

**MEETING MINUTES  
OF THE  
PHILLIPS VILLAGE BOARD  
January 6, 2026**

The meeting of the Phillips Village Board was called to order at 7:00 P. M. by Chairperson Benton on Tuesday, January 6, 2026 in the Town Hall in Phillips, Nebraska.

The following Trustees answered at roll call:

Dorothy Benton, Chairperson  
Jim Crawford  
Jordan Watson  
John Briseno  
Les Dana

Chairperson Benton states, the Open Meeting Laws are posted on the south wall of the meeting room in the Town Hall if anyone wants to review them.

Motion by Trustee Crawford, seconded by Trustee Briseno, to approve the Minutes of the December 2, 2025 Board Meeting. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Fire Chief Brandt was present to discuss the fundraising event scheduled for February 14, 2026 at the Phillips Memorial Hall, located at 501 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Phillips. Tickets prices are \$40.00 for single and \$75.00 for couples. Extensive food menu and music will be provided. Contact the Fire Department to order event tickets.

Maintenance Superintendent, Bergmark provided an update on day-to-day maintenance repairs, lower replacement cost for fire hydrants, winter preparedness and status of lagoons and equipment bids. He has also successfully completed and passed his Grade IV Water Operator License and will now be the primary, designated operator for the Village.

Brief discussion held on the Ball field concession repair with further discussion to take place with possible action in February. Park cameras discussion will be revisited on the March Agenda.

Final discussion held on Bid estimate for replacing the Village mower. Trustees approved the purchase of the 61" deck Scag Patriot zero turn from Scotts Outdoor Power for \$8,494.90.

Clerk/Treasurer reports were presented to Trustees to include Water Billing year-end close and older uncollectable accounts. Brief discussion held on delinquent account duration. Motion by Trustee Dana, seconded by Trustee Briseno, approving write-off of any uncollectable accounts prior to 2024, and to attempt collection on aging accounts by last known address or property owners. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Trustee Crawford provides property cleanup updates. Brief discussion held on status of special assessment and lien property at 130 Hall Street. Property to be added to the February agenda. Properties at 208 7<sup>th</sup> Street and 636 West Street will receive letters regarding the Ordinance violations.

Continued discussion of no change to the funding status on the Water Project. Trustee Crawford confirmed that the Village of Giltner has had some changes to their water non-compliance, but are still interested in the project.

Mr. Reed with Winchesters Saloon is present, brief discussion held on the Lottery (Keno) status. Chairperson Benton states she spoke to representatives with Fonner Park and explained what the Village needs to proceed and has not heard anything further. Mr. Reed is under the understanding everything has been approved and all that is needed is a Resolution from the Village. To not delay matters further, Chairperson Benton asks for a Motion.

Motion by Trustee Dana, seconded by Trustee Briseno, to prepare a Resolution approving a Keno sales outlet as soon as appropriate for the signature of the Chairperson. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Chairperson briefly discusses Pinnacle ICS bank accounts and provides information from Henderson Bank on the Nebraska Bankers Pool, which possibly appears to be a better fit for the Village needs. Further discussion is needed. Clerk is instructed to add to the February agenda.

Discussion held on current interlocal agreement with Hamilton County Planning and Zoning Permits Comprehensive Plan set to renew in 2027. Review of the current Comprehensive Plan will begin with recommendations from the Village Board of Trustees and residents. Clerk instructed to post the link to the Comprehensive Plan to the Village website under Government, Planning & Zoning so that residents can review.

Open Public Discussion held. Commercial property owner, Jeff Reed, appeared to address a letter he received regarding the Vacant Property Registration Ordinance §151.01-§151.99 enforcement. Reed expressed disappointment and displeasure in receiving the enforcement letter and gave numerous reasons why the Village Board of Trustees should review the Ordinance enforcement for his property and amend the Ordinance to remove commercial property.

Discussion held on repealing the Vacant Property Registration Ordinance or amending said Ordinance to reflect only residential properties not commercial. Further discussion and potential action is required. Clerk is instructed to add item to February agenda under new business.

Motion by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Briseno, approving Resolution 2025-15 – Appointing Dorothy Benton as Vacant Property Program Administrator. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Crawford, seconded by Trustee Watson, to approve a Special Designated License for Phillips Memorial Hall on Saturday, February 14, 2026, located at 501 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, from 1:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Dana, to approve a Village credit card for Maintenance Superintendent, Bergmark with a credit limit of \$5,000. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Chairperson, Benton addressed the other banking options agenda item and stated it was covered during unfinished business and no action was needed.

Fire Chief Brandt, presented a building quote from AGI Sentinel for review. Fire Chief Brandt is requesting more building space for equipment and rigs. Discussion held on adding on to provide more room and potentially extending further North to the property line, so if the request is granted, it would be the last time. Board of Trustees stated they will require more than one Bid with further discussion to take place in March. Clerk instructed to add to the March Agenda under unfinished business.

Four Lawn Care Bids are reviewed by the Village Board of Trustees. Prior to any action, Trustee Watson discloses he submitted a lawn care bid for consideration and was unaware of the other bids as they were sealed and specifically requested the Clerk not provide any copies prior to possible action. Further, he disclosed his conflict of interest and will abstain from voting.

Motion by Trustee Crawford, seconded by Trustee Dana, awarding Watson Turf Solutions as the provider for the Village. Voting aye: Crawford, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Abstained Vote: Watson. Motion carried. The lawn care service is awarded to Watson Turf Solutions.

Three Pest Control Bids are reviewed by the Village Board of Trustees. Motion by Trustee Dana, seconded by Trustee Briseno, awarding Watson Pest Control as the provider for the Village. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried. The pest control service is awarded to Watson Pest Control.

Clerk/Treasurer Arnett, respectfully requests the Village Board of Trustees review reports presented regarding the current monthly sanitation and water rates based on a 2024 Heartland Disposal rate increase and a Water Study conducted outlining slight yearly percentage increases to assist in maintaining operations that are not currently in effect.

Brief discussion held, Clerk is instructed to add sanitation/water rates to the February agenda for potential action.

Chairperson, Benton addresses a resident complaint received with reference to Ordinance 71.08- Truck and Trailer Parking. Discussion held on Ordinance and number of trucks in the Village currently in violation of the Ordinance. Clerk to send letter to resident of the complaint with a copy of the current Ordinance. Discussion by some Trustees to review the Ordinance for amendment or repeal after public input that the Ordinance should not be enforced as written.

At 10:03 p.m., a Motion by Trustee Dana, seconded by Trustee Watson, to go into closed session to discuss annual, personnel reviews. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

At 11:13 p.m., a Motion by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Briseno to come out of closed session. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Chairperson, Benton advises the Trustees of her communication with the IRS regarding letters sent to the Village. The Village is now current on all employer tax filings and payments. However, the Village will be assessed penalties and interest once the IRS has processed the past due filings and payments, for the years 2022 through 2024. The process could take from 6 to 8 weeks.

Motion by Trustee Briseno, seconded by Trustee Watson, to pay all Claims as presented. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Trustee Crawford moved, Trustee Briseno seconded, at 11:24 p.m. to Adjourn. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton Voting nay: none. Motion carried and meeting adjourns.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Doris M. Arnett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Doris M. Arnett  
Clerk/Treasurer  
Village of Phillips