

# **Veteran's Service Committee Meeting Minutes**

## **Buffalo County Veteran's Service Committee Meeting Tuesday April 9, 2024 Board of Commissioner's Board Room, Kearney, NE**

Chairperson Tom McCoy called the Regular Meeting of the Buffalo County Veteran's Service Committee Meeting to order on April 9, 2024 at 4:00 P.M. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. A copy of the Open Meetings Act was made available to the public for this meeting and posted at the back of the Board Room.

### **Roll Call-**

Committee members present were Richard Bock, Robert Harpst, Lisa Mitchell and Tom McCoy. Absent: Stanley Brodine. Also in attendance Commissioners Myron Kouba, Veteran's Service Officer Matthew Starkey and Buffalo County Office Clerk Katie VanSlyke.

### **Notice of Meeting-**

Public Notice of this meeting was published on April 4, 2024, in the Kearney Hub and in accordance with Section 84-1412 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes and also available on the Buffalo County Veteran Services Website.

### **Approval of Minutes-**

The minutes of the March 12, 2024 meeting were previously provided to the Committee members for their review. Moved by Harpst and seconded by Bock to accept the March 12, 2024 minutes. Absent: Stanley Brodine. Upon vote, the motion passed.

### **Regular Agenda-**

There were no applications for County Veteran Aid at this time.

Veteran's Service Officer Matthew Starkey provided an office construction update. Starkey reminded the Committee of the Veteran Service Home Board will be meeting on April 12, 2024 at 9:00 A.M. held at the Central Nebraska Veteran's Home in Kearney Nebraska, Matt shared an Agenda with the Committee and a copy is on file with the Clerk's office, discussion occurred. Starkey also gave a Budget update and shared a report with the Committee

After discussion it was moved by Bock and seconded by Harpst that the Thursday before the meeting is a reasonable amount of time for Public Notice. Absent: Stanley Brodine. Upon vote, the motion passed.

**Mileage Claims-**

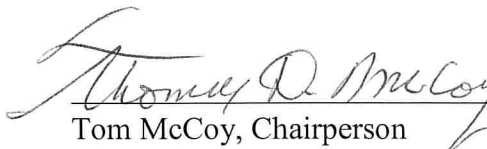
The Committee was informed that mileage claims could be submitted for those committee members requesting reimbursement.

**Public Comment Period/ Benefits Questions and Answers-**

Chairperson McCoy stated that he would like to see more communication between the government of the City, State and County in regards to the needs of local veterans. All agreed. No one else addressed the Committee.

**Adjournment-** Chairperson McCoy adjourned the meeting at 4:30 P.M. until Tuesday, May 14, 2024 at 4:00 P.M.

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Tom McCoy, Chairperson  
Buffalo County Veterans Service Committee

4-12-24  
Date

**From:** [Matthew Starkey](#)  
**To:** [Matthew Starkey](#)  
**Subject:** FW: LB1300 - NG who served on active duty for training only  
**Date:** Friday, May 3, 2024 8:17:01 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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**From:** Bennett, Levi <Levi.Bennett@nebraska.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 5:30 PM  
**Subject:** FW: LB1300 - NG who served on active duty for training only

Good afternoon,

As many of you are aware [LB1300 \(Slip Law\)](#) passed and was signed by the Governor. LB1300 provides eligibility for ***peacetime veterans to be eligible for County Veteran Aid (CVA) and for Nebraska National Guard members (and spouses/surviving spouses) who served on active duty for training only*** (no active duty other than training is required), both are effective three calendar months from the adjournment of this legislative session. Below are the excerpts from the Slip Law with edits/changes in bold.

(page11) **Sec. 45.** Section 80-102, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read: 80-102 (1)(a) The county veterans service committee shall meet at least once each year or on call of the chairperson or of any three members of the committee. It shall determine the amount it considers necessary for providing aid, including food, shelter, fuel, wearing apparel, medical or surgical aid, or funeral expenses, for the purposes identified in subdivisions (b) and (c) of this subsection. The county veterans service committee shall certify the amount so determined to the county board, which amount shall be reviewed and considered by the county board in making a levy for an aid fund. (b) The county veterans service committee shall determine the amount of aid described in subdivision (a) of this subsection for persons who are in need of the aid and who: (i) Served in the armed forces of the United States ~~during a period of war as defined in section 80-401.01 or during a period of actual hostilities in any war or conflict in which the United States Government was engaged prior to April 6, 1917;~~

(page12) **Sec. 47.** Section 80-316, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read: 80-316 (1) The department shall provide domiciliary and nursing home care and subsistence to: (a) All persons who **either** served on active duty in the armed forces of the United States other than active duty for training **or served on active duty for training in the Nebraska National Guard** and who were discharged or otherwise separated with a characterization of honorable or general (under honorable conditions) if, at the time of making an application for admission to one of the Nebraska veterans homes:

(page13) Sec. 50. Sections 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, **45, 46, 47, 48, and 53 of**

this act become operative three calendar months after the adjournment of this legislative session. The other sections of this act become operative on their effective date. Sec. 51. If any section in this act or any part of any section is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the declaration shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of the remaining portions. Sec. 52. Original section 81-830, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is repealed. Sec. 53. Original sections 14-137, 14-211, 14-217.02, 14-2104, 15-309, 19-412, 19-616, 23-1114, 23-1114.07, 70-624.02, 80-102, and 81-503, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and sections 80-104 and 80-316, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, are repealed. Sec. 54. Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect when passed and approved according to law.

Respectfully,

Levi E. Bennett,  
*Deputy Director*

**Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs**

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## LEGISLATIVE BILL 1300

Approved by the Governor April 16, 2024

Introduced by Bostar, 29; Brewer, 43; Ballard, 21; at the request of the Governor.

A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to law; to amend sections 14-137, 14-211, 14-217.02, 14-2104, 15-309, 19-412, 19-616, 23-1114, 23-1114.07, 70-624.02, 80-102, 81-503, and 81-830, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and sections 80-104 and 80-316, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022; to adopt the Pacific Conflict Stress Test Act, the Foreign Adversary Contracting Prohibition Act, the Nebraska Nonprofit Security Grant Program Act, and the Wildland Fire Response Act; to define terms; to provide security requirements for chemical facilities; to provide for preemption; to create the Commission on Asian American Affairs and provide for its membership, powers, duties, and compensation; to change provisions relating to salaries of governing bodies and require approval of registered voters for increases; to change provisions relating to county veterans service committees and certain veterans aid programs; to provide duties for the State Fire Marshal and Homeland Security Policy Group; to harmonize provisions; to provide operative dates; to provide severability; to repeal the original sections; and to declare an emergency.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Sections 1 to 6 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the Pacific Conflict Stress Test Act.

Sec. 2. The purpose of the Pacific Conflict Stress Test Act is to prepare and secure the State of Nebraska in order to minimize the disruptive impact of a potential conflict precipitated by foreign adversaries against allies, democratic countries, and the United States Armed Forces in the Pacific theater.

