

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
JANUARY 8, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – Annual Resolutions/Motions
 9:00 – 2023 Longevity Employees
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 10:00 – Bids – AA Building Doors
 10:15 – Sam & Praful Bhakta – Sunrise Hospitality

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Amy Tharp, County Clerk was also present. Pat called the meeting to order. Tron moved to approve the minutes from the previous commissioner meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Tron moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	220,180.81
Judicial District	\$	171.79
Road & Bridge	\$	175,894.08
Airport	\$	3,649.17
County Building	\$	44.00
Noxious Weed	\$	4,293.96
EMS	\$	8,387.83
Fire	\$	14,542.58
Community Health	\$	14,357.65
ARPA	\$	1,019.99
Fair Funds	\$	36,850.00
Services for Elderly	\$	116,017.00
Sheriff	\$	41,420.45
Library	\$	96,692.22
Insurance Agency	\$	311,120.00
Alcoholic Treatment Fund	\$	2,700.00
Airport Grants	\$	118,162.00
Hospital Main Fund	\$	500,000.00
Library - Emp Benefits	\$	31,519.00
Reg of Deeds Tech Fund	\$	160.60
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>1,697,183.13</u>

Ross Sullivan was in attendance and told the commissioners the contractors that worked on the wellness center roof had come in and replaced the insulation above the office and made some repairs to the roof. Ross stated the issue was the roof edge stating some of it was not plugged

which allowed water to enter the building. Ross also told the commissioners the insulation will be replaced along with the metal cap on the roof top. Joe said if the roof is not repaired satisfactorily, Paul will need to take action. Ross said there needs to be more downspouts on the southside to help allow water to drain from the gutters more effectively. The Moscow Senior Citizen roof needs to be done and Ross asked if the commissioners want to replace it or spray it.

Pat made a motion to delay the bid opening until January 22, 2024, at 10:00 AM for the AA buildings doors. Tron seconded. Motion carried.

The commissioners told Ross to start getting specs for bids on replacing and/or spraying the Moscow Senior Citizens roof. Bid date and time will be discussed later.

Rodney Kelling checked in and told the commissioners the radio tower has been repaired but the generator is still down. Rodney said he has a portable generator connected to the radio tower now in case of inclement weather or an outage.

Tony Martin was present with Kyle Hittle.

The commissioners recognized the employees longevity for 2023:

10 Year:	Bailey Esarey – EMT (P/T)	Amy Jo Tharp – County Clerk
	Pat Hall – Commissioner	Tony Martin – Road & Bridge
	Kyle Hittle - Road & Bridge	
20 Year:	John Moser – EMS (P/T)	Duane Topliss – Sheriff
30 Year:	Trina Young – Sheriff	
40 Year:	Margaret Bell – EMS (P/T)	Joy Lewis – EMS (P/T)
	(Margaret and Joy’s actual 40 year was in 2022)	

Tony gave the commissioners copies of the zoning regulations and said he will be meeting with Glenn Kerbs in Dodge City on the 15th to go over some questions the zoning board has. Tony also stated that there needs to be three (3) zoning board members from each district and currently there are only six (6) members. Questions about who appoints the zoning board members arose, Amy said she will reach out to the county clerk group and see if they have any information on zoning boards. Tony said there is a state law for oversize/heavy load vehicles requiring a permit and told the commissioners the county will probably start needing to charge for a permit on their roads as well, excluding agricultural equipment.

Tony told the commissioners he is having a meeting with Terracon tomorrow and is looking for them to replace Benesch for the landfill.

Tony turned in his letter of encumbrance. The commissioners discussed having all of the department’s encumbrance letters turned in by February 26, 2024, by 9:00 AM.

Tony said the Noxious Weed conference is scheduled for February 27th through the 29th and he plans to send Jeff Cox and Jessie Eckert to stay up to date on their weed licenses.

Joe made a motion to accept ***Resolution 24-01 for the financial statements and financial reports for the year ended December 31, 2023***, to be prepared in conformity with GAAP. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Joe made a motion to accept ***Resolution 24-02 for the Rural Opportunity Zone (ROZ)***. Tron seconded. Motion carried.

Pat made a motion to appoint Matt Rome in place of Jack Rowden on the Economic Development Board. Tron seconded. Motion carried.

Pat made a motion to approve having commissioner meetings the second and fourth (2nd and 4th) Mondays of each month unless it falls on a holiday then it will be the next business day. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Pat made a motion to accept The Hugoton Hermes as the official county newspaper. Tron seconded. Motion carried.

Joe made a motion to accept the Citizens State Bank of Hugoton as the primary depository and Dream First as secondary depository. Tron seconded. Motion carried.

Joe made a motion to appoint Tron Stegman as commissioner chairperson and Pat as vice commissioner chair. Pat and Tron seconded. Motion carried.

Amy said the candidate packets for the 2024 election are ready to be picked up and all paperwork and fees must be turned in by June 3rd at noon.

Amy asked if the AA requested money should be paid to the City of Hugoton for the AA building utilities. The commissioners agreed to pay the money to the City of Hugoton for the AA building.

Amy told the commissioners that Jayme Rich informed her the 2023 CD interest accrued is \$506,470.66 and the one percent (1%) sales tax received from July through December 2023 is \$138,059.86.

The commissioners discussed the costs for the hospital phone system and decided to table it.

Tron made a motion to accept V&B Construction's concrete bid for \$2,250.00 for the work on the west side of the courthouse. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

The commissioners discussed getting an MOU with the museum completed as soon as possible.

Sam Bhakta and Praful Bhakta with Sunrise Hospitality were in attendance. Sam told the commissioners they thought the hotel was exempt for ten (10) years from taxes and they have not received anything from the county until this year. The commissioners explained their taxes were set up for a ten (10) year sunrise tax with the first-year tax exempt, and each year after would be ten percent (10%) of taxes due with the tenth (10th) year taxes being one hundred percent (100%) due. Sam asked the commissioners if the hotel can be excluded from the taxes due to no notification and begin their ten (10) year sunrise plan beginning 2024. Pat told them to ask the county appraiser, Angela Eichman, before they travel back to India to see what can be done. The commissioners explained it is a state law not county.

Due to the inclement weather occurring, the commissioners told Amy to let county departments know to close at noon today, excluding emergency services and road and bridge.

Abatement Orders for taxes 2021 numbered 112, taxes in 2022 numbered 231, and taxes in 2023 numbered 28 were reviewed and approved by commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; total valuation removed 1,099 with a relief assessment of \$89.14

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Pat Hall, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
JANUARY 22, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – Ross Sullivan
 9:00 – Craig Swinney - Lots
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 10:00 – Suresh Bhakta – Sunrise Hospitality
 10:30 – Jennifer Featherston & Dave Piper – Hospital

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Counselor; Amy Tharp, County Clerk; and RoGlenda Coulter with the Hugoton Hermes were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Joe moved to approve the minutes from the previous commissioner meeting. Pat seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	56,081.60
Judicial District	\$	270.00
Road & Bridge	\$	36,437.70
Airport	\$	8,634.55
County Building	\$	-
Noxious Weed	\$	4,608.30
EMS	\$	9,341.37
Fire	\$	2,655.37
Community Health	\$	17,862.78
ARPA	\$	50,803.00
911 Wireless	\$	116.37
Sheriff	\$	45,393.66
Reg of Deeds Tech Fund	\$	286.80
TOTAL:	\$	232,491.50

Bob Brunson with Invenergy was in attendance.

The county commissioner discussed the county bills.

Ross Sullivan was in attendance. He presented the commissioners with the amounts he received for the AA doors from various contractors:

1. Sinco Construction \$2,624.00
2. Harrison Construction \$2,218.64
3. AK Roofing \$1,280.00

The commissioners tabled their decision and asked Ross to contact AK to find out if they have included all of the specs in their bid.

Tony Martin was in attendance.

Craig Swinney was in attendance to discuss the lots for sale around the Pioneer Manor. Craig said he is looking at building a large home and large garage which would also have living quarters in it. The commissioners stated the covenants on the developed lots require any building outside of the house needs to be on the same lot. The commissioners also stated if there are any changes it would be through the City of Hugoton as they have put the covenants on the property. Joe told Craig if he would like a larger lot, to purchase the undeveloped lots outside of the city limits and use those for a house and shed as large as he is looking at. Jim Ghumm came in and said the issue is the size of the developed lots do not leave enough room for a large garage that will also have living quarters and be able to have a decent sized yard. Tony Martin said the city has an ordinance for developed lots stating the dwelling and garage must be on the same lot and the city will have to approve replotting the lots if they want them changed. Craig said he would take the map and let the commissioners know later if he chooses to purchase any lots in the Pioneer Addition.

Jenifer Featherston and David Piper from the Stevens County Hospital and Suresh Bhakta with Sunrise Hospitality were in attendance.

Tony handed the commissioners crossing permits to be signed and approved. Tony gave the commissioners a contract with Terracon to replace Alfred Benesch to review and possibly sign. KDHE is aware of the possible change to Terracon.

Pat made a motion to accept Terracon Companies as the Stevens County Solid Waste consultants. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Tony also stated he will be starting fees on March 1st, 2024, at the landfill for any vehicle pulling a trailer. The fees will be \$30.00 per ton for the tipping fee. There will be no fees at this time for just a pickup load.

Pat made a motion to approve new landfill fees. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Ted Heaton and Cuyler Miller were in attendance.

Tony discussed a meeting he had with Glenn Kerbs over the planning and zoning board. He stated the current board members are:

Darin Heger	3 year term	Don Beesley	2 yr term
David Rome	3 year term	Tony Nix	1 yr term
Shannon Crawford	2 year term		

Tony mentioned he heard that Tony Nix passed away over the weekend, so his term is up for re-appointment.

Amy provided statutes for the commissioners about the planning and zoning board stating they are to have no less than three (3) and no more than seven (7) members on the board and to be determined if they will serve a three (3) or four (4) year term.

Pat made a motion to reappoint Darren Heger and David Rome for a four (4) year term, Don Beesley and Shannon Crawford for a three (3) year term. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

The commissioners said to run an ad in the newspaper for two (2) people who would be interested in serving on the planning and zoning board to send in a letter stating why they would like to serve on the board. The two (2) new candidates will serve a two (2) year term. When each of the board members comes up for re-appointment it will then be a four (4) year term.

Tony said the planning and zoning board would like to hold a public meeting at the Memorial Hall January 31st, 2024, and another one in February. Tony said he would like to have the county attorney in attendance and Glenn Kerbs will possibly be in attendance as well. This meeting will to go over the solar and wind farm discussions and regulations.

Suresh Bhakta with Sunrise Hospitality was in appearance. Tron told Suresh the county commissioners have waived penalties and interest on the back taxes and is allowing Sunrise Hospitality to pay the back taxes in monthly installments for sixty (60) months. Suresh asked if the back taxes could be spread out into a ten (10) year term and the commissioners said five (5) years is the longest they are willing to go. Paul will draw up a contract and get a copy to the county treasurer.

Jennifer Featherston and Dave Piper with the Stevens County Hospital were in to discuss the hospital's phone system. Dave said he would like to know if the county is willing to help pay for the system and how much. Dave also stated they are not looking at a cloud-based system because of paging and if there is a power outage. Dave stated the state and Medicare informed them the hospital needs to get an alarm on their vaccine/medicine refrigerators to be able to accept Medicaid and Medicare payments from the state and federal government. The commissioners agreed to pay up to \$100,000.00 for the phone system and the rest is up to the hospital to pay. Dave said the financial are up through November, which is positive, however there are many products which are at end-of-life and the hospital board will have to view the priority of those items to start working on replacements. Pat told Dave and Jennifer it is hard to determine if the county's valuation is going to go up or down each year so it is hard to predict how much can be appropriated. Pat stated years ago when the county's valuation was doing good, the hospital and Pioneer Manor were able to have a decent appropriation of six (6) mils but since the valuation is poor, the county is paying more than the six (6) mils to help which unfortunately is not what the hospital had been used to in years past. Jennifer said she is trying to be transparent about the hospital finances in hopes it helps people understand the situation the hospital is in. Dave said the fire sprinkler system in the hospital will possibly need to be replaced in 2025. Joe told Dave and Jennifer to find out the cost for the system and get it to the commissioners before budget time so they can see what can be done to

help pay for the replacement. After further discussion of costs, the commissioners agreed to pay for the Pioneer Communications bills for the new phone system and Hancock's will be the hospital's responsibility. The total cost of the Pioneer Communications bills to be paid is \$107,126.32.

Ross Sullivan came back in and stated AK Roofing was not using all the specs for the AA building doors and stated the new quote is \$2,980.00.

Pat made a motion to accept the lowest bid from Harrison Construction in the amount of \$2,218.64, for the AA building doors. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Ross told the commissioners the septic tank at the wellness center has backed up into the facility and he is currently having someone try to locate the tank and get it cleaned out.

Amy asked if the MOU with the museum needs to have a legal description or address included since the Stevens County Gas and Historical Society also own property under their own board. Paul said putting the block on the MOU should be sufficient.

Amy called the treasurer's office to ask a tax question and Jayme was out of the office for the minute so Misty Peitz, deputy treasurer, came in and told the commissioners the back taxes on county property needs to be paid first before current taxes. She will ask Jayme if the Sunrise Hospitality can pay 2023's first half of the taxes along with a payment of back taxes.

Amy said the Eco Devo board is asking if the county can appropriate another \$5,000.00 this year to help with funding. Pat stated there will be no more appropriation to entities this year because the budget has already been set and to request more taxes on the 2025 budget.

Tron said a property owner called and asked about the interest on delinquent taxes due to a name change not being handled properly. Pat stated it is up to KDOR, not the county and Angela said the property can go into the tax sale. Tron reiterated the property owner needs to get an attorney, pay the taxes or allow the property to go on the tax sale.

