

April 23, 2026

Scotts Bluff County Board of Commissioners
Administration Building
2nd Floor — Commissioners Room
1825 10th Street
Gering, NE 69341

Dear Scotts Bluff County Board of Commissioners,

Over the past several months, I have followed the progress of the Sunset Hills Venue in rural Gering owned by Courtney & Taylor Severyn. This ambitious business venture would bring diverse opportunities for couples, families, organizations, and businesses in the area to host their events. The venue is nestled at the foot of the beautiful Wildcat Hills and would offer a great alternative to the existing venues within Scotts Bluff County.

As someone who grew up in Mitchell and worked at the Legacy of the Plains Museum, I am familiar with the venues available for rent throughout the county. The premiere venue in the area, the Weiborg 21 Centre, elicits much business for weddings and other special events. It holds somewhat of a monopoly over weddings, hosting a large number of them in the area.

When my husband and I were searching for venues for our wedding in September 2025, the Weiborg 21 Centre did not offer the sort of environment we wanted. It is large, spacious, and modern. For many couples and groups, that is wonderful. However, we wanted something more intimate with beautiful scenery. The second option was Legacy of the Plains Museum. During my time working there, it was rented out many times for weddings, graduation parties, and meetings. It offered a beautiful view and venue, but did not need or want such a large place.

Ultimately, my husband and I married at Fort Robinson State Park in Crawford because the venue was closer to nature and offered our guests more than any venues in Scotts Bluff County did. We had 75 people travel in from across the country and support the state park and Crawford's community through cabin & hotel rentals, venue rentals, store purchases, and restaurant visits. This totaled close to \$7,000. This sort of impact could be echoed in Scotts Bluff County with a new venue available to residents and others who travel to the area.

During my time at Legacy of the Plains Museum, I saw the impact of event rentals on the revenue and visitorship of the organization. 40-some events were hosted at the museum during my time there and captivated visitors due to the unique location. The Sunset Hills Venue would have a similar impact as it is at the base of the Wildcat Hills and close to the historic Fort John and Robidoux Pass locations. It would meet the needs of the community and welcome fresh opportunities not only for the Severyn family but other vendors in the area.

On a personal note, I was a friend of Taylor Severyn's throughout high school. His character as a community member, part of the EMS community, husband, and father would ensure this

business venture is not only successful but rooted in what makes Western Nebraska great. This opportunity would build lasting ties for a new generation of business owners to emerge in Scotts Bluff County.

Sincerely,

Olivia N. Garl

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Olivia N. Garl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Olivia" being more prominent and the last name "Garl" following in a similar style.