

VILLAGE of SUTHERLAND
BOARD OF TRUSTEES Regular Meeting
May 14, 2025 at 6:00 P.M.

1 The Village of Sutherland Board of Trustees held a Regular Meeting on May 14, 2025, at
2 6:00 P.M. in the Village of Sutherland Meeting Room, located at 1200 First Street, Sutherland,
3 Nebraska. Notice of these meetings was given by posting notice in four public places, the
4 designated method by the Village Board of Trustees. The agenda for this meeting was kept
5 continuously current and available for inspection at the Office of the Village Clerk.

6 Chairman Meyer called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 6:00
7 p.m. Members present upon roll call were **Scott Meyer, Kimberly Backer, Felicia Patrick, Derek**
8 **Dempcy, and Justin Nelms**. Quorum was established. Also present were Village Superintendent
9 Casey Kendall, Village Clerk Bonnie Ralston, and Village Attorney Rory Roundtree. The guests
10 present were Trena Seifer, Jim Dickerson, Gale Hopping, and Muriel Clark. If all the names are
11 not included, it is only by error, absence of signature or undecipherable signature in the guest
12 book.

13 The Board of Trustees and all present rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

14 Chairman Meyer gave notice of the open meeting law poster and its location and proper
15 procedure for guests.

16 At this time, the Board opened the floor for comments from the public. Chairman Meyer
17 stated that all comments need to be directed to the Chair and that there was a five-minute time
18 limit. Chairman Meyer also said that there would be no discussion by the Board on comments by
19 the public had addressed items that were not on the agenda. With no comments forthcoming from
20 those in the audience, Chairman Meyer moved on to the agenda items.

21 Chairman Meyer asked for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Motion Backer.
22 Second Patrick. Voting yes: Nelms, Patrick Backer, Dempcy, Meyer. Voting no: none. Motion
23 carries.

24 The Board read the minutes for the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees April 23,
25 2025. Motion Backer to approve the minutes as presented. Second Patrick. Voting yes: Dempcy,
26 Backer, Nelms, Meyer, Patrick. Voting no: none. Motion carries.

27 The Board read the minutes for the emergency meeting of the Board of Trustees April 23,
28 2025. Clerk Ralston pointed out a mistake in lines 7 & 8 that has been fixed. Motion Backer to
29 approve the minutes with corrections on line 7 and 8. Second Patrick. Voting yes: Meyer, Nelms,
30 Patrick, Backer, Dempcy. Voting no: none. Motion carries.

31 Chairman Meyer then gave the Sheriff's report that was included in the packet. There were
32 110 calls for service, including 5 traffic violations and 3 village code violations. These code
33 violations included loose animal, traffic & parking, and loud music. Total hours accumulated this
34 month was 112.25, which brings total hours to 819.5 out of the contracted 1200 yearly hours.

35
36 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**
37

38 The topic of storm/sewer drainage was addressed, as was the sewer lagoon drainage.
39 Superintendent Kendall stated there was no update at this time.

40 Walnut Street property was addressed. Attorney Roundtree stated he has reached out to get
41 additional documents.

42
43 **NEW BUSINESS:**
44

45 The first new business item on the agenda is to accept or reject Anchor Park Project bids.
46 One bid was received from ABcreative in the amount of \$197, 976.00. This bid was for option A,
47 and only encompassed the playground portion of the project. A vision board and booklet with
48 specifics were provided for the bid. Chairman Meyer and Clerk Ralston shared with the Board
49 what Mr. Dunn from West Central Nebraska Development District had clarified at the bid opening.
50 Mr. Dunn had stated that since the project had gone out for bid twice and every effort was made
51 to obtain bids for the complete project, the Board could, if it chose to, accept a partial project bid.
52 This would require the grant to be amended to only encompass a portion of the project. Clerk
53 Ralstons stated that the bid had been placed from Fort Collins, CO to Omaha, NE with little
54 response. Backer questioned if the grant funding would be reduced if an amendment is submitted
55 based on only receiving partial bids. Meyer stated that Mr. Dunn had told him that the Village
56 could still receive the full grant even amending to only complete the playground portion. Patrick
57 asked how that would work if a bid for the multi-sport court portion came in. Backer reminded her
58 that the bid deadline had passed, and Meyer stated that the multi-sport court would be removed

