

MINUTES FOR March 14, 2022
BOARD OF CHEROKEE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS'
CHEROKEE COUNTY, KANSAS

CONVENE

Chairman Cory Moates called the regular session of the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners (The Board), to order at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, March 14, 2022, in the Commission Room, #109 of the Cherokee County Courthouse located at 110 W Maple St., Columbus, Kansas. Commissioner Lorie Johnson opened the meeting with prayer followed by the Pledge Allegiance. Commissioners Cory Moates, Lorie Johnson, Myra Frazier, County Clerk Rebecca Brassart, Cody Zook Road and Bridge Supervisor, Chris Johnson Maintenance Coordinator and Columbus News Report Reporter Jacob Spencer were present.

APPROVAL of MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Frazier to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2022, meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson. The motion carried 3-0.

ROAD & BRIDGE

Cody Zook, County Road Supervisor, appeared before the Board requesting a motion to hire Gale Holt as the new janitor for the Courthouse at a pay rate of \$12.00. A motion was made by Commissioner Moates to hire Gale Holt as the Courthouse Janitor at a pay rate of \$12.00. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

Cody asked The Board to please review bridge agreement no.88-22 for project c-5172-01 and to sign it. Commissioner Moates reviewed it and asked The Board if they were okay with him signing it and they stated they were.

Cody apprised The Board on Burns & McDonnell who is procure and construct contractor for the 81-0 Riverton-Neosho Project for Empire District Electric Company.

Cody informed The Board that the county needs to look at updating the road use permit that falls under resolution #19-2016, as it needs to protect the county more than it currently does. Cody asked if that would be something that County Counselor Coleman could do?

Cody gave The Board an update regarding the survey in the Skidmore area. Zook also stated an issue with a survey on NW Lawton Rd and NW 10th Street regarding the right-of-way. He stated that he spoke to the surveyor concerning this issue and he was able to rectify the issue.

Zook informed The Board that he had went ahead and filled the unleaded fuel tank full due to the rising fuel prices.

The Board was notified by Cody that there had been a log jam at NW Coal Valley Rd and Lightening Creek bridge that had needed immediate attention due to a large log jam. Cody stated that both Commissioner Johnson and Commissioner Moates offered equipment to remove the jam. Commissioner Moates had equipment that was only 3 miles away, so he went to site and removed the large jam. Cody stated that did this free of charge to the county.

Zook discussed with The Board about possibly looking into doing some programs that would benefit the county. One would be a volunteer group who would do litter control on Shoal Creek Rd. The other item discussed was to have a company come in and give the county a quote on doing possible dust control on the county roads.

Cody informed The Board that the county equipment share with the cities was moving forward and that the cities of Baxter Springs and Galena would both be purchasing a dump truck from the county fleet in the amount

of \$15,000 with an additional purchase of a spreader for each in the amount of \$500. He stated there was one more truck available should the city of Columbus decide that they want to purchase one as well. Additionally, later there will be brush cutters available for purchase as well.

Zook consulted with The Board about looking into possibly being able to shave some of the asphalt roads that are currently in dire need of repair.

Cody notified The Board that JC Parson went and took the noxious weed director test. He will be notified this week as to whether he passed or not.

Cody informed The Board that he will be purchasing a sign machine for the county lot that would be around the cost of \$2000.00

OFFICE HEADS

Deana Randall – Human Resources

Randall informed The Board that she has been training Deputy County Clerk Michaela Heistand how to do accounts payable and payroll so that when Randall goes on vacation that Heistand will be able to take over in her absence. She stated that Heistand has been doing a great job of learning the job. Commissioner Moates praised Heistand on a job well done.

Commissioner Frazier asked Randall if the non-elected office holders had been turning in their sick time on the sheets. Randall stated they had been and that she keeps the sheets that they turn in. Frazier asked if Randall had a running total and Randall stated she does not because her system does not allow for that, but as she stated she does have the sheets that are turned in, and Commissioner Moates stated then that should give them a running total. Randall stated that yes it should.

Dusty Groves - 911 Coordinator

Groves gave The Board an update regarding his office. He stated that he had made 51 maps, assigned 4 new addresses, updated the quarterly report to DASC and had finished the annual expense report which is required yearly. He informed The Board that the GIS consultant had sent an updated support agreement which only raised his fee for the NG911 by \$10. This was the first increase since 2016 by him.

Raven Elmore -County Treasurer

Commissioner Johnson stated that County Treasurer Raven Elmore was busy but that she had sent over to The Board a signature document from American Bank which would add Chelsea Pillar as an additional signer. A motion was then made by Commissioner Moates to add Chelsea Pillar as an additional signer to the American Bank account. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson. The motion carried 3-0.

NATURAL GAS CONTRACT

County Clerk Brassart informed The Board that Mike Williams with Hamlin Energy had been into her office on March 7, 2022, after the commissioner meeting that day and had left a projected futures for KGS on the natural gas prices. The Board discussed the numbers and questioned as to whether those were contract hard numbers or if they could fluctuate? The Board also questioned as to whether Mr. Williams fees were built into to price. Brassart stated she would contact Mr. Williams regarding the pricing and contact PES regarding the current contract expiration date.

