

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2026

CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

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Village Budget Hearing Set For September 23

The Arnold Village Board of Trustees will hold a Budget Hearing on Wednesday, September 23, 2026, at 7:00 P.M. The proposed 2026-2027 budget is \$2,867,820, representing a 7% increase from the prior fiscal year.

Approximately 18% of the total budgeted expenditures, or \$520,000, is allocated for electricity purchases from Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (MEAN) and Western Area Power Administration (WAPA).

In 2025, the Village was awarded a \$208,271.00 Community Forestry Infrastructure Grant from the Nebraska State Arboretum (NSA). This is a three-year reimbursable grant. For the 2026-2027 fiscal year, \$75,000 has been budgeted for Community Forestry Infrastructure Grant expenses.

Capital Improvement Expenditures include:

- \$11,500 - Windows at office
- \$20,500 - Heater for the Swimming Pool
- \$63,500 - Street Improvements
- \$69,500 - Sidewalk Improvement Project (Curbs/Gutters/Ramps)
- \$178,260 - Cured In Place Pipe (CIPP) Lining (Sewer System)
- \$68,000 - Installation of five new fire hydrants to replace existing, outdated fire hydrants
- \$12,000 - Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) for the Northeast Well



Clarissa Thomsen began her role at the Arnold Village office on September 8. Under the guidance of Village Clerk/Treasurer Patty Lamberty, Thomsen will undergo training to prepare for her eventual transition into the clerk/treasurer position. - Debbie Connelly photo

Capital Outlay Expenditures include:

- \$33,500 - Dumpsters
- \$20,000 - Picnic Tables/Benches (Contingent upon grants)
- Some of the other budgeted expenditures include:
- \$50,000 - Transfer from the Electric to the General Fund
- \$50,000 - Transfer from the Electric to the Sewer Fund
- \$109,500 - Operating Supplies/Expense
- \$115,030 - Insurance & Bonds
- \$59,500 - Contract Labor/Materials
- \$20,000 - Wastewater

Plant Expense

- \$25,000 Professional Fees (Attorney/Auditor/Engineer)
- \$26,000 - Solid Waste Tipping Fees
- \$21,675 - Nuisance Abatement
- \$402,530 dollars has been budgeted for Community Improvement. This money comes from the 1 percent local sales & use tax. Of the \$402,350 budgeted for Community Improvement \$149,900 is designated for the Sidewalk Improvement Project. The Arnold Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) makes recommendations to the Board

of Trustees regarding the use of these funds.

The Village Board will hold a Special Hearing to Set the Final Tax Request on September 23, 2026, immediately following the Budget Hearing. The property tax request is \$150,000.00. The proposed property tax rate is \$0.340981 compared to last year's property tax rate of \$0.350436. Property tax revenues are divided between the General and Street Departments. The General Department includes the Parks, the Swimming Pool, the Community Center and General Government.

Downtown Sidewalk Renovation Project Begins

A pre-construction conference on Arnold's sidewalk improvement project was held last Thursday, September 10, at the Arnold Economic Development Corporation meeting room. Jed Paulsen with Paulsen Inc. had great news for those in attendance. The downtown sidewalk project would start early this week and with a 15-man crew, the job should go smoothly.

The project is split into two phases: Phase 1 is the east side of the 100 block of South Walnut, and Phase 2 is the west side of the block. All work will be completed in Phase 1 before starting Phase 2.

As of Monday, the plan is to have one-way traffic flowing to the south and park on the west. There is the possibility of the entire street being shut off if space is needed. Paulsen Inc. will try their very best to avoid this.

The contractor has notified all businesses with an update of the schedule of work and has coordinated with business owners regarding temporary access and potential alternative access. The contractor will provide a ramp system, and some businesses will choose to have the public use back entrances.

NE Junk Jaunt Is Coming to Town

Nebraska's largest garage sale is coming to Arnold the weekend of Sept. 24 through Sept. 28. This year there are 13 vendors participating in Arnold, the most vendors we've had in recent years.

Sale 1 - Chris Kuczynski, 507 W Madison. Thu-Fri-Sat 7 am to 7 pm. Madiera China (55pcs), jewelry, tools, DVDs, racing gear

and reloading equipment. Dishware, antiques, automotive parts, gloves, camping equipment, games and antique projectors w/movies. 9" Ford gears, Nascar memorabilia, and much more!!!

Sale 2 - Ted & Julie Young, 103 Birch St. Fri-Sat 9 am to 3 pm. Camp- See JUNK JAUNT, page 8

Fall Festival Is This Saturday

Get ready to pull out your red, white, and blue! The highly anticipated Arnold Fall Festival is this Saturday, September 19, and this year's celebration is bringing maximum community spirit with an exciting "USA!" theme.

Event organizers RT Green, Della Dailey, Robin Dailey, and Allison Goodenow have curated an action packed itinerary designed to bring together neighbors, families, and visitors for a full day of patriotic fun. From morning athletic events to afternoon traditions, here is your complete hour-by-hour guide to the festivities.