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59 from the project. Some discussion was held on who had completed the courts in North Platte and
60 if they could be reached out to. Meyer stated that, at this point, the Board would need to come to
61 a decision on whether they wanted to move ahead with the partial project. Meyer said that this bid
62 was within the September deadlines spelled out by the grant. The Board discussed the placement
63 of the proposed playground and if it would limit usage of the green spaces of the park. The Board
64 also discussed whether the community would prefer the Board accept a partial project or no project
65 at all. Tenda Seifer was in attendance and asked the Board if the playground would be too close
66 to the Veteran's Memorial. Meyer stated that the proposed site is next to the existing playground
67 near the covered picnic tables. Patrick asked who would make the decision on placement. Meyer
68 clarified that the Board would make placement decisions. Dempcy asked when the project needed
69 to be decided. Clerk Ralston stated that there is a September start date, but the project could span
70 up to two years for full completion, depending on the scope of the project. Backer expressed
71 concern over only doing half the proposed project and expressed that the inclusive equipment
72 would be a big deal for the Village. Meyer stated that the court could be put in later if the Board
73 chose to accept this bid. Some discussion was held on if the proposal needed to be accepted before
74 September or if the project needed to be started by September. Meyer clarified that if the project
75 could not be started, materials ordered at a minimum, then the village would lose the grant. For
76 reasons of discussion, Backer motioned to accept the bid in the amount of \$197,976.00 for the
77 playground portion of the project. Second Meyer. Dempcy stated that he was having a hard time
78 justifying almost \$200,000.00 of a \$230,000.00 grant for just one portion of the project and
79 wondered if there was anything that could be done at that point about it. Backer said that the project
80 could possibly be downsized, but then the question was if the company would continue with the
81 bid if that was done. Meyer also pointed out that the grant had a minimum of \$175,000 to qualify.
82 Discussion was held on the proposed equipment being inclusive, but also some pieces being for
83 those that do not have special needs, and the fact that the proposal creates an integrated area for
84 children to play, regardless of their individual needs. Meyer stated that a portion of the expense
85 was due to the surface being a poured in place rubber as opposed to the rubber balls or a cement
86 walkway. Muriel Clard was present and asked the Board if there was a plan to extend the poured
87 in lace surface into the existing playground equipment. Meyer said that this bid was only for the
88 new portion, Patrick expressed the opinion that that was something the Board should consider in
89 the future, it would replace the current woodchips and eliminate the sticker problems. Patrick also
90 stated that in her opinion if this project moves forward, community events should be migrated
91 from Railroad Park to Anchor Park. She feels that would increase safety by keeping children off
92 the highway, and would also make use of the park that all this money is going into. Tenda Seifer
93 asked to address the Board again. She informed the Board that people stop on their way through
94 town at Railroad Park and often walk across to the shops along 1st Street. Her concern with Anchor
95 Park is the lack of parking for larger events and the fact that it is in a residential neighborhood so
96 an increase in traffic and speeding would be concerns. There was some discussion on the number
97 of available spaces, and how many spaces are paved and handicapped accessible. Meyer asked if
98 there was any further discussion. Backer expressed concerns about the cost, Meyer said that the
99 full amount was included in the budget planning for the year. Dempcy reiterated that with only
100 one bid there was nothing to compare it to, and that the budget money was for both portions of the
101 project. Meyer said that the representative from ABcreative had told him that they had tried to get
102 a court included with the playground for the grant amount and they were not able to do so. Jim
103 Dickerson asked to address the Board. He agreed that it is a lot of money for only half the project
104 and asked if the Board had also considered the additional parking and paving that would be needed
105 if the park is expanded and used more often. Dempcy asked if the multi-sport court was just a
106 poured concrete court or if there was more to it. Meyer explained that, from what he understood,
107 the court would need to be built in a similar way to the playground with the poured surface. Patrick
108 said she felt this needed some more thought before this large amount of money is spent. Gale
109 Hopping also asked to address the Board. Hopping presented a different perspective and stated
110 that going off of the proposed square footage, the cost of the playground portion of this project
111 was more than the cost to build a twenty-five hundred square foot house. Meyer agreed that
112 inclusive equipment is expensive. Muriel Clark asked to speak and expressed to the Board that
113 even though some of the equipment is inclusive, it could be utilized by children who don't have
114 special needs also. Clark felt that instead of focusing on spending that amount of money on
115 handicapped equipment, the Board considers that they are spending the money on a playground
116 expansion for all the children in town. Patrick responded saying that she didn't feel that was what