Joe brought up a discussion about a grocery store in Stevens County. No one knows where the hold up is on the proposed purchase of the current grocery store if the back taxes are too high or if there are other legal issues.

Abatement Orders for 2023 taxes numbered 29 through 35 were reviewed and approved by commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; total valuation removed 21,179 with a relief assessment of \$2,871.32.

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
SPECIAL MEETING
JANUARY 29, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 AM – Gene's Heartland Foods regarding new grocery store

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met for a special session. Present were all members: Pat Hall, Tron Stegman, and Joe D Thompson. Also present was County Attorney, Paul Kitzke; Amy Rich, Deputy County Clerk; RoGlenda Coulter from the Hugoton Hermes; Jeff Charbonneau, James Clasen, and Justin Renz with Gene's Heartland Foods. Stevens County residents who attended were Estella Beesley, Walter Beesley, Jim Ghumm, Kim Harper, Debra Kallenbach, Matthew Lewis, Dennis Moore, Matthew Rome, Thea Schnittker, Matt Willis, Jill Wolters, and Nate Wolters.

Tron called the meeting to order.

Tron asked the Heartland Food representatives to give an update on their plans for the grocery store. The gentlemen are with the Gene's Heartland Foods chain and Justin Renz will serve as the future manager for the Hugoton store. James Clasen spoke for the group, stating the original negotiations were done in October of 2023 and they had planned to open the store the first Sunday after Thanksgiving in November of 2023.

He explained that the delay in opening was due to waiting on the bank to have full control. He talked about the hack into the electronic filing system of the state of Kansas courts back in October of 2023, and Heartland not being able to get a clear title opinion for the property. He reported the bank now has full control.

Thea asked if they knew if the title company is still requiring exceptions and waivers to be signed for contract completion.

Paul stated new cases cannot be digitally filed yet through Eflex (the court's electronic filing system), but as far as he knew, everything else was back on track as of the prior week.

When asked about an updated timeline, James replied, they are being told their bank is working with Jeremiah Johnson and should have a clear title in about two (2) weeks and then they can have inventory stocked by the end of February. James said their warehouse is in Amarillo and they work very nicely together. He relayed that there will be many trucks coming in with product, and it takes one and one half (1 ½) weeks to two (2) weeks to stock the size of this location.

Paul asked some questions regarding the store model and employment numbers.

James stated they have different models for their varying store locations, depending on the needs of the community. He said after researching Stevens County they will stick to a traditional supermarket model for now that will include a deli and catering services.

Justin replied he had held interviews and about 20 to 30 people were lined up to start work back in November. He said this size store with a deli could employ 35 to 45 people, and one obstacle they have encountered for this location has been finding a meat cutter.

The electricity in the building was the next topic of conversation. James relayed that it had been shut off just prior to the below freezing temperatures. Pat wondered about perishable food items being left in the store. James replied it had all been previously removed, and Heartland has a refrigeration

specialist coming to inspect all the equipment. Debra informed them that when the store was previously in operation, there were leaks in the building and puddles of water on the floor whenever it rained.

The gentleman shared some information about their past work experience and where the other Gene's Heartland Grocery store locations are in Kansas.

The commissioners thanked them for coming in and Joe invited them to ask if they needed anything and the commissioners will do their best to help in any way or point them in the right direction. Matthew Rome was introduced to them as the new city mayor and was instructed to contact him if anything arises that is a city matter.

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Rich, Deputy County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
FEBRUARY 12, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – Cammie Heaton
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 10:00 –
 10:30 – Review of planning/zoning board applicants

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session (excluding Commissioner Joe Thompson). Paul Kitzke, County Counselor; and Amy Tharp, County Clerk, were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve the minutes from the previous special commissioner meeting. Tron seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Tron seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	119,850.71
Judicial District	\$	459.93
Road & Bridge	\$	155,463.61
Airport	\$	8,722.23
Airport Grants	\$	12,398.00
County Building	\$	11,215.30
Noxious Weed	\$	8,389.42
EMS	\$	25,275.38
Fire	\$	15,964.26
Community Health	\$	18,666.64
Diversion	\$	339.68
ARPA	\$	82,005.84
LATCF Grant	\$	62.73
Sheriff	\$	91,791.90
Employee's P/R Misc W/H	\$	3,200.00
Reg of Deeds Tech Fund	\$	213.40
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>554,019.03</u>

Cammie Heaton came in and said she spoke with Rusty Tuman about handling IT and if he had any figures yet on the costs. Rusty told her not to upgrade through the current IT company the county has, since the contract is up this summer. He told Cammie there were a few more things he needed to check on and would get back with a cost. Rusty said he is willing to come to the county and answer any questions any of the departments may have if the county chooses to go through him for IT purposes. Cammie told the commissioners her and Brittney are going to Rolla next Tuesday to do vision and hearing screenings for the school as there is no one in Morton

County at this time to do school screenings. Cammie also informed the commissioners there is a workforce development grant worth \$105,000.00 for Stevens County which will be spent between the years 2024 through 2027. Cammie would also like to discuss the nurse salary for the community health department versus the salary for the hospital and Pioneer Manor nurses to see if there can be changes. Cammie told the commissioners she is still trying to get some form of oral health brought into the community health department at least once a month or every other month as she feels having at least an oral hygienist on occasion will help the community. Cammie said she might need some help funding for some of the oral hygienist equipment but plans to try to get a grant for a majority.

Rodney Kelling was in attendance and presented the commissioners with a letter of request to roll over some of the funds from 2023 into his fire and EMS equipment funds. Rodney is requesting to roll over \$19,000.00 from the EMS 2023 fund and \$80,000.00 from the 2023 fire fund. Rodney stated that would be upon approval from the auditors on what is remaining in the funds that is allowed to be transferred. Rodney also told the commissioners he has put around \$5,000.00 into the current generator at the radio tower and the control panel has been replaced at least three (3) different times and nothing seems to be working. He said the generator will work, but at this time it will not be able to manually start if needed. Amy Tharp said the county equipment fund has money which can help with the costs of repairs or replacement. Rodney said a new generator will be around \$10,000.00 to \$20,000.00 but will ask around and get an idea and hopefully request bids. The generator will need to be at least 5,000 watts.

Tony Martin was in and said the radio tower might have some communication issues with the wind towers. Tony also stated he would like to have Rodney be the communications director to work with the wind farms and make sure the communication towers/radios stay working without interference. Rodney told the commissioners he would like to do a walk-through with the commissioners of the fire and EMS building as he is noticing some issues that will need to be addressed.

Paul Nordyke was in attendance.

Paul Nordyke asked the commissioners how the landfill's cost was going to work. He asked if anything larger than a pickup would be \$30.00 per ton or if there are exceptions. The commissioners stated the city would not have to worry about cleanup day as that would be free except for tires. Tony said tires are not free because the county has to pay for a company to pick up tires and dispose of them so there has to be cost on the landfill taking tires. Tony said if there is a trailer or anything carrying items for the landfill it will cost \$30.00 per ton and everything on the trailer less than one (1) ton will go by weight (roughly \$0.015/pound). Junk iron, trees and concrete will still be free to dump. Tony did inform Paul and the commissioners it will take time to work out any issues with beginning costs at the landfill but hopefully it will smooth out over time. Paul asked Tony about cleanup week the city provides, and Tony stated it should not be a problem as long as the city and county communicate with each other.

Tony told the commissioners there will be a public notice from KDHE in the newspaper about the new pit. Tony did state he is struggling trying to get all the information from Benesch that he needs but hopes it will work out. Tony said he would like to possibly hire a part-time person to work Saturdays at the landfill's weigh station, the commissioners said they will take that into consideration.

Tony presented a list of possible new fair board members to the commissioners.

Pat made a motion to approve the new Stevens County Fair Board members: Lacy Kurts, Don Beesley, Trent Kurts, Cher Bohl, Kelli Cerecero, Gary Gold, Jamie Gold, Nancy Honig, Paul Kitzke, Karen McClure, Ron Honig, Andy Moser, and Abel Sullivan with Tony Martin as President, David Rome as Vice President, and Melissa Sullivan as Secretary-Treasurer. Tron seconded. Motion carried.

Discussion over the planning and zoning board members were had by the commissioners. Tony presented six (6) candidates and Amy handed in one (1) candidate. The following people sent in letters of interest to be on the planning and zoning board: Warren Willis, Mariann Willoughby, Loren Seaman, Jonathan Percy, Neal Gillespie, Andy Moser, and Robert Davis.

Pat and Tron discussed the board member positions and said they were undecided on the third (3rd) choice between Robert Davis and Andy Moser. After further discussion, a motion was made.

Pat made a motion to accept Warren Willis, Loren Seaman, and Andy Moser to fill the empty positions on the Stevens County Planning and Zoning Board. Tron seconded. Motion carried.

Amy said the appraiser's office had some issues paying Postalocity for the personal property and real estate change value notices due to the credit card not having a high enough cap and the bank doesn't allow the county to send a payment ACH. Amy asked if the appraisers could raise the cap on the credit card or have permission to write a check as it comes in for Postalocity so the appraisers can meet their required deadlines. The commissioners said they will allow a check to be printed when it is needed instead of waiting and one of them will come in to sign, they also stated they did not have an issue if the appraiser needs to raise the cap on the credit card.

Amy said she has put out memos to all the department heads about needing to receive all encumbrances/roll over requests no later than the commissioner meeting on February 26, 2024.

Abatement Orders for 2023 taxes numbered 36 through 45 were reviewed and approved by commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; total valuation removed 18,246 with a relief assessment of \$2,725.15.

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
FEBRUARY 26, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 –
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 10:00 –
 10:30 –

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Counselor; and Amy Tharp, County Clerk, were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve the minutes from the previous special commissioner meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	67,193.51
Judicial District	\$	4,070.12
Road & Bridge	\$	39,349.18
Airport	\$	2,108.84
Airport Grants	\$	-
County Building	\$	114,960.95
Noxious Weed	\$	4,006.91
EMS	\$	7,863.48
Fire	\$	2,176.04
Community Health	\$	10,638.14
911 Wireless	\$	119.70
Sheriff	\$	37,973.94
Employee's P/R Misc W/H	\$	-
Reg of Deeds Tech Fund	\$	346.58
TOTAL:	\$	290,807.39

Bob Brunson with Invenergy was in attendance.

Ross Sullivan came in and said the windows on the Memorial Hall entrance are completed. He stated the wellness center has new concrete over the septic tank and is getting a grate from the City of Hugoton to cover the clean out for the septic. Ross told the commissioners the doors on the AA building have been replaced and will need new windows on the east side of the building in the near future. Ross asked the commissioners when they would like bids for the Moscow Senior Center's

roof to be published and the commissioners agreed to open bids for the center on March 11th at 9:00 AM.

Amy Jo said she has several matters to discuss. She relayed information from Rodney about the radio tower generator and the commissioners agreed a new one needs to be out there but doesn't need to be over 5 kilowatts. Amy Jo said the opioid grant the county has received needs to be used by a certain date and she spoke with Rodney over the issue, and he said he plans on using the funds for purchase of Narcan, training and public information. Amy also informed the commissioners the county lot leases were up on March 1, 2024, and asked if they needed to have it in the newspaper to go out to bid for the next commissioner meeting. Commissioners said yes. Amy stated one individual has paid for the year and she will get them reimbursed. Amy gave a copy of a statute to the county commissioners regarding taxes, penalties, and fees she received from Jayme, the county treasurer. She said to have Paul look it over and see if the commissioners can make changes to the penalties or fees. Paul said he would discuss the matter with Sarah Steele and see what her take is on the statute.

Pat said Benny Cabrera contacted him and stated he has been on the hospital board for nine (9) years now and according to their by-laws will need to be replaced. Pat asked Amy if he was the only board member at this time or if there were more whose term had expired. Amy said she will look into it and see which board members need to be replaced this term.

Amy asked the commissioners when they would like to have everyone's budgets in, and the commissioners agreed the first meeting of June would be sufficient. Amy presented all the encumbrance/roll-over letters received from department heads to be reviewed and decided upon.

Joe made a motion to approve the encumbrance/roll-over letters if the funds are available from 2023:

1. Noxious Weed – transfer \$30,000.00 to the Noxious Weed Equipment Fund
2. GIS - \$950 – postage meter for passports
3. EMS/Emergency Management – transfer \$19,000.00 into the EMS Equipment Fund
4. Fire – transfer \$80,000.00 into the Fire Equipment Fund
5. Appraiser – \$5,855.17 to be used for repairs, postage, equipment and dues
6. Elections – transfer \$8,000.00 into Election Equipment Fund

Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Denise Spence and Bryan Duer were in attendance to discuss the mobile home they had moved into the county in 2021. Bryan said they have not begun building a residence on their land yet due to the costs of new construction. Discussion ensued and all parties agree they are close to the three (3) year agreement to have the mobile home removed from the property no later than November 1, 2024. The residents are asking for more time as they were originally under the impression they had to begin building within the three (3) years not have the mobile home removed by the end of the three (3) year motion. Bryan stated he had tried to reach out to Paul on numerous occasions

but had not heard back from him. Paul stated he had not heard from Bryan for a few years until Friday afternoon (February 23, 2024) when Bryan tried to call Paul, but he was in court. Paul said the minutes state the trailer will need to be removed at the end of three (3) years which is November 1, 2024. It is up to the commissioners if an injunction is filed with the court. Joe suggested they table and reconvene at a different commissioner meeting on March 25, 2024, at 9:00 AM.