Sec. 3. For purposes of the Pacific Conflict Stress Test Act:

(1) Critical infrastructure means systems and assets, whether physical or virtual, so vital to this state or the United States that the incapacity or destruction of such systems and assets would have a debilitating impact on state or national security, state or national economic security, state or national public health, or any combination of such matters. Critical infrastructure may be publicly or privately owned and includes, but is not limited to:

(a) Fossil fuel production, storage, or delivery systems;

(b) Water supply, refinement, storage, or delivery systems;

(c) Telecommunications networks;

(d) Electrical power delivery systems, including power generation, transmission, and distribution systems;

(e) Emergency services; and

(f) Transportation systems and services;

(2) Critical procurement means those acquisitions made by the state or any agency of the state that are critical to the proper functioning of critical infrastructure or to the health, safety, or security of the State of Nebraska or the United States;

(3) Divestment means the sale, forfeiture, or otherwise contractual end of any current or planned ownership or control of assets;

(4) Investment means any transfer of funds into any active or passive, direct or indirect, structure which seeks to generate revenue or accomplish any other gain, including nonmonetary gains;

(5)(a) Pacific conflict means a declared war or armed conflict between the United States or any of its allies and another nation that occurs in the land, sea, or air area of the Pacific Ocean and threatens or could reasonably escalate to threaten the supply chains, critical infrastructure, safety, or security of the State of Nebraska or the United States.

(b) Pacific conflict includes a serious deterioration of diplomatic ties or economic engagement between the United States or its allies and another nation that threatens the status quo of Pacific trade, travel, and military operations or exercises;

(6)(a) State-managed fund means any short-term or long-term investment structure that is state-managed, state-run, state-controlled, or otherwise overseen by the State of Nebraska, a state agency, a political subdivision of this state, or any agency controlled by such a political subdivision. This subdivision shall apply only to any fund that is subject to the purview or direction of the state or applicable political subdivision and is populated, wholly or in part, with state funds, including, but not limited to, any such fund managed by a third-party entity, such as a fiduciary.

(b) State-managed fund includes, but is not limited to, public pension funds, public retirement funds, or other state-sponsored funds, that are sponsored, maintained, or contributed to or required to be contributed to by this state or any subsidiary of the state;

(7) State supply chain means the end-to-end process for shipping goods, purchased by the state, to the State of Nebraska, beginning at the point of

origin through a point or points of distribution to the destination; and

(8) State vendor supply chain means the end-to-end process for shipping goods, purchased by the state from state vendors, to the vendors, beginning at the point of origin through a point or points of distribution to the destination.

Sec. 4. (1) The Department of Administrative Services shall conduct a review of critical procurements purchased or supplied through a state supply chain or state vendor supply chain and produce a report, which shall be electronically submitted using a secure method to the Governor by November 1, 2024.

(2) The report shall:

(a) Summarize the critical procurements produced in or by a foreign adversary, a state-owned enterprise of a foreign adversary, a company domiciled within a foreign adversary, or a company owned by a company domiciled within a foreign adversary;

(b) Summarize the critical procurements manufactured in countries or by companies at risk of disruption in the event of a Pacific conflict;

(c) Summarize the critical procurements sourced from any country or company which utilizes Pacific supply chain processes at risk of disruption in the event of a Pacific conflict;

(d) Assess the difficulty in identifying potential alternative sourcing, if relevant; and

(e) Assess the level of risk to the State of Nebraska associated with such a disruption in sourcing for each procurement that is threatened in the event of a Pacific conflict.

(3) The Department of Administrative Services may contract with a private consultant to assist with the review and report required under this section, and such contract need not be competitively bid.

(4) Information contained in the report required under this section is confidential. Unauthorized public disclosure of such confidential information is a Class III misdemeanor.

Sec. 5. (1) The Nebraska Investment Council shall conduct an audit of all state-managed funds and produce a report, which shall be electronically submitted using a secure method to the Committee on Pacific Conflict created under section 6 of this act and the Governor within one hundred eighty days after the operative date of this section.

(2) The report shall:

(a) Summarize the investments at risk of substantially losing value or being frozen, seized, or appropriated by foreign adversaries in the event of a Pacific conflict;

(b) Summarize the investments in any arms industry of a foreign adversary;

(c) Summarize the investments in state-owned enterprises of a foreign adversary;

(d) Summarize the investments in companies domiciled within a foreign adversary or owned by a company domiciled within a foreign adversary; and

(e) Recommend strategies for the immediate and complete divestment of the assets described in subdivisions (a) through (d) of this subsection.

(3) Information contained in the report required under this section is confidential. Unauthorized public disclosure of such confidential information is a Class III misdemeanor.

Sec. 6. (1) It shall be the policy of the State of Nebraska to:

(a) Support the civilian and military command of the United States and its efforts to promote and maintain prosperity, peace, and security for America and its allies;

(b) Enhance the defensive posture of this state so as to protect state citizens and assets and to contribute to the broader defensive posture of the United States by reducing security vulnerabilities within this state; and

(c) Exercise foresight and make reasonable preparations for a potential regional or global conflict centered on the Pacific theater which could involve attacks upon the United States and its allies in the Pacific theater, which could involve asymmetrical attacks on the American homeland, and which could cause the disruption or complete severing of supply chains between this state and its vendors and the People's Republic of China, the Republic of China, or other countries in the Pacific theater.

(2) The Committee on Pacific Conflict is hereby created. The committee shall consist of the following seven voting members:

(a) The Director of State Homeland Security, appointed pursuant to section 81-830, who shall serve as chairperson of the committee;

(b) The Director of Administrative Services;

(c) The state investment officer;

(d) The Adjutant General; and

(e) Three individuals with applicable knowledge of the threats posed to this state in the event of a Pacific conflict, including at least one individual who represents an entity that is responsible for the operation and maintenance of critical infrastructure in this state. Such individuals shall be appointed by the Governor.

(3) The committee shall also include four members of the Legislature, to be appointed by the Executive Board of the Legislative Council. The legislative members shall be nonvoting members of the committee.

(4) Appointments to the committee shall be made within sixty days after the operative date of this section.

(5) The committee shall be authorized for an initial period of three years.

(6) The first meeting of the committee shall be held within ninety days after the operative date of this section.

(7) The committee shall meet no less than once every three months. Additional meetings may be called at the will of the majority of the voting members of the committee, and emergency meetings may be called at the will of the chairperson of the committee or the Governor. In the interest of state and national security, meetings of the committee shall not be subject to the Open Meetings Act and the records and documents of the committee shall not be considered public records for purposes of sections 84-712 to 84-712.09.

(8) At the discretion of the committee, an advisory board may be established and subject matter experts may be consulted to provide expertise or collaborative research support.

(9) The committee is authorized to liaise with relevant federal government authorities, authorities from other state governments, and experts from research institutions for the purpose of obtaining information that is useful for the committee's work.

(10) The committee is authorized to produce policy recommendations for the State of Nebraska.

(11) The committee is authorized to conduct secure hearings or briefings with critical infrastructure providers for the purpose of understanding the threats, risks, and vulnerabilities posed to critical infrastructure in the event of a Pacific conflict, including potential mitigation or emergency response strategies.

(12) The Governor shall annually produce and publish a state threat assessment no later than the day prior to the annual address made to the Legislature by the Governor. The annual state threat assessment shall provide an overview of the substantial threats to state or national security, state or national economic security, state or national public health, or any combination of such matters, occurring within and threatening the State of Nebraska to the extent such information can be provided and stored in a manner that meets national security standards. The state threat assessment shall include summary nonconfidential findings of the Committee on the Pacific Conflict. Such summary nonconfidential findings shall include no information that would create any risk to state critical infrastructure or other sensitive state assets.

(13) The committee may, at the discretion of the committee and upon an affirmative vote of five of the committee's seven voting members, produce a confidential report that shall be kept in a secure location to be determined by the Governor and which shall only be accessed with the approval of the Governor. Such report shall contain information, instructions, and other findings that the committee deems useful to preserve for the elected leaders of the State of Nebraska.

Sec. 7. Sections 7 to 13 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the Foreign Adversary Contracting Prohibition Act.

