDOT) Nebraska
E911 – Enhanced 911
EAS – Emergency Alert System (FEMA)
ECW – Emergency Call Works (Reg 26 911 Equip)
EM – Emergency Manager
EMD – Emergency Medical Dispatch
EMPG – Emergency Management Performance Grant
EMS – Emergency Medical Services
EMT – Emergency Medical Technician
EOC – Emergency Operations Center
EPA – Environmental Protection Agency (Federal)
ERG – Emergency Response Guide (Orange Book – Hazardous Materials)
FAA – Federal Aviation Admin. (Report tower light outages)
FADD – Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician
FCC – Federal Communications Commission (for Radio Frequency Licenses)
FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency
FMD – Foot and Mouth Disease (Livestock)
FY – Fiscal Year
GAN – Grant Adjustment Notice (aka Grant Award)
GIS – Geographic Information System
GPS – Global Positioning System
gWORKS – Public information on Property by County
HAZMAT – Hazardous Materials
HHS – Health and Human Services (Federal)
HSGP – Homeland Security Grant Program
ICS – Incident Command System
IPAWS – Integrated Public Alert Warning System
IPPW – Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop
J.A.M.I.N. – Jail Administration Management Information Network (Part of Justice Data Solutions)
JDS – Justice Data Solutions (Law Enforcement Records Management & CAD software system)
LASO – Local Agency Security Officer
LBF – Lee Bird Field – North Platte (Airport) Weather Service Location

LBPHD – Loup Basin Public Health Department (covers Blaine, Loup, Garfield, Wheeler, Greeley, Valley, Sherman)
LE – Law Enforcement
LEPC – Local Emergency Planning Committee
LEDRS – Livestock Emergency Disease Response System
LEOP – Local Emergency Operations Plan
MACH – Mobile Architecture for Communications Handling
MRC – Medical Reserve Corp
NA911 – Nebraska Association of 911 Managers
NACO – Nebraska Association of County Officials
NAEM – Nebr. Association of Emergency Managers
NEMA – Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
NENA – National Emergency Number Association
NESCA – NE Emergency Services Communicators Association
***NCR** – North Central Region* (see below)
NIMS – National Incident Management System
NIRMA – NE Intergovernmental Risk Management Association
NRIN – Nebraska Regional Interoperable Network
NX-Gen – Next Generation 911
PD – Police Department
***PET** – Planning Exercise Training* (see below)
POD – Points of Dispensing (Immunization)
PPE – Personal Protective Equipment
PMC – Page My Cell (secondary Paging to Depts.)
PSAP – Public Safety Answering Point (911 Centers)
PSC – Public Service Commission
PVC – Platte Valley Communications
RFP – Request for Proposal
SEAT – Single Engine Air Tanker
SEOC – State Emergency Operation Center
SHSP – State Homeland Security Program
SME – Subject Matter Expert (Homeland Security Grants)
SO – Sheriff's Office
SRS – State Radio System
T-CPR – Telecommunicator CPR
THIRA – Threat & Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment
UPS – Universal Power Supply (workstation backup power supply until generator starts)
VFD – Volunteer Fire Department
VOAD – Volunteer Organization Aiding Disasters
VOIP – Voice over Internet Protocol
V-TAC – Mutual Aid VHF Frequency Channels
WEA – Wireless Emergency Alert
WCDHD – West Cent. District Hlth Dept. (Covers Thomas)
W.H.O. – World Health Organization
WPC – Weather Prediction Center – Norman, OK
WIRAT – Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team
WMD – Weapons of Mass Destruction

*** North Central PET Region Includes:**

Keith, Arthur, Grant, Hooker, McPherson, Logan, Custer, Cherry-Keya Paha, Brown-Rock, Boyd-Holt and Region 26: (Thomas, Blaine, Loup, Garfield, Wheeler, Greeley, Valley and Sherman)