Board of County Commissioners of Lincoln County
Agenda for September 29, 2025

9:00 Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance

9:00 Troy McCue, Lincoln County Economic Development Corporation Executive Director, to provide an update

10:00 LaRay Patton and Chris Monks to discuss the Lincoln County employee leave policy

-To be completed as time permits-

---

1. Approve the minutes from the September 18, 2025, meeting
2. Approve the minutes from the September 24, 2025, meeting
3. Review and act upon a Legislative Committee Commissioner Designation form for Colorado Counties, Inc.
4. Review and act upon a memorandum of understanding for control of confidential data regarding sales and use tax and lodging tax for 2026
5. Discuss a revised proposal from Structures Unlimited, Inc. regarding the flooring project in the Lincoln County Roundhouse
6. County Commissioner reports
7. County Attorney's report
8. County Administrator's report
9. Old Business
10. New Business
11. Approve Payroll

The Board of Lincoln County Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. on September 29, 2025. Chairman Wayne Ewing, commissioners Robert Safranek and Terry Jaques, county administrator Jacob Piper, and clerk of the Board Corinne M. Lengel attended.

Chairman Ewing called the meeting to order and asked Mr. Safranek to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Jaques said a prayer.

Lincoln County Economic Development Director Troy McCue provided an update on economic development activities. He expressed his surprise and disappointment that Hugo Main Street disbanded the organization and assigned various events to area businesses with the expiration of its MOU with the town of Hugo. Conversely, downtown Limon remains active with ongoing enhancements and event plans.

IT Director James Martin arrived as Mr. McCue provided other updates, including that the Limon Chamber of Commerce hopes to reboot the organization; it formed a focus committee to address membership and participation. SBDC faces cuts in reimbursable event and professional development hours, and the EDC Housing Committee continues its efforts to obtain affordable housing options. Genoa's Wonder View Tower group still seeks a construction loan and donation items for a silent auction. They've planned a Denver-area Tower fundraiser for February 10, 2026. Mr. McCue also mentioned the Limon restaurant projects, several possible establishments opening in Limon, and the closures of the Hugo Heritage Care Center, the Limon Leader, and Denver Cutlery. Big Ben's RV and Homer's House & RV Lots are doing quite well due to renewable energy projects in Lincoln and Kit Carson counties. Mr. McCue mentioned his involvement with the NERPD steering committee for the 2026 RPD event in Yuma next July, his attendance at the Colorado Workforce open house, and his upcoming trip to Lubbock, Texas, with Mr. Jaques to attend the Ports-to-Plains annual meeting. Lastly, he noted that he planned to attend the Drive-Lead-Succeed conference in Pueblo in late October.

Mr. McCue left at 9:40 a.m., and Mr. Martin asked what he needed to do to request a credit limit increase on his county credit card. He had three Microsoft subscriptions pending for approximately $500 and only has a $2,500 limit; the finance department won't pay the current statement before the subscription renewals' due date. Mr. Piper said he could use his card.

Mr. Martin left, and Mr. Jaques moved to approve the meeting minutes for September 18, 2025. Mr. Safranek seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Piper had provided a couple of corrections to the budget minutes after Mrs. Lengel sent them to the commissioners; she had corrected the errors. Mr. Safranek moved to approve the corrected meeting minutes for the September 24, 2025, budget meeting. Mr. Jaques seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

The Board reviewed a Treasurer's report that wasn't available at a previous meeting.

Mr. Jaques moved to approve the Colorado Counties, Inc., Legislative Committee Commissioner Designation form, appointing Mr. Ewing and designating Mr. Jaques as an alternate. Mr. Safranek seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Jaques moved to approve a memorandum of understanding for control of confidential data regarding 2026 sales and use tax, with Mr. Piper as the authorized representative. Mr. Safranek seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Jaques moved to approve a memorandum of understanding for the control of confidential data regarding the 2026 lodging tax, with Mr. Piper as the authorized representative. Mr. Safranek seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

The Board discussed a revised proposal from Structures Unlimited, Inc., regarding the flooring project at the Hugo Union Pacific Railroad Roundhouse. The original State Historical grant amount was $312,500, of which the county's 20% match was $62,500. The revised proposal amount was $479,320, leaving the county responsible for an additional $166,820.

Deputy Assessor Renita Thelen arrived at 9:55 a.m., followed by Deputy Treasurer LaRay Patton, and Road & Bridge Districts 1 and 3 Supervisors Chris Monks and Judd Kravig.

Referring to the revised proposal, Mr. Jaques said the new amount didn't fit the budget, so he voted not to accept it. He didn't want to jeopardize future funding from the State Historical Society, but the county couldn't afford it. Mr. Piper said the SHS had expressed irritation that the county continued to extend the grant without completing the project, but he understood the situation and didn't know what the next steps were. Mr. Ewing agreed, stating that taxpayers couldn't afford it, and many had made it clear that they didn't want the commissioners to move forward with the project.

Mr. Piper asked if the Board wanted the other contractor to redo their bid and offered to contact the State Historical Society about it. He voiced concerns with possible county funding commitments, of which he was unaware. Mr. Jaques noted that the commissioners weren't trying to make enemies; they couldn't accept the quote, which was outside the match, with a good conscience as the stewards of county funds.