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the Board was trying to say. Clark stated that she felt this was something the community would like to see as an investment into the community by the Board. Meyer stated that there are very few towns our size who have equipment like this available. Frank Fleecs was attending via zoom and questioned if the community would refuse to do any more fundraising, which was the agreement when the grant application was approved. Backer was also concerned about this. Patrick informed the Board that she had been told that unless it was a dedicated pickleball court, no fundraising would be taking place. Meyer pointed out that with the matching grant, the Village is only truly paying for half of the project. And with the \$20,000 donation from the Chamber of Commerce, that leaves the Village responsible for approximately \$80,000. Meyer feels that very few upgrades have been done to parks lately, and the Keno money is there for community betterment. Jim Dickerson asked how many kids could be using the equipment, Meyer replied that he doesn't know if there is a max capacity, there are multiple pieces of equipment and some of them are for use by multiple children at once. Meyer asked again if there was any further discussion. Dempcy commented that this bid was for 87% of the grant and only covers half of the project. With no further comments, Meyer called for a vote. Voting yes: Meyer. Voting no: Backer, Dempcy, Patrick, Nelms. Motion fails. Meyer then instructed the office to reach out to Mr. Dunn to inform him how the vote went and find out what steps need to be taken next. Backer asked if a motion needed to be made to reject the grant itself. Attorney Roundtree stated that that Mr. Dunn needed to be reached out to.

Change of billing software was next on the agenda. The office had presented three options for software for Board consideration. PowerManager, iWorq, and EdmundsGovTech quotes were all included in the packet. The office had done online demonstrations for each software option and shared pros and cons of each with the Board, including ease of use, switching from one classification to another, and integration with accounting software. Pricing was discussed also, each option compared to the current gWorks software the office uses. The office had been impressed by how easy the PowerManager software appeared to be and had spoken with other municipalities who currently use this software to get thoughts and opinions on it. Meyer asked what lead times for switching over would be. Ralston stated it would be 3-4 months for backing up information, installation, and training to be completed before going live. This timeline is similar for all three options. Paxton has recently switched to PowerManager, Ralston expressed interest in going to see how it works in person. Frank Fleecs questioned if the original contract had been reviewed, he did not believe the yearly costs were that high when the switch was originally made. Ralston also informed the Board that customer service is also lacking with the current software. Ralston was directed to take some time to go see the software in Paxton. This item will remain on the agenda for the next meeting.

Ditch mowing had been placed on the agenda. Questions had been brought to Board members about why some ditches in town were mowed by the village and not others. Backer and Ralston both confirmed that this question is frequently asked. Backer said she informed the person who asked her about this that from the center of the street to the center of the alley is property owners responsibility to maintain. Kendall said that using the tractor and big more often tears up yards and several homeowners have asked we stop mowing theirs. Meyer stated that there are some ditches on North County Road that the village mows as directed by a previous board in order to mitigate some flooding issues. Backer stated that since those issues have been taken care of, does the Board now let the property owners take care of the ditches. Backer asked if it is an all or none issue, either we mow them all or we mow none. The Board decided to leave things as they are. This item can be removed from the agenda.

Muriel Clark was in attendance to discuss a completed grant for 910 1st Street from the CARC board. Completion letter and invoice were presented to the Board recommending payment of the grant. Motion Dempcy. Second Nelms. Voting yes: Patrick, Dempcy, Meyer, Nelms, Backer. Voting no: none. Motion carries. Clark also addressed a request for a grace period for an awarded grant. 1251 Locust had received a sidewalk grant, which was delayed while the planning commission determined standards for sidewalks in town. The permit for this has been turned in to go before the planning commission and the homeowners are asking for a 30-day grace period for completion of this project. Motion Patrick to grant a 30-day grace period. Second Dempcy. Voting yes: Backer, Meyer, Dempcy, Patrick, Nelms. Voting no: none. Motion carries.

