

July 26, 2023  
Reno County Courthouse  
Hutchinson, Kansas

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

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a short sectarian prayer led by Pastor Ron Deviney Faith Chapel Church.

Health Department Director Karla Nichols presented a plaque to Pam Adrian in recognition of her 25 years of service. She invited everyone to come celebrate her retirement next Thursday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, between 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. at the Veteran's Room in the Courthouse.

Jim Preston, 3214 N. Halstead Street, urged the Board to restore the \$100,000 funding to TECH that had been cut from their budget request. He explained the importance of the funds for services to the disabled. Mr. Hirst felt the cut was too drastic and would like to readdress the cut amount. Mr. Partington stated if they wanted to change the amount it would have to be covered by the General Fund.

Mr. Whitesel requested to pull and discuss consent item 6I for the Community Corrections Juvenile Policy updates. Community Corrections Director Randy Regehr explained that the expungement and diversion policy was set by the Justice Information, Kansas Highway Patrol, KBI and FBI and is not negotiable. Mr. Regehr said he has no control over it for a position with community corrections people. They would change wording from page to notify under policy 6.22 3A4 "The Director, or designee, or a supervisor will notify people in the building to go to the shelter area" he stated this would give them more options. He described the process of entering dwellings (homes) with reasonable suspicion versus routine visits where clients were reported to be living. There were several changes made to different policies.

**Mr. Whitesel moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst,** to approve the Consent Agenda as modified, consisting of items 6A through 6L which includes the: **(6A)** Accounts Payable Ledger for claims payable on July 21st, 2023, totaling \$1,056,557.03; Accounts Payable Ledger for claims payable on July 28th, 2023, totaling \$861,822.26; **(6B)** approval of BOCC minutes for June 13<sup>th</sup> and June 27<sup>th</sup>, and June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Study Session final drafts **(6C)** approval of appointment of Daniel King as Assistant Fire Chief of Reno County Fire District 8; **(6D)** approval of Kansas Department of Transportation Agreement No. 444-23. This agreement is between the Secretary of Transportation, Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) (the "Secretary") and Reno County, Kansas ("County"), collectively, the "Parties." This Agreement is for the replacement of Bridge No. 000780775005600 located on N. Victory Road, 0.5 mile east and 2.0 miles south of Buhler, Kansas, over the Little Arkansas River in Reno County, Kansas; **(6E)** approve Community corrections FY23 Year-end Adult Grant Budget Adjustments; **(6F)** approve FY24 Adult and Juvenile Carryover Reimbursement Budgets; **(6G)** approve Community Corrections Adult and Juvenile FY23 Year-End reports; **(6H)** approve Community Corrections and Intake and Assessment FY23 Year-End Juvenile Budget Adjustments; **(6I)** approve Community Corrections Juvenile Policy updates; **(6J)** approve purchasing a small truck for the Maintenance Department for an amount not to exceed \$28,000 to replace a 1997 Ford E350 van with 100,290 miles; **(6K)** approve obtaining quotes and purchasing a 2023 or 2024 Ford F150 Responder for Emergency Management not to exceed \$48,000 to replace a 2008 Chevrolet Silverado with 91,744 miles; **(6L)** approve obtaining quotes and purchasing a 2023 or 2024 Ford F150 Responder not to exceed \$48,000 for the Sheriff's Department to replace a 2019 Responder with 109,943 miles; with amending item 6I's policy 6.22-3A4 changing page to notify and bring back next meeting, the rest of the items were as presented by staff . The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

**7B. Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Parks,** to approve moving forward with the Federal Workforce Development Grant as Health Department Director Karla Nichols stated the funds would be used for skills and education. She said funds will decrease traveling expenses for staff to attend the Governor's Public Health Conference. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

**7C. Mr. Partington** stated in April RFQ's were sent out to the local newspapers requesting rates for legals and notices. Three papers responded with rates: The Hutchinson News was \$18.00 per column inch no circulation numbers given, Rural

Messenger based in Haven, Kansas was \$8.50 per column inch circulation 10,300, and Ninnescah Valley based in Pretty Prairie was \$3.70 per column inch circulation 360 people. Any changes would be effective September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Rural Messenger address is in another county however they are changing to Hutchinson via approval of a United States Postal Service permit.

Michael Glenn with The Hutchinson Tribune stated the cost to the public was \$.40 at a news stand for the Pretty Prairie/Ninnescah Valley paper but he was not aware of delivery, The Hutch News is \$2.00 daily and \$4.50 on Sunday and a \$30.00 subscription fee, and Rural Messenger was free.

County Counselor Patrick Hoffman explained the statute requirements for a paper to publish legals, and all three papers qualified once the Rural Messenger's permit with the post office is approved. He said the RFQ's were for cost and circulation numbers.