IT Director James Martin and Land Use Administrator Ty Stogsdill arrived at 9:58 a.m.

At 10:00 a.m., Mrs. Patton brought up the proposed changes to the employee leave policy that Mr. Piper had emailed to all county employees on September 11. She thanked the Board for allowing time to discuss the issue. Mrs. Patton stated that, as an employee with twenty or more years of service and an advocate for all employees, she wanted to ensure the new policy didn't penalize anyone.

Public Health Director Kelly Meier arrived at 10:02 a.m. as Mrs. Patton explained that long-term employees couldn't always use their accumulated hours and often gave some away to avoid losing them at the end of the year. While she understood that the cap on hours meant an employee couldn't accumulate more time until it fell under the cap, she wasn't clear on what happened to the hours over the cap that many had banked. Mr. Piper stated that no employee would lose hours over the cap when the policy took effect; however, they wouldn't accrue more hours until they had used up that time and gone below the allotted cap.

Extension Office 4-H Program Assistant Christine Schinzel arrived at 10:05 a.m.

Mrs. Patton asked if the Board would consider increasing the cap to ensure a fair and equitable solution throughout the transition. Mr. Stogsdill agreed, stating that as a one-person office, he often couldn't take the time he had accumulated as a ten-year employee and sometimes donated hours to other employees in need to avoid losing them. Mr. Jaques asked what they proposed increasing it to; Mrs. Patton recommended at least another week. Forty-hour-per-week employees would receive an additional forty hours, and so on. Mr. Monks also agreed, stating that he didn't necessarily want to earn more time but wanted to be able to keep what he had. He had to get back to the courthouse parking lot project and left at 10:10 a.m.

Christine Schinzel inquired whether the Department of Labor had approved the new policy and noted that employees had only received one email regarding the situation. She didn't understand why the commissioners would penalize employees for not taking time they rightfully earned. While Mr. Piper tried to explain that employees would never lose the time they currently had on the books at the end of the year if it was over the cap, Ms. Schinzel reiterated that employees were being penalized because the county wouldn't allow them to accrue additional hours.

Mrs. Meier said that, unfortunately, Colorado lawmakers never considered how their laws would affect rural communities or departments with very few employees; laws typically fit large companies with many employees.

Mr. Piper said another option would be to switch to a straight PTO system, such as twelve days, which employees would receive automatically at the beginning of the year.

James Martin inquired about a payout option; Ms. Schinzel mentioned that she might have taken more time off before the policy change and agreed that the commissioners should consider implementing a payout option.

Mr. Piper said the final option would be to pay all employees out for their time and start everyone at zero again. Mrs. Meier disagreed with that idea, stating that not only would it be a tremendous financial strain on the county, but she didn't want the commissioners dictating how she and her staff took time off.

Mr. Jaques suggested giving employees over the cap a choice between a payout and keeping the hours on the books; Mr. Stogsdill and Mrs. Meier again stated that they'd prefer it if the commissioners raised the cap.

Mr. Kravig noted that the county has had a good leave policy, but since it isn't legal and needs to be changed, he asked if paying at a lesser rate if employees didn't take their time off by the end of the year was an option. Mr. Piper said the county couldn't take anything away from employees and would have to pay them out at 100%.

The group thanked each other for the discussion, and everyone left at 10:50 a.m., except for Mr. Stogsdill, who stayed to briefly discuss junkyard regulations and a formal complaint he received via email. He intended to send a certified letter to the landowner of record, giving them fifteen days to respond. If they didn't, Mr. Stogsdill said the county could charge the new fines, since the complaint concerns property of less than 160 acres.

There is also an area on County Road 20.5 north of County Road 3E that needs addressing. Mr. Stogsdill wanted to discuss with County Attorney Kelly Lowery the appropriate course of action to take based on the laws. He noted that he would like clearer regulations for non-conforming lots.

Mr. Stogsdill left at 11:05 a.m., and Mr. Ewing called for the commissioners' reports.

Mr. Jaques reported that on September 18, he and Tony Johnson discussed whether any of the District 2 roads required attention after use by the Arriba Wind project; they did not identify any issues. They also discussed culvert purchases and determining if there was a need to install weed barriers on the three FEMA projects. Mr. Jaques also attended the COG meeting, where they received the 2024 audit report that identified two areas requiring corrective action: the need for new budget software (which they were in the process of upgrading), and sub-recipient monitoring (due to CDOT's payment delays, which shouldn't recur in future years). They also learned about the Blooming Health Notification System, which connects older adults and underserved communities with health and wellness organizations, provides critical information and safety tips during public emergencies, and identifies individuals needing urgent assistance through real-time surveys. The opt-in program will cost $5,500 annually after the first fourteen months, which are free, and will reduce mailing costs and formal notifications. Mr. Jaques said they approved an Outback bus fare increase to twenty-five cents per mile for riders under sixty years old; it is a suggested rate for anyone over sixty. The rates have been eleven cents per mile since the eighties. The meal rates will also increase after remaining stagnant for numerous years; however, the COG board has no discretion to set meal rates for anyone under the age of sixty-three. They are $21 per meal at the center and $15 per meal delivered. Mr. Jaques also reported learning that the cost of employee health insurance increased 6.65% overall, but the commissioners voted to continue paying the benefit at 100% employer contribution.