Sec. 8. The Legislature finds that:

(1) Dealings with commercial entities that are organized under the laws of a foreign adversary or that have their principal place of business within a foreign adversary tend to be less commercially sound because such entities are unusually likely to be acting on noncommercial motivations and carry increased political risk, including from United States federal sanction authorities;

(2) When such a commercial entity is a state-owned entity, it presents heightened concerns and threatens this state's security, including by making accessible to the foreign adversary information about the structure, operations, resources, and infrastructure of the government of this state; and

(3) Dealings with such commercial entities, and especially state-owned entities, threaten the privacy and security of residents of this state, to the extent that they involve the personal information of such residents.

Sec. 9. For purposes of the Foreign Adversary Contracting Prohibition Act:

(1) Company means any sole proprietorship, organization, association, corporation, partnership, joint venture, limited partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability company, or other entity or business association that exists for the purpose of making a profit, including all wholly owned subsidiaries, majority owned subsidiaries, parent companies, or affiliates of any such entity or business association;

(2) Foreign adversary means a foreign adversary as determined pursuant to 15 C.F.R. 7.4;

(3) Owned in whole or in part means:

(a) For a publicly traded company, any share of ownership that entails the ability to direct or influence the operations of the company, the ability to appoint or discharge any board members, officers, or directors, or any other rights beyond those available to a retail investor holding an equivalent share of ownership; and

(b) For a privately held company, any share of ownership;

(4) Public entity means the state or any department, agency, commission, or other body of state government, including publicly funded institutions of higher education, any political subdivision of the state, and any other public or private agency, person, partnership, corporation, or business entity acting on behalf of any such public entity;

(5) Scrutinized company means:

(a) Any company organized under the laws of a foreign adversary or having its principal place of business within a foreign adversary, and any subsidiary of any such company;

(b) Any company owned in whole or in part or operated by the government of

a foreign adversary, an entity controlled by the government of a foreign adversary, or any subsidiary or parent of any such company; or

(c) Any company that sells to a public entity a final technology-related product or service that originates with a company described in subdivision (5) (a) or (b) of this section without incorporating that product or service into another final product or service; and

(6) Technology-related product or service means a product or service used for information systems, surveillance, light detection and ranging, or communications.

Sec. 10. A scrutinized company shall not bid on, submit a proposal for, or enter into, directly or indirectly through a third party, any contract or contract renewal with any public entity for any technology-related product or service.

Sec. 11. A public entity shall require a company that submits a bid or proposal or enters into any contract or contract renewal with any public entity for any technology-related product or service to certify:

(1) That the company is not a scrutinized company;

(2) That the company will not subcontract with any scrutinized company for any aspect of performance of the contemplated contract; and

(3) That any products or services to be provided do not originate with a scrutinized company.

Sec. 12. (1) No public entity shall enter into any contract or contract renewal that would result in any state or local government funds being transferred:

(a) To a scrutinized company in connection with any technology-related product or service; or

(b) To any company in connection with any technology-related product or service that originates with a scrutinized company.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, a public entity may enter into a contract for goods manufactured by a scrutinized company if:

(a)(i) There is no other reasonable option for procuring such good;

(ii) The contract is preapproved by the Department of Administrative Services; and

(iii) Not procuring such good would pose a greater threat to the state than the threat associated with the good itself; or

(b) The purchasing entity is an electric supplier that is not out of compliance with the Critical Infrastructure Protection requirements issued by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation.

Sec. 13. (1) Any contract entered into in violation of the Foreign Adversary Contracting Prohibition Act shall be null and void.

(2) Any scrutinized company that violates section 10 of this act or that violates the certification provided pursuant to section 11 of this act:

(a) Shall be liable for a civil penalty in an amount equal to the highest of the following three amounts:

(i) Two hundred fifty thousand dollars;

(ii) Twice the amount of the contract for which a bid or proposal was submitted; or

(iii) The amount of any losses suffered by the public entity as a result of such violation; and

(b) Shall be ineligible to enter into any contract with any public entity for a period of five years.

(3) The Attorney General may bring an action in any court of competent jurisdiction against any person that violates the Foreign Adversary Contracting Prohibition Act.

(4) If a public entity believes that a company has violated the certification provided pursuant to section 11 of this act, the public entity shall give such company notice of the alleged violation. The company shall then have sixty days to respond to the notice. The public entity shall make a final determination on whether a violation of such certification has occurred within sixty days after receipt of the response from the company. If the public entity determines that a violation has occurred, the public entity may refer the matter to the Attorney General.

(5) Any individual may act as a whistleblower and report suspected violations of section 10 of this act or suspected violations of the certification provided pursuant to section 11 of this act to the Attorney General. If the reported violation results in a civil penalty under this section, the whistleblower shall be entitled to a reward equal to thirty percent of the civil penalty assessed.

Sec. 14. Sections 14 to 19 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the Nebraska Nonprofit Security Grant Program Act.

Sec. 15. For purposes of the Nebraska Nonprofit Security Grant Program Act:

(1) Agency means the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency;

(2) Equipment means security equipment installed on real property, including any building or improvement, that is owned or leased by the nonprofit organization, including reinforced doors and gates, perimeter lighting, exterior and interior door locking systems, alarm systems, camera-based security systems, access-control systems, blast-resistant film for windows or shatter-resistant glass, lock-down systems, public-address systems, high-intensity lighting and alarms, and inspection and screening systems;

(3) Planning means those activities that are related to protecting a facility, the people within the facility, and the people with access to the facility and providing for their functional needs. The term includes developing



and enhancing a nonprofit organization's security plans and protocols, emergency contingency plans, and evacuation or shelter-in-place plans and the materials that are required to conduct planning activities;

(4) Program means the Nebraska Nonprofit Security Grant Program created in section 16 of this act;

(5)(a) Qualified nonprofit organization means an organization that:

(i) Is exempt from federal income taxes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, including any nonprofit organization created exclusively for religious purposes;

(ii) Is at high risk of a terrorist attack or at risk for hate crimes or attacks because of the nonprofit organization's ideology, beliefs, or mission; and

(iii)(A) Has applied for a federal nonprofit security grant and has not received funding for the same year the applicant is applying for a state grant under the program;

(B) Has been unable to apply for a federal nonprofit security grant; or

(C) Has a documented barrier or hardship related to the application for a federal nonprofit security grant; and

(b) Qualified nonprofit organization does not include:

(i) A hospital as defined in section 71-419;

(ii) A rural emergency hospital as defined in section 71-428.01; or

(iii) An institution of postsecondary education;

(6) Security personnel includes personnel who are contracted with or employed by the nonprofit organization; and

(7) Training means training that addresses a specific security threat or vulnerability. The term includes:

(a) Attendance and travel fees for training the nonprofit organization's staff or members;

(b) Security training and exercises or drills, including active shooter and shelter-in-place training, for the nonprofit organization's staff, members, and visitors; and

(c) Training-related expenses, including supplies, materials, and training equipment.

Sec. 16. (1) The Nebraska Nonprofit Security Grant Program is created. The program shall be administered by the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.

(2) In order to receive a grant under the program, a qualified nonprofit organization shall submit an application to the agency on a form prescribed by the agency. The agency may accept an application submitted to the federal government for a federal nonprofit security grant instead of the state application prescribed by the agency.

(3) Grants may be issued to qualified nonprofit organizations to reimburse such organizations for the costs of target hardening and other safety and security projects intended to mitigate vulnerabilities identified in a vulnerability assessment completed by the qualified nonprofit organization or by a vendor with whom the qualified nonprofit organization has contracted, including projects involving:

(a) Planning;

(b) Equipment;

(c) Training; or

(d) Security personnel.