Mr. Whitesel stated Representative Seiwert is working on getting rid of the requirement to publish in local newspapers and has hit some roadblocks in the House. Mr. Whitesel suggested legal notices could be put on our website.

Anita Stuckey owner (one of three owners) of Rural Messenger spoke about online presence and paper delivery. She would speak with other partners to see if they would reduce cost to match the Ninnescah per column inch from \$8.50 to \$3.70 and get back to us.

Mr. Hirst spoke about using a local paper, The Ninnescah Valley News with the lowest cost per column and the Reno County Website.

Mr. Bogner asked if Ms. Stuckey was the owner and he stated cheapest may not be the best and we should see if Rural Messenger would match the Ninnescah \$3.70 cost.

Mr. Parks liked the online edition option, not going to reach everyone 100 percent, use local papers, and was leaning toward Rural Messenger since circulation is important.

**Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Bogner**, to authorize a change in our official newspaper to Rural Messenger matching the low bid of \$3.70 per column inch. Direct staff for future publication notices to place on our website and provide a press release to prove to the state it is a more efficient way to do

business. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 4-1 with Mr. Hirst opposed.

**Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Whitesel**, if the low bid rate of \$3.70 is not accepted by Rural Messenger than the award would go to Ninnescah Valley News in Pretty Prairie. The motion was approved by a consensus vote of 5-0. Mr. Hoffman stated a resolution would be forthcoming naming the official paper of choice.

7A. Sheriff Darrian Campbell discussed the new shooting range and how they are at a point in the project to move forward with Phase I. He stated a goal from the City/County joint meeting was not to duplicate resources and at this time the city has yet to give an answer to the Sheriff. He said they are currently sharing the Department of Corrections range and is searching for answers to funding of the project. He's looking at whether to use the radio grant money or if money could be freed up from jail costs. One of his employees made a spreadsheet to discuss the jail cost issues. He suggested coming together to discuss it on August 14<sup>th</sup> having at least one commissioner attending. The Sheriff has been speaking with the County Administrator regarding Senate Bill 28 for mental health patients in the jail system. The state would pay \$100 a day, retro funds back to July 1, 2022, the first invoice to the state would be approximately \$100,000, then they would bill on a quarterly basis. He talked about dockets concerning long term inmates in the jail and the extra cost for prolonging court appearances. Mr. Friesen wanted to clarify the radio purchases. Mr. Partington stated radio purchases are budgeted in the General Fund and next year if the Sheriff gets Congressional spending, that money is sitting in the Capital line item in the Sheriff's budget, and it could go toward the shooting range improvements.

Mr. Partington stated Phase I was \$600,000. Funds will come from Capital Reserve which currently has \$4 million and that would leave a cushion of \$2 million that was unencumbered.

Mr. Hirst suggested looking at adding Emergency Management Department to the facility.

**Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mr. Bogner**, to approve moving forward with Phase I using the Capital Funds for the project as presented. The motion is approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

Mr. Partington questioned the Board if they wanted to proceed with researching financing for Phase II at this time or wait to discuss it when Phase I was complete. He stated Phase II could be a \$1.1 to \$1.5 million dollar project. Mr. Whitesel suggested waiting to see the outcome of saving money at the jail and possibly using those funds. Mr. Parks questioned a timeline for completion of Phase I and have administrator start looking at financing. Sheriff Campbell stated he was not sure when Hutton would start construction on the facility maybe in two to three months. Mr. Hirst mentioned looking now for financing Phase II. Mr. Friesen stated they may want to keep the fire under the jail cost issue and look for Phase II financing.

7E. Public Works Director Don Brittain explained the petition. He requested approval for **resolution #2023-18; A RESOLUTION PERTAINING TO THE PROPOSED VACATION OF A PORTION OF WEST 95<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE IN RENO COUNTY, KANSAS.** John M. Harrison on Riverton Road and K14/96 viewing dates and times along with public hearing dates and times. He said the state eradicated the road and this vacation would make it legal to vacate the road. The owner owns both sides of the road because of the new highway. Mr. Hoffman stated the statute says the viewing needs three county residents. The viewers are going to be Randy Parks, Randy Partington, and Don Brittain on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. on site meeting at Riverton Road and 95<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Mr. Hoffman recommended the public hearing as September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. **Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst**, to approve the resolution 2023-18 with times and dates as presented by Mr. Brittain. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

7D. Mr. Partington recommended approval to purchase required first floor Hon furniture for \$48,615.33 through a State of Kansas contract ordered from Midwest Single Source and authorize the county administrator to complete the order. This furniture is for Human Resources, County Administrator, and some areas of the main floor for IT. He said later this year, there will be another recommendation for furniture with Midwest Single Source to equip the departments/agencies on floors 3-5. **Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Bogner**, to approve the purchase of Hon furniture for the first floor estimated at \$48,615.33 from the state contract authorizing a signature of the county administrator on the contract. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 4-1 with Mr. Whitesel abstaining.

