Bridgeport, Nebraska
Tuesday, April 14, 2026

The Morrill County Board of Commissioners met in an open and public regular meeting at 7:30 A.M., Tuesday, April 14, 2026 in the Commissioners' room at the Courthouse. Chairperson Metz announced that the new Open Meetings Law was posted on the wall of the Commissioners' room. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Notice of such meeting having been published in the Bayard Transcript and the Bridgeport News-Blade on April 9, 2026. Copies of the Agenda kept continuously current were available from the County Clerk's office and were e-mailed to each of the Commissioners on April 9, 2026. On roll call Commissioners Jeff Metz, Chairman, Susanna Batterman and Josh Schmidt were present. Absent: None. Some of the elected and appointed officials were present. Candace D. Panas, County Clerk, recorded the proceedings of the meeting.

Motion was made by Batterman, seconded by Schmidt, to approve the agenda with deletion of tax list corrections on Board of Equalization and approve the minutes of the March 24, 2026 meeting. Yeas: Batterman, Schmidt and Metz. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Correspondence was received and read.

The Commissioners reviewed the following claims:

GENERAL FUND

Action Communications, Repairs, $237.00; Allo Communications, Service, $1,437.20; American Family Life, Insurance, $1763.09; Ameritas Life Ins. Corp, Retirement, $8,782.43; Brennan Andrew, Phone, $40.00; Bayard Transcript, Publishing, $700.98; Black Hills Energy, Service, $298.16; Bridgeport New-Blade, Publishing, $513.36; Charles Browne, Bailiff Service, $180.00; Capital Business Systems Inc, Equip Lease, $11.47; Ismael Cardenas, Phone, $40.00; Yesenia Castano, Witness Fee, $20.00; Cenex Fleet, Fuel, $3,193.05; Century Business Products, Office Supplies, $184.70; Century Link, Service, $80.75; Charter Communications, Service, $169.69; City of Bridgeport, Service, $2,384.46; Clerk District Court, Court Costs, $1721.81; Clinger Family Enterprises LLC, Jury Supplies & Lunch, $163.34; Brandon Collins-Flamig, Phone, $40.00; Colonial Life, Insurance, $209.37; Timothy Conrad, Phone, $40.00; Country Catering, Co. Gov Day Meals, $1176.00; Culligan of Scottsbluff, Service, $140.50; Cvsoan, Dues, $200.00; Emmy Dominguez, Witness Fees, $20.00, Rhett Dye, Phone, $40.00; Eakes Office Solutions, Supplies & Lease, $385.09; Election Systems & Software, Ballots & Media, $3442.07; Shauna Faessler, Phone & Fuel, $50.10; Kirk Fellhoelter, Mileage, Landline Reimbursement & Cell Phone, $2187.00; Daniel Flores, Phone, $40.00; Galls, LLC, Uniforms, $94.99; Grand Slam Solutions LLC, Contract Labor, $1,500.00; Heartland Radar, Radio Equipment, $495.00; Hometown Leasing, Equip Lease, $86.68; Ideal Linen, Jail Laundry, $224.74; Jackon's Garage, Car Service, $305.31; Kaiser Tire, Repairs, $630.48; Becky Kiesel, Witness Fees, $20.00; Andrew Lawson, Phone, $40.00; Audrey M. Long, Public Defender, $4,968.22; Tim Marquez, Phone, $40.00; Seth McLaughlin, Mileage, Meals & Phone, $40.00; Meritain Health, Insurance, $35,416.03; Jeff Metz, Phone, $40.00; Microfilm Imaging Systems, Equip Rental, $75.00; MIPS Inc, Data Processing Costs, $2925.41; Mobius Communications Company, Service, $58.50; Morrill County Community Hospital, Inmate meals, $1,379.50; Morrill County Court, Court Costs, $420.00; Morrill County Health Plan, Emp Share, $2,430.46; Morrill County Highway Dept, Public Transit-Fuel Assessor-Fuel, $351.40; NACO, Treasurers Workshop, $175.00; NE Clerk Dist. Court Association, Summer Workshop, $75.00; Nebraska Total Office, Supplies, $40.45; Nein Pharmacy, Inmate Medical, $39.90; NE Child Support, Child Support, $274.16; $236.31; Candace Panas, Phone, $40.00; Zeth Patterson, Phone, $40.00; Patty Wax General Service, Mngr, $1,000.00; PEAC Solutions, Equip Lease, $606.43; Jason Perkins, Phone, $40.00; Platte Valley Bank, HSA Accts, $647.91; Platte Valley Bank, Federal Withholding, Social Security & Medicare, $14,227.22; Region 21 Emergency Management, Contract, $15,065.17; Retchless Technologies, Data Processing Contract, $3,000.00; Travis Rodak, Rent, $675.00; Jessica Roebuck, Witness Fee, $20.00; Steven Roebuck, Witness Fee, $20.00; Becky Schlager, Court Reporting, $1547.95; Scotts Bluff County Seriff's Dept, Service of Process, $170.12; Jonathan Seng, Building repairs, $121.00; Sonny's Super Foods, Supplies, $49.39; State of NE-Dept of Admin Services, Data Processing, $825.60; Telecomm West, Internet Service, $55.00; Tico Customs, Law Supplies, $4,200.00; Towns & Country Advertising, Advertisement Veterans, $81.00; Transwest Ford, Car parts & Labor, $5,158.63; U.S. Postal Service, Election Business Reply, $1,000.00; USDA Aphis, Service, $704.81; Vision Care Direct, Vision Insurance, $88.32; Jesse Weibert, Witness Fees, $20.00; Wex Bank, Fuel, $389.12; Xesi Document Solutions, Equip. Lease, $212.89; General Employee Salaries, $50,346.64.