(4) The agency may prescribe requirements for vulnerability assessments and may allow other target hardening and safety and security projects to qualify for grant funding in addition to those activities described in subsection (3) of this section.

(5) The agency may begin issuing grants under the program on January 1, 2025.

(6) The agency shall establish a working group of stakeholders to review and evaluate applications. The working group shall make recommendations on funding decisions and shall provide such recommendations to the agency.

(7) The agency may award up to five hundred thousand dollars in grants per year. A qualified nonprofit organization shall not receive more than fifty thousand dollars in grants in any one year.

(8) A qualified nonprofit organization shall not be eligible for a grant under the program if:

(a) The qualified nonprofit organization applied for a grant under the program and received the full amount of its funding request in the previous year; or

(b) The qualified nonprofit organization received a federal nonprofit security grant within the previous five years.

Sec. 17. A qualified nonprofit organization shall not use grant funds to purchase equipment for security personnel.

Sec. 18. It is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate five hundred thousand dollars from the General Fund for each of fiscal years 2024-25 through 2028-29 to carry out the Nebraska Nonprofit Security Grant Program Act.

Sec. 19. The agency may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the Nebraska Nonprofit Security Grant Program Act.

Sec. 20. Sections 20 to 26 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the Wildland Fire Response Act.

Sec. 21. (1) The Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team is created and for administrative purposes is part of the office of the State Fire Marshal.

(2) The Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team may provide assistance or guidance to any individual who or entity that is attempting to prevent,

control, suppress, or otherwise mitigate a wildland fire, as determined by the State Fire Marshal or his or her designee. Such assistance or guidance may be provided regardless of a state of emergency proclamation issued by the Governor relating to a wildland fire incident.

(3) Pursuant to the Emergency Management Act, the Adjutant General and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency may provide assistance to the Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team following a state of emergency proclamation issued by the Governor relating to a wildland fire incident.

Sec. 22. The State Fire Marshal shall serve as the coordinator of the Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team and shall:

(1) Establish squads within the team and select a squad leader and squad members for each squad. The State Fire Marshal may consult with the State Forester when establishing a squad, selecting a squad leader, or selecting a squad member. The State Fire Marshal is limited to selecting squad leaders and squad members from employees of the State Fire Marshal and employees of the Nebraska Forest Service;

(2) Maintain a roster of all individuals who are a part of the Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team; and

(3) Establish standards for the operation, training, equipment, and administration of the Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team. It is the intent of the Legislature that such standards should comply with the standards established by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group or its successor.

Sec. 23. (1) A squad leader or squad member of the Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team shall have the powers, duties, rights, privileges, and immunities and receive the compensation incidental to employment of such leader or member by the State Fire Marshal or the Nebraska Forest Service.

(2) Each squad leader is responsible for the organization, administration, and operation of the squad to which the squad leader is assigned.

(3) While operating under the Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team, each squad leader and squad member are subject to the operational control of the State Fire Marshal.

(4) While operating under the Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team, each squad member assigned to a wildland fire incident is subject to the operational control of the squad leader assigned to such wildland fire incident.

Sec. 24. (1) The office of the State Fire Marshal is responsible for paying the compensation of any squad leader or squad member who is an employee of the State Fire Marshal while such squad leader or squad member is assigned to a wildland fire incident, including any overtime worked by such squad leader or squad member.

(2) The Nebraska Forest Service is responsible for paying the compensation of any squad leader or squad member who is an employee of the Nebraska Forest Service while such squad leader or squad member is assigned to a wildland fire incident, including any overtime worked by such squad leader or squad member.

(3) Each squad leader and squad member shall be reimbursed as provided in sections 81-1174 to 81-1177 for expenses incurred as a result of being assigned to a wildland fire incident.

(4) The State Fire Marshal and the Nebraska Forest Service shall be responsible for requesting adequate appropriations each fiscal year to pay the expenses of any employee who is selected to be a squad leader or squad member of the Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team, including expenses predicted to be incurred pursuant to this section and section 25 of this act.

Sec. 25. The Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team may rent equipment that is needed to respond to a wildland fire incident and shall pay a reasonable rental fee for the use of such equipment. The Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team is responsible for any loss or damage to the rented equipment caused due to the negligent use or misuse of such rented equipment by the Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team.

Sec. 26. The State Fire Marshal may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the Wildland Fire Response Act.

Sec. 27. (1) For purposes of this section:

(a) Chemical facility has the same meaning as in 6 C.F.R. 27.105;

(b) Federal agency means the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency of the United States Department of Homeland Security;

(c) Federal standards means the federal Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards under 6 C.F.R. part 27, as such standards existed on July 1, 2023; and

(d) Program means the voluntary and publicly available chemical security program provided by the federal agency as an alternative to the federal standards.

(2) The Legislature finds that:

(a) The federal standards were created after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks to identify and regulate high-risk chemical facilities to ensure security measures are in place to reduce the risk of certain dangerous chemicals being weaponized by terrorists;

(b) The United States Congress allowed the statutory authority for continuing regulation of the federal standards to expire on July 27, 2023;

(c) With the expiration of such statutory authority and without reauthorization by Congress, the federal agency can no longer enforce compliance with the federal standards;

(d) The lack of enforcement means that chemical facilities will no longer be required to report their chemicals of interest, submit to inspections, provide compliance assistance, or implement any security plan or program; and

(e) The federal agency has encouraged chemical facilities to maintain security measures and offers a voluntary and publicly available alternative chemical security program that provides facilities that possess dangerous chemicals no-cost services and tools to identify risks and improve chemical security.

(3) Beginning on the operative date of this section, a chemical facility shall utilize the federal agency's program if such chemical facility was required on or before July 27, 2023, to have a chemical facility security program pursuant to 6 C.F.R. 27.200 et seq., as such regulations existed on such date.

(4) The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Environment and Energy shall publish the requirements of this section and post a link to the program on their agency websites.

(5) This section is preempted when the federal standards are in effect if Congress reauthorizes such federal standards.

Sec. 28. (1) There is hereby established the Commission on Asian American Affairs. For purposes of sections 28 to 34 of this act, commission means the Commission on Asian American Affairs.

(2) The commission shall consist of fourteen members who shall be of Asian ancestry. Members of the commission shall be appointed by the Governor. The commission may have such nonvoting, ex officio members as shall be appointed by the commission and who need not be of Asian ancestry. The commission shall elect one of its members as chairperson.

(3) Members of the commission shall serve four-year terms or for the unexpired term in the event of a vacancy. As the terms of the voting members expire, their successors shall be appointed by the Governor from a panel of nominees submitted by the public. An appointment for an unexpired term shall follow the same procedure as for initial and subsequent appointments. Voting members shall be eligible for reappointment.

Sec. 29. The purpose of the commission is to join representatives of Asian Americans in Nebraska to do all things which the commission may determine to enhance the cause of Asian American rights and to develop solutions to problems common to all Asian Americans residing in Nebraska.

Sec. 30. The commission may receive and administer funds from state, federal, and other sources and may employ and fix the compensation of an executive director of its own choosing who shall be an Asian American person and a legal resident of the State of Nebraska. An office for the executive director shall be provided.

Sec. 31. The functions of the commission are to:

(1) Promote state and federal legislation beneficial to the Asian American community in Nebraska;

(2) Coordinate programs relating to the Asian American community in Nebraska regarding housing, education, welfare, medical and dental care, employment, economic development, law and order, and related problems;

(3) Work with other state and federal government agencies and federal and state elected officials in the development of programs in the areas described in subdivision (2) of this section;

(4) Keep the Governor's office apprised of the status of affairs in the Asian American community in Nebraska;

(5) Administer sections 28 to 34 of this act;

(6) Provide the public with information and education relevant to Asian American affairs in Nebraska; and

(7) Develop programs to encourage the total involvement of Asian American people in activities for the common benefit of the Asian American community.

