

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
HALLAM BOARD OF TRUSTEES
September 14, 2026
Hallam Auditorium

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Gary Vocasek at 7:04 p.m.

PRESENT: Gary Vocasek, Chairperson
TRUSTEES: Brad Niemeyer, Sheila Taylor, Bob Wink, Jason Burianek
ATTORNEY: Becky Anderson
CLERK: Robin Likens
GUESTS: John & Karen Seacrest, Taylor & Carrie Bartels, Alice Senseney, Jeanne Egger, Ernie Odvody, Annie Wilhite, Steve Clausen, Randi Christopher, Dani Nichols, Ron & Mary Boden, Dawn Morris, Paul Frerichs, Joetta Schwaninger, Tara Hanke, Darin Schwaninger, Tom Hanna, Bruce Trautwein, Cindy Heier, Jeremy Pierce, Andrew Holsing, Todd Blome

ALL PROCEEDINGS HEREAFTER SHOWN WERE TAKEN WHILE THE CONVENED MEETING WAS OPEN TO THE ATTENDANCE OF THE PUBLIC.

1. PETITIONS-COMMUNICATIONS-CITIZENS CONCERNS:

Frerichs spoke up and he is wondering if the town or the elevator would consider doing anything with the water issue back behind his place between their house and the twin towers?

Taylor said we have looked over that and there isn't a really good solution for that. There is nowhere to run with it nowhere to go with it.

Frerichs continue to say each year rock is put on the road and that just enhances the problem. He would like something done versus nothing. He says it is progressively getting worse. His back slab behind his garage has sunk because of the water that is being held by his driveway, which he says has never been an issue before.

Vocasek said he can't speak to that but he knows a lot of people have had a lot of concrete settle and crack and so on and a lot of it was after the tornado everybody was in a big hurry, and I am not sure everything got packed, or set up the way it should have before or after the concrete was poured.

Vocasek says could have engineering to look at it and see if there is any kind of solution to try to provide drainage one direction or another. Short conversation about the rock that is put along that area behind Frerichs house.

Frerichs says before the tornado maybe two or three times that the water would stand in the backyard and that was during a heavy, wet spring. He says now it settles back on the driveway all the time. Frerichs continue to say that some of it is coming from the drainage tubes from the elevator it is pointed about directly to their backyard and Ridley's backyard.

Niemeyer says there is no water that goes through them. He continues that there hasn't been a drop of water going through the drainage tubes since he has been there (working for COOP). Niemeyer says he doesn't know where the water comes from, but it doesn't come through those tubes, not a drop has fallen through those tubes. Comments may be from the railroad tracks.

Frerichs says that is a long way for the water to travel and sit to end up on the other side of the tubes. Frerichs says he knows that area is a drainage problem back there (behind his property) and that it has been for a long time. Frerichs says the elevator makes it worse by every year putting rock back there.

Vocasek says we will see what the engineers come up with and if the village can run in a different way and get it over to South Street that would be fantastic.

Vocasek says he would like to bring something up. In the last couple of weeks he has visited several village residents, and he feels disappointed in a lot of the attitude or whatever someone wants to call it. Vocasek continues to say that he stopped to visit one resident about an ordinance that was being broken and it is something he said he has heard a lot of the last few months. That is we moved here because we didn't want to put with this and we didn't want to put up with that. Vocasek held the ordinance book and said this is the ordinance book for the village of Hallam. He asks why the village has this. Because someone got upset with their neighbor or some situation and something had to be done. Vocasek continues to say that this guy told him he moved from what he believes was Lincoln to get away from rules and stuff like that and then basically told me he was not going to obey the ordinances. Vocasek finds this sad and it hurts him to think that we are here trying our best to keep things going and someone just blatantly says no I am going to do what I want to do. Vocasek said he was with another person that made it sound like the village board does nothing. Vocasek asked him who makes sure the snow is off your street or makes sure the streets are sealed so we don't have to keep replacing them or mowing the ballpark. This person's

response was our tax dollars. Vocasek said it is sad to him that a grown-up with kids only got that far with things. If the community thinks this then it is not worth having a village board because we don't have to be here breaking our backs doing this stuff. Vocasek said he is very proud of the people he is serving with and Vocasek feels that the board has done a very good job of representing the people.