On September 19, Mr. Jaques attended the Eastern Plains Renewable Energy Impact Committee meeting, where they responded to candidate questions before selecting a consulting firm. He also checked several roads in District 2. Mr. Jaques attended the September 24 budget meetings, and on September 26, he and Bart O'Dwyer reviewed the Structures Unlimited revised proposal for the Hugo Union Pacific Railroad Roundhouse flooring project. Mr. O'Dwyer also expressed his concerns about the difficulty local businesses faced in competing with the

County Health Pool. Mr. Jaques explained that the benefit helped attract and retain employees, as Lincoln County's salaries are lower than those of counties closer to the Front Range.

Mr. Ewing reported attending a September 19 CCI Steering Committee meeting at the new location. They reviewed several potential legislative bills and hoped to narrow down the list to between five and eight for the official vote on October 3. Mr. Ewing and Travis Miller discussed the Big Sandy Bridge project on September 20; Mr. Ewing expressed his concerns, as well as those of the landowner. Mr. Ewing thought they had a flagging class in Eads on September 23, which he later learned is actually on October 23. He and Chris Monks discussed the Road & Bridge budget, county roads in general, and mowing. Mr. Ewing attended the budget meeting on September 24 and discussed budget items and county vehicles with Mr. Monks on September 25.

Mr. Safranek reported receiving a call on September 19 from a landowner who felt a road was too narrow. Another resident wanted to know what newspaper the county planned to use for legal publications when the Limon Leader closes. Mr. Safranek informed the party that the commissioners voted to name the Ranchland News as the county's official publication. Mr. Safranek attended the Colorado East Community Action Agency meeting, where they discussed grants and funding opportunities for the building. On September 22, Mr. Safranek spoke with District 3 supervisor Judd Kravig about road issues and the budget; he attended the budget meeting on September 24.

County Attorney Kelly Lowery had sent an email regarding the Tipismana BOE case; he hadn't filed any complaints against the 2024 assessed valuation before the deadline.

Mr. Piper reported that an employee had inquired about purchasing some of the large rocks removed by the county from around the courthouse during the parking lot replacement, if there were no plans to reuse them. Mr. Ewing said they would put some of them back, but would let Mr. Piper know if there were any available for purchase.

Mr. Piper provided the 2026 Underfunded Courthouse Grant Application for ADA-accessible restrooms in the courthouse jury assembly room and a letter of project support requiring Mr. Ewing's signature.

Mr. Jaques moved to approve the $93,440 grant request, $23,360 county match, and the letter of support. Mr. Safranek seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Deputy Assessor Renita Thelen arrived at 11:35 a.m., but she only wanted to pass on the information regarding the Tipismana BOE case and left.

Mr. Piper informed the Board that maintenance man John Mohan was eligible for a step raise, and the commissioners needed to complete a performance evaluation before they left for the day.

Mr. Ewing mentioned the annual leave policy again, stating that he felt it would be fair to increase the cap hours according to the number of hours specific departments worked: forty, thirty-seven and a half, and thirty-five. Mr. Piper suggested skipping the half hour and giving the DHS employees an additional thirty-eight hours. He stated that even increasing the cap would be less of a liability to the county than the current leave policy.

Mr. Ewing called for old or new business; Mr. Safranek brought up Rob Fager's request to reinstate his company's landfill charge account. Mr. Ewing stated that Landfill Manager Allen Chubbuck informed Mr. Fager that he needed to sign the standard contract they required. Mr. Fager discussed the form with Mr. Safranek and outlined several concerns with its content, namely that it required him to certify that the loads contained no items prohibited by the landfill; Mr. Fager didn't always know what was in the trash he collected.

Mr. Jaques commented that the county should add a fee for any prohibited items found in trash loads and include that in the policy. Mr. Safranek felt the rules should be a separate document, but attached to the application for reference.

Mr. Piper went to ask County Treasurer Ashley Erwin about the documents, as she had helped initially draft them. The group took a short break, and then the commissioners called Rob Fager to discuss the application and policy and let him know what they had decided.

The commissioners and Mrs. Lengel discussed the uncleanliness of the public restrooms and the courthouse in general until Mr. Piper returned. Mr. Jaques said the janitor should work their eight hours during the workday; Mrs. Lengel said it was preferable as long as the janitor respected phone calls and customer interactions when vacuuming.

Mr. Piper returned to say that Mrs. Erwin was on vacation; the Board let him know what they had told Mr. Fager.

Chris Monks stopped in with a parking lot update at 12:40 p.m.

The Board discussed some of the budget requests, specifically those regarding the fairgrounds and Extension office, before approving the September 2025 payroll.

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Ewing adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m. The next meeting is at 9:00 a.m. on October 7, 2025.

____ ___________________________________

Corinne M. Lengel, Clerk of the Board — Wayne E. Ewing, Chairman