Minutes of the Region 26 Council Board Meeting

April 28, 2026

Region 26 Council:

Present:

Blaine County: Matt Eggert
Garfield County: Diana Hurlburt
Greeley County: Jordan Foltz (late arrival)
Loup County: Dave Larson
Sherman County: Tom Bandur
Valley County: Theresa Petska
Wheeler County: Doug Pokorny
Law Enforcement: Joel Bergman
Tri-County Municipalities: Jay Meyer, Chairman

Absent:

Thomas County: Joseph Smith (excused)
Range Municipalities: Paige Ryschon (excused)
City of Ord: Branden Stoural

Staff Present: Catie Larsen, Director; Virginia Michalski, Office Manager Miki Gerten, Head Dispatcher

The meeting was called to order at 6:59 p.m. by Chairman Jay Meyer.

Notice of the meeting and agenda were sent to all county clerks of each member county/municipality for posting and given in advance to all members of the Board. A quorum was present, and the Chairman declared the meeting to be a legal meeting of the Region 26 Council in accordance with the Open Meeting Act, which was posted and available for public review.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Matt Eggert, seconded by Dave Larson, to approve the amended agenda as presented. Vote carried by roll call vote. Ayes (9), Nays (0), Abstain (0).

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Joel Bergman, seconded by Doug Pokorny, to approve the March 31, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. Vote carried by roll call vote. Ayes (8), Nays (0), Abstain (1).

Motion by Tom Bandur, seconded by Dave Larson, to approve the April 21, 2026 Special Board Meeting minutes as presented. Vote carried by roll call vote. Ayes (8), Nays (0), Abstain (1).

Public Comment

No public comments were received.

Financial Reports and Claims

Motion by Dave Larson, seconded by Joel Bergman, to approve the corrected February 2026 financial statement related to grant funds that were incorrectly recorded and later corrected with no effect on net position. Vote carried by roll call vote. Ayes (9), Nays (0), Abstain (0).

Motion by Joel Bergman, seconded by Matt Eggert, to approve the April 28, 2026 financial statement. Vote carried by roll call vote. Ayes (9), Nays (0), Abstain (0).

Motion by Tom Bandur, seconded by Doug Pokorny, to approve the April 2026 claims. Vote carried by roll call vote. Ayes (9), Nays (0), Abstain (0).

Pre- Approval of Recurring Bills

The Council discussed late fees incurred on electric bills due to the timing of check signatures. Motion by Dave Larson, seconded by Jordan Foltz, to authorize ACH automatic payments for electric utility bills including Custer Public Power, Loup Valleys. Vote carried by roll call vote. Ayes (9), Nays (0), Abstain (0).

Check Signers

Motion by Tom Bandur, seconded by Jordan Foltz, to add Catie Larsen as an authorized check signer and to remove Jack VanSlyke and designate Theresa Petska as an alternate signer, effective immediately. The minutes shall serve as authorization. Vote carried by roll call vote. Ayes (9), Nays (0), Abstain (0).

Towers and Equipment

An update was provided on tower maintenance activities. Preventative maintenance was completed at the Ord and Sargent towers. No significant issues were reported.

The purchase agreement and bill of sale for the Ansley Tower were completed and forwarded to Custer County. The Council will await further action.

Catie will confirm that Platte Valley has worked on the Thomas County siren to fix what they were needing done.

Garage Update

Staff reported that Longhorn Electric has not yet disconnected power to the garage facility. HVAC removal is pending proper evacuation of the system. Demolition will proceed once utilities are disconnected.

Interlocal Agreements

Interlocal agreements have been received from Ord, Garfield, Thomas, and Greeley counties. Additional agreements remain outstanding.

It was noted that a previously distributed resolution contained errors and did not match the interlocal agreement term. The Council confirmed that only the interlocal agreement is required; resolutions are not necessary. Catie Larsen will inform counties they only need to sign the interlocal agreement not the resolution and continue to collect the rest of the interlocal agreements.

Doug Pokorny stated that Wheeler County would be rescinding the termination letter sent to Region 26 in their upcoming meeting and will sign interlocal agreement and send to Region 26.

