

August 9, 2023
Reno County Courthouse
Hutchinson, Kansas

The Board of Reno County Commissioners held an agenda session with Chairman Daniel Friesen, Commissioner Randy Parks, Commissioner Don Bogner, and Commissioner John Whitesel, County Counselor Patrick Hoffman, County Administrator Randy Partington, and Minutes Clerk Cindy Martin, present. Commissioner Ron Hirst was available via phone.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a short sectarian prayer led by Pastor Tim Kraft, First Church of God.

Nancy Stucky, 201 S. Maple, Pretty Prairie voiced her objection regarding the county official newspaper RFP. She is the owner/publisher/editor of the Ninnescah Valley Newspaper who had the lowest qualified bid. She asked why the Commission let Rural Messenger lower their column rate? Since they were not qualified by the requirements of the RFP. She was also concerned that Rural Messenger did not have their USPS periodical application approved yet. She was further upset about her paper showing 100 percent of paid subscribers compared to the Rural Messenger and thought the whole thing was handled very unfairly to bidders.

Theron Salyer, 5710 Highland Drive, Hutchinson was concerned with water shortages with the talk of additional homes or businesses moving into the area. Where will the water supply come from to replace the water table in times of drought? His concern was they would run out of water and needed to take care of what they had for the long term.

There was a revision to the agenda, removing items **6C** Resolution #2023-17 designating The Rural Messenger as the official county newspaper; **6H** approval of Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) contract for Medical Reserve Corp (MRC)-State, Territory and Tribal Nations, Representative Organizations for Next Generation (STTRONG) Local Unit Sustainability Project Award; and **6I** ARPA Agreement with the Growth Inc, a legal entity run by the Hutchinson Chamber of Commerce for discussion.

Mr. Whitesel moved, seconded by Mr. Parks, to approve items pulled from the consent agenda for discussion. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

County Counselor Patrick Hoffman stated the returned RFP for the Rural Messenger's application status was pending with USPS and as of today it was not approved. He suggested tabling the issue until the USPS determines whether the paper has periodical status or not. After a brief discussion by the Board. **Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Bogner**, to table item 6C pending further staff review. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

County Administrator Randy Partington reviewed a grant application for The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) contract for Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) State, Territory and Tribal Nations, Representative Organizations for Next Generation (STTRONG) local unit Sustainability Project Award. He stated this grant was an application to help offset costs for emergency preparedness that we are already doing and paying for with taxpayer's money at this time.

Mr. Whitesel requested this item be removed from the consent agenda. He reviewed the states original copy but asked for the current copy of the contract and had not received it. He wanted to review the federal government contract to see if it benefited the Reno County taxpayers.

Health Department Director Karla Nichols replied there was no agreement, it is a current active MRC. She said there was grant funding that comes in and out and was not being utilized therefore was considered inactive. The Health Department wanted to use the grant funds for preparedness, fostering with the volunteer center. She stated there was no cost to volunteerism however there could be a cost to organize volunteers in the community. The Health Department Preparedness Coordinator Julie Kallas would be assisting in the community preparedness to help make it a more organized unit. Ms. Nichols explained Ms. Kallas' function for preparedness activities in the community and how her salary was covered. **Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mr. Bogner**, to approve the KDHE contract grant for Medical Reserve Corp with the county as described by staff. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

Mr. Partington reviewed the ARPA agreement with Growth Inc., a legal entity run by the Hutchinson Chamber of Commerce. He stated \$1.2 million was allocated a year ago out of the ARPA funds by the Commission to develop the industrial park on south K-96. This contract was to formalize how to use the funds by Growth Inc. The use was designated for engineering and land acquisition to further develop the site. Chamber of Commerce

Debra Teufel addressed the Commission regarding the purchase of 154 acres for the industrial park. She explained the process to acquire more acres and requirements for water rights to the park site.

Mr. Whitesel requested verbiage be put into the agreement referring to re-investing funds into other Economic Development projects in the future. Ms. Teufel stated the funds would not be used for staffing costs but for future site developments. She explained the potential opportunities.

