

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE
PHILLIPS VILLAGE BOARD
March 3, 2026**

The meeting of the Phillips Village Board was called to order at 7:00 P. M. by Chairperson Benton on Tuesday, March 3, 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 Dana, seconded by Trustee Crawford, to approve the Minutes of the February 3, 2026 Special Board Meeting. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Briseno, to approve the Minutes of the February 25, 2026 Board Meeting. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Fire Chief Brandt was not present, but communicated with Trustee Dana his absence and requested the Fire Department addition Bids be moved to the April Agenda. Clerk instructed to postpone further discussion until the April Agenda.

Maintenance Superintendent, Bergmark was absent from the meeting, but provided Trustee Watson an update on day-to-day Village maintenance activities. Trustee Watson summarizes the general maintenance activities, additional electrical repairs for the Town Hall. Repairs to down stop sign on 1st and Hamilton; 4-way stop signs are all installed. Cleaning of the Village streets is ongoing. Clerk is provided a full list of activities completed by the Maintenance Department for the month of February if the Trustees wish to individually review the notes provided.

Clerk/Treasurer reports were presented to Trustees to include month end billing. Clerk/Treasurer confirms rate increase notification to all active resident accounts; updates to the billing software to reflect the rate increases on the next billing cycle.

Trustee Crawford provides property cleanup updates. Brief discussion held on status of special assessment and liened property at 130 Hall Street. Property at 208 7th Street received an Attorney letter. The vehicle was moved to the driveway and is now licensed; however, the appliances and other litter remain on the property. Barking dog nuisance complaints letters were sent to 504 and 518 East;

520 West received a barking dog and inoperable vehicle letter. Trustee Crawford provides an updated list to the Clerk/Treasurer to issue new nuisance letters.

Chris Miller with Miller and Associates is present to provide an update on the uranium water project funding. Alternatively, the cost associated with a treatment facility or purchasing water from Grand Island.

Mr. Miller answers concerns from the Trustees on the current condition of the sewer lagoon levels. Chairperson Benton specifically addresses the need for a water study to identify other potential water capacity deficiencies. Chairperson Benton expresses the need for the Village to be pro-active, not re-active. Chairperson Benton points out with the addition of at least 50 new homes; the annual water usage has nearly tripled. Additionally, a fluctuation in requests for multi-family home construction since the last water study in 2009. All of which impact the level of the sewer lagoons.

Mr. Miller advises the Board on what the water study data will provide, the mandatory requirements of the water project funding, which includes the discussed water study analysis. The cost of the water study is covered by the funding; however, the cost is \$25,000 for the Village to complete independently. Regardless, the water study will take 6 months to a year to complete. Further, if the Board decides to have the water study completed prior to funding, it will not jeopardize the water project funding.

After a brief Board discussion, it was decided that Mr. Miller would work with the Maintenance Superintendent on setting up a flow meter to monitor the level of the sewer lagoons for 30-60 days. Clerk instructed to add the flow meter data to the May Agenda.

Hilary Betka with the Hamilton County Planning and Zoning is present to discuss the current status of the Plat application for 426 Hall Street. The Plat application was changed from an administrative plat to a subdivision plat. This change requirement will require review from the Hamilton County Planning and Zoning Committee. Once completed, it may be presented to the Village Board of Trustees for approval in April. Clerk instructed to add the subdivision plat application to the April Agenda.

Darren Bartunek adds additional comments for the 426 Hall Street Plat application. Discussion on the revision to the Plat application was to designate an alley back to the Village which currently belongs to the 426 Hall parcel. Further discussion is held with the Board and Chris Miller, Village engineer about sewer pipe size requirements, etc.

Open Public Discussion held. Area resident Russ Peard appears to provide the Trustees an update on the information he obtained from a water engineer through contacts he has. This put him in contact with water engineers in other states that have experienced similar problems. He discusses the cost associated with running pipe lines to purchase water from Grand Island. He also mentions the possible alternatives that may be available to the residents from his contact with Culligan and the ION Exchange canisters that can be attached to the well heads. Mr. Peard provides the contact information he has on the alternative subjects to the Village engineer, Chris Miller. In conclusion, Mr. Peard encourages the Board to walk, not run on making a decision to join with Grand Island.