Sec. 32. The members of the commission shall each receive fifty dollars for each day spent in the performance of their duties and shall receive reimbursement for any expenses as provided in sections 81-1174 to 81-1177.

Sec. 33. (1) The commission shall meet at least once every calendar quarter. Meetings shall be held in January, April, July, and October. Special meetings may be called at the request of eight voting members. Eight voting members of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

(2) The office of any member of the commission who, without a valid excuse, fails to attend quarterly or special meetings shall be vacant.

Sec. 34. (1) For purposes of administration of the commission during the interim between regular quarterly meetings, there is hereby established an executive board of the Commission on Asian American Affairs consisting of the chairperson of the commission and four members of the commission.

(2) The executive board may enter into contracts for consultation services, supplies, and equipment, if the amount contracted for does not exceed two thousand dollars in any one contract, and may supervise all programs relating to the affairs of Asian American people residing in Nebraska instituted and authorized by the commission.

Sec. 35. Section 14-137, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

14-137 The style of ordinances of a city of the metropolitan class shall be as follows: Be it ordained by the city council of the city of ..... . All ordinances of the city shall be passed pursuant to such rules and regulations as the city council may prescribe. Upon the passage of all ordinances the yeas and nays shall be recorded in the minutes of the city council, and a majority of the votes of all the members of the city council shall be necessary for passage. No ordinance shall be passed within a week after its introduction, except the general appropriation ordinances for

salaries and wages other than salaries of the mayor and city council members. Ordinances of a general or permanent nature shall be read by title on three different days unless three-fourths of the city council vote to suspend this requirement, except that such requirement shall not be suspended (1) for any ordinance for the annexation of territory or the redrawing of boundaries for city council election districts or wards or (2) as otherwise provided by law.

Sec. 36. Section 14-211, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

14-211 (1)(a) No ordinance passed by the city council of a city of the metropolitan class, except when otherwise required by the general laws of the state, by other provisions of sections 14-201 to 14-229, or as provided in subdivision (1)(b) of this section, shall go into effect before fifteen days from the time of its final passage.

(b) An ordinance passed by the city council of a city of the metropolitan class may take effect sooner than fifteen days from the time of its final passage if the ordinance is:

(i) For the appropriation of money to pay the salary of officers or employees of the city other than salaries of the mayor and city council members; or

(ii) An emergency ordinance that is for the preservation of the public peace, health, or safety and that contains a statement of such emergency.

(2)(a) If during such fifteen days a petition, signed and verified as provided in this section by electors of the city equal in number to at least fifteen percent of the highest number of votes cast for any city council member at the last preceding general city election, protesting against the passage of such ordinance, shall be presented to the city council, then such ordinance shall be suspended from going into operation, and it shall be the duty of the city council to reconsider such ordinance.

(b) If such ordinance is not repealed by the city council, then the city council shall proceed to submit to the voters such ordinance at a special election to be called for such purpose or at a general city election, and such ordinance shall not go into effect or become operative unless a majority of the qualified electors voting on such ordinance shall vote in favor of the question.

(3) Such petition shall be in all respects in accordance with the provisions of section 14-212 relating to signatures, verification, inspection, and certification.

Sec. 37. Section 14-217.02, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

14-217.02 (1) Vacancies in the office of mayor or city council in a city of the metropolitan class shall be filled as provided in section 32-568.

(2)(a) Salaries of the mayor and members of the city council shall be determined by ordinance subject to the requirements in this section. Except as provided in subdivision (b) of this subsection, no such salary shall be increased by more than the average percentage change in the unadjusted Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Federal Bureau for Labor Statistics for the period since the last salary increase plus one percent. No such salary shall be increased more than once every two fiscal years. The ordinance may establish the salary for the mayor or the city council members or both. The salary change for the mayor shall not take effect until the end of the term of the mayor in office at the time of the adoption of the ordinance. The salary change for the city council members shall take effect as soon as permitted under Article III, section 19, of the Constitution of Nebraska.

(b) The city council may place the issue on the ballot of whether to increase the salary of the mayor or the city council members or both by more than the amount permitted in subdivision (a) of this subsection for approval by the registered voters of the city. The city council shall determine the percentage of increase and hold a public hearing regarding the increase. If the city council approves the percentage by a vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the city council, the city clerk shall transmit the issue to the election commissioner or county clerk for placement on the ballot at the next statewide general election subject to section 32-559. If the salary change for the mayor is approved by a majority of the voters voting on the issue, the salary change shall take effect at the end of the term of the mayor in office at the time of the election. If the salary change for the city council members is approved by a majority of the voters voting on the issue, the salary change shall take effect as soon as permitted under Article III, section 19, of the Constitution of Nebraska.

Sec. 38. Section 14-2104, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

14-2104 (1) Any vacancy occurring in the board of directors shall be filled for the unexpired term by the remaining members thereof within thirty days after the vacancy occurs. It is the intent and purpose to render the board of directors nonpartisan in character.

(2)(a) ~~(2)~~ The board of directors shall set the salaries of the chairperson and other members of the board of directors as provided in this subsection. The chairperson of the board of directors of a metropolitan utilities district shall be paid, as compensation for his or her services, not to exceed the sum of one thousand two hundred sixty dollars per month as of the operative date of this section. Each of the other members of the board of directors shall be paid, as compensation for his or her services, not to exceed the sum of one thousand one hundred twenty dollars per month as of the operative date of this section.

(b) Subject to subdivision (c) of this subsection, Any adjustments in compensation shall be made only at regular meetings of the board of directors. Except as provided in subdivision (c) of this subsection, no salary shall be increased by more than the average percentage change in the unadjusted Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Federal Bureau for Labor Statistics for the period since the last salary increase plus one percent. The  ~~,~~ and the salaries of the chairperson and other members of such board shall not be increased more often than once every two calendar years in any calendar year.

(c) The board of directors may place the issue on the ballot of whether to increase the salary of the chairperson and other members of such board by more than the percentage amount permitted in subdivision (b) of this subsection at the next statewide general election for approval by the registered voters of the metropolitan utilities district. The board of directors shall determine the percentage of increase and hold a public hearing regarding the increase. If the board of directors approves the percentage by a vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the board of directors, the board of directors shall transmit the issue to the election commissioner or county clerk for placement on the ballot at the next statewide general election subject to section 32-559.

(3) Members of the board of directors may be considered employees of the district for purposes of participation in medical and dental plans of insurance offered to regular employees. The dollar amount of any health insurance premiums paid from the funds of the district for the benefit of a member of the board of directors may be in addition to the amount of compensation authorized to be paid to such director pursuant to this section.

(4) The chairperson and other members of such board of directors shall also be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties.

Sec. 39. Section 15-309, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

15-309 (1) Subject to subsection (2) of this section, the The city council of a city of the primary class shall have the power by ordinance to fix the salaries of the officers and employees of the city and provide by ordinance for the forfeiting of the salary of any officer or employee.

(2)(a) Salaries of the mayor and members of the city council shall be determined by ordinance subject to the requirements in this section. Except as provided in subdivision (b) of this subsection, no such salary shall be increased by more than the average percentage change in the unadjusted Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Federal Bureau for Labor Statistics for the period since the last salary increase plus one percent. No such salary shall be increased more than once every two fiscal years. The ordinance may establish the salary for the mayor or the city council members or both. The salary change for the mayor shall not take effect until the end of the term of the mayor in office at the time of the adoption of the ordinance. The salary change for the city council members shall take effect as soon as permitted under Article III, section 19, of the Constitution of Nebraska.