Tony Martin was in and asked the commissioners to sign off on the Noxious Weed Report. He stated he will be putting a public notice in the newspaper for the landfill permit modification coming up. Tony told the commissioners Alfred Benesch put in requirements to the state that the landfill needs clay around the pits, but Terracon does not think clay is needed and can possibly get that stricken from the requirements.

Tony said he held an informal planning and zoning meeting last week and the board feels they are ready to begin the public hearings and receive the commissioner's approval. Tony said there are new zoning regulations to review, and they are still working on the windfarms but feels the solar farms are ready to go through the final zoning process. The commissioners told Tony to move forward with the solar and work on getting the wind farms ready to move forward as well.

Tony said Jeff and Jessie will be going to Manhattan for the Noxious Weed conference to keep their weed licenses. Tony said there are some issues with charging for trash at the landfill but will try to get any issues worked out as soon as possible.

Joe said there is a trailer home in Moscow's jurisdiction that a citizen wants to move onto some land within the City of Moscow's city limits. The trailer is older than allowed according to the zoning board. Joe said the City of Moscow can help the issue by not turning on the water or utilities going to that home but also believes the situation will work itself out.

Bill DeCamp came in and asked the commissioners if they were familiar with the resolution Kiowa County just signed pertaining to migration and sanctuary issues. Commissioners replied they are familiar with it. Bill said he would like to have his rights protected and does not want to wait on this issue until it is too late.

Abatement Orders for 2023 taxes numbered 46 through 47 were reviewed and approved by commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; total valuation removed 6,258 with a relief assessment of \$961.67.

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
MARCH 11, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 9:00 – Bids on Moscow Sr. Center Roof
 9:15 – Bids on County Lots
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 10:00 – Robert Harrington – Rural Growth Strategies
 10:30 –

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Amy Tharp, County Clerk, was also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Joe moved to approve the minutes from the previous commissioner meeting. Pat seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	106,470.27
Judicial District	\$	992.19
Road & Bridge	\$	76,184.60
Airport	\$	3,634.17
Airport Grants	\$	-
County Building	\$	-
Noxious Weed	\$	4,330.41
EMS	\$	8,007.69
Fire	\$	3,123.99
Community Health	\$	19,939.07
Community Health Grants	\$	460.00
Sheriff	\$	45,008.47
Employee's P/R Misc W/H	\$	-
Reg of Deeds Tech Fund	\$	82.60
TOTAL:	\$	268,233.46

Rodney Kelling and Bud Jordan were in attendance.

The commissioners discussed the immigration resolution which is circulating among other Kansas counties. This resolution is stating Stevens County is not a hub for illegal immigrants, although Stevens County does support legal immigration and migrant worker programs.

Pat made a motion to accept ***Resolution 24-3, Proclamation of opposing the entry, transportation, employment and settlement of illegal immigrants in Stevens County.*** Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Ross Sullivan was in and Pat asked Ross to contact H&M Roofing and see about doing a water check at the wellness center. Pat said he wants to make sure there are no leaks with the new roof.

Amy informed the commissioners that Benny Cabrera and Seth Gillespie had served nine (9) years on the hospital board and their terms had expired. She said there are two (2) open positions at this time. The commissioners stated they will begin reviewing letters from interested citizens and hopefully decide at the next commissioner meeting.

Amy said she contacted Sarah Steele as per Paul's instruction and said the Board of Tax Appeals are the only ones who can waive penalties or fees on taxes. Tron said he will contact Paul and have him reach out to the prospective party on this matter.

The commissioners asked Rodney if the sirens for Stevens County were working correctly. Rodney said they tested all the sirens and the few that were not working have been repaired. Rodney said he would like to get three (3) more sirens installed in the City of Hugoton and one (1) more installed in the City of Moscow. Rodney said there needs to be a siren at both the east and west industrial parts of Hugoton and possibly by the Pioneer Manor, according to a company who came down, did a study, and suggested more sirens. Rodney said the cost per siren is possibly going to be \$20,000.00. Rodney told the commissioners there have been three (3) structure fires already this year which were deemed a complete loss. Rodney said he will be saving for new SCBA's as they are costly but needed, especially in fire season. Joe asked if Rodney sent any trucks to Texas and Rodney stated he did not as there is a stipulation about going to other states and was waiting for word on whether they needed help. Rodney said he sent a truck to Seward County to aid in a grass fire. Rodney asked the commissioners if they will be doing a walk-thru of the building and the commissioners said they will have Ross go and see what needs repaired.

The commissioners opened bids for the Moscow Senior Citizens roof:

1. Sinco Construction	\$21,440 – Replacement	\$0.00 – Spraying
2. Ebenezer Roofing/Const	\$18,000 – Replacement	\$0.00 – Spraying
3. AK Roofing	\$19,995 – Replacement	\$9,200 – Spraying

The commissioners discussed if they felt the whole roof needed replacement or if they should just have it sprayed with a silicone type substance. Joe stated the storage room has been damaged now and the walls are not in good condition due to the roof leaks. The commissioners told Ross to contact Richard with AK Roofing and find out if they will scrape and clean patches before they spray. Ross said he will contact Richard and ask about adding a flashing to the conjoined roofs before spraying to assist in leak repairs. The decision has been tabled until Ross can get more information from Richard about the spraying.

The commissioners opened bids for the county lots which are up for lease:

TRACT 2 – N1/2 of SW 10-33-37 – 39 acres

1. Jimmy Kraisinger \$1,053.00/year
2. Gary Baughman \$1,072.50/year

TRACT 3 – E side of SW 21-33-37 – 82 acres

1. Jimmy Kraisinger \$2,993.00/year

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 2. Gary Baughman | \$2,255.00/year |
| 3. Chuck Leininger | \$2,952.00/year |

Joe made a motion to approve the bid for Tract 2 from Gary Baughman and Tract 3 for Jimmy Kraisinger. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Tanner Rindles was in from AK Roofing to discuss the Moscow Senior Center roof and told the commissioners they can do silicone seal on foam sealed patches. The commissioners asked AK to shave off the foam seal and see if anything needs to be repaired in those spots before sealing with silicone. Tanner said they can, and the silicone spray seal is guaranteed for three (3) years. The commissioners asked when the work can begin, and Tanner said in a couple of weeks.

Joe made a motion to accept the bid for silicone spray seal for the Moscow Senior Center roof from AK Roofing for \$9,200.00. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Tony Martin was in and said there will be a planning and zoning meeting on March 19th, 2024, at 10:00 AM at the Stevens County Fair Office building. He stated this will be open to the public and is the first of two (2) meetings before the commissioners have their discussion on regulations.

Tony requested an executive session over legal issues for ten (10) minutes. Pat made a motion to go into executive session for ten (10) minutes for pending legal litigation, beginning at 9:30 AM. Joe seconded. The executive session began at 9:30 AM and ended at 9:36 AM. No action was taken.

Tony informed the commissioners he plans on attending a planning and zoning conference on April 23rd through the 25th.

Tony told the commissioners the concrete wall at the asphalt plant is caving in and is currently being supported by sand. He would like to get an estimate on repair and believes it will be around \$16,000.00. Tony then asked if the costs would be out of the building fund, equipment fund or some fund from the road and bridge department. Amy said she will find out what budget needs to pay for the repairs. Tony told the commissioners the repairs will have to be done after asphalt season. Tony said the new water dock's concrete is poured and everything is in place and hopes it will be open soon. Tony also told the commissioners he has not heard back from KDHE about the permit but plans to begin bidding for the digging of the new pit at the landfill.

Pat asked Tony about possibly having a question on the primary ballot to see how many Stevens County citizens are for or against wind farms. Tony said it would be very difficult to get an actual count as most of the landowners do not live in Steven County who do own land. The commissioners then agreed it would be difficult to know since most of the residents live in town and do not have land which would be impacted.

Matt Rome, Lisa LeNeve, Jan Leonard, and Jim Ghumm were in attendance.

Robert Harrington with Rural Growth Strategies, LLC., came in to present the commissioners with the housing study report. He stated this report gives Stevens County an idea of what the housing needs are. Robert also provided information and places for contractors and the commissioners to apply to receive aid for certain housing projects. Robert advised the commissioners to ask for a first right of refusal if there is any land the county wishes to acquire. Joe asked if there is someone the commissioners can refer a person to who is interested in these programs. Robert suggested the Department of Commerce. Robert then further stated the Chamber of Commerce, or the cities and county should get a list from the Department of Commerce of contacts in case someone has questions. Robert also suggested having a housing development committee under Eco Devo who will investigate which programs are available and this board will need to report to Eco Devo, the county commissioners, and the cities. There was further discussion of some of the programs and results of the study between Robert Harrington, Jan, the commissioners, and Jim Ghumm. (A copy of the results will be available at the Stevens County Clerk's office).

Abatement Orders for 2015 taxes numbered 211, 2016 taxes numbered 166, 2017 taxes numbered 119, 2018 taxes numbered 168, 2019 taxes numbered 275, 2000 taxes numbered 89, 2021 taxes numbered 113, 2022 taxes numbered 232, and 2023 taxes numbered 48 through 49 were reviewed and approved by commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; total valuation removed 77,788 with a relief assessment of \$13,700.65.

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
MARCH 25, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Glenn Kerbs – P/Z Attorney
 9:00 – Canvass for 2024 Presidential Primary
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 10:00 – Cammie Heaton – Community Health
 10:30 –

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Counselor; and Amy Tharp, County Clerk, were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve the minutes from the previous special commissioner meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Joe moved to approve the county vouchers. Pat seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	64,967.54
Judicial District	\$	876.15
Road & Bridge	\$	39,152.98
Airport	\$	2,520.48
Airport Grants	\$	-
Ins Agency Damages	\$	4,600.00
Noxious Weed	\$	8,784.62
EMS	\$	5,892.32
Fire	\$	2,177.13
Community Health	\$	13,137.51
911 Wireless	\$	120.19
Sheriff	\$	38,977.32
Employee's P/R Misc W/H	\$	400.00
Reg of Deeds Tech Fund	\$	90.00
TOTAL:	\$	181,696.24

Tony Martin, Stacey Wood, Rodney Kelling, and Bob Brunson were present. Glenn Kerbs and Samantha Sweley with Kerbs Law Office were present via conference call. Discussion was over the planning and zoning regulations for the wind and solar farms coming to Stevens County. Samantha and Glenn asked when the planning and zoning board will have their public meeting to approve the zoning regulations and Tony said they were looking at April 24, 2024, at 10:00 AM at the Stevens County Memorial Hall. Samantha said she would get some information sent to Tony and Stacey to be published in the newspaper at least twenty (20) days prior and must be published twice. If the planning and zoning board approves the regulations, the commissioners will review the regulations and either approve or deny them at the May 13th commissioner meeting

at 9:30 AM. Pat asked Glenn if they had heard about the one percent (1%) impact assessment fee which Kiowa County, Colorado is currently implementing. Glenn said he had not but would investigate it to see if it is something worth working on or if it's possible to do in Kansas. Glenn stated he will be at the meeting on May 13th and will probably request an executive session for contract negotiations. Pat asked Glenn and Samantha if either of them had heard about any counties holding an advisory election on wind and/or solar farms. Samantha said she thought Reno County had one and possibly Sedgwick County as well. Tony asked if Glenn or Samantha knew when Kirkham Michael should be approached about road maintenance agreements. Glenn said to wait until the regulations are approved by the commissioners and contact Kirkham Michael. Glenn said Kirkham Michael has been onsite daily with the wind projects in Ford County and stated to have the developer pay for legal and Kirkham Michael expenses.

Joe stated he had some citizens contact him about the landfill stating they get nails in their tires every time they go to the landfill, and he asked Tony his thoughts on a roll-off at the entrance of the landfill. Tony said there will be extra costs by having to purchase a roll-off vehicle or renting one and having his employees take it and dump it in the pits would take them away from their daily duties. Tony told the commissioners he plans on raising the cost of tire dumping fees an extra \$1.00 per tire. The county pays \$225.00 per ton to have the tires disposed of and it's becoming too costly.

Tony presented the commissioners with the bridge inspection report and stated the bridges are complying and nothing needs to be done at this time. Tony gave the commissioners the noxious weed plan to the commissioners for review and a contract that needs to be signed for Benesch to cancel the contract with them. Tony asked permission for the landfill to be closed on Saturday, March 31st, for Easter weekend. The commissioners told Tony the landfill could be closed on Saturday, March 31st. Tony said they have been receiving concrete and are in the process of finding ways to crush it.

Joe asked Tony if the planning/zoning permit fees needed to be updated. Tony said the fees do not need to change except for the wind and solar fees/regulations. Joe asked Tony if there would be a problem sending the wind/solar regulations to Robert Harrington since he works with infrastructures and is at no cost. Tony said the only problem he sees is that the county hired Glenn Kerbs to do the contracts and regulations. Joe said he would like to send them to Robert to see if he has any questions or ideas that may be beneficial to Stevens County.

Tron said he was at a meeting recently where there is a potential buyer for the KDI plant and stated the pilot from KDI is obsolete due to their closure. Discussion about another possible IRB for whoever purchases KDI was brought up, but Pat stated KDI is within the city limits of Hugoton, and it is ultimately up to them. The commissioners do not feel it is right for the City of Hugoton to accept an IRB without prior approval or discussion with the county commissioners and the schools.