ROAD/BRIDGE FUND

Allo Communications, Service, $112.16; American Family Life, Insurance, $713.32; Ameritas Life Ins. Corp, Retirement, $4,105.73; Bayard Automotive LLC, Repairs & Tools, $1,764.45; Black Hills Energy, Service, $2,593.42; Bridgeport News-Blade, Publishing, $219.73; Caterpillar Financial Services Crop, Equip Lease, $11,148.86; City of Bayard, Service, $355.17; City of Bridgeport, Service, $468.90;

Colonial Life, Insurance, $22.16; Contractors Materials Inc, Parts, $409.28; Dooley Oil Inc., Shop Supplies, $313.89; Fat Boys Tire, Supplies & Repairs, $3278.40; Floyds Truck Center, Parts, $107.26; Frank Parts Company, Supplies, $190.93; Jamie Holloway, Contract labor, $1020.00; Hometown Leasing, Copier Lease, $242.60; Ideal Linen, Supplies, $73.91; Inland Truck Parts, Parts, $455.64; KBK Trucking, Gravel, $48,009.60; Koke's Auto Farm Truck, Parts, $737.28; Lawson Products Inc., Supplies, $420.16; Menards, Supplies, $184.88; Meritain Health, Insurance, $18,022.47; Morrill County Health Fund, Emp Share, $1,177.29; Morrill Hardware, Supplies, $1312.20; NE Dept of Rev/Motor Fuel, Special Fuels Tax, $842.00; NMC, LLC, Repairs, $1,581.60; Northwest Pipe Fittings Inc., Parts, $701.66; Platte Valley Bank, HSA Accts, $700.00; Platte Valley Bank, Federal Withholding, Social Security & Medicare, $7,713.33; Powerplan, Parts, $773.29; PT Hose & Bearing, Parts, $204.78; Quill LLC, Supplies & Equip, $81.22; Rocky Mountain Air Solutions, Supplies, $320.12; Sapp Bros. Inc, Fuel, $21,906.68; Simons, Cold Mix, $1,296.90; Village of Broadwater, Service, $145.40; Vision Care Direct, Vision Insurance, $46.92; 21st Century Equip, Supplies, $74.16; Road Employee Salaries, $26,317.24.

HWY BUYBACK PROGRAM FUND

Croell Redi Mix Inc., Cement, $3,436.00.

