

May 30, 2023  
Reno County Annex  
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 Kyker, Countryside Baptist Church.

There were no public comments or additions to the agenda.

**Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst,** to approve the Consent Agenda as amended, consisting of items 6A through 6C which includes the: **(6A)** Accounts Payable Ledger for claims payable on June 2nd, 2023, totaling \$356,884.42; **(6B)** approve corrected BOCC minutes from February 14<sup>th</sup>, February 28<sup>th</sup>, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and final draft of May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023; **(6C)** approval of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Grant Agreement with the Hutchinson Community College for \$200,000 and authorize the County Administrator Randy Partington to sign. This grant will be exclusively used for the capital project to expand HCC's nursing program, as provided by staff. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

7A. County Attorney Patrick Hoffman recommended approval of RFP for Landfill Methane Program. He said the RFPs would be used to gather ideas from developers to see what was available and would provide a transparent and open process for the county to consider development proposals. **Mr. Whitesel moved, seconded by Mr. Bogner,** to approve the RFP for Landfill Methane Program as presented by staff and instruct them to publicize it. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

7B. Health Department Director Karla Nichols gave her annual updated report to the Board. She had with her two of her staff that served Reno County for 25 years, Pam Adrian and 35 years, Kathy Winger in Administration. She also brought her Assistant Directors Karen Hammersmith Clinical Services and Megan Gottschalk Population Services. She said the Reno County Health Department had been partnering, preventing, and promoting

healthy lifestyles for Reno County residents throughout their 50-year history.

Ms. Nichols presented a link: [kphcollaborative.org](http://kphcollaborative.org) that maps out the Kansas Public Health Department services throughout Kansas depending on the needs of the community. The information is updated annually, she noted Reno County did not have any infectious disease outbreaks. She spoke about the \$158,799 Workforce Development grant that Reno County would be applying for in June.

8A. At 9:20 a.m. **Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Parks**, to recess the Board into executive session in an adjacent room with the County Administrator Randy Partington and County Counselor Patrick Hoffman present for 20 minutes until 9:40 a.m., the subject matter to be county personnel and the justification for the executive session is to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel. The motion was approved by a consensus vote of 5-0.

At 9:40 a.m. **Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Parks**, to extend the executive session for another 5 minutes until 9:45 a.m. The motion was approved by a consensus vote of 5-0.

8B. At 9:50 a.m. **Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Bogner**, to recess the Board into executive session in an adjacent room with the county administrator, county counselor, and Health Department Director Karla Nichols for 20 minutes until 10:10 a.m., the subject matter to be county personnel and the justification for the executive session is to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel. The motion was approved by a consensus vote of 5-0.

9A. At 10:10 a.m. Mr. Friesen recessed for five minutes reconvening with all Commissioners, County Administrator Randy Partington, County Counselor Patrick Hoffman, and Minutes Clerk Cindy Martin, present.

10A. Mr. Friesen opened the study session for Wastewater Regulations. He asked for introductions from representatives of the Health Department and The Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Representatives were as follows: Health Department Director Karla Nichols, Environmental Health Supervisor Darcy Basye, Health Department Assistant Director of Population Services Megan Gottschalk, KDHE Non-Point Source Program Manager Katie Basiotis, KDHE South Central District Environment Administrator Allison Herring, and KDHE Communication Manager

Elizabeth Moore. Ms. Nichols provided links and printed materials to the Reno County Sanitation Codes and KDHE Minimum Standards.

Mr. Friesen welcomed any public comments regarding the wastewater regulations.

Ron Vincent from Carl Vincent Plumbing said he thought Mr. Hirst's responses in a letter to the Chair were spot on. Mr. Vincent suggested using the Planning and Zoning for obtaining permits instead of the Health Department. He thought the suggestions presented would be a good direction to go.

Marsha McConnell, 3616 E. 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Hutchinson, was an advocate for those that have septic systems on their properties. She has been a realtor for 20 plus years and was concerned about how complicated and expensive the cost of septic systems has become to both buyers and sellers in Reno County. She said it is a complicated process in Reno County compared to other counties and almost twice the cost to install a septic system. She suggested making it less expensive and still protecting the ground water, dealing with waste appropriately, making the process move along in a timely manner, and remembering to serve the people we are here to serve.

Josh Barkley from Barkley Plumbing echoed those concerns. He suggested simplifying the process in a timely manner, cost to the consumer, and then mentioned there were new materials out there that could make it easier for consumers and less costly. Some vendors have new products except here in Reno County because of restrictions in our codes. He spoke about continuing education on the use of products from vendors and that each contractor is licensed in Kansas. Installers have taken courses for soil certifications for analysis before using products.

The Board discussed the codes and soil controversy. Ms. Herring spoke about having a committee of stockholders review the current code from front to back and having a clear black and white set of requirements for soil certifications.

County Counselor Mr. Hoffman was concerned about the environmental appeal process and who should hear them, Planning and Zoning or the Health Advisory Board.

Sheldon Yoder from All Pro Plumbing Heating and Air Conditioning had concerns about going to classes for certification on soil and slow permit timelines.

Mr. Friesen asked if the majority of the Board agreed with reducing the county regulations to speed up the permit process and still follow the KDHE regulations. He suggested the Board put together a list of changes they feel need to be made. There was a large discussion. The conclusion of the study session was to come back in front of the Board in approximately 60 days with these suggested changes:

- 1) Remove the current Reno County Sanitation Code and adopt KDHE Bulletin 4-2
- 2) A clear black-white requirement for contractors to do their own soil profile-certificate program and CEU's also hands-on
- 3) A clear black-white response time for a permit
- 4) Acceptance of an engineer, that is licensed in the State of Kansas, to sign off on plans to remove the need for waiver(s)
- 5) Define the appeal process for the denial of a permit
- 6) Submission and review of the administrative environmental health policies
- 7) Alternative treatment, acceptance of tanks that are NSF and/or ASNI approved

Ms. Basiotis explained the process for changes in the policy/ revisions to the code, drafted forms needed to be filled out and submitted to the KDHE for approval. This process could take up to 3 to 6 months before final approval is given.

At 12:00 p.m. Mr. Friesen adjourned the meeting until Tuesday, June 13th, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

Approved:

---

Chair, Board of Reno County Commissioners

(ATTEST)

---

Reno County Clerk  
cm

---

Date