Chris Miller again addresses the Board on items brought forward during Mr. Peard's discussion. He covers the State of Nebraska requirements and what is allowable. He is also familiar with the ION Exchange canisters and will reach out to Mr. Peard's contacts for further inquiry.

Area resident, William Gordan speaks with the Board about his relationship with Central Community College and his past donations of planting vegetation in the Village. Mr. Gordan and his students would like to provide this service again this year starting at the park and 4th and West. He would like to see press cover the project. Clerk instructed to add to the April agenda.

Mr. Gordon concludes public discussion.

Motion by Trustee Briseno, seconded by Trustee Watson, to approve a Special Designated License for Winchester's Saloon on March 15, 2026, located at 501 3rd Street, from 11:00 a.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 Crawford, to approve the Hen Permit Application at 721 West Street. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Briseno, approving Resolution 2026-3 – Increase solid waste/sanitation fees. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Briseno, approving Resolution 2026-4 – Authorizing Clerk/Treasurer to close Pinnacle Bank Accts./Appoint Henderson State Bank. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Dana, seconded by Trustee Watson, approving Resolution 2026-5 – Closure of existing Village Credit Card account with Pinnacle Bank/establish account with new vendor. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Crawford, seconded by Trustee Dana, approving Resolution 2026-6 – Sale of Village property. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Hilary Betka, appears to discuss a new plat application at 444 West Street and advises the Board it meets the planning/zoning requirements and was approved by the Hamilton County Planning and Zoning Commission.

Motion by Trustee Crawford, seconded by Trustee Briseno, to approve the Plat Application at 444 West Street. Voting aye: Crawford, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Trustee Waston abstains. Motion carried.

Tamar Jimenez with the Aurora Chamber of Commerce appears to introduce herself to the Village Board as she is recently new to the position. Brief discussion held on topics the Chamber of Commerce offers and involvement with the community. The Board is encouraged to contact her with any assistance they may need with their services.

Trustee Watson moved, Trustee Briseno seconded, to introduce Ordinance No. 2026-2 – Repeal §31.05 Relating to Compensation of the Board of Trustees and to waive the three-reading rule. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Trustee Watson moved for final passage, seconded by Trustee Dana, to approve Ordinance No. 2026-2 – Repeal §31.05 Relating to Compensation of the Board of Trustees. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton. Voting nay: none. Motion carried.

Local resident, Michelle Pedersen is present to request an Ordinance be established regarding the feral and non-feral cat population similar to the Village dog ordinance. Ms. Pedersen provides occurrences on her property with her neighbor's cats coming onto her property to urinate and defecate. They have damaged packages left on her porch. Ms. Pedersen shares her displeasure of too many cat owners letting them roam to breed, go onto other resident properties to spray, fight and be a general nuisance.

Chairperson Benton suggests first speaking with her neighbor regarding their cats going onto her property. Secondly, addresses there is no ordinance for cats due to the difficulty in enforcement. Chairperson Benton offers to reach out to Aurora Adopt – A- Pet to see if the director will come speak with the Board again regarding the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program. This will allow for humane trapping of the cats, vaccinations, spaying and neutering.

Trustee Crawford, Dana and Watson share their views, also area residents Jeff Reed and Deanna Weir speak on the matter.

Brief discussion held on authorizing a Village Marshal to enforce ordinances, Hamilton County Sheriff Interlocal Agreement or using a legal counsel enforcement procedure utilized by Giltner which has had success. Board of Trustees agree paying a Marshal or a Sheriff Interlocal Agreement, plus Attorney's fees may not be fiscally manageable for the Village.

Additional discussion from the Board to the Clerk/Treasurer regarding letters being sent and resident compliance. The Board of Trustees agree to a procedural change on property nuisance violations to become effective immediately.

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

Trustee Briseno moved, Trustee Watson seconded, at 8:47 p.m. to Adjourn. Voting aye: Crawford, Watson, Briseno, Dana, Benton Voting nay: none. Motion carried and meeting adjourns.

Respectfully Submitted,



Doris M. Arnett
Clerk/Treasurer
Village of Phillips