Vocasek shared that the Lancaster County Commissioners had their meeting last week about a moratorium for the data centers. Vocasek went to the meeting. The commissioners decided not to do a moratorium. Part of Vocasek is concerned about the moratoriums that have been established in places like Seward County, Cass County and Gage County. Will those counties stay diligent on trying to bring a solution to the issue. One of the commissioners said we can kick the can down the road for a year, we still must come and address it at some point. One thing that Vocasek did address with them was when a gentleman from the Planning Commission, Lancaster County Planning Department was there and he talked about Lancaster County's industrial corridor, he basically said Hallam. Vocasek said he felt fortunate enough that the commissioners asked him to speak on what issues Hallam is having. Vocasek told him it was short-sighted on his part because you can call it the Lancaster industrial corridor but there are a lot of residents that live out there and for them it is not an industrial corridor it is a residential area. Vocasek said if the committee is so concerned about industrial areas they should not have allowed residential areas to be established to begin with. He encourages people to attend the commissioner's meeting or contact them. Give them your input.

A person asked about how we enforce ordinances. Vocasek said we can contact the Lancaster County Sheriff's Department if it is a legal matter or he gave examples of where just talking to people and informing them when they come into the office. Some people ask before they start a project about what rules we have for certain things. The board members have several things right now they are trying to decide on; one is the data center the other is e-bikes and electric scooters. We are trying to figure out what we want to do and how we can enforce that. Vocasek explained how we are trying to work with other communities as well so we all can be on common ground and the sheriff's department doesn't have to guess the rules for which town.

2. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS:

A. Snow Bids, anything to change before post. To open/award bid October 5, 2026

Short discussion over whether the village needs to change or adjust anything from last year. Question about if we needed to adjust where the new well was at. Did not think so.

Burianek made the motion, seconded by Wink to have Likens post the snow bids and have them due at the October board meeting. Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek – yes

B. Tree Trimming – Street Trees

Vocasek commented that this kind of goes along with A. He said that this hasn't been a big problem in the recent past but in the past when we used to have big snowstorms and big trees the village had to keep the street trees trimmed for the county to clear the streets if needed. If our trees would rub against their machinery they would not clear the streets. Looking around the village now we have some trees that definitely need trimmed in case that happens again. Taylor will contact Price and JD to see if we can get some quotes.

C. Planning Commission – Tony Oberley resignation

Vocasek read aloud Tony Oberley's letter of resignation from the planning commission.

Niemeyer made the motion, seconded by Taylor to accept Tony Oberley's resignation letter from the Planning Commission. Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek – yes

Taylor made the motion, seconded by Wink for Likens to post the open position on the Planning Commission. Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek – yes

D. Gartner & Thompson water bill.

Likens walked through what has been going on with this water bill. Explained Thompson had called office back in June, which is when their water bill got high as you can also tell from the bills that Likens provided. Thompson and Likens talked over the last couple of months, keeping an eye on the water bills. They talked about leaking or running somewhere inside or outside. Trying to figure out why their bill was so high. Likens also worked with the village contact at Norris Public Power, who does the village billing. Likens got the readings as far back as

2024, the readings as the paper shows they are consistent other than a month or two. Then the end of last week Gartner called the office and told Likens that their water bill is back to normal now and that he was going to take over the conversation now because at first he thought someone may be stealing his water (he left on the answering machine). When they spoke on the phone Likens brought up the idea that maybe a toilet or something was running and they didn't notice. Gartner told Likens that he wasn't going to pay for it and that meant the extra money that they spent those months because they didn't use that water. Likens said she told them she couldn't make that decision by herself so could only put it on the agenda. Likens also shared that they have actually paid up on their water bill other than the current bill. Gartner was using the number of \$1,000 on the phone.