VISITOR'S PROMOTION FUND

Bridgeport Area Chamber of Commerce, Awarded Grant Money, $2,000.00; Bridgeport City Sound, Awarded Grant Money, $1000.00; Broadwater Days Committee, Awarded Grant Money, $1000.00; Ismael Cardenas, Awarded Grant Money, $1,000.00; Spirit of Broadwater Foundation, Awarded Grant Money, $2000.00.

HEALTH INSURANE CLAIM FUND

Morrill County Health Fund, Insurance Claims, $109,380.67.

INHERITANCE TAX FUND

Sandhills Repair, New Engine, $7,079.73.

911 FUND

Century Link, Service, $81.00, $47.04, $56.38; Prairie States Communications, Installation & Labor, $4,080.00; State of NE, Dept of Admin Services, SRS Radio, $213.00.

W911 FUND

Century Link, Service, $240.87, $10,380.83, $247.39; Frontier, Service, $34.19.

COURTHOUSE FUND

Fisher Roofing, Deductible for Roof Repairs, $10,000.00.

Motion was made by Batterman, seconded by Schmidt, that the above claims be approved and checks drawn on the various funds, delinquent personal property taxes deducted where owing. Yeas: Batterman, Schmidt and Metz. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Board of Equalization

See separate minutes for Board of Equalization.

Loretta McCoy, County Treasurer, presented a Resolution to transfer funds into the Road Fund for $50,000.00. Motion was made by Schmidt, seconded by Batterman, to approve the transfer and to adopt the following resolution:

RESOLUTION #2026-09
TRANSFER OF FUNDS

WHEREAS, the Road Fund monies were put into the General Fund at levy time, it is necessary to transfer those monies into the proper funds. The Morrill County Board of Commissioners orders the County Treasurer to transfer the funds in the amount of $50,000.00 into the Road Funds.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 14th day of April, 2026.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

/s/Jeff Metz
Chairman

/s/Susanna Batterman
Board Member

(S E A L)

/s/Josh Schmidt
Board Member

ATTEST:

/s/Candace D. Panas
County Clerk

Yeas: Batterman, Schmidt and Metz. Nays: None. Motion carried. Loretta also presented claims for the fair account to TKC Construction, Exhibit Hall Building supplies, $104,620.00; Bridgeport News-Blade, Publishing, $13.42; Rod Laucomer, Contract, $1000.00. Motion was made by Schmidt, seconded by Batterman to approve and pay the listed claims. Yeas: Schmidt, Batterman and Metz.

Jeff Metz, Chairman of the Board, presented the updated county handbook for approval. Updates were made to address findings from the state audit, including policies on overtime, vacation, sick leave, mileage and hotel claims. Additional provisions were added outlining procedure for tracking and recording rebates from Menards, uniforms and personal protective equipment and credit card usage. Motion was made by Schmidt, seconded by Batterman to approve the updated County Employee Handbook. Yeas: Schmidt, Batterman & Metz. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Bill Dean, Zoning Board member, reported on the zoning board hearing for the conservation easement for 20x Land and Cattle, LLC, he confirmed that the zoning board recommended approval.

Chairman Metz opened the public hearing for the Conservation Easement for 20X Land & Cattle, LLC at 7:57 a.m. Jonathan Pieiffer, Attorney at Waite & McWha Law Firm on behalf of Ducks Unlimited Wetlands, request to place a conservation easement on approximately 83.95 acres located approximately seven miles northwest of Broadwater. The property is zoned agricultural but is located entirely within a floodplain. The goal is to preserve the land for future generations, protecting wildlife habitat and prevent subdivision or development. Jay Flohr, owner of 20x Land & Cattle, LLC, stated he has owned the property for 16 years and has family ties to Broadwater and Bridgeport area since the early 1980s. The property is currently used for farming, ranching and grazing and has no utilities or structures on property currently. Metz raised concern that entering a contract with Ducks Unlimited could allow the easement to be transferred to another entity in the future. He also noted that perpetual conservation easements may reduce the property's resale value, which could negatively impact county property valuations. Chairman Metz, closed the Public Hearing at 8:30 a.m. Motion was made by Schmidt, seconded by Batterman to approve the Conservation Easement for 20x Land & Cattle. Yeas: Schmidt and Batterman. Nays: Metz. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Schmidt, seconded by Batterman to approve and adopt the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION 2026-10

A RESOLUTION APPROVING CONSERVATION EASEMENT FOR WETLANDS AMERICA TRUST, INC.