8A. County Administrator Randy Partington asked if there were any questions on monthly department reports. Mr. Whitesel questioned visits to other states and chamber lunches. Mr. Partington said both items had been sponsored by grants at no cost to county taxpayers. He spoke about a published article during COVID stating NPI (hand washing, masks, gloves, distancing, etc.) contributed to a lower number or not at all of RSV or flu cases. It was written by one of the Health Department personnel, and he believed it had no research to back up the information.

Health Department Director Karla Nichols explained that Epidemiologist Megan Pierce and a data specialist worked with the state compiling data that had been recognized by the State of Kansas and should be an honor for Reno County to be published. Conclusion of the article was that non-pharm intervention did play a part in reducing severity and duration when the NPI was enforced disease (flu and RSV) rates went down.

8B. Mr. Partington stated financials were doing well with revenues and expenses. He asked the Commission about scheduling study sessions on the fifth Wednesday or end of agenda meetings. He said they needed a study session on space needs for some departments. Cargill wanted to put a well on property located on the northeast corner of the jail that could limit any expansion in the future. Mr. Friesen asked if the Cargill water well monitor could be put in the permanent easement/right-of-way or locate another place for it. Mr. Partington suggested the best option would be if the state would sell a small portion of their land on the south end of their property.

Commissioner comments:

Mr. Hirst thanked everyone who participated and supported the 4H-Fair. Congratulations on the Buhler FFA students for their livestock certifications. He would like to see a small cut of \$10,000 to TECH instead of the \$100,000 cut and asked the Board to think about it.

Mr. Friesen was trying to understand the TECH funding asking how the county started paying toward a non-profit organization. He questioned if this was per statute. Mr. Hoffman replied the statute stated, "may fund giving authorization by statute to fund on a local level".

Mr. Parks stated that if the cut was rescinded it would have to be covered from other funds. We need to continue working

on a policy for reducing outside agencies funding and working toward donations from the county instead of funding.

Mr. Whitesel asked if it is right to take by force funding from taxpayers and give to outside agencies or for them to go out and raise their own funds. He said time to stop funding outside agencies and they can raise the funds to support themselves. Mr. Friesen said we need a robust study session to determine a policy in early fall starting the framework for a policy on outside agency funding. Mr. Partington stated the TECH Director invited the Board to tour their facility. Mr. Whitesel spoke about sending unclaimed property to the state or not and said he received a check from the state for unclaimed property. County 4H-fair was really neat attending, and State Fair is coming soon. He wanted to thank the Fox Theater for showing a great movie, Sound of Freedom for \$5.00 this weekend.

Mr. Parks spoke about people still paying delinquency on property taxes that were sold and paying those taxes for years. He said you could get ahold of the Appraiser to fix the problem. He visited with Mr. Partington about a possible purchase on a building for Emergency Management. KWORK/KCAMP insurance would like to cover the county's insurance needs. Fee Agency handles our insurance currently. He thought the pool insurance would be good to look at possibly saving the county money, he would like to have a further discussion on the topic.

Mr. Bogner talked about a meeting with people where he stated RNR taxes shouldn't go up, one lady responded taxes always go up Don. He explained the taxes by Reno County are not going up however some other entities will be taxing residents under the name of Reno County.

At 11:10 a.m. the meeting recessed for ten minutes.

At 11:20 a.m. the meeting reconvened with all Commissioners, County Administrator Randy Partington, County Counselor Patrick Hoffman, and Minutes Clerk Cindy Martin, present.

**Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst,** to recess into executive session for 30 minutes until 11:50 a.m., with the county administrator, county counselor, Health Department Administrator Karla Nichols, and Health Officer Karen Hammersmith joining the governing body in the executive session, the justification for the executive session is discussion of job performance of non-elected personnel and the subject matter personnel matters of nonelected personnel. The motion was approved by a majority vote of 5-0.

**Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Whitesel,** to extend the executive session for another 5 minutes until 11:55 a.m. The motion was approved by a majority vote of 5-0.

**Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Parks,** to recess into executive session for 20 minutes until 12:15 p.m., with the county administrator, county counselor, and District Attorney Thomas Stanton joining the governing body in the executive session, the justification for the executive session is discussion of job performance of non-elected personnel and the subject matter personnel matters of nonelected personnel. The motion was approved by a majority vote of 5-0.

**Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Whitesel,** to extend the executive session for another 5 minutes until 12:20 p.m. The motion was approved by a majority vote of 5-0.

At 12:20 p.m. Mr. Friesen adjourned the meeting until Wednesday, August 9th, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

Approved:

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Chair, Board of Reno County Commissioners

(ATTEST)

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Reno County Clerk  
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Date