Mr. Hoffman explained the funding had to be used per the agreement and was limited to the items mentioned above. He said it might be redundant putting what is already stated. **Mr. Whitesel moved** to table the approval until the next agenda meeting for the changes to be put into the agreement. The motion died for lack of a second. Mr. Partington stated they could have language by the end of the meeting today. Mr. Hirst did not want to hinder fund opportunities by getting the agreement too specific. **Mr. Whitesel moved** to table later in the meeting after directing staff to make changes as discussed and bring back after the meeting with the additional wording, **seconded by Mr. Parks**. The motion was approved by roll call vote of 4-1 with Mr. Bogner opposed.

Mr. Friesen moved to clarify the previous motion **seconded by Mr. Whitesel**, to approve the consent agenda as amended removing 6C, 6H, and 6I for discussion, consisting of items 6A, 6B, 6D through 6G which includes the: **(6A)** Accounts Payable Ledger for claims payable on August 4th, 2023, totaling \$692,710.39; Accounts Payable Ledger for claims payable on August 11th, 2023, totaling \$436,280.88; **(6B)** and also consisting of pending Added, Abated and Escaped Taxation Change Orders numbered 2023-504 through 515;

(6D) approval of a **resolution #2023-19; A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTS AND REPORTS TO WAIVE THE REQUIREMENTS OF K.S.A. 75-1120a; (6E)** approval of a **resolution #2023-20; A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE PURCHASE OF REAL ESSTATE FOR BENEFIT OF SEWER DISTRICTS 201 AND 202; (6F)** approval for a Termination Agreement between the City of Nickerson (EMS) and Reno County Fire District 3 as requested by the City of Nickerson; **(6G)** approval for Planning Case #2023-04 A request by Pat Banman to rezone approximately 4.7 acres of land from R-1 Rural Residential District to AG Agricultural District for the purpose of combining the land with an adjacent parcel zoned AG Agricultural

District. The area proposed for rezoning is located near the southwest corner of E. Longview Road and S. Woodberry Road. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 4-0 with Mr. Hirst not available to vote via phone.

7A. At 9:50 a.m. **Mr. Friesen moved** for the Board to adjourn into executive session for 20 minutes until 10:10 a.m. with Dr. DeAnna Marshall, the County Administrator, County Counselor, Health Department Director, and Health Officer, to discuss subject of a potential medical advisor to the Board of Health, and the justification of the executive session is to protect the privacy interest of non-elected personnel. **Mr. Whitesel seconded.** The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

At 10:10 a.m. **Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Whitesel,** to extend the executive session for 10-minutes until 10:20 a.m. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

7B. At 10:25 a.m. **Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Bogner,** for the Board to adjourn into executive session for 20 minutes until 10:45 a.m. with Dr. Dawn Varney M.D., County Administrator, County Counselor, Health Department Director, Health Officer, to discuss subject of a potential medical advisor to the Board of Health, and the justification of the executive session is to protect the privacy interest of non-elected personnel. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

At 10:45 a.m. **Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Whitesel,** to extend the executive session for 10 minutes until 10:55 a.m. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

6F. Mr. Partington briefly explained the termination agreement between the City of Nickerson (EMS) and Reno County Fire District #3 as requested by the City of Nickerson. Nickerson runs a volunteer EMS service and helps to cover Fire District #3, which is Nickerson and The Highlands. He said each time Nickerson was called out the fire district would pay \$100 to Nickerson EMS for their run. After some conversation between parties, it was decided the EMS service from Nickerson was not needed on all fire calls. The Reno County EMS would respond to service The Highlands. Nickerson EMS wanted to concentrate on just Nickerson.

Mr. Hoffman explained that either side could terminate the agreement. He stated this termination agreement makes a clear

paper trail to the 1987 agreement for EMS services. Nickerson sent the termination of services agreement to Reno County.

The Highlands Mayor Carol Moore asked to clarify coverage for The Highlands by EMS. The answer was yes Reno County EMS would cover services.

Travis Vogt Reno County Fire Administrator clarified the EMS service out of Nickerson was a first responder only and could not transport. He said EMS services for The Highlands would continue out of the hospital or the EMS station next to the Health Department because the Reno County EMS had to respond to do the transport.

