

May 19, 2025

Meeting of the Nebraska International Port of the Plains Board of Directors. Present were Vince Dugan, James Hawks, J. Patrick Keenan, Kirk Olson, Michael Steele, Kimberly Steger, and Kevin Tighe. Absent was Leann Ellis and Dwight Porter. Chair Hawks called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Hawks announced that the Open Meeting Act with amendments is posted for public review and Board of Directors will comply with the open meeting requirements.

Steger moved to approve the minutes from April 28, 2025. Tighe seconded the motion. Present and voting “aye”: Dugan, Hawks, Keenan, Olson, Steele, Steger, and Tighe. “Nays” none. Motion carried.

Finance Committee: Steele presented Balanced Sheet and Profit and Loss statements.

Facilities Report: Hewgley stated the County will do limited cleaning inside the building. Roads Department will maintain the outside as will Noxious Weeds be conducting spraying to assist with the outside maintenance until a tenant occupies the building.

Executive Committee: Hawks and Steele reported that there was not any response from local attorneys regarding RFP. The Committee will meet to determine how to proceed. Signage is in the process and will be placed in the near future.

Person updated the Board on the University of NE and Twin Platte NRD’s interest in a regenerative agriculture project if funding could be secured through legislation that deemed that Inland Port Authorities were eligible to receive Innovation-HUB funding. There is confusion on the legislation as many thought it was directed at I-HUB’s being established in the Omaha area, but they used the Inland Port Authority legislation to incorporate the funding into it, leading others to believe any Inland Port could be eligible to apply. Another meeting is scheduled for some time in June with local and state officials to discuss.

Discussion on the Property Management Agreement between Lincoln County and NIPP. Bruns discussed the agreement with the Board and changes that were made at the meeting of the County Commissioners. The Chairwoman of the Board signed the agreement at their meeting on May 19, 2025. Dugan reviewed the agreement, reminded Board of items regarding liability insurance and other items. He did not have any issues with the agreement and recommended signing.

Dugan moved to enter into an Agreement between Lincoln County and Nebraska International Port of the Plains, authorizing the Chairman to sign and noted that the agreement is missing No. 4. Steele seconded the motion. Present and voting “aye”: Dugan, Hawks, Keenan, Olson, Steele, Steger, and Tighe. “Nays” none. Motion carried.

Hawks updated the Board on the progress with TranSystems. Approval from the railroad is pending. Surveyor should be out soon then the design and bid letting.

Hawks stated that in discussion with TranSystems the spur will need to be inspected. NIPP will need to pay for the railroad’s inspection as well as an inspection for NIPP. Keenan stated this

notification to get the spurs inspected should be taken soon. The Board agreed. The Board agreed that a special meeting could take place to act and approve the agreement for inspection once it is provided.

Discussion of the Board to enter into negotiations with Project GRIT.

Dugan moved to authorize the Chairman to sign a Letter of Intent to enter into negotiations with GRIT GROUP INC on a transloading agreement and potential use of a portion of the NIPP facility and to remove the inference of the Greenbrier facility and change to Nebraska International Port of the Plains. Keenan seconded the motion. Present and voting “aye”: Dugan, Hawks, Keenan, Olson, Steele, Steger, and Tighe. “Nays” none. Motion carried.

Update from Development Corporation-Gary Person stated the Chamber and Development Board has authorized the auction of the buildings that were formerly associated with the Hershey Flying Service and later as Steffes Farms located at the rail park. The Chamber & Development Group met with a potential industry prospect last week that is looking at a facility in either Twin Rivers Business Park or the rail park and the visit went well. The prospect is taking the information back to the investment group to see if they want the project to move forward at a North Platte area location.

Once the existing rail spur is reactivated it will be considered a “Union Pacific Focus Site” and used for marketing purposes, meaning that UP has found it to be a preferred site for business and industry to operate with access to the UP mainline, Person said. The Hershey Rail Park also will be considered a preferred top 10 sites for development in Nebraska, following a competitive process to qualify. The Rural Projects Act requires an annual visit by DED staff members and Person said the visit was likely to include four officials this year, whereas in the past it was only two. July 22 has been set as the annual visit with DED.

Public comment: Bruns stated he met with Dan Phelps of the Airport Authority and is in the beginning stages of conducting an HDR engineering study of the levy to work to get the area out of the floodplain and would want to work with the County and Inland Port.

Hawks adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Advance notice and agenda for May 19, 2025, inland port board meetings were sent to the Inland Port Board members and all others requesting the same. Advance public notice (includes agenda) of the Nebraska International Port of the Plains Board of Directors meeting was posted at the Lincoln County Courthouse, City Hall, Village of Hershey, and the Lincoln County website on May 15, 2025, and was also emailed to the media on May 15, 2025.

The agenda for the meetings to be held on Monday June 23, 2025, will be kept continually current and open for inspection at the office of the Lincoln County Board Assistant. The regular meeting of the Nebraska International Port of the Plains Board of Directors will be at 18610 W Highway 30, Hershey, NE 69143 at 2:00 p.m.

Submitted by:
Tammy White