(b) The city council may place the issue on the ballot of whether to increase the salary of the mayor or the city council members or both by more than the amount permitted in subdivision (a) of this subsection for approval by the registered voters of the city. The city council shall determine the percentage of increase and hold a public hearing regarding the increase. If the city council approves the percentage by a vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the city council, the city clerk shall transmit the issue to the election commissioner or county clerk for placement on the ballot at the next statewide general election subject to section 32-559. If the salary change for the mayor is approved by a majority of the voters voting on the issue, the salary change shall take effect at the end of the term of the mayor in office at the time of the election. If the salary change for the city council members is approved by a majority of the voters voting on the issue, the salary change shall take effect as soon as permitted under Article III, section 19, of the Constitution of Nebraska.

Sec. 40. Section 19-412, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

19-412 (1)(a) ~~(1)~~ The officers and employees of a city under the commission plan of government shall receive such compensation as the mayor and city council shall fix by ordinance subject to the requirements in this section. Except as provided in subdivision (b) of this subsection, the salary of the mayor or city council member of a city of the primary or metropolitan class shall not be increased by more than the average percentage change in the unadjusted Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Federal Bureau for Labor Statistics for the period since the last salary increase plus one percent. No such salary shall be increased more than once every two fiscal years.

(b) The city council of a city of the metropolitan or primary class may place the issue on the ballot of whether to increase the salary of the mayor or the city council members or both by more than the amount permitted in subdivision (a) of this subsection for approval by the registered voters of the city. The city council shall determine the percentage of increase and hold a public hearing regarding the increase. If the city council approves the percentage by a vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the city council, the city clerk shall transmit the issue to the election commissioner or county clerk for placement on the ballot at the next statewide general election subject to section 32-559.

(2) The salary of any elective officer in a city under the commission plan of government shall not be increased or diminished during the term for which he or she was elected, except that when there are officers elected to a city council, board, or commission having more than one member and the terms of one or more members commence and end at different times, the compensation of all members of such city council, board, or commission may be increased or diminished at the beginning of the full term of any member thereof. No person who has resigned or vacated any office shall be eligible to be elected or appointed to such office during the time for which he or she was elected when, during the same time, the salary has been increased.

(3) The salary or compensation of all other officers or employees of a city under the commission plan of government shall be determined when they are appointed or elected by the city council, board, or commission and shall be payable at such times or for such periods as the city council, board, or commission shall determine.

Sec. 41. Section 19-616, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

19-616 (1) The annual compensation of the mayor and city council members in cities under the city manager plan of government shall be payable quarterly in equal installments and shall be fixed by the city council subject to subsection (2) of this section. The salary of any appointive or elective officer shall not be increased or diminished during the term for which such officer was elected or appointed, except that when there are officers elected or appointed to the city council or a board or commission having more than one member and the terms of one or more members commence and end at different times, the compensation of all members of such city council, board, or commission may be increased or diminished at the beginning of the full term of any member thereof. No person who has resigned or vacated any office shall be eligible to be elected or appointed to such office during the time for which he or she was elected or appointed when, during the same time, the salary has been increased. For each absence from regular meetings of the city council, unless authorized by a two-thirds vote of all members of the city council, there shall be deducted a sum equal to two percent of such annual salary.

(2)(a) The salaries of the mayor and city council members of a city of the primary class shall be established by ordinance subject to the requirements in this section. Except as provided in subdivision (b) of this subsection, no such salary shall be increased by more than the average percentage change in the unadjusted Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Federal Bureau for Labor Statistics for the period since the last salary increase plus one percent. No such salary shall be increased more than once every two fiscal years. The ordinance may establish the salary for the mayor or the city council members or both.

(b) The city council may place the issue on the ballot of whether to increase the salary of the mayor or the city council members or both by more than the amount permitted in subdivision (a) of this subsection for approval by the registered voters of the city. The city council shall determine the percentage of increase and hold a public hearing regarding the increase. If the city council approves the percentage by a vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the city council, the city clerk shall transmit the issue to the election commissioner or county clerk for placement on the ballot at the next statewide general election subject to section 32-559.

Sec. 42. Section 23-1114, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

23-1114 (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (4) of this section, the The salaries of all elected officers of the county shall be fixed by the county board prior to January 15 of the year in which a general election will be held for the respective offices.

(2) The salaries of all deputies in the offices of the elected officers and appointive veterans service officers of the county shall be fixed by the county board at such times as necessity may require.

(3) The county board may make payments that include, but are not limited to, salaries described in this section or reimbursable expenses by electronic funds transfer or a similar means of direct deposit.

(4)(a) The salaries of the members of the county board shall be established by resolution by the members of the county board subject to the requirements in this section. Except as provided in subdivision (b) of this subsection, no such salary shall be increased by more than the cumulative change in the unadjusted Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Federal Bureau for Labor Statistics for the period since the last salary increase plus one percent. No such salary shall be increased more than once every two fiscal years.

(b) The county board may place the issue on the ballot of whether to increase the salary of the members of the county board by more than the amount permitted in subdivision (a) of this subsection for approval by the registered voters of the county. The county board shall determine the percentage of increase and hold a public hearing regarding the increase. If the county board approves the percentage by a vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the county board, the county board shall transmit the issue to the election commissioner or county clerk for placement on the ballot at the next statewide general election subject to section 32-559.

Sec. 43. Section 23-1114.07, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

23-1114.07 Except for members Members of the county board, salaries of

~~county shall set their own annual salary to be paid out of the general fund. Salaries of other officers, including appointive full-time veterans service officers, in counties of Class 6 or 7 shall be established by the county board, except that the county assessor in counties of Class 7 shall receive a minimum annual salary of twenty thousand dollars, to be paid periodically as other county employees out of the general fund.~~

Sec. 44. Section 70-624.02, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

70-624.02 The members of the board of directors shall be paid their actual expenses, while engaged in the business of the district under the authority of the board of directors, and, for their services, such compensation as shall be fixed by the board of directors.

The boards of directors of those districts with gross revenue of less than ~~five hundred forty~~ million dollars may fix compensation at not to exceed ~~thirteen thousand four hundred forty six thousand seven hundred twenty~~ dollars per year as to all members except the president and not exceeding fifteen thousand one hundred twenty seven thousand five hundred sixty dollars a year as to the president.

The boards of directors of those districts with gross revenue of five hundred forty million dollars or more may fix compensation at not to exceed ~~twenty-six thousand eight hundred eighty thirteen thousand four hundred forty~~ dollars per year as to all members except the president or chairperson of the board and not exceeding thirty thousand two hundred forty fifteen thousand one hundred twenty dollars per year as to the president or chairperson of the board. All salaries and compensation shall be obligations against and be paid solely from the revenue of the district.

No director shall receive any other compensation from the district, except as provided in this section, during the term for which he or she was elected or appointed or in the year following the expiration of his or her term, and resignation from such board of directors shall not be construed as the termination of the term of office for which he or she was elected or appointed.

A member of the board of directors of a public power district organized under the laws of this state shall not be limited to service on the board of directors in the district in which he or she has been elected so as to preclude service in similar positions of trust on a state, regional, or national level which are the result of his or her membership as a director on such board. For time expended in his or her duties in such position of trust, the director shall not be limited to any existing provisions of law of this state relating to payment of per diem for services as a member of such board of directors, but shall be entitled to receive such additional compensation as may be provided for such service, regardless of the fact that such compensation may be paid from funds to which his or her district has made contributions in the form of dues or otherwise.

