

November 22, 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 Chaplain Haley.

Jenna Fager Deputy Election Clerk was present to conduct the coin toss to break the tie for the Langdon City Council position from the November 7th, 2023, City/School Election. Mr. Friesen stated the star was heads for Lathan Keener and tails was for Karen Fisher. Chaplain Haley did the toss and Lathan Keener won.

There were no additions or revisions to the agenda.

Mr. Parks moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst, to approve the consent agenda consisting of items 6A through 6D which includes the: **(6A)** Accounts Payable Ledger for claims payable on November 17, 2023, totaling \$305,603.08; **(6B)** approve BOCC minutes for October 11th, and October 25th, 2023; **(6C)** approve the purchase of one (1) 2024 Dodge Durango Pursuit vehicle from Midway Motors in the amount of \$39,316 and declare the 2018 Ford Interceptor Sedan VIN#1FM5K8AR7JGB12441 as surplus to be auctioned on Purple Wave; and authorize County Administrator Randy Partington to sign the title work; **(6D)** approve to purchase used vehicle to be used as unmarked car for the Sheriff's Department Detective Division at a cost not to exceed \$34,000; declaring a 2006 Malibu VIN#1G1ZT51846F132869 as surplus to be sold on Purple Wave Auction; and authorize County Administrator Randy Partington to sign the title work; presented by staff. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

7A. County Administrator Randy Partington explained to the Board about the amended Development Agreement with Superior Holding, Inc. and Reno County. Superior Holding Inc. entered into a development agreement on May 1st, 2020, based on the Reno County Economic Development Incentives policy. Superior Holding Inc. has complied with the agreement, however a review by staff determined there were typographical errors and potentially

conflicted language in the original agreement. The amended agreement is intended to clarify the obligations of both parties. **Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Bogner,** to approve the Superior Holding Inc. Development Agreement with Reno County as outlined by staff. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

8A. Community Corrections Director Randy Regehr gave a presentation for his annual report. He highlighted several topics from public safety to juvenile supervision of higher risk children. Mr. Friesen questioned the impact on the community every year for funding. Mr. Regehr replied the first step was to get the legislators on board with an enhanced requested budget though the governor.

8B. Treasurer Brenda Kowitz gave an overview of her annual report. She stated that her department had an overall 99 percent accuracy rate and an 80 percent accuracy with commercial, both were the top in the state. Her main concern was the rising cost of publications and postage. KCTA was pushing for emailed statements to save the counties postage cost. Mr. Friesen questioned if commercial vehicles had to come into the office or could renew online. Ms. Kowitz replied that the state dictated a physical signature.

Mr. Hoffman explained the commercial vehicle registration process was controlled by state law.

Mr. Friesen requested that he review the regulations. He requested Ms. Kowitz return in a couple of weeks to report on the legislation to see if they could make it less complicated for commercial vehicles.

Mr. Parks asked if Ms. Kowitz could explore the possibility of installing microphones or speakers for the people to hear on the other side of the glass partition in her office. Mr. Bogner agreed with the request stating people who were hard of hearing had problems hearing the tag employees.

8C. Human Resources Director Helen Foster gave an overview of her annual report. She touched on reviews and pay for performance changes. Insurance providers were kept the same and she stated that there were no major issues with workers comp. There were more applicants this year with less positions posted. She reminded the Board of the Holiday dinner for employees December 13th, 2023, at 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the RCAT facility, they will be serving all shifts with a meal. She also

reminded them of the Service Awards December 19th, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. in the Veteran's Conference Room.

9A. Mr. Partington introduced Mr. Bob Fee with Fee Insurance. He explained the Reno County Insurance coverage of property with Travelers. He also discussed deductibles for auto insurance. Mr. Whitesel requested Mr. Fee look into what the costs would be to have the shooting range available for public use. **Mr. Whitesel moved, seconded by Mr. Parks**, to approve the Travelers insurance as quoted by Mr. Fee in the agenda. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 5-0.

At 10:22 a.m. the meeting recessed for eight minutes.

The meeting reconvened with all Commissioners, County Administrator Randy Partington, County Counselor Patrick Hoffman, and Minutes Clerk Cindy Martin, present.