8A. At 11:05 a.m. Mr. Friesen opened the Budget Hearing for the purpose of hearing and answering objections relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of ad valorem tax for the County 2024 budget.

No discussion took place in the hearing.

At 11:07 a.m. Mr. Friesen closed the hearing.

8B. Mr. Friesen stated that discussion and adoption of the 2024 Budget would take place later in the meeting.

9A. Public Works Director Don Brittain explained the Municipal Water Conservation Plan for Reno County Rural Water District 101 and adoption of resolution #2023-21. This will allow Public Works to apply for grants.

Mr. Whitesel questioned the \$50 reconnection fee and the \$500 to remove the meter fee. Mr. Brittain thought the fees were correct at this time. **Mr. Whitesel moved, seconded by Mr. Parks,** to approve the **resolution #2023-21; A WATER DROUGHT/EMERGENCY RESOLUTION**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DECLARATION OF A WATER WATCH, WARNING OR EMERGENCY; ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES AND VOLUNTARY AND MANDATORY CONSERVATION MEASURES; AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS; AND PRESCRIBING CERTAIN PENALTIES,** be it resolved by Rural Water District No. 101 of Reno County. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 4-0 with Mr. Hirst via phone voting yes making it 5-0.

9B. Maintenance/Purchasing Director Harlan Depew said last year after a large discussion on courthouse façade renovations, the Commission decided to spec out the project for bid. He said they decided at that time to delay action until the five-member

Board was in place. He spoke about the lack of ties for anchoring and when they used a camera to inspect the ties, they found not as many original ties as expected. He explained the engineering responses/reports versus the local engineer report recommending anchors for the stones that could be anchored between the tiles mortar joints on the top section of 6th floor. Mr. Harlan recommended to follow the perspective local engineers and architect reports to install anchors only on 6th floor. The project is ready to go out to bid if approved.

Bradley Doeden from GLMV, Wichita answered questions from the Board regarding the façade renovation anchoring to concrete only. He stated there was no additional cost for preparing the bid documents as it had been previously paid for.

Mr. Friesen questioned the original cost and insurance cost for the building. He stated \$200,000 sounds better for repair costs.

Mr. Bogner asked would we anchor to clay tiles? Mr. Doeden stated the ties would be anchored to mortar joints instead of clay tiles. He said it is a maintenance decision starting from the top down, doing it in segments.

Mr. Parks would like to wait until a future date to fix the anchors.

Mr. Whitesel will agree with no repairs and not spend the money.

Mr. Bogner said it should go out for bids to better have the information it has paid for previously and to know the results. Mr. Doeden stated there is no additional cost for the bid.

Mr. Hirst didn't want to anchor to clay tiles. He recommended going out for bids to know the costs then deferring a decision.

Mr. Bogner moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst, to approve the letting of bids for this project as discussed by staff. The motion failed by a roll call vote of 3-2 with Mr. Hirst and Mr. Bogner in favor.

6I. Chamber of Commerce changes requested by the Board. Counselor Hoffman explained the changes after bullet point 2, and he added bullet point 3; that said, "none of these funds are going to go for operating costs and he added the plan is for

this industrial park to someday be sold and the proceeds from the sale will be re-invested by Growth Inc. in additional commercial or industrial real estate development. He added a 6. **Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mr. Whitesel**, to approve the additional changes made to the Chamber of Commerce ARPA agreement with the Growth Inc. and give authority for the Administrator to sign. The motion was approved with a roll call vote of 5-0.

Vicki Mader with Horizons gave her quarterly report. She went over finances stating that things were looking as planned and she spoke about receiving grant funding. She said the Carrefour Crisis Center and Mobile Crisis Response Team were both working well. All vacant positions were now filled. She ended with some state bill updates.

Human Resources Director Helen Foster reviewed the 2023-2024 Health Premiums for employees. She explained the premiums with a 1 percent shift in premium responsibility from the employer contributions to the employee contributions as well as an overall increase in premiums of 2 percent. There was an increase in Allied administrator fees that would be covered by the slight increase in premiums. All other vendors for the health insurance stayed flat with renewals.