KAC

County Clerk Rebecca Brassart presented The Board with an invoice from KAC. The Board stated that they wish not to renew the KAC dues. Commissioner Johnson stated that should KAC ask why The Board chose not to renew to tell them that Commissioner Johnson herself voted against paying it because she did not agree with KAC's stance on Medicare expansions and their stance on remaining neutral regarding SB 353.

KCCA

The Board questioned the invoice from KCCA and were unsure what KCCA even did for them as

commissioners. The Board stated that did not wish to pay the invoice.

ARPA FUNDING

The Board welcomed Carey Spoon and Adrian Wall with the SEK Rural Planning Commission to the meeting. Spoon and Wall came before The Board to answer any question The Board might have regarding the ARPA Funding. Commissioner Frazier asked Spoon if she has received everything she needed from the City of Weir. Spoon stated that would depend on how The Board wanted to handle their funding expenditures. She gave a brief description and example of standard revenue loss. Should The Board decide to go this route then Spoon would have everything she would need from the City of Weir. After some discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Frazier to follow the Standard Revenue loss. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson. The motion carried 3-0.

COUNTY APPRAISER

David Thornton County Appraiser came before The Board to present them with an update regarding the partial mail merge from Postalocity. He stated that the appraisals would go out today and that he expected to start hearing from taxpayers on Wednesday.

Thornton informed The Board that he had hired a new employee into his office who came with some experience. He presented The Board with a new hire sheet for Deann Norris at a pay rate of \$14.00. A motion was made by Commissioner Moates to approve the hiring of Deann Norris at \$14.00/hour. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson. The motion carried 3-0.

There was some discussion regarding wind turbines between The Board and Thornton and as to how it affected values. He stated that he would get them some information regarding values.

OLD BUSINESS

NRP-2022

Commissioner Johnson presented The Board with an amended NRP letter which will be sent to all participates of the NRP program. She asked that everyone review the letter so that we can further discuss it at the next meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION NON-ELECTED PERSONNEL

Commissioner Frazier made a motion for a 15-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with the 3 commissioners. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0. Commissioner Frazier asked to amend the motion to include County Counselor Nathan Coleman. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

The meeting reconvened at 11:00 a.m.

There was no action taken because of the Executive Session.

JUVENILE CONTRACT

Barbara Wright came before The Board to discuss the indigent representation opening. Wright submitted her resume and after some discussion with The Board Commissioner Johnson made a motion to hire Barbara Wright as the new attorney for the indigent representation opening. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Frazier. The motion passed 3-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION NON-ELECTED PERSONNEL

Commissioner Frazier made a motion for a 30-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with the 3 commissioners, Counselor Coleman, and Emergency Manager Jason Allison. Commissioner Moates seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

The meeting reconvened at 11:40 a.m.

There was no action taken because of the Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION NON-ELECTED PERSONNEL

Commissioner Frazier made a motion for a 20-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with the 3 commissioners, Counselor Coleman, and Emergency Manager Jason Allison. Commissioner Moates seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

The meeting reconvened at 12:00 p.m.

There was no action taken because of the Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION NON-ELECTED PERSONNEL

Commissioner Frazier made a motion for a 5-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with the 3 commissioners, Counselor Coleman. Commissioner Moates seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

The meeting reconvened at 12:05 p.m.

There was no action taken because of the Executive Session.

After the meeting reconvened from the executive session Counselor Coleman needed to exit the meeting for a short time.

WELLNESS CHECK

Commissioner Frazier stated that The Board needed to decide if the county would continue with the wellness checks for the employees. Commissioner Moates stated he felt that it was good program to continue. County Clerk Brassart stated she would let Deana in Human Resources know that The Board wishes to continue with it.

EXECUTIVE SESSION NON-ELECTED PERSONNEL

Counselor Coleman returned to the meeting and ask The Board if they wanted to go back into executive session. The Board stated they did at which time Commissioner Frazier made a motion for an 8-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with the 3 commissioners and Counselor Coleman. Commissioner Moates seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

The meeting reconvened at 12:30 p.m.

There was no action taken because of the Executive Session.

MOTION FOR BREAK

Commissioner Frazier made a motion for a 10-minute session break to return at 12:40 p.m. Commissioner Moates seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

The Board reconvened at 12:40 p.m.

RESIGNATION OF EMERGENCY MANAGER

Commissioner Moates stated that he needed to bring The Board up to speed regarding the written resignation of Emergency Manager Jason Allison to be effective March 28, 2022. Commissioner Frazier made a motion to accept the resignation of Emergency Manager Jason Allison. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moates. The motion carried 3-0.

The Board stated that we would need to post the opening in various locations, indeed, Janet Millers Blast, the News Report, social media, and it was suggested to check with KDEM regarding a possible state posting. Brassart was tasked with getting all the necessary information that will be needed and required by the State to be an Emergency Manager in Kansas. Commissioner Frazier

inquired about a job description. Clerk Brassart stated that she had seen one in her files just recently when she was searching for a different item. Clerk Brassart went to her office and came back with a job description.

Commissioner Frazier made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

ATTEST: Resolved and ordered this **21st** day of **March**, 2022

Cherokee County Clerk Rebecca Brassart

Commissioner Chairman Cory Moates

Commissioner Lorie Johnson

Commissioner Myra Carlisle Frazier