9B. Mr. Partington gave a brief summary. He then turned the discussion over to the Health Department Director Karla Nichols who provided an update on services that Reno County Public Health provides. She stated their main function was prevention and education. They made cost reductions saving the county \$342,950 dollars on an annual basis. She outlined benefits of public health stating, "It does matter." Mr. Parks questioned what services were required by statute. She said services were driven by the community needs assessment not mandated by the state. Most services were for a narrow population of uninsured and Medicare patients. The Board briefly discussed vaccines and giving them in schools. Mr. Hirst commented on the WIC program and how the Health Department was more efficient with the healthy food program and providing education to the community. Mr. Friesen requested in the next monthly report if Ms. Nichols could add another column for administration and statute requirements. Mr. Parks requested that she ask other healthcare agencies if they would be willing to help with some of the services provided by the Health Department, she said she would ask.

9C. Public Works Director Don Brittain was present to answer questions and receive guidance from the Board regarding the Solar Regulations. After a lengthy discussion on solar regulations in zoned and unzoned areas of Reno County, Mr. Brittain explained the difference between zoned and unzoned portions of Reno County.

Several Commissioners stated they would like a county wide ban on commercial solar development. Mr. Hirst read some thoughts from attending discussions on solar regulations. He had concerns with a large industrial solar project affecting watersheds and what type of battery energy storage systems were being used, also what if we had a large hailstorm or tornado. He was in favor of smaller solar projects such as the Ark Valley project or for personal use.

Mr. Whitesel suggested penalties should be in place to ensure compliance with regulations in regard to runoffs.

Mr. Friesen stated the fire issue was just as important as solar and wind. He suggested another six-month extension on solar to get a list of questions together for the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Board. Mr. Hirst stated that the Planning and Zoning Board had held a public hearing and now needed to give their recommendations to the Board. Mr. Hoffman said a balance was needed between personal and public rights since they were in question. Consensus by the Board was to direct staff to draft a six-month solar development ban with not more than 10 acres or 2 megawatts and to stop the commercial solar regulations. For clarification staff was directed in the regulations to prohibit over 10 acres or less or 2 megawatts in zoned areas by January 1, 2024. Mr. Hirst was concerned about the Ark Valley project being halted.

10A. Mr. Partington reviewed the financial report. He spoke about a 4.5 percent cost of living raise for employees with no pay for performance effective January 2024 pay period and pay ranges to increase by 2.25 percent. He suggested on December 13th at the end of the meeting maybe taking a break and coming back at 1:00 p.m. for a study session so the Board could attend the Reno County Christmas Dinner from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the RCAT facility. He also mentioned the ARPA funds in waiting.

Mr. Hoffman requested to brief the Board on the 30-30 in the next agenda session.

Mr. Friesen read both executive sessions adding times before recessing for the sessions.

12A. **At 12:10 p.m. Mr. Friesen read a motion** for the Board to enter into executive session until 12:35 p.m. with County Administrator Randy Partington, County Counselor Patrick Hoffman, Sheriff Campbell, Undersheriff McHaley, Human Resources

Director Helen Foster, the subject matter to be job performance of county employees and the justification for the executive session is to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel, **Mr. Parks seconded the motion.** The motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.

At 12:35 p.m. in the first executive session **Mr. Whitesel moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen,** to extend the executive session by 30 minutes until 1:05 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously.

12B. **Mr. Friesen then read the second motion** for the Board to enter into executive session at 12:35 p.m. until 12:50 p.m. with County Counselor Patrick Hoffman, Human Resources Director Helen Foster, the subject matter to be job performance of county employees and the justification for the executive session is to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel, **Mr. Bogner seconded the motion.** The motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.

At 1:05 p.m. in the second executive session **Mr. Whitesel moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen,** to extend the executive session by 10 minutes until 1:15 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously.

At 1:15 p.m. the agenda meeting adjourned until Wednesday, December 13th, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

Approved:

Chair, Board of Reno County Commissioners

(ATTEST)

Reno County Clerk
cm

Date