Anderson said if they want their money back they would have to make a claim to us, the village board.

Vocasek said it is so hard to realize how much water you use when you have a leak. It can be thousands and thousands of gallons a month. If a float isn't set right, the flapper isn't in the seal isn't on right. He told the story of one resident we had, and it was discovered that it was an outside faucet. The faucet barely had a drip but that is what it was. Vocasek encourages everybody if suddenly you get a huge jump in your water bill, do not let it go for three or four or five months before you start trying to figure out why. He is not sure this would be fair to everybody else in town. Told of a story of his wife who is hard of hearing and once could not hear the toilet running and he does not use that restroom. It ran for a long time, and it took a lot of water. I didn't ask someone else to pay mine. Nor have we credited anyone else.

Vocasek continues to say that if the village finds out it is something on the village's end I would be willing to back up and pay them, but we will wait for them to file a claim. Likens does say we have found it to be our problem in another case but with this one could not find a reason, said they watched it for months and could not find a problem why they were so high and now all the sudden the readings are back to normal. Vocasek read 3500, 2900, 3500, nineteen thousand, thirteen thousand, thirty-two thousand, forty-four thousand and then it goes back to normal. Likens said this month will be 3500 gallons then comments that they even checked to make sure that the inside meter and the reading outside were the same, so there is that four-month period, two months that are high.

Vocasek told Likens to contact them and say they can send a request for reimbursement and then the board will consider it. It also would be nice if we knew what happened. Whether a faucet was running in the basement, a toilet was leaking, something outside was leaking because somebody had to have found something or somebody shut something off that all of sudden it went back to where

it was because a meter won't all of a sudden go crazy and then come back to normal.

E. Health Department

Vocasek explained that the health committee likes to go around a couple times a year to look at things like people's yards to just try to keep things clean. Vocasek commented that he does not want to go back to doing a cleanup day. We have not since the tornado. When we did a cleanup day it became very ugly because the village would bring in a couple of roll-offs, one year we would bring one in for appliances. Vocasek said by the time the day was done we had seven (7) roll-offs. People got to the point where they would save their stuff. Vocasek asked if there was anyone who Trautwein felt that there was anyone he felt needed a letter right away or do you think all of them should probably get a letter? Trautwein replies that it probably wouldn't hurt for each of them to get a letter. The thing that bothered him the most is the area/alley along Harrison Street, behind the houses like Taylor's to Olmstead's. No one has mowed the weeds. They are not only growing in the right-of-way but growing in the ditch and right up to the field. Frerichs asked why Hallam does not do something like a burn pile once a year? There was some laughter and Vocasek said he would vote for the burn pile if somebody volunteered to clean up what is left afterwards. The last time Hallam had a burn pile was after an October snowstorm it took down a lot of limbs and stuff. By the time it was all done we had metal bed frames, couches and everything else. Vocasek said he is proud of our park and the job that they have done. The village has done mowing around the village facilities and stuff like that, and I just don't feel we do not need another trash place or another place we are going to have to contend with.

Someone asked about getting grants and similar to help with one-day events and other type clean up events. Taylor mentioned that normally our medium household income is too high to qualify.

Wink made the motion, seconded by Taylor to have Likens send letters to the recipients/violators on the Health Committee's list. Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek – yes

F. SCADA

Vocasek explained he wanted to put this on the agenda and explained that this is our monitoring system for our wells and the lift station. He talked about or first brought up the idea of the village replacing it for the last two and half to three years. The problem is it is working fine right now, and the problem is when something breaks it is very hard to find parts because it is 20 plus years old. The village did decide to wait until after the new well was put in. The village did not

want to put in something new like the well then find out we had to upgrade the SCADA system. Vocasek said we can maybe look at getting new bids this spring and maybe this spring. He continues to say that there really is not motion that is needed Vocasek will check with the companies again and work with Likens on that and get new bids from them.

3. RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

(The Board may take action to hear testimony in favor of or in opposition to discuss / limit discussion and take action to approve or disapprove any matter presented under this title. The Board may take action to waive the statutory rule requiring reading three separate dates on any ordinance being considered. The Board may take action to pass and approve any matter presented under this title.)

A. Taylor Bartels brought the board a Resolution to consider.

Resolution #2026-01: Establishing a limit of one data center with a maximum capacity of 35 megawatts within the Village of Hallam and its Zoning Jurisdiction.

Vocasek asked Bartels if he would like to take the floor. Bartels said he proposed a resolution to the board asking the board to adopt a simple clear policy. One data center in Hallam with a 35-megawatt cap with no expansion beyond that. It protects the village from unrestricted growth while still allowing the board to consider the pending projects on its merits. The zoning ordinance has no definition or standards for data centers. This resolution fills that gap with a clear numerical limit everyone can understand. The application itself describes a project of up to 35 megawatts and states that any future data center would require a separate process. This resolution sets a firm boundary of one (1) facility of 35-megawatts. It allows the board and the community time to decide more details on rules on noise, water setbacks, or other items without rushing that decision under pressure from individual applications. The resolution does not prevent the board from approving the pending special use permit or securing a community benefits agreement. This resolution simply makes clear that Hallam's policy is limited to a single facility. Bartels said he feels like this is a win-win-win situation. A win for Monolith in that they will get the revenue needed for the expansion. Crusoe will be able to move forward upon board approval. There is a win for the board and the citizens by entering a community benefits agreement with Crusoe. It will be financial assistance to our village. And it is a win for our citizens it provides the security that one (1) data center facility with a cap of 35maga-watts will stop the encroachment of other data centers from building within the Village or the one-mile jurisdiction. And certainly that the citizens will know what the future looks like for their village that they call home. Bartels asks a trustee to introduce this resolution to the board to discuss and vote on a clear limit. This is a straightforward way to protect abilities, long-term interests, while still dealing fairly with the application in front of you. A clear one facility, 35-megawatt policy

is the responsible step for Hallam right now and a good compromise for everyone involved.

Vocasek says he is going to let Anderson, our village attorney, respond to this because we did have her review this. Anderson said she is debating if this needs to be an ordinance instead of a resolution, because it is more of an opinion when you do a resolution and we are looking at ordinance, we just haven't had a lot of time with everything else going on. She does continue to say she does think there are a lot of good points in it for us to consider so she is not saying we are not looking at it, just need more time to figure all of this out. Some discussion back and forth about resolution, more of an opinion versus an ordinance, a rule that is in the book.

Bartels thinks that is a fantastic idea, an ordinance would be stronger.

Anderson and Vocasek both thank Bartels for his work on the resolution.

Boden comments he does feel we need something in writing but that he doesn't like the whole data center idea and why would we even allow that? Boden asks what is the advantage besides to Monolith? Boden says he is just worried about the whole data center idea. He asks why even the 35 megawatts? Bartels answers say that the lesser of the two evils. Monolith is a company that we know, and we don't want to see them leave the community or go bankrupt, we are not saying that we're going to be able to help Monolith do that or not but for them to propose a data center on land that they already own as an industrial area is a lot more common sense than anything that others are doing. Bartels says he understands personally wouldn't want a whole lot of data centers or any next to him as well, but this is the lesser of the two evils.

Pierce speaks up and says data centers are coming to this area inside the mile or outside our mile. Pierce continues to say that Monolith has done a lot for the village of Hallam community. M. Boden asks what Monolith has done and has Pierce started to try to name Taylor says she has a big list she put together. Pierce goes on to say he does not understand why anybody would want a business to fail and would not do anything in their power to help them. There was talking among a lot people, and some conversations happening. Seacrest speaks up and says Bartells had a good point and that is this is an opportunity for us to step back and say look we can battle each other tooth and nail or we can each reach out a little bit and try to have a compromise. Seacrest continues to say and the board said it would be nice to have some input from another revenue source to be able to do things in the community and Monolith needed an influx of cash if going to stay a viable company. We are working on a compromise so that everyone gets a little bit.

