North Platte City Administrator Jim Hawks sworn in as member of State Highway Commission

Gov. Ricketts appointed Hawks in December

North Platte City Administrator Jim Hawks was sworn in Jan. 26 as a member of the Nebraska State Highway Commission. Gov. Pete Ricketts appointed Hawks for the job in December. He filled a vacancy in District 6.

Hawks has served as the North Platte City Administrator, Utility Director and Development Director for nearly 15 years and before that, served as the Lincoln County Highway Superintendent. He also currently sits on the Nebraska Department of Transportation’s Innovation Task Force and is a past president of the Nebraska Association of County Engineers, Highway Superintendents and Surveyors and the Professional Surveyors Association of Nebraska.

The State Highway Commission was created by the Nebraska Legislature in 1953 to ensure citizen input in the planning, design and operation of the state highway system. It acts as a liaison between the public and Nebraska Department of Transportation regarding highway matters and holds commission meetings throughout the year to provide a forum to receive public input.

The commission consists of eight private citizens with one member appointed from each of the eight highway districts. Each commissioner is appointed by the Governor and approved by the Legislature to serve a six-year term.

Kearney Solar Complex
Energy Production Dashboard available

With the recent completion of Kearney’s new Solar Complex, the public has access to a free online tool that allows users to track the hourly energy production produced at the facility.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the new Solar Park was held in December. The $11 million project is the largest of its kind in Nebraska and will generate 5.8 megawatts of electricity, about 5 percent of Kearney’s peak demand.

The system is nearly a half-mile long and 600-feet wide and includes more than 22,000 panels that rotate with the sun’s movements.

Sources – City of Kearney and NMPP Energy