A chicken permit for 620 Walnut was presented to the Board. Superintendent Kendall stated he had no issues with the permit. Motion Backer to grant the chicken permit. Second Dempcy. Voting yes: Nelms, Patrick, Backer, Dempcy, Meyer. Voting no: none. Motion carries.

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Aden Enterprises had submitted an SDL permit for an event taking place at Stolen Vault Records on May 29, 2025. Motion Backer to approve the SDL. Second Dempcy. Voting yes: Dempcy, Backer, Nelms, Meyer, Patrick. Voting no: none. Motion carries.

Contract mowing was next on the agenda. Superintendent Kendall would like to place an ad in the paper and create a list of companies who could be hired on a case-by-case basis to mow nuisance lawns if the resident doesn't take care of it after being notified of the nuisance. Discussion was held on average rates for this service and if the Board thought an hourly rate or payment per job would be best. Backer felt the office should place an ad in the paper to request pricing from interested companies with the condition that they would be required to show proof of liability insurance.

Removal of nuisance cars was discussed. Kendall stated there are some that are clearly inoperable, which is against village code. Clerk Ralston clarified that code also states that the north lot is the designated storage for vehicles and a daily fee is established in the fee schedule if vehicles are towed and impounded due to nuisance.

At this point Chairman Meyer informed all present that there is an active storm warning. He stated that anyone who needed to leave was permitted to and if there were enough remaining members to have a quorum the meeting would proceed. Trustee Patrick and Trustee Nelms left the meeting at this point. With three remaining trustees there was a quorum, and the meeting continued.

Purchase of postage stamps in bulk was discussed next. The office had asked about this before the price of stamps increases. It is often a struggle for the office to purchase stamps from the local post office because they don't always have them on hand. The Board authorized the office to purchase up to one years worth of stamps and place the amount on the appropriate claims cycle.

Attorney Roundtree had requested the the housing authority be placed on the agenda. He had been approached by the housing authority board about overseeing an eviction for them. He was unsure if this fell within his scope of duties and requested the opinion of the Board. Frank Fleecs asked to speak and reminded the Board that the housing authority is at least partially federally funded. Discussion was held concerning the Board appointing members of the housing authority board. It was determined that this was not in the duties of Attorney Roundtree.

OTHER:

- Claims in the amount of \$195,648.08 were presented to the Board. Clerk Ralston stated this also includes the water bond payment. Motion Backer to approve the claims as presented. Second Dempcy. Voting yes: Dempcy, Backer, Meyer. Absent and not voting: Patrick and Nelms. Voting no: none. Motion carries.
- Payroll Reports were presented to the Board for the May 2, 2025 Board payroll and the May 9, 2025 regular payroll.
- Comp Time Reports were also included in the packet.

FYI INFORMATION:

REPORTS:

- Superintendent Kendall reported that the sonar of the lagoon had been completed. Three fourths of this was ok, the west portion may need some work. Work has been going on at the pool. It should be ready for opening Memorial Day weekend. Nuisance letters have been going out.
- Clerk Ralston had spoken with RJ Meyer and they are hoping to have the audit report completed soon.

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Trustees Reports:

- K. Backer had nothing to report.
- D. Dempcy had nothing to report.
- F. Patrick was absent.
- J. Nelms was absent.
- S. Meyer had nothing to report.

With no further agenda items to discuss Meyer asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion Dempcy to adjourn the meeting. Second Backer. Voting yes: Meyer, Backer Dempcy. Absent and not voting: Nelms and Patrick. Voting no: none. Motion carries. Meeting is adjourned at 7:14 P.M.

These minutes are set to be approved at the May 28, 2025, regular meeting.

Scott Meyer, Chairman
Board of Trustees, Village of Sutherland

[Seal]

Bonnie Ralston, Clerk
Village of Sutherland