With this change the employee funding will account for 16.62 percent of the health plan compared the 15.67 percent for the 2022-2023 plan year. August 14th begins open enrollment for Reno County employees.

Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Bogner, to approve the schedule as presented by staff. The motion was approved by a roll call vote 5-0.

12A. At 11:50 a.m. **Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Parks**, for the Board to adjourn into executive session for 25 minutes until 12:15 p.m. with Dr. Rogena Johnson M.D., County Administrator, County Counselor, Health Department Director, Health Officer, to discuss subject of a potential medical advisor to the Board of Health, and the justification of the executive session is to protect the privacy interest of non-elected personnel. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

At 12:15 p.m. **Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Parks**, to extend the executive session for 10 minutes until 12:25 p.m. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

At 12:25 p.m. **Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Whitesel,** to extend the executive session for 10 minutes until 12:35 p.m. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

8B. Mr. Partington presented the 2024 Budget discussion and adoption explaining the commission had a study session on June 27, 2023, where the majority of cuts were made to most departments and/or agencies for the 2024 budget. The county published a budget that met the Revenue Neutral rate, which is \$25,544,928 in ad valorem taxes. The estimated mill levy, 35.764 RNR (Revenue Neutral Rate) one-time cuts to funds set and maximum expenditures of \$81,386,438. Consensus of the Board in the last meeting was to put Conservation \$50,000 back with no changes to budget amount. The budget would be online for the public to view. **Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mr. Bogner,** to approve the FY2024 Budget as outlined by staff. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 4-0 with Mr. Hirst not available on the phone to vote.

Mr. Partington gave an administrative report stating he and Mr. Friesen were planning to set up a study session late August or September for the Space Master Plan for departments that have outgrown their space. They will have architects come in and decide what the next step is to put into place or not at this time?

Update on Environmental Health Regulations, Mr. Hoffman has been working with staff to get something in place. Tomorrow, August 10th, at 3:30 p.m. in the Veterans Room an invitation was sent to contractors, interested parties to look at drafted intentions. The Health Department to get feedback agreeing with changes or to work on before it comes back to the Board. Mr. Hoffman stated staff worked on draft and now needs input from stockholders and make possible changes for clarification, it is very technical.

11. Commissioner comments:

Mr. Bogner spoke about entities going over their RNR notices. He said people were telling him, "Sending me stuff was a waste of money" it is the new law, lots of misunderstandings and he has tried to explain to people about the letter.

Mr. Parks had no comments.

Mr. Whitesel attended a meeting regarding the 30/30 Federal Land Grab. He learned a lot and asked if anyone wanted more

information, they could contact him. They discussed a trail going through Reno County so people in rural areas may want information. Reno County did not raise taxes, but some taxing entities did raise taxes, get involved if you feel you have a problem with higher taxes.

Mr. Friesen requested IT look into a different way to connect for zoom calls as the present system did not work without losing connections. He suggested virtual meetings since it was hard to participate as is for agenda meetings. He appreciated Nancy Stucky, Ninnescah Valley news for coming in and making her public comments for her business.

Mr. Partington stated in the consent agenda today it was approved to close on the land purchase for H.A.B.I.T. We need to start the loan process with an application in September. He asked if the Board wanted to pursue with the City of Hutchinson connection since land has been purchased.

Mr. Hirst commented that the Board needed to start on the drafts for the loans. We cannot wait for the City of Hutchinson, short term would be good but long time not a good idea, we need to own the lagoons for the best use of money.

The Board requested to put on the next agenda meeting with study results and loan cost estimates, keeping our options open on grant and loan applications. Mr. Hirst suggested moving forward with the project. Mr. Partington stated it would be on the next agenda meeting to get a formal vote.

At 1:05 p.m. Mr. Friesen adjourned the meeting until Wednesday, August 23rd, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

Approved:

Chair, Board of Reno County Commissioners

(ATTEST)

Reno County Clerk
cm

Date