

June 23, 2025

Meeting of the Nebraska International Port of the Plains Board of Directors. Present were Vince Dugan, Leann Ellis, James Hawks, J. Patrick Keenan, Kirk Olson, Dwight Porter, Michael Steele, Robert Stefka and Kevin Tighe. 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 the Board of Directors will comply with the open meeting requirements.

Keenan moved to approve the minutes from May 19, 2025. Olson seconded the motion. Present and voting “aye”: Dugan, Ellis, Hawks, Keenan, Olson, Porter, Steele, Stefka and Tighe. “Nays” none. Motion carried.

Hawks introduced new member of the board that was appointed by the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners on June 23, 2025 at their regular meeting. Hawks swore in Robert Stefka at the Commissioners meeting.

Finance Committee: Steele presented Balanced Sheet and Profit and Loss statements. Steele will verify if there is any restricted use of the interest earned.

Facilities Report: nothing to report at this time.

Executive Committee: Hawks stated that the RFP for attorney services will be continued to next meeting. Condon Signs is working on the signage.

Justin Gosnell and Ryan Hanson of the North Platte Airport Authority were present to discuss and present information about the potential inclusion of the North Platte Airport within the Nebraska International Port of the Plains. Included in the area is a 75,000 sq ft warehouse potential project. Bruns explained that the County Board can allow an additional 25% or 100 acres of noncontiguous land to be included in the park. The County Board would suggest a letter of interest or resolution supporting such a request from the NIPP. Dugan would like to have a resolution in support of such a request. Volmer stated he could assist with that for the next meeting.

Dugan moved to recommend to the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners the inclusion of the North Platte Airport into the Nebraska International Port of the Plains. Keenan seconded the motion. Present and voting “aye”: Dugan, Ellis, Hawks, Keenan, Olson, Porter, Steele, Stefka and Tighe. “Nays” none. Motion carried.

Roric Paulman was present to discuss the potential option of application through the Nebraska Innovation Hub Act. There isn't any monies allocated at this time but inland ports authorities have been invited to apply to be designated as an iHub. They are currently seeking a grant writer and hope to have an application available for review in a couple months. The application is available December 1-December 31, 2025.

Dwight Porter updated the Board on the inspection of the tracks. East 803 and 804 need bumpers fastened down then they will be accessible. 805, 806 & 807 are in good shape. Once the application is completed it will take the UPRR a couple of months to activate the switch. Hawks stated the Board of Commissioners approved the agreement to put the tracks back in service.

Porter stated the railroad will do spot checks once the tracks are back in service. Porter will get the application submitted.

Update from County Commissioners-Bruns updated the Board of the new board member applications received. Also updated the Board on the discussion of the expansion of the airport into NIPP.

Update from Development Corporation-Gary Person stated the Board has authorized the auction of the buildings at the railpark. They met with a potential prospect. Once the spur is activated it will be considered a “UP Focus Sites-Shovel Ready-Community & Railroad Supported” and “Selected as a top Large Industrial Site in 2024 by a Burns & McDonnell study on behalf of the Nebraska Legislature” and will be used for marketing. The Railpark is in the top 10 sites for development. July 22 is the annual visit with the DED. The annual report is due and includes the end of June.

At the conclusion of the legislative session, the funding sources were not touched but the Board needs to utilize the monies already received and keep moving forward in the track construction RFP.

Gary met with Mike Bacon and the Hershey Village Board approved the area as blighted in the Hershey Redevelopment Plan and will be working with Hershey to remove the buildings. The priority of the railpark is rail related for potential businesses.

Hawks asked that the next meeting be moved to the North Platte Area Chamber conference room ask there is technology available that is currently unavailable at the Hershey site. TranSystems will be available via ZOOM to discuss the RFP for track construction.

Dugan made a motion to move the July 28, 2025 meeting to the North Platte Chamber conference room. Steele seconded the motion. Present and voting “aye”: Dugan, Ellis, Hawks, Keenan, Olson, Porter, Steele, Stefka and Tighe. “Nays” none. Motion carried.

Steele asked if the potential of storing rail cars is still a possibility for a revenue. Porter stated that once the switch is open, that storing cars would be a revenue option.

Steele moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:15 p.m. Keenan seconded the motion. Present and voting “aye”: Dugan, Ellis, Hawks, Keenan, Olson, Porter, Steele, Stefka and Tighe. “Nays” none. Motion carried.

Public comment: none

Advance notice and agenda for the June 23, 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 June 18, 2025, and was also emailed to the media on June 18, 2025.

The agenda for the meetings to be held on Monday July 28, 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