The celebration kicks

off bright and early at the Arnold Recreation Area. The Arnold Rotary Club is sponsoring this year's Fun Run / Walk to get the community moving. Check-in is at 7:30 a.m. with start time at 8:00 a.m. The Rotary Club will also be serving breakfast burritos with coffee or juice for \$6.00.

From 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., the South Loup Cheerleaders will host a sidewalk decorating competition. Artists of all ages will have exactly one hour to transform the pavement using sidewalk chalk. To pre-register, text Miss Berglund at 308-539-0997. Winners will be determined later in the day.

The true centerpiece of the festival begins mid-morning. Parade participants will line up at the Methodist Church at 10:30 a.m. At 10:45 a.m., parade judges will inspect the entries to crown winners in two distinct categories: Best Decorated Float and Most Patriotic. At 11:00 a.m., the parade will officially march its way around the city park (be sure to check page 8 for the exact parade route map).

Following the parade, the action shifts entirely to the city park, offering a vibrant afternoon marketplace and plenty of kids' activities.

The South Loup 4-H Club

will be hosting a lunch fundraiser operating on a free-will donation basis.

Thanks to the generosity of the Arnold Fall Festival Committee, the crowd favorite spider wall and bounce house are back and completely free for children to enjoy.

Stop by the South Loup Cheerleaders' station to get glitter tattoos and be sure to browse the wide array of local vendors set up across the northwest corner of the park and running down the west side behind the swings.

The excitement continues into the afternoon with several highly competitive - and highly entertaining - community



games. At 1:00 p.m. Turtle Races, hosted by the High School National Honor Society, will begin. Prizes will be awarded for Fastest Turtle, Slowest Turtle, and the Top Three Best Decorated Turtles. Immediately following the turtle races, brace yourself for a game of "Slippery Kick Ball."

September 19 also marks the official opening day of the annual Aardvark

Hunt! If you manage to capture the elusive prize, reach out to Tiff Varney at 308-546-9340 to claim your reward. Don't forget to consult the hidden clue published in the September 10 issue of *The Arnold Sentinel* to give yourself a competitive head start.

Dress in your finest patriotic gear, and come celebrate the vibrant spirit of Arnold this Saturday!

School Board Approves Budget, Tax Request Resolution

Following public hearings, the Arnold Board of Education approved the 2026-2027 budget and the 2026-2027 tax request resolution at their meeting held on September 8.

Superintendent Joel Morgan said that financially, APS continues to maintain an adequate cash reserve while meeting its annual operational

needs.

"With the current availability of state and federal grants, we work to utilize those funds to cover our necessary expenses while continuing to grow our academic programs and student experiences," he said. "In the last six years, we have also added the preschool and an additional Title position to

meet student needs. Even with those additions, I feel we have been able to minimize the increase in our overall tax asking while providing significantly beneficial programming and supports. During this same time, we also have updated our transportation and continue to complete facility updates and improvements."

He went on to say that funds from the state such as Per Pupil Aid, Option Enrollment, Special Education Reimbursements, and the Property Tax Credits have been a real benefit to APS.

"I feel we are maximizing our planning and budgeting with these funds to ensure a stable financial position," he said. "The

concern will always be the sustainability of these funds, so it is important to also plan for that possibility in the future.

"Actions from our Unicameral will be crucial these next couple of sessions as they contend with budget shortfalls, the Education Futures Fund sustainability, along with decisions that have

an impact on our daily operations."

The documents pictured below show the district's historical tax asking and how the state property tax credit impacts the net property tax request for the district.

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027
General Fund Request:	\$2,681,871.00	\$2,832,428.00	\$2,879,250.00	\$2,938,846.00	\$3,013,458.00	\$2,865,779.00	\$3,007,609.00	\$3,114,988.00	\$3,236,887.00
Special Building Fund Request:	\$505,050.00	\$454,545.00	\$407,621.00	\$407,071.00	\$409,091.00	\$444,240.00	\$378,788.00	\$378,788.00	\$303,030.00
Total Asking:	\$3,186,921.00	\$3,286,973.00	\$3,286,871.00	\$3,345,917.00	\$3,422,549.00	\$3,310,019.00	\$3,386,397.00	\$3,493,776.00	\$3,539,917.00
Valuations:	\$456,247,502.00	\$442,378,646.00	\$428,714,598.00	\$440,627,855.00	\$453,303,674.00	\$466,906,646.00	\$484,077,208.00	\$520,153,970.00	\$551,827,800.00

		2025/26 ADOPTED DISTRICT BUDGET (non-bond)			PROPERTY TAX CREDITS FROM STATE			EFFECTIVE TAX OUTCOME TO PROPERTY OWNER	
Agency ID	School Name	Total Valuations	Levied Taxes	Levy	Homestead Credit	Real Property Tax Credit	School Tax Credit	Net Tax to Property Owners	Effective Levy
21-0089	Arnold Public Schools	520,147,642	3,493,739	0.671681	26,990	422,753	904,699	2,139,297	0.411287