WHEREAS, 20X Land and Cattle, LLC are the owners of the following described real estate:
See Exhibit A

WHEREAS, Wetlands America Trust, Inc. is desirous of obtaining a conservation easement for 20x Land & Cattle, LLC on the real property legally described hereinabove and 20x Land & Cattle, LLC is desirous of conveying a conservation easement to Wetlands America Trust, Inc. on the real estate legally described hereinabove; and

WHEREAS, Wetlands American Trust, Inc. and 20x Land & Cattle, LLC have submitted a request to Morrill County for the approval of a conservation easement on the real estate legally described hereinabove; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §76-2,112 on March 5, 2026, the Morrill County Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of the easement at their regularly scheduled meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners, on April 14, 2026 conducted a public meeting on the granting of this easement; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Morrill County Commissioners, that the grant of the designated conservation easement on the real estate legally described hereinabove and more

particularly set forth in the Conservation Easement, together with conditions of the easement and other matters as more particularly described and set forth in the Conservation Easement with this Board by reference thereto incorporates into this Resolution as if fully set forth herein, should be, and hereby is, approved.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that proponent or proponents of the easement are authorized to file copy of the Resolution against described properties and/or attach copy of this Resolution to any deed, easement, and /or other document associated with it, should they so desire.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 14th DAY OF APRIL, 2026

/s/ Jeff Metz
Chairman
Morrill County Board of Commissioners

EXHIBIT A

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROTECTED PROPERTY

A TRACT OF LAND SITUATED IN A PORTION OF GOVERNMENT LOTS 2, AND 3, AND THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER ALL IN SECTION 9, TOWNSHIP 19 NORTH, RANGE 49 WEST OF THE 6TH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, MORRILL COUNTY, NEBRASKA, LYING SOUTH OF THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY AND ALSO ACCRETED LAND THERETO, MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

REFERRING TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID GOVERNMENT LOT 3; THENCE, ALONG THE WEST LINE OF SAID GOVERNMENT LOT, S02°11'05"W TO A POINT ON THE SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD, BEING A DISTANCE OF 4.78 FEET, SAID POINT ALSO BEING THE TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE, CONTINUING ALONG SAID WEST LINE, AS DESCRIBED IN A BOUNDARY LINE AGREEMENT AS RECORDED IN THE MORRILL COUNTY DEEDS OFFICE IN MISCELLANEOUS BOOK 70, PAGES 362-367, S02°11'05"W TO A POINT ON AN EXISTING FENCE LINE GENERALLY PARALLELING THE SOUTH BANK OF THE MAIN CHANNEL OF THE NORTH PLATTE RIVER, BEING A DISTANCE OF 2268.57 FEET; THENCE, ALONG SAID FENCE LINE AND AS DESCRIBED IN A BOUNDARY LINE AGREEMENT AS RECORDED IN THE MORRILL COUNTY DEEDS OFFICE IN MISCELLANEOUS BOOK 68, PAGES 187-188, S62°27'55"E FOR A DISTANCE OF 97.68 FEET, S39°48'52"E FOR A DISTANCE OF 205.65 FEET, S48°22'28"E FOR A DISTANCE OF 265.52 FEET, S51°46'06"E FOR A DISTANCE OF 364.34 FEET, S39°26'35"E FOR A DISTANCE OF 152.76 FEET, S62°55'50"E FOR A DISTANCE OF 174.25 FEET, S74°43'48"E FOR A DISTANCE OF 232.24 FEET, S40°43'09"E FOR A DISTANCE OF 125.85 FEET; THENCE, N09°14'48"E TO A POINT ON THE SAID SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE, BEING A DISTANCE OF 2537.86 FEET; THENCE, ON SAID SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY, N65°30'46"W FOR A DISTANCE OF 1739.04 FEET TO THE TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 83.95 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, ALSO TO INCLUDE A 50 FOOT ACCESS EASEMENT ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID TRACT.