Sec. 45. Section 80-102, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

80-102 (1)(a) The county veterans service committee shall meet at least once each year or on call of the chairperson or of any three members of the committee. It shall determine the amount it considers necessary for providing aid, including food, shelter, fuel, wearing apparel, medical or surgical aid, or funeral expenses, for the purposes identified in subdivisions (b) and (c) of this subsection. The county veterans service committee shall certify the amount so determined to the county board, which amount shall be reviewed and considered by the county board in making a levy for an aid fund.

(b) The county veterans service committee shall determine the amount of aid described in subdivision (a) of this subsection for persons who are in need of the aid and who:

(i) ~~Served in the armed forces of the United States during a period of war as defined in section 80-401.01 or during a period of actual hostilities in any war or conflict in which the United States Government was engaged prior to April 6, 1917;~~

(ii) Were discharged or otherwise separated with a characterization of honorable or general (under honorable conditions) or died while in service or as a direct result of that service; and

(iii) Have legal residence in the State of Nebraska for a period of not less than one year and in the county in which application is made for a period of not less than six months.

(c) The county veterans service committee shall determine the amount of aid described in subdivision (a) of this subsection for:

(i) Husbands and wives, surviving spouses, and minor children under eighteen years of age of veterans described in subdivision (b) of this subsection; and

(ii) Payment of expenses of last illness and burial when a veteran described in subdivision (b) of this subsection or a surviving spouse described in subdivision (c)(i) of this subsection passes away leaving no next of kin.

(2) The county board of each county shall annually make such levy or levies as needed to raise the required aid fund referred to in subsection (1) of this section as the county board determines is necessary, not exceeding one cent on each one hundred dollars upon the taxable value of all the taxable property of such county. Any unexpended balance of the aid fund at the end of any fiscal year shall remain in the fund, without reappropriation, for future use. The committee or a majority thereof shall fix the amount to be paid to each claimant, subject to any amounts in the aid fund, and promptly disburse the same to or for the benefit of the claimant. The county clerk shall issue a

warrant to the committee or to the county veterans service officer as directed by the committee upon the county treasurer for such amount as the committee shall from time to time request and as amounts in the aid fund permit. The committee shall at the end of each year make a detailed report of its transactions to the county board. Such reports shall be accompanied with vouchers for all money disbursed.

Sec. 46. Section 80-104, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

80-104 Except for cremated remains disposed of as provided in section 71-1382.01, it shall be the duty of the county veterans service committee to cause to be decently interred the body of any person who has been discharged or otherwise separated with a characterization of honorable or general (under honorable conditions) from any arm of the military or naval service of the United States, ~~has served during a period of war, as defined in section 80-401.01, or during a period of actual hostilities in any war or conflict in which the United States Government was engaged prior to April 6, 1917, and who dies may hereafter die~~ without leaving sufficient means to defray such person's ~~his or her~~ funeral expenses. Such burials should not be made in any cemetery or burial grounds used exclusively for the burial of pauper dead. The committee shall permit the ~~If surviving relatives of the deceased shall desire to conduct the funeral if , they request shall be permitted to do so.~~

Sec. 47. Section 80-316, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

80-316 (1) The department shall provide domiciliary and nursing home care and subsistence to:

(a) All persons who either served on active duty in the armed forces of the United States other than active duty for training or served on active duty for training in the Nebraska National Guard and who were discharged or otherwise separated with a characterization of honorable or general (under honorable conditions) if, at the time of making an application for admission to one of the Nebraska veterans homes:

(i) The applicant has been a bona fide resident of the State of Nebraska for at least two years;

(ii) The applicant has become disabled due to service, old age, or otherwise to an extent that it would prevent such applicant from earning a livelihood; and

(iii) The applicant's income from all sources is such that the applicant would be dependent wholly or partially upon public charities for support or the type of care needed is available only at a state institution;

(b) The spouse of any such person admitted to one of the homes who has attained the age of fifty years and has been married to such member for at least two years before his or her entrance into the home;

(c) Subject to subsection (2) of this section, the surviving spouses and parents of eligible servicemen and servicewomen as defined in subdivision (a) of this subsection who died while in the service of the United States or who have since died of a service-connected disability as determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(d) Subject to subsection (2) of this section, the surviving spouses of eligible servicemen or servicewomen as defined in subdivision (a) of this subsection who have since died.

(2) The surviving spouses and parents referred to in subdivision (1)(c) or (d) of this section shall be eligible for such care and subsistence if, at the time of applying, they:

(a) Have been bona fide residents of the State of Nebraska for at least two years;

(b) Have attained the age of fifty years;

(c) Are unable to earn a livelihood; and

(d) Are dependent wholly or partially upon public charities or the type of care needed is available only at a state institution.

(3) No one admitted to one of the Nebraska veterans homes under conditions enumerated in this section shall have a vested right to continued residence in such home if such person ceases to meet any of the eligibility requirements of this section, except that no person who has been regularly admitted shall be denied continued residence solely because of his or her marriage to a member of one of the homes.

Sec. 48. Section 81-503, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

81-503 (1) The State Fire Marshal may appoint a first assistant fire marshal and such deputies, inspectors, and other persons as in his or her discretion may be necessary to carry into effect sections 81-501.01 to 81-531 and 81-5,151 to 81-5,157, the Nebraska Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1969, the Petroleum Products and Hazardous Substances Storage and Handling Act, the Wildland Fire Response Act, and any other statutory duties imposed upon the State Fire Marshal. He or she may also, at his or her pleasure, remove such first assistant and any of such deputies as he or she may deem advisable. The deputies and inspectors shall perform such duties and have and enjoy all the rights, privileges, and immunities granted by law. The State Fire Marshal may also employ such clerical assistants, office employees, and other persons as he or she may deem advisable and necessary to carry such duties into effect.

(2) The State Fire Marshal, the first assistant fire marshal, each deputy, and each inspector shall wear full uniform when performing statutory duties. The State Fire Marshal shall determine the type of clothing, in relation to the duty being performed, necessary to meet the full uniform requirement.



Sec. 49. Section 81-830, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

81-830 (1) The Office of Homeland Security is created. The Governor shall appoint the Director of State Homeland Security who shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

(2) The purpose of the office is to ensure preparedness by the State of Nebraska in response to or in mitigation of terrorist acts or threats from foreign adversaries. The office shall coordinate efforts regarding domestic security issues with the United States Department of Homeland Security. The Director of State Homeland Security shall serve as the contact between the state and the United States Department of Homeland Security.

(3)(a) The Homeland Security Policy Group is created. The Director of State Homeland Security shall serve as chairperson of the policy group. The policy group is charged with assessing state homeland security risks, threats, and hazards and recommending strategic alternatives and recommending broad courses of action for the development of comprehensive strategies to eliminate or mitigate such risks, threats, and hazards.

(b) The Governor shall appoint other members of the policy group who shall serve at the will of the Governor.

(c) The Executive Board of the Legislative Council shall select one member of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee and one member of the Appropriations Committee of the Legislature to serve as ex officio nonvoting members of the policy group.

(d) ~~(b)~~ The policy group shall report electronically by March 1 of each year to the executive board identifying federal funds sent to the state in support of its preparedness activities and indicating the use of federal funds received by the state for homeland security, including specific amounts allocated to any unit of state or local government and the use to which the unit shall apply the funds.

(e) ~~(c)~~ The policy group shall not be subject to the Open Meetings Act or to sections 84-712 to 84-712.09.