Rusty Tuman and Cammie Heaton were present. Rusty discussed the possibility of being the IT person for the county, which includes the community health department, courthouse, landfill, and wellness center. Rusty stated the county can have their own backup server in which the county will be responsible for overseeing the contracts on the server. This will allow the county to see the costs and make changes as needed. Rusty stated having a backup will help fight ransomware which means that if there is ransomware implemented the county can go to their backup and retrieve information prior to the ransomware becoming active so they will not lose everything. The county will need to purchase a firewall where Rusty can remote in to fix anything that does not need to be in person. He stated he has several people he can use to help if he is unavailable. Rusty stated he would draw up a contract for the commissioners to view and suggested it is for \$1,500.00 per month with ten (10) hours included, if the county uses all ten (10) hours in a month then the cost would be per hour. Rusty also stated in October 2025, Windows 10 will no longer be supported so some of the county's computers might need to be updated as well. Amy asked if Rusty would be willing to come in and visit with courthouse employees to answer questions they may have before a final determination is made for the county IT, Rusty said he is willing to come in and discuss IT with those who are interested and answer questions.

Cammie told the commissioners the BT Coordinator, Richard Everett, passed away last week. She did state Jenette Schuette will be replacing Richard. Cammie presented some grant applications for the commissioners to sign. Cammie stated there is a DEKK (Drug Endangered Kids in Kansas) but the meetings so far are in Washington D.C. and two (2) staff members are to attend. There are other meetings for the DEKK grant but are to be determined as to where and when. Cammie feels this grant would be beneficial, but she has no way of having two (2) of her staff attend, and the costs for Washington D.C. Cammie also stated she is receiving grant funds from a Risk and Reduction Grant and is hoping to use it to purchase a new server for the community health department and handicap accessible doors.

Rodney asked the commissioners if they had anything for him and stated he was just checking in.

Amy presented a letter from the county appraiser's office for personal property owned by the county itemized list was not signed or updated causing a penalty fee. The commissioners asked when this occurred, and Amy stated it has always been done but this year it was not signed by the department head. Lori came over and explained the equipment is used to make money and the county is not a non-profit organization.

Ross Sullivan was in attendance and told the commissioners the contractors for the wellness center told him they are waiting on their insurance company to cover the damage and the repairs needed to fix the wellness center. The contractors also told Ross they would cover the damage and repairs if they do not hear back soon, and Ross told the commissioners that was two (2) weeks ago. Pat asked about doing a water test and Ross said they will conduct a water test when the roof is repaired at the wellness center. Ross said he went to the EMS building and looked around and stated he felt the lights might be a wiring issue and would like an electrician to check that part out before he begins repairing the lights. Ross also told the commissioners if the electrical is good he will start

replacing the bulbs with LED lights and getting them mounted back up as some of the lights are coming down. Ross said there are two (2) shipping doors on the north side of the EMS building, and they are currently being sealed with duct tape to keep the drafts from coming in. He said the doors could be single doors and frame in the other portion of the double doors to help with drafts and control the temperatures in the building. The commissioners told Ross to contact Hancock and find out about the lights and get bids going for the two (2) doors at the EMS building to be replaced and turned into single doors. The bids for the EMS doors will be opened on April 22nd, 2024, at 10:00 AM in the commissioner meeting room and Ross will have the specs and information on the doors if anyone has questions.

The commissioners asked Bob Brunson for some information on Invenergy to see how many acres they have acquired for the wind farm. Bob stated they had acquired 160,000 acres so far.

Abatement Orders for 2023 taxes numbered 50 through 61 were reviewed and approved by commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; total valuation removed 211,194 with a relief assessment of \$30,982.81.

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
APRIL 8, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 9:00 – Denise Spence
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 10:00 – Cimarron Basin – Kayla Janko
 10:15 – Jim Ghumm – Neighborhood Revitalization

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Counselor; and Amy Tharp, County Clerk, were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve the minutes from the previous special commissioner meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	98,237.40
Judicial District	\$	305.82
Road & Bridge	\$	78,552.23
Airport	\$	2,961.80
LATCF Grant	\$	62.73
Library	\$	96,692.25
Noxious Weed	\$	7,768.96
EMS	\$	9,489.85
Fire	\$	10,705.91
Community Health	\$	16,370.12
Community Health Grants	\$	520.00
Sheriff	\$	51,422.08
Employee's P/R Misc W/H	\$	800.00
Reg of Deeds Tech Fund	\$	111.40
TOTAL:	\$	374,000.55

Bob Brunson was in attendance.

Rodney Kelling came in and gave the commissioners the estimate for a new 20kw, diesel generator. Rodney stated 20kw is the smallest generator he can get that runs on diesel, and the tower has a 15kw generator now. Joe asked if Caterpillar is the only place that sells generators. Rodney said they are the only company he can find. Joe asked Rodney if a propane generator would be better. Rodney said it was possible, but he would need a propane tank at the tower to connect to the generator. Pat said propane doesn't degrade like fuel does and would probably be better than diesel. Rodney said he will investigate a propane generator and see what the total cost

would be including tank lease/purchase. Rodney told the commissioners he has already had to pay \$7,200.00 for repair on the current generator and the company is having a hard time finding the panel if there is one in production anymore.

Denise Spence came in and Paul told the commissioners they met last week, and he advised her to set up a meeting with the commissioners to discuss her plans for the mobile home and update the commissioners on where she is at with building a home. Paul stated there are no promises about what will or won't happen. Denise told the commissioners she had spoken to some contractors and the prices of lumber are still high and too costly at this point. She did state they are changing the size of their house to get it within their budget and are working with Jon Peterson to design a home with less square footage as well as G&G CAD Works. Denise said she doesn't want to lose what they have started and after putting in \$67,000.00 for the land, plumbing and electricity, she will build on it. Denise stated that if it comes down to it, she might have to look at a prefab home. Denise asked the commissioners what they would need from her. The commissioners told her they would like to see the plans and a slab or footers down. Pat said nothing is enforced on building codes other than water wells and septic and is not sure what can be done by November. The commissioners told her she can come into any meeting and give updates. Denise requested to be on the agenda for April 22 at 10:15 AM.

Kayla Janko with Cimarron Basin came in with the FY2025 plan which needs signed by the commissioners so she can submit it to the department of corrections. The commissioners signed the FY2025 presented by Kayla. Kayla asked the commissioners if they had discussed and what their decision was on appropriating roughly \$27,000.00 to the Cimarron Basin for assistance in purchasing newer vehicles. The commissioners told Kayla to send an email to Amy requesting how much they are asking for so it can be put into the 2025 budget and hopefully be able to help.

Tony Martin was present and told the commissioners the planning and zoning committee will meet on April 16th, at 10:00 AM in the Memorial Hall to go over the regular planning and zoning regulations. Tony stated a public hearing for the wind and solar regulations will be held on April 24th, at 10:00 AM in the Memorial Hall for approval. After the hearing, it will then be presented to the county commissioners for finalization. Pat told Tony to ask Glenn Kerbs about an impact fee. Tony discussed ways of getting the meetings publicized and Bob said to use Facebook to put ads up for the Stevens County area so people will see it. Discussion about possibly holding an informative meeting in Moscow over the wind/solar/zoning regulations.

Ted Heaton and Cuyler Miller were in attendance and Ted informed the commissioners he will be purchasing a new sheriff pickup soon and is bypassing the bidding process.

Tony requested an executive session over non-elected personnel for fifteen (15) minutes. Joe made a motion to go into executive session over non-elected personnel for fifteen (15) minutes beginning at 10:03 AM. Pat seconded. Motion carried. Executive session commenced at 10:03 AM and ended at 10:17 AM. No action taken.

Tony said there will be a notice in the newspaper around May 1st to inform of digging the new pit at the landfill. He stated it is a lengthy process but is hoping by this time next year it will be completed.

Jim Ghumm came in and asked if the two (2) homes he recently built would be allowed in the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (NRP). He stated he was under the impression that all the homes he plans on building as a project would require only one (1) application for the project and not a single application per home. The commissioners stated the renewal for the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan is still in the works and they are discovering more information on the plan but according to the old plan, the application is per dwelling and needs to be turned into the appraiser prior to building. Paul said he did not know if the NRP could be undone, waived, or what.

The commissioners discussed the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan. Amy said she has acquired some information from several other counties who continued the plan, and it appears it needs to have a public hearing and resolution along with interlocal agreements with the cities and schools in Stevens County. The commissioners would like to get this going as soon as possible. Jan Leonard will need to be informed so he can help get the process going as far as the interlocal agreements and the appraiser will need to be informed so she will know to start looking for applications when this gets put back into place.

Added and Abated Orders were reviewed and approved by commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; for tax year 2021 number 114-115 total valuation added 135 and tax assessed \$21.96, removed 135 and tax assessed -\$21.96; for tax year 2022 number 233-234, total valuation added 135 and tax assessed \$19.81, removed 135 and tax assessed -\$19.81; for tax year 2023 number 62-63, total valuation added 135 and tax assessed -\$18.33, removed 135 and tax assessed -\$18.33. Total valuation of 0 and total tax assessed -\$0.00.

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
APRIL 22, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 9:00 – City on a Hill
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 10:00 – EMS door bids
 10:15 – Denise Spence
 10:30 – Cammie Heaton

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Amy Tharp, County Clerk, was also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Joe moved to approve the minutes from the previous special commissioner meeting. Pat seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	80,118.04
Judicial District	\$	411.23
Road & Bridge	\$	37,395.50
Airport	\$	12,200.12
County Building	\$	5,400.00
Airport Grants	\$	28,384.00
Noxious Weed	\$	4,402.42
EMS	\$	9,595.54
Fire	\$	2,532.48
Community Health	\$	11,399.56
Community Health Grants	\$	422.00
Sheriff	\$	38,313.76
Insurance Agency Damages	\$	39,755.58
Employee's P/R Misc W/H	\$	50.00
County Clerk Tech Fund	\$	3,307.50
911 Wireless	\$	116.59
Reg of Deeds Tech Fund	\$	197.60
TOTAL:	\$	274,001.92

Rodney Kelling came in and gave the commissioners the cost of a propane powered, 12kw, generator which is \$8,900.00. Rodney said he is waiting for Fronk Oil to give him an estimate on a propane tank lease and purchase. If the generator runs on propane a 500-gallon tank it can last ten (10) days as opposed to one to two (1-2) days on diesel. The current generator is set to auto-start but if it fails, there is no way to manually start it due to the panel.

Joe made a motion to purchase the propane generator for \$8,900.00. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Ross Sullivan came in and stated he has not received any bids for the EMS doors yet, but they still have an hour to get them in. Ross told the commissioners the wellness center roof is fixed and passed the water test. Ross also said he is having Marquez Company put the downspouts in at the wellness center since they did a good job of redoing the roof and insulation. Ross and Shelby have completed the installation of the new ceiling tiles at the wellness center office and foyer.

Bob Brunson from Invenergy is in attendance.

Erica Ortega with City on a Hill came in and said they are requesting \$1,500.00 from the county for 2025. Erica told the commissioners they do receive state funding, however, there has been an increase in clients and decrease in state funding. The commissioners said they will take their request into consideration during the 2025 budget process.

Tony Martin came in and reminded the commissioners of the planning and zoning public hearing being held on Wednesday, April 24th at 10:00 AM in the Memorial Hall. Tony also told the commissioners he is trying to get the road and bridge department started early on roads since the weather has been ideal. Road and bridge will begin their four (4) day work week on May 6th. Tony told the commissioners the engineer from KDHE (Joseph Packer) stated there have not been any complaints/remarks about the landfill since the beginning of March, Terracon said not to begin any work, bids, or anything related to a new pit as it could cause the KDHE approval to have to be started over. Tony plans on getting the costs of a ten, fifteen and twenty (10, 15 & 20) year pit.

Amy asked the commissioners if the memorial hall rental charges could be discounted for funeral meals and such. They said the memorial hall is for the public and taxpayer dollars cover the upkeep of the hall and feel making exceptions would cause issues. Amy told the commissioners she will be closing her office on April 30th, from 9:00 AM until 12:00 PM for the memorial services for Jilian Kelly.

Ross came in and handed the commissioners the bid(s) he received for the EMS doors:

1. Finishing Touches \$3,623.08

Joe made a motion to accept the Finishing Touches bid on the EMS doors for \$3,623.08. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Ross told the commissioners someone used an electric knife on the butcher block in the memorial hall kitchen over the weekend. The commissioners told Ross it is up to him if he wants to withhold the deposit from the prior renters. Ross said he will redo the butcher block and let the commissioners know if there was any major damage. He stated he would like the renters to read the signs stating to rinse off the dishes and pans they use in the memorial hall kitchen as well as making sure they are using items needed to help keep the facilities nice.

Denise Spence came in and stated she has tried to reach Jon Peterson for the new draft of their building plans and has not heard back so she went to G&G Cad works from Liberal. She said she will have plans no later than May 13th. Denise set a time of 10:00 to come into the commissioner meeting on May 28th.

Cammie Heaton came in and stated she had some issues with the guest Wi-Fi for the community health department which runs the temperature monitors for the vaccine refrigerators as well as the iPads. There was some issue trying to figure out if it was an internet issue or firewall issue. NexTech sent their IT tech out and he was there for a whole day working on the issue before it was fixed. He told Cammie they will need to look for new computer equipment. Cammie said the ECDC preschool enrollment health assessment had a good turnout for the two (2) hours her and Brittany were there. Cammie also stated she spoke with Gene's Heartland Foods, and they are working on getting completely certified for WIC. She also stated she will not be pursuing the drug endangered child grant as there are too many issues with travel. Cammie said she does have a workforce development grant for \$124,000.00 which has until 2027 to be spent and would like to hold a diabetes self-management class with the grant funds. She said to hold these classes on diabetes, she and possibly Brittany will be taking courses through KDHE to become trained lifestyle coaches.

Abatement Orders for 2023 taxes numbered 64 through 65 were reviewed and approved by commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; total valuation removed 407,857 with a relief assessment of \$53,343.62.