2026-2027 Budget Review

Staff reviewed budget materials and ongoing discussions with information they received from NIRMA regarding insurance valuations. Concerns were expressed regarding insuring assets not owned by Region 26 and valuation discrepancies. There was uncertainty that $50,000 would be enough coverage. There was discussion of why the counties are not covering the insurance for the towers and equipment that reside in their counties. The council asked Catie Larsen to work with NIRMA to get a breakdown of what it would cost each county to cover the insurance for the towers and equipment in their counties. Region 26 would still cover all the NRIN equipment coverage. Catie Larsen will work with NIRMA to get the breakdown for the counties. Once she receives the information she will send information out to all Council Members.

Outside of the NIRMA Insurance coverage the board had no other issues with the budget that was presented. Once NIRMA Insurance is decided on they will be able to vote and approve the budget.

Criminal Justice Board Report

Joel Bergman stated that he had no report and the next Law Enforcement meeting will be May 1st at Region 26.

Communications Report

Miki Gerten reported in April, the final group of dispatchers completed weather spotter training at Region 26, with four dispatchers—Meggan, Jaimie, Darien, and Jake—attending. Dispatch training is now in its final phases throughout the remainder of April and May. Although both Meggan and Darien will remain on probation through the end of the year, they will transition to experience-based training with continued support from more seasoned dispatchers. Meggan completed a dispatcher ride-along with Cheyenne Doyle at Ord Police Department and reported a positive experience. Additionally, Deputy Cafaro from Wheeler County spent time observing operations in dispatch, and Joel also spent some time in dispatch between meetings. I attended a NAEMS pre-conference in Kearney with Catie, which provided valuable insight into interagency and community collaboration. Libby is currently attending NESCA and will provide a report at the next staff meeting. Dispatch also participated in a day-and-a-half presentation from Central Square on a potential new CAD system, which was well received due to its advanced features and ability to consolidate call-handling tasks; however, implementation would depend on the availability of grant funding. Along similar lines, we have been in communication with JDS regarding previously promised Digi Box integrations, though the expected updates have not yet been received. Moving forward, we hope to implement those updates along with improvements to RapidSOS. Finally, I am developing a new evaluation form with the goal of completing employee evaluations within the next two months and using them as part of the assessment process for potential pay increases. It was discussed to pay for Libby to attend NESCA.

Directors Report

For the North Central PET Region update, it was reported that the region is still awaiting notification on whether funding will be awarded through the 2025 Department of Homeland Security/EMPG Grant. Efforts are currently underway to fully spend down all 2023 and 2024 PET funding so that, if 2025 funding is received, it can be utilized immediately, as the available timeframe may be shorter. Several training initiatives are scheduled, including Active Shooter Training conducted by Florida trainers on Thursday, May 14, from 8:30–11:30 a.m. in Ainsworth with 36 attendees, and on Friday, May 15, from 8:00–11:00 a.m. at the Taylor Event Center with 43 attendees. In addition, a Mobile Precision Engagement Platforms course will be offered free of charge for 13 attendees on May 12 or 13 at the Dismal River Club beginning at 8:00 a.m. The first regional newsletter has been sent out. A demonstration of the Central Square CAD system was conducted and described as a very impressive platform. Lastly, a new annual CodeRED contract was signed today, with plans to schedule training with Joel and Emergency Managers, including access for both Emergency Management and Dispatch staff.

Executive Session – Personnel

The Council entered into executive session to discuss personnel matters.

Motion by Jay Meyer, seconded by Tom Bandur, to enter executive session for personnel salary discussion at 8:31 PM. Vote: Ayes (9), Nays (0), Abstain (0).

Motion by Dave Larson, seconded by Doug Pokorny, to exit executive session and return to open session at 9:11. Vote: Ayes (10), Nays (0), Abstain (0).

The Council reconvened in open session at approximately 9:11 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Meyer.

Respectfully submitted:

Catie Larsen, Director

Approved by the Region 26 Council:

Chairman ________________________________ Date ____________