Sec. 50. Sections 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, and 53 of this act become operative three calendar months after the adjournment of this legislative session. The other sections of this act become operative on their effective date.

Sec. 51. If any section in this act or any part of any section is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the declaration shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of the remaining portions.

Sec. 52. Original section 81-830, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is repealed.

Sec. 53. Original sections 14-137, 14-211, 14-217.02, 14-2104, 15-309, 19-412, 19-616, 23-1114, 23-1114.07, 70-624.02, 80-102, and 81-503, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and sections 80-104 and 80-316, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, are repealed.

Sec. 54. Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect when passed and approved according to law.

## M I N U T E S

On October the 25th., 1995 the Buffalo County, Veterans' Service Committee met at the V.F.W. Club, 2215 1st., in Kearney, NE..

At 6:30 we held introductions and welcomed our newest member (Bill Crosier) and his wife (Sharon). We then enjoyed an excellent meal served by the VFW Club staff.

At 7:30 we honored Don Zwink by presenting him with a plaque recognizing his 5 years of service to the Buffalo County, Veterans' Service Committee. Thanks again Don!

At 7:45 our chairman (Rick Musil) called the meeting to order, and led us in the "Pledge of Allegiance". Those present were Chairman Musil, Horner, Wilke, Crosier, and Secretary Williams. Lee Lacey was unable to attend. Don Zwink attended as our guest.

We discussed the need to establish "limits" on the amount of County Veterans' Aid Fund moneys provided to each applicant in an effort to administer the fund in a consistent, fair and equitable manner. The Secretary (Wm. R. Williams) recommended that for simplicity's sake, we adopt the precise monetary amounts specified by the State of Nebraska for the administration of the Nebraska Veterans' Aid Fund, (i.e. a maximum of \$2500.00 on medical bills, a maximum of \$2000.00 on funeral bills, and a maximum on "maintenance items" not to exceed \$2000.00 per month, per applicant for not more than three months because of illness and not more than two months for all other reasons).

After our discussion the Veteran's Service Committee adopted the following policies concerning the administration of County Veteran's Aid:

Maintenance Items (i.e. rent/mortgage, utilities, groceries, clothing, fuel, etc..) - Motion to adopt the \$2000.00 amounts specified by Nebraska Veterans' Aid for "maintenance items",:

- a. One maintenance application per month,
- b. Payment to vendors only,
- c. In the amount of actual allowable bill only,
- d. Not to exceed \$2000.00 per maintenance application,
- e. For a period of not more than *three* months per year in the event that *illness* prevents the applicant from meeting their monthly maintenance obligations,
- f. For a period of not more than *two* months per year for *any and all other reasons*,
- g. Veterans' Service Office staff are given discretion within these limits, but must receive preapproval from the Veterans' Service Committee to exceed these numerical and monetary limits.

\*\*\* Motion by Wilke, Second by Musil, motion carried \*\*\*

**Funeral Bills** - Motion to adopt the \$2000.00 maximum amount specified by Nebraska Veterans Aid for funerals.

- a. Application for Nebraska Veterans' Aid first,
- b. Mutual agreement with Nebraska Veterans' Aid, the funeral director, and family to provide a "respectable funeral" with a metal casket and to keep the expense as close to \$3000.00 as possible, or less,
- c. a maximum of \$2000.00 of County Veterans' Aid payable for all or a portion of remaining funeral bill, after all Nebraska Veterans' Aid and other sources contribute or deny payment.
- d. Veterans' Service Office staff are given discretion within this monetary limit, but must receive preapproval from the committee to exceed the \$2000.00 limit.

**\*\* Motion by Wilke, second by Musil, motion carried \*\***

**Medical Bills** - Motion to adopt the \$2500.00 maximum amount specified by Nebraska Veterans' Aid for medical bills.

- a. Application for Nebraska Veterans' Aid first,
- b. Request reduction in bills from medical service providers,
- c. Mutual agreement between applicant, Nebraska Veterans' Aid, medical service provider and Veterans' Service Office to each contribute specified amounts if the medical providers forgive a specified amount of the total bill, sufficient to completely eliminate the entire debt if Nebraska Veterans' Aid and/or County Veterans' Aid are contributed to the bill,
- d. A maximum of \$2500.00 per applicant, per year from County Veterans' Aid.
- e. Veterans' Service Office staff are given discretion within this specified \$2500.00 annual limit, but must obtain preapproval to exceed the \$2500.00 per applicant annual limit.

**\*\* Motion by Crosier, second by Horner, motion carried \*\***

*The Veterans' Service Officer (Wm. R. Williams) described the application procedure that the service office staff follow for County Veteran's Aid:*

1. Qualify each applicant as per State of Nebraska statute 77-1605 (Honorable Discharge, Wartime Ear, resident of the State of Nebraska for one year, resident of Buffalo County for six months),
2. Interview and qualify each applicant with respect to "financial need" by requiring the completion of a financial disclosure of all income and assets, with applicant's signature required. Also requiring that the applicant's "need" be "legitimate" (i.e. involving involuntary loss of employment/income, emergency, illness, etc.. and not the product of "irresponsibility", "misconduct", or "deception" etc...).

3. They examine all alternate sources of aid/support for the immediate, intermediate and long term need, from Social Security, VA Compensation/Pension, Nebraska Veterans' Aid, Social Services, Veterans' Service Organization, etc.

4. They negotiate "reductions" in all medical bills and arrange "agreements" between the medical service providers and Nebraska Veteran's Aid for the elimination of the entire bill, (a significant savings to Nebraska Veterans Aid, County Veterans' Aid, and veteran).

5. They negotiate "agreements" between Nebraska Veterans' Aid, the Funeral Home Directors, the families' of the deceased veterans and the Veterans' Service Office to ensure that the veteran receives a "respectable funeral" and metal casket, at a reduced rate resulting in a savings to Nebraska Veterans' Aid, County Veterans' Aid and the veteran's families.

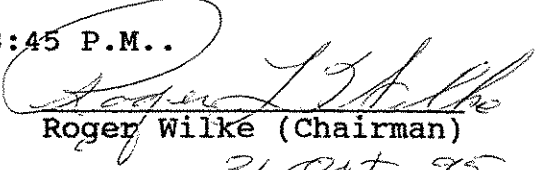
We then discussed a "Memorandum" from Chief Deputy Buffalo County Attorney (Andrew Hoffmeister) dated October 24, 1995 concerning the manner prescribed in State of Nebraska Statute 80-102 for the Veterans' Service Committee to obtain the moneys obtained from tax levies for County Veteran's Aid.

In compliance with the Chief Deputy County Attorney's instruction, Jack Horner made a motion to write a letter "**directing**" the Buffalo County Clerk, to issue a "Warrant" monthly to Wm. R. Williams (Secretary/Treasurer of the Veterans' Service Committee) upon the Buffalo County Treasurer in the amount of the previous "month end balance" of moneys collected from all levies specifically intended to fund "Soldier's, Sailor's and Marine's Relief Fund", and the letter will formally "**authorize**" Wm. R. Williams to receive those funds, for deposit in the "County Veterans' Aid Fund" checking account. Bill Crosier seconded this motion. Motion carried.

We discussed the difficulty of obtaining "Burial Flags" from the U.S. Post Office in Ravenna. Mr. Williams will follow up on this.

Jack Horner nominated Roger Wilke to assume the position of "Chairman" of the Veterans' Service Committee. Mr. Wilke accepted the nomination, and it was seconded by Bill Crosier. Roger Wilke was unanimously elected as our new "Chairman".

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 P.M..

  
Roger Wilke (Chairman)

31 Oct 95