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
MAY 13, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – SDSI (Budget) – Mark Hinde & Steve Sandoval
 9:00 – RCDC (Budget) – Rebecca Clancy & Stephanie Wills
 9:15 – WKCAC (Budget) – Don Rivera
 9:30 – Kerbs Law Office – Glenn Kerbs & Samantha Sweley
 10:00 – Wind & Solar Regulations Hearing
 12:00 – Tony Martin – Public Works

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Attorney; Amy Tharp, County Clerk, and RoGlenda Coulter with The Hugoton Hermes were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve the minutes from the previous special commissioner meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Joe moved to approve the county vouchers. Pat seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	117,216.32
Judicial District	\$	5,427.10
Road & Bridge	\$	131,709.36
Airport	\$	28,064.76
County Building	\$	757.50
Airport Grants	\$	15,864.00
Noxious Weed	\$	9,566.71
EMS	\$	15,777.54
Fire	\$	5,082.43
Community Health	\$	28,190.96
ARPA Grant	\$	5,027.37
Sheriff	\$	132,728.59
Insurance Agency Damages	\$	-
Employee's P/R Misc W/H	\$	-
County Clerk Tech Fund	\$	148.75
911 Wireless	\$	-
Reg of Deeds Tech Fund	\$	244.60
TOTAL:	\$	495,805.99

Robert Davis, Shawn Renfro, Bob Brunson, and Erick Nordling were in attendance. The commissioners told them and several others waiting in the hallway the solar and wind regulation

hearing will be held in the Memorial Hall close to 10:00 AM. Most of the constituents left for Memorial Hall to wait for the wind and solar hearing.

Amy presented the bills for the commissioner's review stating the museum handed in a bill for a concrete slab to be paid out of building and the extension office handed in a bill for LED lights to come out of building as well. The commissioners stated they have paid for the concrete work in full for the museum and were unaware they were continuing to make changes to county property and denied paying for the concrete slab work. Joe said he spoke with Ron Honig and was under the impression something with the lights needed to be done as the wiring or lights were having issues and told Ron to go ahead and get them fixed and turn the bill into the county clerk's office.

Robert Davis told the commissioners there were two (2) construction bids for the airport runway lights and only one (1) was at the lowest and was within the grant fund amount. Robert stated he needed signatures for approval for the grant. Tron asked about snow and ice on the runway with LED lights and Robert stated the LED lights will have heaters in them to help with snow melt. Pat asked Robert Davis what the county clerks' role would be with this grant and Robert stated to just take care of the accounts payable aspect.

Mark Hinde and Steve Sandoval with SDSI (Southwest Developmental Services Inc.) came in and Mark told the commissioners he will be retiring, and Steve will be his replacement. Mark explained the Kansas legislature has appropriated enough funds to help cover five (5) of their employee's wages but would like to find more employees for this area. Mark explained the state sets the eligibility determination and wait list for those in need. The SDSI is looking for someone would like to be on the board from Stevens County and explained they will meet four (4) times a year (every quarter), meals are provided and if weather is bad or someone is unable to drive at night, they will provide a motel stay. They will offer Zoom as an alternate way of meeting if needed. The commissioners said they heard the assisted living places in Liberal are closing. Mark stated the Mosaic is turning into a shared living model and is now trying to match up those with disabilities with someone who will allow them into their home and get paid to care for them. Mark stated SDSI is asking for \$40,767.00 in appropriations and thanked the commissioners for the \$28,209 that was appropriated for this year.

Rebecca Clancy and Stephanie Wills were in attendance with RCDC (Russell Child Development Center). Rebecca told the commissioners they work with children from birth to three (3) years of age on developmental skills. If a child qualifies, they will work with the child and parents to help with the transition to Part B of the High Plains and school districts so the child can get the help they need to get them into school. RCDC assists with many different programs depending on the child's need along with positive parenting. Joe asked how staffing was and Rebecca stated it was good but are looking for a special education teacher. The RCDC is requesting \$22,500.00 in appropriated funds and stated they were appreciative of the \$18,742 they are receiving for the 2024 year.

Don Rivera with WKCAC (Western Kansas Child Advocacy Center) came in and spoke with the commissioners. Don stated WKCAC is the first (1st) to respond after child abuse has been reported by the local law enforcement agencies. They will interview the child with the least traumatizing as possible. Don stated ninety percent (90%) of children who are abused know their abuser and WKCAC helps provide services for the children. WKCAC will coordinate appointments, finances, court dates, attorney, after care and mental health services. The WKCAC has buses which have a forensic, medical, court advocate and therapist on board to assist with these instances. Don stated the WKCAC is requesting \$2,500.00 for their 2025 appropriation.

Rodney came in and told the commissioners a 500-gallon propane tank, with line installation and filled is going to be about \$2,500-\$3,000. Pat said possibly look at a tank at the landfill which is no longer in use instead of purchasing.

Glenn Kerbs and Samantha Sweley along with Tony Martin were in attendance and Tony requested an executive session to discuss client, attorney privileges regarding negotiations and contracts related to wind and solar projects.

Pat made a motion to go into executive session for fifteen (15) minutes to discuss client, attorney privileges regarding negotiations and contracts related to wind and solar projects. Joe seconded. Executive session began at 9:26 AM and commenced at 9:41 AM. No action taken.

Pat made a motion to return to the executive session for fifteen (15) minutes to discuss client, attorney privileges regarding negotiations and contracts related to wind and solar projects. Joe seconded. Executive session began at 9:42 AM and commenced at 9:57 AM. No action taken.

The commissioners moved the meeting to the Memorial Hall so there would be enough room for those interested in attending. Those in attendance were Shawn Renfro, Walter Beesley, Neal R. Gillespie, Seth Gillespie, William Davidson, Walt Beesley, Lisa LeNeve, Keith Rome, Wayne Reynolds, Erick Nordling, Kirsta Tortorice, Trevor Hindmarch, Matt Willis, Bod Jordan, Paul Henderson, Ardith Dunn, Kent Dunn, Valerie Thompson, Shawn Anderson, Don Beesley, Warren Willis, Tony Martin, Paul Kitzke, Mitch Lucas, Bob Brunson, Darrin Heger, Stacey Wood, Glenn Kerbs, and Samantha Sweley.

Tron Stegman opened the public hearing at 10:05 AM.

Darrin Heger, planning and zoning chairman, handed the commissioners a copy of the wind and solar regulations for review and the public hearing. Glenn Kerbs stated the zoning board met and had a public hearing to add solar and wind articles to the zoning regulations already in place and now the commissioners will review the regulations and can either made amendments, table, approve, or send back for more work to be done. Glenn also stated the airport and zoning board worked together to try and come up with plans around the airport to satisfy all parties.

Warren Willis, planning/zoning board member, spoke to the commissioners and told them it was difficult to make decisions on these regulations as some people will be happy with them and some will not, but overall, the board tried to process and make the right decisions for the people of Stevens County. Warren stated it was a unanimous vote to keep the turbines at a six (6) mile radius or further and presented the commissioners with a map of what areas would be outside the radius of the airport and explained it's not an exact circle as they went by the center of the runways to come up with the six (6) miles. Warren also said he spoke with Robert Davis, airport chairman and Hugoton Mayor, Matt Rome to get a better understanding of the six (6) mile radius from the runways. Warren also said there is a government interactive map online which shows the closest wind turbine to Dodge City's runway is five and a quarter (5.25) miles instead of three (3) miles as their regulations allow, and Guymon's wind turbine is five and four tenths (5.4) miles from their runway. Warren also stated he had reviewed and worked on understanding the difference of 1,500 and 2,000 feet for wind turbine from residential housing and stated no counties are consistent with each other and some counties have resources such as land, oil, gas, people, sun, water, etc. Planning and zoning commissions are to regulate industries which tap into resources, where some people want wind turbines, and some don't. Most people who own property in the path of the wind turbines signed up with the contracts stating 1,500 feet instead of 2,000 feet to a residence with Invenergy. Warren states the planning and zoning board feel the regulations are reasonable even with the 2,000 feet, giving landowners the right to discuss and make waivers with other landowners to move the wind turbines closer. Warren provided maps for reference.

Tron opened the hearing up to the public to speak.

Shawn Renfro got up and stated the tax base is not doing well at all especially with KDI gone, gas and oil production is getting less and less which hurts the county revenue. Allowing wind farms will allow revenue for the county and schools. Shawn stated he did sign up for the wind turbines to be located on his property and doesn't want to see the project fail because of setback regulations. Stevens County needs growth and the strict regulations would inhibit growth. The county needs to try to get some form of revenue coming in.

Mitch Lucas, project developer with Invenergy, presented the commissioners with a map showing counties with less than and more than setbacks from residences, as well as banned wind turbines and un-zoned or zoned without regulations. Mitch stated he is very appreciative of the work Stevens County has done. He stated if the turbines produce 600 megawatts, will potentially bring in \$150,000,000.00 to the public revenues. He stated much of the infrastructure in Stevens County is difficult due to pivots, gas lines, oil lines, and aquifers and the setbacks could potentially hurt this project as Stevens County is the most restrictive, but it will depend greatly on neighbors if they choose to sign waivers.

Keith Rome stated he spoke with several neighbors, and they are very supportive of wind turbines and feel the turbines would be great for the community, schools, and jobs. He stated his concern of losing the wind turbine project over five hundred (500) feet.

Neal Gillespie said placing the turbines 2,000 feet from residential would cost more in the long run. Neal said he has concerns as the county is losing gas and what will happen when the gas is depleted. Walt Beesley stated he would like to see the taxes stay down. Neal stated the commissioners that have come on board did at the worst possible time when the revenue dropped marginally due to valuations. Right now, Stevens County needs to do all they can to get revenue which would include adding wind and solar companies to the tax rolls after their tax exemption is over.

Joe stated he agrees with Neal and Warren on all the issues they had discussed.

Erick Nordling stated he felt if the regulations are adopted as proposed will take away the project completely. Mitch said if it does to 2,000 feet it will knock out about 10-20% making a major impediment.

Darrin Heger stated the wind company was already here making contracts with landowners before any wind/solar regulations were in place. Darrin agrees with the airport regulations of six (6) miles from the runways due to instrument panel implementation the airport currently has. Darrin also stated as a board, they must protect the citizens, and he feels confident in leaving the distance to residential at 2,000 feet on wind turbines. A large part of the equation on why the regulations were accepted by the zoning board is because the distance can be waived.

Pat made a motion to approve the solar energy regulations created by the Stevens County Planning and Zoning Board. Tron abstained as he has an interest in a solar project. Joe seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

Joe made a motion to approve the wind turbine regulations created by the Stevens County Planning and Zoning Board. Pat seconded. Discussion was open among commissioners with Tron stating he is curious of the risk of loss by staying at 2,000 feet as opposed to 1,500 feet. Joe asked how difficult it would be to zone with details such as how many residential houses the distance will affect. Pat stated there are so many acres and the waivers will play a big effect when a homeowner doesn't want a wind turbine. Pat then asked if a wind turbine only produces 6.1 megawatts, how do we understand when we can't participate. Looking at numbers he doesn't see the difference between 2,000 feet as opposed to 1,500 feet. Pat said this is tough and not sure the taxes will go down with wind turbines or solar. Erick Nordling asked who is responsible for the waivers and who is asking. Bob Brunson said they will go and find out about waivers and if residents would be willing to sign them. Bob also stated going from 1,500 to 2,000 feet can make a large difference due to center pivots and landowners not wanting to participate. Bob also stated if no one signs the waivers it could potentially cause some large issues but needs to do what's best for the constituents. Paul Henderson said if a landowner does not want to be part of the wind energy program or sign waivers and asks what the county is giving up for an extra five hundred (500) feet. Joe stated there is no guarantee on what revenue the wind turbines will bring in. Paul asked how much value that costs or bring into the county with a five hundred (500) difference, it was stated the appraiser would have to see if the wind turbines bring in appraised value or depreciates land value. Joe said

several people fear the project will die over five hundred (500) feet, but Joe doesn't feel he is being unreasonable by agreeing to the planning and zoning decision. Mitch said there are always larger and taller turbines being produced as tech improves. He said the board might need to eventually look at changing the distance to residential regulations to possibly two and a half (2.5) times the height of a turbine instead of just a number which will allow the regulations to work with the growth of the industry. Tron asked who all was in favor of the wind regulations created by the Stevens County Planning and Zoning Board. Two (2) were for and one (1) against. Unanimous decision for the regulations. Motion carried.

Tron called the public hearing to a close, public hearing ended with the commissioners voting for the solar and wind energy regulations as presented by the planning and zoning board.

Glenn and Samantha have requested to meet with the commissioners at a special meeting at 2:00 PM on May 30th. They have requested the meeting to be an executive meeting to go over client attorney privileges regarding negotiations and contracts related to wind and solar projects.

Tony Martin told the commissioners the landfill inspection last week showed the county is in compliance with everything required by the state.

Pat said Brandon Bozone is interested in the other conveyor belt at the asphalt plant and asked if it is not being used to possibly put it out for bid. Tony said it would be a good idea as he knows several places who would be interested in it as well. Tony asked the attorney and commissioners what needs to be done if someone is building out in the country without any permits, and stated Paul will probably be writing a letter to the individual soon.

Added and Abated Orders were reviewed and approved by commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; for tax year 2018 numbers 169 to 176 total valuation added 940 and tax assessed \$138.00 total valuation removed -940 and tax removed -\$138.00; for tax year 2019 numbers 276 to 283 total valuation added 940 and tax assessed \$132.99 total valuation removed -940 and tax removed -\$132.99; for tax year 2020 numbers 90 to 97 total valuation added 940 and tax assessed \$144.49 total valuation removed -940 and tax removed -\$144.49; for tax year 2021 numbers 116 to 123 total valuation added 940 and tax assessed \$146.72 total valuation removed -940 and tax removed -\$146.72; for tax year 2022 numbers 235 to 242 total valuation added 940 and tax assessed \$129.12 total valuation removed -940 and tax removed -\$129.12; for tax year 2023 numbers 66 to 73 total valuation added 940 and tax assessed \$124.70 total valuation removed -940 and tax removed -\$124.70.

