

June 22, 2026

Meeting of the Nebraska International Port of the Plains Board of Directors. Present were Leann Ellis, James Hawks, Kirk Olson, Dwight Porter, Michael Steele, Robert Stefka and Kevin Tighe. Absent was Vince Dugan and J. Patrick Keenan. Attorney Kendra Strommen was present. Chair 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.

Ellis moved to approve the minutes from May 26, 2026. Tighe seconded the motion. Present and voting “aye”: Ellis, Hawks, Olson, Porter, Steele, Stefka and Tighe.”Nays” none. Motion carried.

Finance: Steele reviewed Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Statement. He has contacted R.J. Meyer to conduct an audit and is preparing for the audit.

Facilities: Stefka is receiving bids for the concrete overlay of the pits.

Executive: no meeting

Paul Hentschke with GFT updated the Board on construction plans for the construction of the 3 tracks drop and pull yard. He received questions from UPRR on drainage calculation. He has an on site visit scheduled for Wednesday and will be able to assess after the meeting if he will be able to finalize plans and advertise for bids to meet the July 27 opening date.

Development Corp Update – Gary Person, President and CEO of the North Platte Area Chamber and Development Corporation (Chamber / DEVCO) provided the following updates.

- **Rezoning** of six parcels of property Chamber / DEVCO owns at the Hershey Rail Park. The Hershey Planning Commission unanimously approved all of the requests at its April 23 meeting. It is now on the Village Board agenda for July 6, 2026 to be formally adopted. A moratorium on construction permits will be in effect until the comp plan is adopted, so that new projects will fall under the 2026 Hershey Comp Plan and not its existing plan.
- **Energy.** We have signed two agreements now with NPPD for the energy availability / capacity feasibility study totaling a \$205,000 application fee (another \$25,000 fee to the Southwest Power Pool is also likely). This study will take several months in which to complete. We had to have a committed anchor project with identified energy needs to move this forward and we have secured that agreement.
- **Annual Report-** Report is due end of July and includes detailed accomplishments of the past 5 years. Filing a 5 year extension with Rural Projects Act. All of the benchmarks have been reached with the final benchmark being the rezoning which should be complete by August 10.
- **Dawson Public Power District**, which is the retail provider, met recently with Chamber / DEVCO leaders to discuss routes for the transmission lines to serve the Hershey Rail Park. Dawson officials provided general timelines for options, and believe the quickest and most cost effective was 24 months for utilizing NPPD Retail sub transmission to Sutherland and Dawson PPD sub transmission to Hershey. Once there Dawson needed to add sub transmission and build a substation.
- **Energy** – our biggest challenge, which was not a challenge at all when we started going down the path of developing a rail park, is the fact the energy world has changed dramatically in recent years with capacity limitations. We have signed two agreements now with NPPD for the energy

availability / capacity feasibility study totaling a \$205,000 application fee (another \$25,000 fee to the Southwest Power Pool is also likely). This study will take several months to complete. We had to have a committed anchor project with identified energy needs to move this forward and we have secured that agreement.

- **Timeline** is the most critical. Capacity is assigned once a project completes all steps of the new load process. Steps remaining for this project include the study being completed and upgrades, if needed, are identified, costs and timelines provided, and securitization for those upgrades posted. The NPPD team and the account managers have been encouraging their planning team to allow smaller projects to be on earlier, so it could be early 2029, but no guarantees. They could also have loads drop and where you're in our process now it could be earlier. The NPPD transmission could also be a delay if upgrades are needed, that's why the study needs completed, because there is no way of knowing until completed.
- **Q1 2029** seems very realistic and manageable from both a construction and capacity perspective. If things come together quicker and no upgrades are needed and NPPD has the capacity, then it may be able to serve sooner. Chamber / DEVCO will soon be signing an agreement with Dawson to begin the multi-million process.
- **Right of way and or additional land purchases** have been secured.
- **Industry prospects** - Chamber / DEVCO continues to field interest from three different companies, and we will continue keeping them in the loop regarding the energy situation and time line for other infrastructure development.
- **Lincoln Foreign Trade Zone**-establishing legal structure in advance will provide the railpark and port with strategic advantage in today's competitive supply chain environment. The direct access to rail lines and interstate, Foreign Trade Zone can eliminate certain import duties.

Kendra Strommen, Attorney at law for Nebraska International Port of the Plains provided as update:

Bidding process-Kendra, Paul with GFT and Cheryl from GFT met regarding the bidding process for construction of the three-track drop and pull yard and following proper bidding requirements for the DED grant structure. Cheryl brings both legal and engineering experience. Kendra recommends complying with Nebraska Revised Statute §23-3111 by publishing notice in a legal newspaper in the county at least once a week for two weeks before the final bid submission deadline.

Once Paul provides the assessment from the on site visit this week, they can determine if the July 27 bid opening will be able to remain to comply with publication requirements. As special meeting may need to be scheduled if bid packages cannot be finalized to meet the July 27 deadlines for publishing requirements.

Customer Contract and Fee Schedule

Continuing to work on the Railcar Storage Agreement and Fee Schedule. Those documents are close to completion. They are important to establish the legal and operational framework for customer storage, switching services, fee structures, billing and liability allocation.

LB 840

Alternative funding mechanisms are being researched including economic development tools that may be available at the municipal level. Kendra is completing the legal analysis, particularly as it relates to statutory authority and the specific voter approved intent language in each municipality.

Public Comment: none

Stefka moved to adjourn at 2:30 p.m. Olson seconded the motion. Present and voting “aye”: Ellis, Hawks, Olson, Porter, Steele, Stefka and Tighe.”Nays” none. Motion carried.

Advance notice and agenda for the June 22, 2026, 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 17, 2026, and was also emailed to the media on June 17, 2026.

The agenda for the meetings to be held on Monday, July 27, 2026, 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 the Nebraska International Port of the Plains facility located at 18610 W Highway 30, Hershey, 69143.

Submitted by:
Tammy White