Yeas: Schmidt and Batterman. Nays: Metz. Motion carried.

Amanda Kildow, along with Matt Walker, presented a request to close County Road 62, which runs through her property and is part of Box Butte County and Morrill County. Kildow cited ongoing property damage as the primary concern, including multiple damaged gates, broken posts and vandalized cameras, all resulting in significant costs. She noted that Western Potatoes travel through and drop poisonous seed potatoes that are harmful to her cattle. Kildow stated that she is not trying to keep property owners from accessing their property as there is an easement in place. Batterman raised concerns that a wire was put across the auto gates and made property owners access difficult and addressed the importance of working toward mutual agreements between neighbors. Batterman addressed the issue with Western Potatoes to mitigate issues, including covering loads to prevent them from falling on her property. The board stated they would not take a formal stance on the matter, would not transfer or give the road to Box Butte County and acknowledge that the issue may ultimately need to be resolved through the court system.

Steve Hutchinson presented the county's annual lawn care and fertilizer contract, noting that pricing will remain the same as the previous year. Motion was made by Schmidt, seconded by Batterman to approve the annual lawn contract at $730 per month. Yeas: Schmidt, Batterman and Metz. Nays: None. Motion carried. Discussion also included ongoing weed concerns and that a bid had been requested from TruGreen for comparison. Motion was made by Batterman, seconded by Schmidt to approve the TruGreen bid for fertilizer and weed control. Yeas: Batterman. Nays: Schmidt and Metz. Motion failed. They expressed that the fertilizer from Bomgaars may not be strong enough and suggest trying alternative providers with more effective products. He stated that he would aerate the lawn this year and check different places for better fertilizer. Motion was made by Schmidt, seconded by Batterman to approve the fertilizer application proposal for three applications at $1050 total. Yeas: Schmidt, Batterman and Metz. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Sarah Paisley and Ashley Fenning, Extension Educators, presented recommendations to appoint Jaz Henderson from the 4-H Council as the Morrill County Extension Board Representative. Bill Bennett

is still on the 4-H Council, but he just won't be on Extension Board since he no longer lives in the county. Ashley talked about the Break for Breakfast event in Scottsbluff which will be catered by Susanna, this will be on April 24, 2026. Motion was made by Batterman, seconded by Schmidt to approve appointment Jaz Henderson as Morrill County Extension Board Representative. Yeas: Batterman, Schmidt & Metz. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Gail Beyer, Mayor of Bridgeport, spoke regarding the 2026 Camp Clarke Days celebration, commemorating 125 years, with a total event budget of $28,850 and activities planned from Tuesday through Sunday. Concern was expressed that the Tourism Committee recommended only $500 of the $5,000 requested in Tourism funding, though appreciation was noted for the board increasing the amount to $2,000 she asked to appeal their decision and requested the additional $3,000 she asked for. It was emphasized that Camp Clarke Days is the largest event in Morrill County and serves to promote tourism, aligning with the committee's purpose. Attendance is expected to be high, with the event's Facebook following increasing from 760 to over 1,100. Metz raised concerns about the appeal process, noting it is uncommon to revisit funding decisions as he's not seen that done since he's been on the Keno Board. The Commissioners denied the appeal request, stating that they requested more than the Tourism Board recommended and don't wish to have conflict with the Tourism Board if additional funds were granted.

Jason Floyd and Justin Scott, from Sentinel Solutions Group, gave a presentation on what their company can offer for the county's IT needs, noting that the current IT contract expires in July. They provided an overview of their services, associated costs and suggested improvements for the county website. They also shared that they have insight into various vendors and equipment providers and can assist the county in identifying options that would provide the best overall value and pricing. The commissioners thanked them from their presentation and noted that they currently have no issues with the existing IT provider but will review the proposal and keep them in mind when the IT contract comes up for renewal.