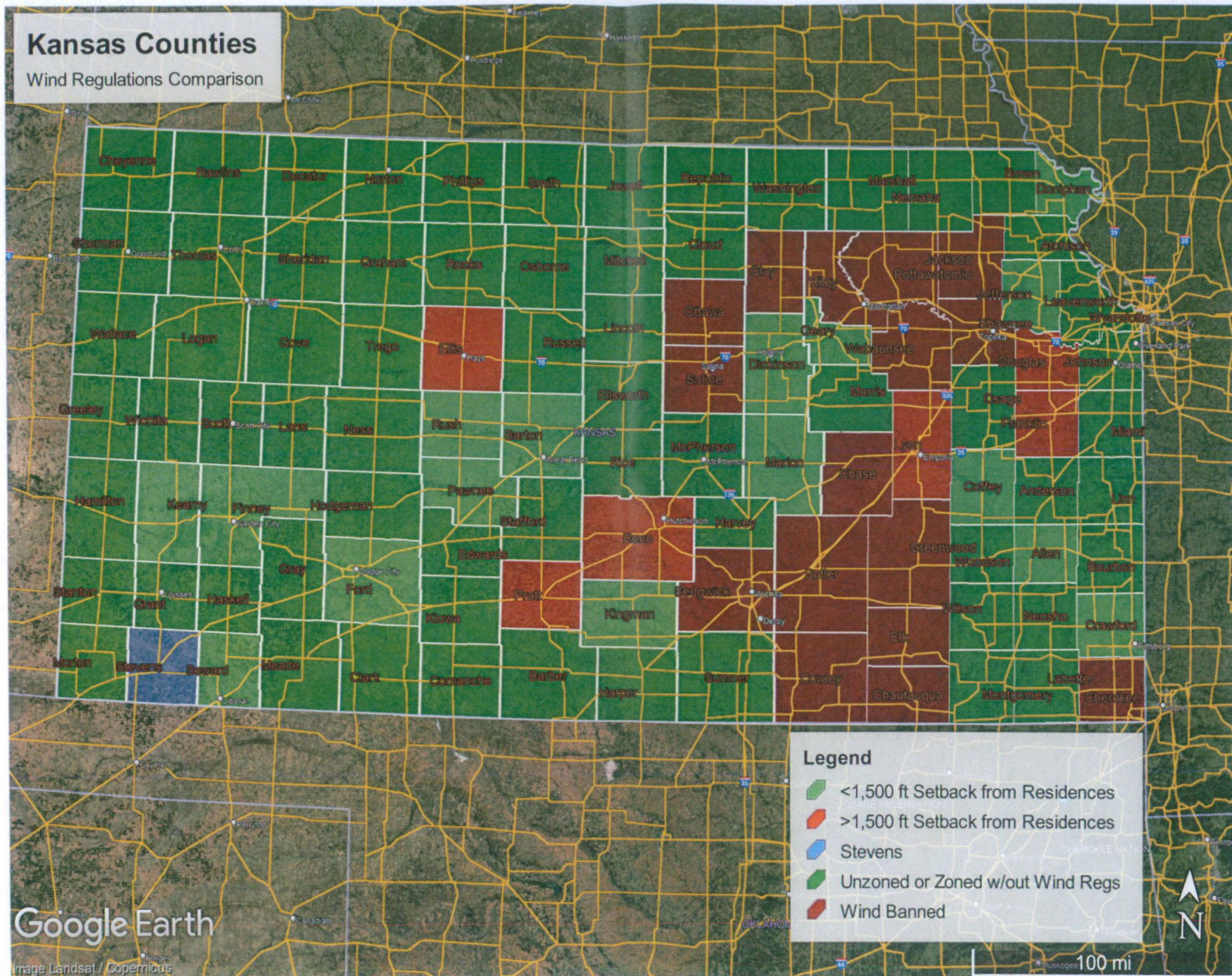
By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

Kansas Counties

Wind Regulations Comparison



COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
MAY 28, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – Cammie Heaton
 9:00 –
 9:15 –
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 10:00 – Angela Eichman

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Attorney, and Amy Tharp, County Clerk were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve the minutes from the previous commissioner meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Joe moved to approve the county vouchers. Pat seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	48,115.78
Judicial District	\$	1,968.52
Road & Bridge	\$	41,528.75
Airport	\$	2,299.68
County Building	\$	1,240.00
Special Law Enforcement	\$	943.00
Noxious Weed	\$	4,438.25
EMS	\$	6,376.54
Fire	\$	2,145.28
Community Health	\$	16,022.61
Alcohol Treatment Fund	\$	233.00
Sheriff	\$	36,126.83
Insurance Agency Damages	\$	3,600.00
Ambulance Bequest	\$	148.50
Fire Bequest	\$	148.50
Treasurer Tech Fund	\$	4,112.88
911 Wireless	\$	116.69
Reg of Deeds Tech Fund	\$	132.60
TOTAL:	\$	169,697.41

Rodney Kelling presented the commissioners with his requested budget. Rodney also told the commissioners he found a used propane tank for the generator and has an estimated amount of \$3,350.00 for the tank, filling it and to get it plumbed in. He is hoping to have the generator installed soon, and also informed the commissioners he needs at least sixteen (16) new SCBA's

which is going to cost around \$350,000.00. Pat asked if Rodney could change them out in stages. Rodney replied it's possible but maintaining two (2) different SCBA's and air compressors is going to be an issue. The commissioners told Rodney to check on a lease agreement program for the SCBA's.

Cammie Heaton came in and said Darren Glenn with Century came into her office and talked with her about the county's IT. Darren told Cammie they have recently started taking care of the IT in Grant County and are looking at several others in the area. Cammie sent him to the county clerk's office and Amy said she visited with him. He is supposed to come in on the 30th about 10:00 AM so department heads who are currently under NexTech can ask some questions. Cammie said there was an Eagle Dash Day for kids. Farm Bureau and the rec center purchased shirts for those who participated. She said the community health department was there to discuss vaccines with the families and give out more information. Cammie said USD210 is wanting the health department to attend another one (1) day on-site enrollment from 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM to vaccinate kids enrolling in school if they need to be vaccinated. Cammie said maybe for a few hours but there needs to be better coordination with the school nurses. Cammie asked the commissioners about merit raises for her staff and her as well. She stated they have all worked hard and diligently and would like to give her staff raises, adding that she has the funds within her budget along with help from a grant.

Tony Martin came in and said Terracon's reports state the water reports are good and they are in the process of getting a liner exemption. He handed commissioners the agreement for services form from Terracon and requested signatures.

Tony gave the commissioners the budget he is requesting for the Stevens County Fair.

Tony stated the person with the junk iron called and said he had a family emergency and was unable to make this meeting but will attend the next meeting. Joe told Tony he has had several people report the bind weed and thistle is out of control. Tony said he has had two (2) trucks running for two (2) straight weeks and Jessie will continue to spray this week providing the weather permits. Tony said the bind weed is adding extra aggravation because he is not letting anyone grade for several days where the bind weed was sprayed so the chemical will have time to kill it out. He said the landfill is making approximately \$10,000.00 or more a month since January and help is needed for Saturdays from 8:30 am – 5:30 pm at the landfill weigh station.

Bob Brunson was in appearance.

County Appraiser, Angela Eichman brought a contract from McCully & Associates to be approved for another year.

Pat made a motion to approve the McCully & Associates contract with an annual fee of \$56,000.00 for consulting services for the county. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Angela said the real estate and ag values are down. She stated if one (1) person would appeal on the ag land, it would probably help drive the values back up. Joe asked if Seaboard Energy should

be on the tax roll now and Angela said Seaboard should get a statement this year, however, the assessing of bio energy plants has become difficult. She is looking into several items with the assessment of energy to make sure the county will remain free of any lawsuits. Angela said solar farms will likely raise valuation as it will change the assessment from ag land to commercial primary. This is because landowners are using the grounds to make money as opposed to windmills which a person can still farm around. The State is still trying to figure out how the appraisers need to assess the land values.

Pat asked Angela about the hotel and what could be done. Paul stated the county cannot waive any fees and the hotel owners will have to visit the Board of Tax Appeals (BOTA) to see what relief is possible. Amy spoke with the treasurer's office and was told the hotel has paid their full 2023 tax amounts and has been paying \$3,500.00 per month since January and this month they will only need to pay \$1,570.00 to get 2017 paid in full.

The commissioners had more discussions about wind and solar farms. They stated they will take their questions up with Glenn Kerbs at the special meeting, which is scheduled for May 30, 2024, at 2:00 PM and the planning and zoning board will meet with Glenn at 3:00 PM.

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
MAY 30, 2024
SPECIAL MEETING

Agenda: 2:00pm – Kerbs Law

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a special session. Amy Tharp, County Clerk was also present. Tron called the meeting to order.

Tony Martin, Stacey Wood, Samantha Sweley, Glenn Kerbs, and Melissa Drake were all in attendance.

Glenn Kerbs requested an executive session for attorney/client discussion.

Pat made a motion to go into executive session for one (1) hour to discuss attorney/client issues pertaining to negotiations and contracts. Joe seconded. The executive session began at 2:02pm and ended at 3:00pm. No action taken.

The commissioners closed the special meeting at 3:02pm.

Commissioners attended a planning and zoning hearing in the Memorial Hall after the special meeting to hear what changes were made to the current regulations pertaining to Stevens County Planning and Zoning. Melissa Drake explained to the planning and zoning board that there were some small changes such as definitions for group home, rural residential, suburban residential, portable asphalt, portable concrete, signage, and conditional use permits. Melissa also stated there were some updates on the statutes within the regulation manual.

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
JUNE 10, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – Dave Piper – Hospital Budget
 9:00 –
 9:15 – Steve Lewis – Museum/firetruck
 9:30 – Marshall Lewis – Southwest Guidance Center
 9:45 - Tony Martin
 10:00 –Bob Brunson - Invenergy

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Attorney, and Amy Tharp, County Clerk were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve the minutes from the previous commissioner meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	123,606.78
Judicial District	\$	554.32
Road & Bridge	\$	84,873.11
Airport	\$	2,772.62
County Building	\$	1,220.00
Library	\$	96,692.25
Noxious Weed	\$	4,499.54
EMS	\$	7,359.05
Fire	\$	3,370.49
Community Health	\$	16,700.14
Community Health Grants	\$	156.00
Sheriff	\$	41,702.97
Airport Grants	\$	15,000.00
Ambulance Bequest	\$	1,200.00
Fire Bequest	\$	1,994.30
911 Wireless	\$	18,000.00
Reg of Deeds Tech Fund	\$	202.60
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>419,904.17</u>

Ross Sullivan came in and told the commissioners the air at the community health department is still not cool even with the new chiller due to the screens being full of junk. Ross said no one from Trane has come in since the new chiller has been installed to check on anything and he is surprised they did not blow out the lines prior to installation. Ross said he managed to get one of the rooms

cooler by cleaning the screen but will be going back every day this week to work on the other rooms and questioned having the water tested for minerals that could potentially be clogging the screens. Trane told Ross they might have to investigate a filtration system to help with the lines to keep the junk out. Pat said he will call Mike from Trane and see what needs to be done. Joe asked Ross if he had a chance to look at the Moscow Senior Citizens roof since the repair had been completed or if he had looked at the inside damage. Ross stated he had not been over there yet, and Joe asked Ross to meet him on Wednesday at 8:00 AM.

Amy handed the commissioners a sworn statement in proof of loss which needs signed and notarized for KCAMP concerning the senior centers in Stevens County.

Dave Piper and Angela Piper were in to give the commissioners more information on the hospital and Pioneer Manor budget. Dave said due to the way Blue Cross and Blue Shield work and the hospital not charging updated amounts, many patients will notice a difference in their billing but hope they understand their insurance will cover most of the fees. The hospital is going to try to put an after-care therapy program in at the physical therapy building and hopes it will help with some funds for the hospital. The hospital is also trying to get more people into the specialty clinic and Dave had spoken with a heart specialist to come out for the specialty clinic but there is so much red tape it is difficult. The Pioneer Manor will be raising rates for private rooms for anyone new from \$200.00 per day to \$289.00 per day, to keep the rates comparable to surrounding areas. Dave mentioned he plans to retire in about five (5) years and Angela Piper will take his position as CFO. Dave also mentioned the hospital is trying to work with a company to get more specialists in such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation who will work with Medicare. The budget has been difficult to get figured out due to the medical places who have been hit with hackers as it was keeping the hospital from working on billing for a little over a month. Dave also informed the commissioners the water softener system at the Pioneer Manor went down and they had to replace it which caused more of a strain on the budget as well. Dave said most of the bad debt in surrounding areas is about eleven percent (11%) and Stevens County ranges from nineteen to twenty-four percent (19-24%). Pat asked Dave if the hospital could have the state collect bad debt through state income tax. Dave said they will be looking into that for sure to get debts cleared up. Dave said due to the new laws of credit reports not showing medical debt seems to play a major role in people not paying for medical expenses which hurts the hospital and clinic. A majority of the costs for the hospital, clinic, pharmacy and Pioneer Manor are due to contract labor, medications, and employee benefits (employee benefits eat up at least 34% of personnel costs). Dave said at this time they are restructuring the charity program to only Stevens County residents.