Someone asks if you can change ordinances. Anderson said all ordinances you can change but we want to have some guidelines, and we have all learned a lot the last couple of months. She continues to say that the board is trying to see if one of them can travel out to see a data center about the same size to hear it, see it and be able to come back and show us videos.

Vocasek says he spoke with Butler and was all for a person/people to visit. Butler has given Vocasek a good feeling, he says he is not sure what other words to use, as far as they are concerned, Crusoe wants to do things right. Whether their right will be right enough for this community he doesn't know but Crusoe doesn't seem afraid of us to ask questions, make comments, see what they are doing. Those other companies I get the feeling it will be a little like the solar, they don't want us to know much, they want to get their permit and boom we are just going to have to deal with it. Vocasek does say he is not standing up for Crusoe, but he is comparing what is going on with the different companies and that he feels better about a company that says yes check us out.

The ones outside our jurisdiction the village board have nothing to say about it that will be up to the Lancaster County Commissions. Discussion over the sound study it will be at the planning commission meeting.

Taylor made a motion, seconded by Burianek to table the resolution that Bartel wrote until we have the information from the Planning Commission's meeting and until the October board meeting. Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek – yes

4. OFFICERS AND SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. POLICE REPORT-

There were five (5) calls this month. Seems they are here a lot of hours but give out very few citations. One shift was five hours and no citations. Speeding or stop sign? It would be nice if they can slow things down and control a few things.

Vocasek says we do pay them so it would be nice to get something in return.

B. UTILITIES – NIEMEYER

Vocasek and Niemeyer worked at and cleaned up the lift station today.

C. PUBLIC SAFETY – TAYLOR

Taylor had nothing new.

D. FINANCE/PERSONNEL – VOCASEK

1. Clerk's Report

General Fund Balance \$431,947.85, Park account \$8,472.78, Cemetery account is \$8,965.28, Keno account \$82,508.53 Keno Reserve \$383.62. The claims totaled \$89,807.70.

E. STREETS – WINK

1. Street Report - couple stop signs to replace.

F. PARK/AUDITORIUM – BURIANEK

1. Auditorium Report

What's in the building this month? 16th Planning Commission Meeting; 23rd Cemetery Meeting

5. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes: August 4, 2025
- B. Treasurer's Report
- C. Regular Claims-Bills
- D. Special Claims-Bills

Motion by Niemeyer, seconded by Burianek to approve the consent agenda along with additional bills if needed as they may come in. Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek - yes

6. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Niemeyer, seconded by Taylor to adjourn at 8:23 p.m. Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek – yes

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, October 5, 2026

ATTEST:

Chairperson

Village Clerk

I, the undersigned, Village Clerk for the Village of Hallam, Nebraska, hereby certify that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and available for public inspection at the office of the Village Clerk; that such subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to said meeting; that the said minutes were in written form and available for the public inspection within 10 days and prior to the convened meeting of said body; that all news media requesting notification concerning the meeting of said body were provided advance notification of the time, and place of said meeting and the subject to be discussed in said meeting.

SPECIAL BUDGET HEARING
HALLAM BOARD OF TRUSTEES
September 14, 2026
Hallam Auditorium

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Gary Vocasek at 8:24 p.m.

PRESENT: Gary Vocasek, Chairperson
TRUSTEES: Brad Niemeyer, Sheila Taylor, Bob Wink, Jason Burianek
ATTORNEY: Becky Anderson
CLERK: Robin Likens

ALL PROCEEDINGS HEREAFTER SHOWN WERE TAKEN WHILE THE CONVENED MEETING WAS OPEN TO THE ATTENDANCE OF THE PUBLIC.