An email was presented to the Commissioners from Scott Wheeler, located in Florida requesting letter of support for his project regarding Lawrence Welk. This year is the 70th Anniversary of the Lawerence Welk Show national debut and was wanting Morrill County to support his efforts in Nebraska to raise awareness and to celebrate the anniversary. Motion was made by Batterman, seconded by Schmidt to approve and sign the letter of support for the Lawrence Welk Shows 70th Anniversary. Yeas: Batterman and Schmidt. Nays: Metz. Motion carried.

Jeff Metz, Chairman of the Board, presented an interlocal agreement for Regional Juvenile Detention needs assessment. This agreement will be presented to eleven different counties and will include recommendations regarding the most appropriate option for the panhandle region to house a Juvenile Detention Center. There is currently no juvenile detention centers located in the panhandle and the long-distance placement increases cost for the counties. The study-cost share is based on population and Morrill County's portion would be $2,939. Motion was made by Batterman, seconded by Schmidt to approve and sign the interlocal agreement for Regional Juvenile Detention needs Assessment. Yeas: Batterman, Schmidt and Metz. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The Board reported on meetings they had attended. Josh reported attending the Aging Office of Western Nebraska meeting. Susanna went to Regional I Behavioral Health meeting with discussion about the Crisis Stabilization Unit. Jeff attended the CAPWN board meeting and Rural Fire District meeting where there were discussion and debate regarding the allocation of donation funds. He also noted a confrontation with a city council member regarding the fire district levy. Additionally, he attended the Bayard School Board meeting, where he reported the budget appears stable and the district maintains a healthy reserve balance.

During public comment Jonnie Kusek, Director of Transportation, discussed the benefits of Open Plains Transit for VA transportation to and from doctor's visits. She touched on how counties can use their current services available but can be reimbursed through the OPT Nebraska Veterans Frontier Health.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Metz adjourned the meeting at 10:32 A.M. Next meeting will be Tuesday, April 28, 2026.

/s/Jeff Metz_____,Chairman

/s/Candace D. Panas_____, County Clerk

Board of Equalization
Tuesday, April 14, 2026

The Morrill County Board of Equalization met in an open and public regular meeting at 7:38 A.M., Tuesday, April 14, 2026 in the Commissioners' room at the Courthouse. Chairperson Metz announced that the Open Meetings Law was posted on the wall of the Commissioners' room. Notice of such meeting having been published in the Bridgeport News-Blade and the Bayard Transcript on April 9, 2026. Copies of the Agenda, kept continuously current, were available from the County Clerk's office and were e-mailed to each of the Commissioners on April 9, 2026. On roll call Commissioners Jeff Metz, Chairman, Susanna Batterman and Josh Schmidt were present. Absent: None. Some of the Elected and appointed Officials were also present. Candace D. Panas, County Clerk, recorded the proceedings of the meeting.

Motion was made by Batterman, seconded by Schmidt, to enter into Board of Equalization, according to Ne Statute #77-1233-04(6) at 7:38 A.M. Yeas: Schmidt, Batterman and Metz. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Loretta McCoy, County Treasurer, presented taxes owed on Tower Company that was bought in 2010. The taxes that were owed on the property were from 2001 to current. Once they located the owners, they stated they will cover the taxes from when it was purchased in 2010 to current. She wanted to know if they wanted to strike the taxes from 2001 through 2009. Motion was made by Schmidt, seconded by Batterman to strike the taxes from 2001 through 2009 on parcel 0200090604. Yeas: Schmidt, Batterman and Metz. Nays: None. Motion carried. McCoy also presented previously approved tax list corrections #2026-09 and 2026-11.

Motion was made by Batterman, seconded by Schmidt, to return to regular session at 7:43 A.M. Yeas: Schmidt, Batterman and Metz. Nays: None. Motion carried.

/s/Jeff Metz ,Chairman

ATTEST:

/s/Candace D. Panas ,County Clerk