

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING  
THIRTY- FOURTH MEETING, 2025 SESSION (34)  
AUGUST 12, 2025**

The Buena Vista County Board of Supervisors met in regular session on Tuesday, August 12, 2025, at 8:30 A.M. in the Boardroom with Chairman Merten presiding and the following other members present Croker, Hartman, Ringgenberg, Snyder, and with Auditor Susan Lloyd as clerk for the meeting. Absent: None.

Unless otherwise indicated, all the following **motions** offered at this meeting were carried with the following vote: Ayes: Croker, Hartman, Merten, Ringgenberg, Snyder. Nays: none. Abstentions: none.

Motion by Ringgenberg, second by Croker, to approve **today's agenda**. Carried.

Engineer Bret Wilkinson started the discussion of the DOT's **Draft Project Concept Statement** on the redesign of the 70<sup>th</sup> Ave. and 80<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersections on Hwy 7 near Lake Creek. There were sixteen Lake Creek landowners, Lindsay Kruse-Storm Lake Radio, Jessica Felix and Sarah Tracy-Iowa DOT, in attendance, along with several unidentified callers online. Maps of the three alternatives were shown on the screen as Wilkinson and Felix explained each one. The landowners in attendance voiced their opposition to the DOT's preferred redesign for the 70<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersection, which would have realigned Villa Road to a 90-degree angle and modified access to St. Andrews Court. Felix stated that the DOT is investing \$6M to this project to be proactive on safety. Felix also stated that the CN Railroad would like to close both railroad intersections on 70<sup>th</sup> Ave. and 80<sup>th</sup> Ave. if they could. Complaints were also stated about the loud engine brakes, and residents would like to see signs posted or an Ordinance adopted regarding engine brakes. Felix stated that the landowners could apply for a quiet zone from the Federal Railroad Association. Felix stated that this meeting was to hear the concerns of the Board of Supervisors and get their recommendation. The Board stated that they preferred Alternative #1, which preserves 70<sup>th</sup> Ave. current angled approach and maintains direct access to Hwy 7, minimizing disruption to homes, farmland, and the NRCS property, which is the option that residents encouraged the Board to approve. At 80<sup>th</sup> Ave., the Board supported Alternative #3, which includes paving, elevation adjustments, and a tighter railroad crossing footprint, reducing the crossing surface from 86' to 59'. Before any motions were made and voted upon, Croker informed the Board that she had talked with County Attorney Paul Allen to ask if there was a conflict of interest for her since she lives at Lake Creek. Allen informed Croker that there was not a conflict of interest. Motion by Croker, second by Hartman, to approve Alternative #1 for the **70<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersection on Hwy 7** and Alternative #3 for the **80<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersection on Hwy 7**. Felix asked the landowners for clarification, to be sure that they stated that IDOT taking the least amount of property was more important than railroad crossings and upgrades for safety, and the landowners stated they agreed. Motion carried. Felix stated that IDOT will now revise the plans, with a public hearing expected in April 2026 with construction slated for 2026.

Engineer Bret Wilkinson presented a release for property damage caused when a semi tractor/trailer went into a county ditch on July 15, 2025, gouging the asphalt and requiring some shoulder shaping. Wilkinson stated that he invoiced Belcock Farms Trucking LLC and John Scott \$500 for the damage caused, and the insurance company asked for this release to be signed, stating that BV County will not pursue further restitution for the incident. Motion by Snyder, second by Ringgenberg, to approve and authorize the Chair to sign the **Release for Property Damage** regarding the semi tractor/trailer that went into the county ditch on July 15, 2025, stating that the county will not pursue further restitution for the incident. Carried.

**Platinum Crush Road Update:** Engineer Bret Wilkinson informed the Board that he has not received the signed right-of-way agreement document from MidAmerican yet. Wilkinson stated that he will have the plans and specifications for the Board to approve at their next meeting, and then they can set a letting date.

**Secondary Roads Report:** The crews have been hauling gravel and edge rutting; the shouldering is done on Hwy 110, and the contractor has moved to C49 for work on the shouldering. After the shouldering is done on C49, then they will paint the lines, and the road will be ready to open.

**Hear the Public:** Kevin Cone thanked the Board for approving Alternative #1 on the DOT Draft Project Concept Statement. Cone asked the Board what their reason was for changing the speed limit back to 55 mph on 70<sup>th</sup> Ave. by Platinum Crush. Croker commented that there isn't much traffic. Cone stated that in the Fall, there will be 500 trucks on that road, and it will be dangerous. Cone stated that he would rather have the Board wait until after the Fall season to see how everything goes before changing the speed limit. Cone commented that when the speed limit goes up, then there are more engine brakes heard.

Public Health Administrator Tracy Gotto and Assistant Administrator Lacey Anderson met with the Board to discuss updating the current **General Assistance** manual and to increase the amount of assistance. Currently, there is a limit of one claim per year, up to \$200, and they would like to raise the amount to \$500. Gotto stated that last year they helped with rent for six families, twenty-eight families for utilities, and had six burials. Gotto informed the Board that they offer financial counseling too. Croker stated that the rate could be increased and see what happens. Merten asked what happens when the dollars appropriated in the budget are used up. Anderson stated that according to Code, the county must pay for assistance, so they would be asking for a budget amendment. Merten stated that he wasn't in favor of a budget amendment. Croker asked Anderson for a copy of the current General Assistance Manual and a copy of the proposed new manual, so she could review and compare them, and asked that Gotto and Anderson return to the Board at another meeting for a decision.

Bldg/Grounds Supt. Joe Keller gave his **department update**. Keller stated that the active shooter training was well received. Keller stated that he and I.T. Director Tyler Van Houten are working on a notification system through the phones if there is ever an incident taking place. A new door has been installed at the VA Office, with the handicap push button coming. The sidewalk on the west side of the courthouse has been fixed. A new railing is coming for the south steps of the courthouse, and the steps also need to be repaired. New signs have gone up at Public Health. Keller stated that he has been reviewing his 3-year projects that were covered by the capital projects loan and has been working on several project bids to see what projects can be done. Keller stated that he would like to have the courthouse washed and sealed and looked at installing new doors with crash bars on the south and west doors. The CPR and Stop the Bleed class is coming up soon for county employees that would like to take it. Chairman Merten thanked Keller for all that he does.

Motion by Snyder, second by Croker, to approve the **minutes** of 7/29/2025 and 8/7/2025 as presented, today's **claims approval list, stamped warrant list, and Auxiant disbursements**, and accepting the following **reports**: July Sheriff's Report of Fees Collected, Quarterly Recorder's Report of Fees Collected (Apr-Jun), June Lake Improvement Commission minutes, June NW IA YES Center minutes, July Board of Health minutes, and June SHIELD Board minutes. Carried.

Motion by Croker, second by Hartman, to approve and authorize the Chair to sign the **Auxiant Buy Down Agreement**. Carried.

There being no further business, motion by Ringgenberg, second by Hartman, to adjourn the meeting at 11:15 a.m. until Tuesday, August 19 at 8:30 a.m. for a special session.