- A. Presentation of the Proposed Budget – Todd Blome
- B. Discussion
 - Question & Answer
- C. Tax Levy Discussion
- D. 2026-2027 Fiscal Year Budget
 - a. Set the Levy Amount
 - b. Approving the Budget, Resolutions or Ordinance

Burianek made the motion, second by Taylor to open the public hearing at 8:25 p.m. for the 2026-2027 budget. Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek – yes

Blome started off with the one-page sheet he tries to bring every year to show the village's long history of its valuation. It also has a tax request and dollars end in a rate. Evaluation this year went up 7.18 percent. Blome tells us that the village can't take advantage of this 7.18 percent increase in the valuation, because state law went into effect a couple of years ago that caps the property tax request in dollars at an inflationary amount. This year happens to be 5.25 percent. So 5.25 percent is less than 7.18 percent. That means your tax rate goes down. The village was at 0.45 a couple of years ago, then the village went to 0.44 and now we are at 0.43, so the tax rate went down.

In the actual budget document Blome does point out a few things, or hi-lights of the document. The property tax request is \$162,000. The village valuation is 37 million. The village has no debt, no bonds anyway.

Page two is the beginning cash plus receipts minus disbursements equals ending cash. Rows six through twenty-four is income. Line 25 is a summary line of disbursements and line 26 is the end in cash. The columns across the top. The first column is the prior year, the middle column is the current year, the village's fiscal year ends September 30th, so the village is close and the last column is the budget column. How do we get those numbers in the middle if we are not done with the year yet? Blome says they use the Village's QuickBooks file; make sure things are tidied up in there through the end of July. Then Blome or his fellow accountant divide by 10 and multiply times 12 and derive what they think the full year is going to look like, that is how we get column two. Then column three for the most part is a push from column two with a few differences. State Highway allocations are a little different, the Department of Roads tells us they thing you are going to get which is \$46,285.

Page 3 we look at our budgeted expenditures and Blome said we are budgeting 1 million 583,000 dollars in expenses, which is a lot but 1.1 of that is capital expenses. A lot of that is because of the well. If the village ends up spending more than that then we have to come back and make some decisions, but it is a 1.583 percentile.

Page 4 is the expenses for this year, which a big chunk went towards water. Due to the new well. Blome asks where we are at with the well. Vocasek lets him know it is in service, but we have not collected on the state revolving funds yet, they are still working on the landscaping part. The village is going to come in less than originally planned.

Page 8 is important because it is that inflationary tax that Blome was talking about earlier. 5.26 percent that is the max that the village can raise the taxes. Then on top of that there is growth. So if there are new homes being built and they are hitting the assessed valuation of the village that didn't exist the prior year that is growth and you can tax on that. \$162,000 is our total tax request.

Blome explains that the notice was placed in The Voice News newspaper. Then where do these numbers come from in your budget? Blome explains he does not make them up, they come effectively from our accounting system.

Taylor made the motion, seconded by Burianek to approve the 2026-2027 budget as presented. Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek – yes

Niemeyer made the motion, seconded by Taylor to approve Resolution #2026-02.

Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek – yes

RESOLUTION #2026-02:

WHEREAS Nebraska Revised Statute 77-1632 and 77-1633 provides that the Governing Body of the Village of Hallam passes by a majority vote a resolution setting the tax request and WHEREAS, a special public hearing was held as required by law to hear and consider comments concerning the property tax request.

Niemeyer made the motion, seconded by Taylor to set the levy rate at .438602.

Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek – yes

Taylor made the motion, seconded by Burianek to close the public hearing at 8:42p.m. Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek – yes

Niemeyer made the motion, seconded by Burianek to adjourn at 8:43p.m. Burianek – yes, Wink – yes, Taylor – yes, Niemeyer – yes, Vocasek – yes

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, October 6, 2025

ATTEST:

Chairperson

Village Clerk

I, the undersigned, Village Clerk for the Village of Hallam, Nebraska, hereby certify that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and available for public inspection at the office of the Village Clerk; that such subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to said meeting; that the said minutes were in written form and available for the public inspection within 10 days and prior to the convened meeting of said body; that all news media requesting notification concerning the meeting of said body were provided advance notification of the time, and place of said meeting and the subject to be discussed in said meeting.

Robin Likens