Steve Lewis came in and stated he assumed the county would be paying for the concrete pad to put the fire truck on which the fire department donated to the museum. Steve said the museum had built a building to cover the fire truck and had the concrete pad put in specifically for the fire truck. The commissioners stated they would not be paying for the concrete pad as it wasn't discussed previously and stated any changes or projects to Stevens County property need to be discussed with the commissioners before moving forward. Steve said the commissioners stated the county would pay for concrete work and he thought it would include the concrete pad for the

fire truck. Joe stated if there is any work done on county property it needs to come to the commissioners first (1st) because they have a say what work will be allowed on county property and if the amount is going to potentially be over \$5,000.00, it will have to go through the bidding process. Steve said he would like to know when Rodney is going to get the fire truck delivered as he was told it was being repaired so it can be driven to the museum then was told it will no longer start. Steve wanted to know if someone else from the county could possibly get the fire truck delivered. The commissioners stated they will find out why it is taking so long to get the fire truck to the museum.

Marshall Lewis with the Southwest Guidance Center (SWGC) came in and presented the commissioners with their requested appropriation. Marshall said the state had made some changes about two (2) years ago and now all the staff at the SWGC are trained in veteran culture, they have a substance use provider, and a certified behavioral health clinic. He said they are asking to keep the foundation solid in mental health and requesting the same amount as they are receiving this year which is \$37,975.00. Joe asked how many staff members are working at SWGC and he stated there are about thirty-five (35) in total. Marshall also informed the commissioners there is a federal grant about every two (2) years to help fund mental health in Kansas as well as other state grants and funds they use to keep the center available.

Tony Martin came in and told the commissioners the asphalt plant was inspected by KDHE, and they were told to shut down due to the pit wall being down. Tony said he is hoping to get the wall repaired so they can the asphalt plant back up and running to work on the repair and maintenance of the county roads. Tony also told the commissioners the asphalt plant will now need to get a permit for storm water run-off from KDHE as it is a regulation. Tony said he spoke with Terracon, and they have submitted a liner demo proposal to KDHE for the landfill hoping to not have to put clay in the new pit. There was a small fire in the pit over the weekend which did not cause any damage, but they have to submit paperwork to KDHE for that instance.

Tony requested a ten (10) minute executive session regarding pending litigation. Pat made a motion to go into executive session at 9:58 AM for ten (10) minutes for a pending litigation. Joe seconded. The executive session began at 9:58 AM and ended at 10:07 AM. No action taken.

Bob Brunson with Invenergy came in and stated Mitch Lucas was not able to attend today. Bob said he appreciated what the planning and zoning board and the commissioners did for putting regulations in place and the work which that entails. Bob asked the commissioners to revisit the idea of using a tip height multiplier for the distance to residential instead of a set 2,000 feet. Research shows using the two and a half (2 ½) tip height would scale up and be more in-line with some of the other setbacks. Bob suggested using a statement for a minimum of 1,500 feet or the multiplier, whichever is greater. Joe said it would be more convenient for wind turbines to use the multiplier because of the constant changes. Pat said he does not want to change the minimum distance of residential from 2,000 feet and stated there is a waiver landowners can sign to exclude the 2,000 feet and have the tower closer. Most homeowners complain about the light and not so

much of the sound or other issues. Pat said he is not for changing the distance between a wind generator and residential home.

Joe made a motion to have the planning and zoning board revisit the distance of the wind tower and residential to be modified to state whichever is greater between the height of tower multiplier (using 2 ½ times tip height) and 1,500 feet. Tron seconded. Pat requested if anyone who has a conflict-of-interest state has a conflict of interest in the motion. Joe stated he did not have a conflict of interest. Pat opposed the motion. By majority vote, motion carried.

Pat asked Paul to speak with an attorney or company to see what can be done about the taxes KDI owes before they file for bankruptcy.

Amy told the commissioners the cost for the RNR notifications this year is estimated to be roughly \$16,000.00 and stated the budget for courthouse was raised for 2025 to cover the costs. Amy also told the commissioners this year outside entities raising the RNR will be reimbursing the county for their portion of the costs instead of the State.

The commissioners discussed the fire truck issue, and no one remembers the decision to donate a truck to the museum. Amy showed minutes from April 10, 2023, where it was discussed to donate the fire truck but no mention of the concrete pad.

Amy asked the commissioners if Effie Gaskill had reached out to any of them as she wanted to come in and visit with the commissioners and decided to contact them via email or phone. The commissioners stated they received an email this morning with concerns the county is pulling funding from Citizens State Bank, which is a local bank, and going to another bank which is not local. Amy contacted the county treasurer and she stated she had not pulled any funds from the bank; the commissioners stated the Citizens State Bank is the depository for the county and there will be no changes at this time.

Lynne Webb came in and handed the commissioners a Board of Tax Appeals (BOTA) application which was denied by BOTA. Lynne said it was denied due to the taxes not being paid before taking to the board. The issue with the person going to BOTA has to do with name and address changes and not seeing any tax bills.

Amy asked the commissioners if they were interested in the neighborhood revitalization plan (NRP). Amy said Paul and she had spoken with other counties and received their plans and resolutions but was not sure which is the best course of action. Paul said he is uncomfortable restarting the NRP, by himself, and costing the county money due to an error.

The commissioners have unanimously decided to forgo starting a new Neighborhood Revitalization Plant (NRP) at this time, no action taken.

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
JUNE 24, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – Sarah Steele – conference call
 9:00 – Courtney Leslie – Hugoton Police Dept
 9:15 – Luke Grubbs – Soil Conservation
 9:30 – Tony Martin – Public Works
 9:45 -
 10:00 –Cammie Heaton – Community Health

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Amy Tharp, County Clerk was also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	102,075.37
Judicial District	\$	1,628.67
Road & Bridge	\$	48,843.21
Airport	\$	7,993.31
Airport Grants	\$	5,891.00
Services for Elderly	\$	116,017.00
Noxious Weed	\$	4,513.52
EMS	\$	8,126.24
Fire	\$	1,774.10
Community Health	\$	15,194.45
Hospital Maint. Fund	\$	500,000.00
Sheriff	\$	40,460.18
Library Emp Benefits	\$	31,519.00
ARPA Grant	\$	19,750.00
Fair Fund	\$	36,850.00
911 Wireless	\$	116.69
Emp Misc W/H	\$	200.00
Reg of Deed Tech	\$	4,202.20
TOTAL:	\$	945,154.94

Ross Sullivan came in and told the commissioners he is concerned with the charges on the Trane bill, specifically the \$70.00 parts charge and the \$1,600.00 labor charge for eight and a half (8.5) hours instead of the five and a half (5.5) hours which was the correct amount of time the Trane representative was here. Pat said he would call a representative of Trane and discuss with them the issues of the new chiller at community health. He will address the problem of the lines and filters

not being cleaned and blown out before and during the installation to make sure the system would run correctly. Ross told the commissioner he spoke with a local person about installing a window unit in the metal shed where the mower and tools are kept so he can work out there when the temperature rises. He said the cost will be \$1,260.80 for the unit and installation. The commissioners agreed. Ross suggested possibly finding someone local with the ability to work on the Trane heating and air systems. Discussion about possible HVAC schooling was held.

Sarah Steele, a tax consultant for the county, was called to discuss the KDI arrears and Pat asked about receiving the back taxes during the liquidation land sale. Sarah said the county will receive any back taxes during bankruptcy before any financial institutions, and there are only six (6) months left of the year to revoke the remainder of their exemption. Sarah told the commissioners to have the county attorney contact the law firm out of Wichita who handles Stevens County tax sales and work on making sure they are aware of the back taxes and the possibility of KDI filing bankruptcy. If the property is sold, the taxes will be a part of the sales cost which will go to the county. Pat asked if any of the financial companies are responsible for the taxes and if the county can go after the financial institutions to collect back taxes. Sarah said no, due to the fact the IRB and financial institution are separate. Sarah suggested contacting Wichita and inform them of payments due and let litigation happen, better to get started now instead of waiting. Trustees appointed on the IRB's will need to have a more active role in the company as the city is the one who issued the bonds with KDI.

Bob Brunson, Rodney Kelling, Tony Martin and Stacey Woods were in attendance.

Hugoton Chief of Police, Courtney Leslie, came in to discuss a medical bill which was received on an inmate which she feels should be the county's bill, not the city's. Courtney stated there was a Jail statute passed last year to cover this issue, stating if someone appears under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, certain conditions will require the police to take the individual to the hospital to be medically cleared. She stated the city police arrested an individual on March 2nd and took him to the jail for booking. Then undersheriff Steers came in and escalated the situation with the arrested person, telling the officers they must take the individual to the hospital for a psychological evaluation. Courtney stated the officers took the individual to the hospital and numerous tests were run, which caused the hospital bill which is now in question. Due to the statute, Courtney does not believe the city police are responsible for the bill. Tron said he had previously spoken to Paul about the situation and Paul stated it is a county bill, not a city.

Luke Grubbs with the Stevens County Soil Conservation District came in with a budget request of \$34,000.00. He apologized for taking so long to submit their request due to changes in the office. Luke also stated the state is offering a stipend to grant equal to or a bit more than what the counties are paying for soil conservation appropriations.

Darin Heger was in attendance.

Rodney Kelling came in and told the commissioners the propane tank will possibly be installed this week and questioned what to do with the old generator. Rodney said the panel is bad, will not start

manually but still runs, that he has been unable to obtain the correct parts for it yet. Tony said road and bridge has the old generator from the community health department, but the engine is cracked. Pat suggested possibly putting it on PurpleWave or another auction/bid site.

Tony and Darin presented the commissioners with the regular planning and zoning regulations. Pat made a motion to approve the revised planning and zoning regulations as presented. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Darin said they may go over the regulations next year and make sure there are no changes needing to be made after the revisions. Tony explained the conditional use permit is attached to the land if it is completed and fulfilled. If the conditional use project is not completed it will be vetoed.

Tony Martin told the commissioners the asphalt plant is getting worked on and will continue to keep it repaired since it is required by KDHE. Tony said the road and bridge department will hopefully begin chip/seal by July 8th. Pat asked Tony about the tire tonnage fee by Champlain Tires and asked if they pick tires up every month or on an as needed basis. Tony said usually once a month unless there are not enough to justify the trip. Pat stated the current bill seems to be quite large and Tony said the billing also depends on how many tires were picked up and to remember the county charges for disposal of tires which balances out the Champlain Tire costs.

Tron asked about the windmill zoning height changes and how to proceed. Tony said he spoke with Glenn Kerbs and it was suggested to find a time when the planning and zoning board can discuss the changes and also have a hearing the same day instead of multiple meetings to make one (1) change. Tony told the commissioners they will begin to work on road agreements, pilot agreements and other things soon.

Sheriff Ted Heaton and undersheriff TJ Steers were in attendance. Ted informed the commissioners the K-9, Kleio, and Deputy Chris Beltz will be retiring on July 13th, 2024. Ted asked the commissioners for approval of retiring Kleio and allowing Chris Beltz to keep her; the commissioners agreed. Ted also stated Stevens County Sheriff Department will no longer have a K-9 unit at this time and will request assistance from neighboring counties if needed. Ted said he is waiting for Paul to draft a letter to allow Chris Beltz to keep her and diminish any liability from the county for Kleio. Ted expressed his frustration with kids and phones in school causing bullying and crimes against others through their phones and social media. On another issue, Ted said there is a county vehicle which was damaged and is under the impression Hugoton Uptown Autobody is beginning to start the process of retiring the business and he is using the new one east of town. Ted said cost saving has been implemented at the sheriff department by using a deputy to replace jailers when needed instead of hiring a new employee. Pat asked Ted about the constant rotation of new vehicles and was questioning trading them in so frequently due to the vehicle being under 100,000 miles and what Ted's thoughts are of cost saving there. Ted told Pat to cut anywhere but vehicles and stated he had not replaced a jailer and will not hire someone to replace Chris Beltz. Ted stated nothing has changed and is nothing new on vehicle trade-ins in the last thirty (30) years. Joe said a half (1/2) ton pickup is in the shop getting repairs more than it is out on the streets. Pat stated the July 9th budget workshop

would be difficult due to the drop in valuation. Joe stated if it is within Ted's budget to trade-in vehicles on a regular basis, then he has the right if needed. Ted stated he has always stayed within his budget and has never gone over until this past year due to inflation.

Cammie Heaton came in and stated she spoke to Mike with Trane, and he suggested having a water test done at the community health department to see if there is an abundance of sediment in the lines or during installation the chiller got plugged. Ross has been cleaning the screens for a week and they finally have cool air at the health department. Cammie said the lines should have been flushed before the installation of the chiller was completed. Pat said he had spoken to Mike and Mike said he would come down and flush out the lines. Pat will reach back out to Mike and see when and what else can be done. Cammie said there are dead tree limbs and she had contacted the city to see if they could come and trim them out, but the city suggested letting Tony with the county take care of them. Cammie said she contacted Tony, but the county doesn't have the equipment to get into the trees and get the dead limbs trimmed out. Pat suggested Cammie contact Casey Settlemeyer and get an estimate. Cammie asked if anyone had noticed numerous doves/pigeons being dead or dying in the area and stated there was a citizen that had found at least twenty (20) dead in his yard. Cammie said she spoke with Stephanie Smith (Hugoton Animal Control) and there are two (2) concerns with all the birds found deceased. One (1) of the concerns is the feedlots are worried about avian flu and are poisoning the birds and the other concern is a pigeon virus called PPMV1 which can cause distemper in dogs. Some doves have been sent in for testing and Cammie is currently waiting for results.

Aaron Brinkerhoff with Washington National came in and discussed the employee benefits they provide and stated if an employee signs up for one of their benefit packages and the employee after time decides they no longer want the plan, they will get their money back. More discussion over the different forms of employee benefits by Aaron was talked about. The commissioners tabled the decision until later and further discussion.

Pat stated someone with the Stevens County Foundation Board and the board is willing to grant the county \$250,000.00 to help cushion the budget due to the drop in valuation. Joe questioned if the county takes the grant, won't the county have to put money back into the foundation? Pat said he would look into it some more and find out.

Amy said the FLSA was revised by the department of labor changing the salary thresholds. Amy said the current threshold is \$35,568.00 annually and by January 1, 2025, the annual threshold will be \$58,656.00. Amy said three (3) county employees will be affected by this and the only solution is to do raises for those affected to get above the threshold or they will not be salaried. Amy reminded the commissioners of the employee manual which states each department head is responsible for employees exceeding overtime and clocking in and out in real time.

More discussion of the wind farms pertaining to the depreciation of the windmills and the ten (10) year land value limit.

The commissioners questioned if counties could change their deductibles in KCAMP. Amy said she will ask KCamp and see what they say. The commissioners also stated if there is something that needs repaired due to an accident or storm where insurance could be the payee, to find out the cost and if the cost is reasonable to just pay out of pocket without submitting a claim.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
JULY 8, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 –
 9:00 –
 9:15 – Cimarron Basin – Tiffany Bowen
 9:30 – Tony Martin – Public Works
 9:45 – Susan Schulte
 10:00 – Sunrise Hospitality - Taxes

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session except for Joe D. Thompson. Paul Kitzke, County Attorney; Amy Tharp, County Clerk; and RoGlenda Coulter with The Hugoton Hermes were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve minutes from the past two (2) meetings. Tron seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Tron seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	72,885.96
Judicial District	\$	-
Road & Bridge	\$	89,464.86
Airport	\$	3,492.47
Airport Grants	\$	-
County Building	\$	3,021.58
Noxious Weed	\$	7,116.17
EMS	\$	8,586.18
Fire	\$	14,620.80
Community Health	\$	13,406.62
Ambulance Bequest	\$	6,871.40
Sheriff	\$	40,901.05
Emp Misc W/H	\$	50.00
Reg of Deed Tech	\$	110.60
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>260,527.69</u>

Bob Brunson, Shannon Crawford and Ross Sullivan were in attendance.

Amy handed the commissioners some utility bills from one of the county departments which have yet to be signed. Pat stated the commissioners should not be signing the bills as they are part of the department head responsibilities and would possibly help to hold department heads accountable for getting their bills signed and in on time to avoid late charges, penalties and disconnect notices, etc. Tron signed the bills and handed them to Amy to be paid.

Ross Sullivan came in and reported to the commissioners that the health department now has cold air throughout. He said the lobby is on a different thermostat which is not connected to the Trane computer system. Ross said he replaced a belt on their HVAC system, cleaned coils and screens. Pat said he spoke with Mike at Trane and Mike stated there should be someone down there to take care of everything and Ross replied he had not seen anyone from Trane at the health department while he was working over there. Pat asked Ross about the roof at the wellness center and Ross said the office is good with no leaks, but the large building does have a few small leaks which must not have gotten sealed.

Rodney Kelling came in and told the commissioners the generator has been installed completely at the radio tower and a propane bill should be coming in soon. Rodney said there are a few leaks in the ambulance and fire bays but believes there is a five (5) year work warranty. He will call AK and have the roof checked to get the leaks repaired. Rodney told the commissioners he gained two (2) new fire fighters and one (1) firefighter left last week.

Cammie Heaton came in and told the commissioners she has submitted her WIC grant budget for \$72,241.00 which is a nine percent (9%) increase from this year. Cammie said the health department has cool air finally, but the generator is now having issues and the repair cost will be around \$4,000.00. Cammie said there is still some money left from the COVID grant and is planning to use some of it to help with a new server and will be requesting an extension until the county can decide on the server and which way they plan to go with IT. Amy told the commissioners several department heads have spoken to other IT companies, and she is waiting for one (1) more estimate so a decision could be made soon. Cammie said Paula had contacted her and said the Stevens County Retail Pharmacy is looking at doing vaccines for the public. Cammie said that is where the health department makes most of their revenue. Cammie said there are weeds all around the outside HVAC system and Ross has sprayed them but wanted to know if Ross is responsible for that portion. Pat said yes, Ross should be taking care of that, and said Ross purchased some sterilant to treat the ground around the unit when it is feasible. Pat asked Cammie if she contacted Casey Settlemyer about the trees and she said she has not as of this time but will contact him today.

Tron said the AES solar company is planning on holding an informational meeting on the 23rd of July. Tron reported if AES and Nextera both come in there is at least a \$200,000.00 profit for the county due to the conditional use permits.

Tiffany Bowen with Cimarron Basin came in and told the commissioners she needs a signature on their fiscal year 2025 budget. Tiffany stated the budget was revamped due to Governor Kelly making some changes in the corrections favor. Tron signed the budget for Cimarron Basin.

Paul gave Tron a mutual release and transfer of ownership for Chris Beltz to take ownership of K-9 Kleio. Tron signed the release form.

The commissioners asked about dissolving townships in Stevens County and Amy said the only township that has had a board in the last eight (8) years has been Moscow as they take care of their own cemetery. To her knowledge no other funds go into any other township and no one ever runs or is on the boards. Amy presented the commissioners with a resolution and some statutes concerning the disorganization of townships. Paul suggested putting the information in the newspaper as a notice and the commissioners asked if it could be done by the next meeting. Amy suggested waiting until after the primary election and if no one is a write-in on that ballot she will talk to the secretary of state's office and see if they can dissolve after the Primary or wait until the end of the year.

Tony Martin was in and stated the landfill received an official approval letter from KDHE to inform them the county can start construction of the new pit without needing a liner. Tony said the pit will last approximately ten (10) years but more than likely will be seven (7) years.

Tony said the planning and zoning board plans to get a meeting set up to make changes on the distance of the windmills to residential properties and will try to take care of the meeting and hearing on the same day so they can then present it to the commissioners.

The road and bridge department will begin chip/seal this afternoon, weather permitting.

Tony requested a ten (10) minute executive session over non-elected personnel wages.

Pat made a motion to go into executive session for ten (10) minutes over non-elected personnel wages. Tron seconded. The executive session began at 9:14 AM and concluded at 9:23 AM. No action taken.

Tony requested the commissioners approve the two (2) employees at the landfill (Josh and Lupe) a \$1.00 per hour raise. Tony also asked for a \$1.25 per hour raise for Stacey Wood and an estimated \$1.25 per hour raise for himself due to the extra work for planning and zoning.

Pat made a motion to accept the raising Tony proposed. Tron seconded. Motion carried.

Tony said the changes at the landfill have worked and the main reason is the landfill is mostly for Stevens County residents and the county has tried to keep it free but people from other counties were coming over and dumping trailer loads due to the no cost. Currently, it is still free for concrete, trees, metal and if it is just a pickup bed of junk, with the exception of tires. Tires and trailer loads are where the fees come into place.

Sheriff Ted Heaton and Deputy Cuyler Miller were in attendance. Ted said he came to ask about the release of ownership of K-9 Kleio and Amy handed him the signed document. The commissioners asked Ted to get Chris to sign the document and bring the original back to the county clerk's office.

Susan Schulte with GIS came in and requested a ten (10) minute executive session to go over non-elected personnel wages. Pat made a motion to go into executive session for ten (10) minutes over non-elected personnel wages. Tron seconded. The executive session began at 9:45 AM and concluded at 9:53 AM. No action taken.

Amy Jo was asked about the figuring of wages due to the recent DOL ruling for some of the salary employees going to hourly. Amy Jo explained she and Amy Rich decided to have a couple estimates prepared based on division of current salary amount by exact number of minimum hours required to work, as well as an average of actual hours worked and accrued, to obtain an approximate hourly wage amount that equates to the current salary. This information was prepared ahead of time for the commissioners, as it would be likely they may request estimates based on these different scenarios. She confirmed they were not set in stone rates, nor did they imply they were set in stone rates, as obviously the commissioners will have to make that decision. Amy Jo reminded the commissioners these rates are not required to go into effect until January 1, 2025, so they have ample time to decide when they want to settle on a rate for each of these employees.

Sam Bhakta, Praful Bhakta and Evelin Urquidi with Sunrise Hospitality came in to discuss their tax issue with the commissioners. Praful stated he is confused on the issue where the commissioners released them from penalty and interest on late taxes but received information the penalties and interest were still attached. Tron explained the commissioners made an error in thinking they can release Sunrise Hospitality, LLC. for interest and penalty, when it needs to be handled through the Kansas Board of Tax Appeals (BOTA). Pat told them the commissioners were behind them and agreed the penalties and interest should be dropped but it is ultimately up to the State. Paul said he spoke with Suresh they need to go in front of BOTA and file an appeal or waiver. Paul also stated it is probably best to get their attorney involved and their attorney can contact him if there are any questions.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
JULY 9, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Budget Workshop

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session except for Joe D. Thompson. Amy Tharp, County Clerk; Theresa Dasenbrock, Lisa Axeman, and Tiffany O'Rourke with Lewis, Hooper and Dick, LLC, were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Walt Beesley, Shannon Crawford, Dave Piper, Angela Piper, Tony Martin, Cammie Heaton, Rodney Kelling, and Robert Davis were in attendance for the budget workshop.

Lisa discussed the landfill and stated the schedule one (1) has met all the requirements. Lisa stated the county has adequate coverage if needed and can transfer within the general budget. Lisa presented graphs going over taxes, intergovernmental, licensing fees, charges, use of tax dollars, property, and transfers in. Lisa also explained the expenditures and how they relate to the county income. Lisa stated the audit report was clean and the county financial statement went down, and the expenditures were good. Pat asked how much of the motor vehicle taxes the county gets and Lisa said only two percent (2%) and the rest goes to the state.

Lisa explained the best practice in compliance states a county can not spend more dollars than they have in the cash balance. Departments cannot spend more than their budgeted authority and requests departments keep track of their future expenditures. Inventory is required every year and all checks outstanding of two (2) years need to be cleaned up. There is a new bank account in which the EIN should be recorded on all daily statements to show the incoming of funds for the county credit card machine receipts. The county treasurer and clerk need to monitor bank statements and make sure expenditures are posted in the proper pay period to keep the current year separate from past year expenditures to keep the budgets in line. The monthly financial reports need to show the budget amounts. Minutes need to have approvals stated within such as the sheriff boiler not being mentioned in the budget for bids or being approved, and the commissioners should be approving any decommissioning or acquiring of any vehicles the county uses. Department heads are responsible for the timely deposits to the treasurer's office to help keep the county funds in compliance with expenditures and receipts.

Tiffany stated the encumbrances need to be documented in the minutes as to the amount, what it is used for and have invoices or price sheets on what the encumbrances are to be spent on. County departments need to keep track of their federal grants, such as receiving, spending and reports due. The airport needs to get approval before entering into any contracts. The register of deeds tech fund has a cash balance of more than \$50,000.00, and they need to spend what is over or transfer the funds into the general.

The auditors suggested the commissioners pull in at least two (2) different department heads on a rotating basis to the commissioner meetings to make sure they are complying with all county rules and regulations and to find out where those departments stand as far as their budget and expenditures.

Theresa showed the commissioners comparisons to neighboring counties and counties with approximately the same population and stated Stevens Count still has lower taxes than most of the other counties.

The auditors discussed the budget and the drop in valuation with the commissioners. They suggested cutting some of this year's budgets and make some cuts to next years budgets to help cushion the valuation decline. The auditors confirmed with the commissioners about keeping the wellness center in the black and being self-funded, meaning the money brought in by the wellness center should match what is being spent by the wellness center. The auditors suggested the commissioners should monitor the wellness center funds throughout the year to make sure they aren't spending more than their income.

After making several adjustments to the 2024 budget and 2025 budgets, the commissioners and auditors managed to keep the tax dollars the same for next year which will not require a revenue neutral rate increase. There will be no revenue neutral rate increase or hearing for 2025. The budget hearing will be held on August 12, 2024, at 8:30 AM in the county commissioner's room.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
JULY 22, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – Lynne Webb - Printer
 9:00 –
 9:15 – Jayme Rich - Treasurer
 9:30 – Tony Martin – Public Works
 9:45 –
 10:00 –

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Attorney; Amy Tharp, County Clerk; and RoGlenda Coulter with The Hugoton Hermes were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve minutes from the last meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	65,467.99
Judicial District	\$	2,418.75
Road & Bridge	\$	228,226.25
Airport	\$	13,939.40
Airport Grants	\$	-
County Building	\$	2,732.21
Noxious Weed	\$	4,401.74
EMS	\$	7,447.11
Fire	\$	2,752.61
Community Health	\$	9,907.19
911 Wireless	\$	116.69
Sheriff	\$	44,990.94
Emp Misc W/H	\$	400.00
Reg of Deed Tech	\$	141.00
TOTAL:	\$	382,941.88

Walt Beesley and Bob Brunson were in attendance.

Rodney Kelling came in and told the commissioners the roof on the fire and EMS building is still leaking in spots. There should still be a warranty for repairs available. He has reached out to AK Roofing and is just waiting to see when the roof can be looked at. Rodney also told the commissioners he met with the Stevens County Foundation Board and has been approved for a grant total of \$95,758.07 to apply towards the compressor and SCBA's which is vital for the fire department. The

estimated cost is around \$330,800.00, which Pat said the county could assist with. This will leave the Emergency Management budget to come up with roughly \$70,000.00. Rodney said they can do a lease to purchase agreement for five (5) years if the commissioners still want to investigate that possibility. Joe asked if there were other funds that could be used for the remainder and Rodney said there is some money in the equipment and bequest funds, but he doesn't want to drain them so low. Joe asked if there were any other companies that do SCBA's to where the county can bid out for them, and Rodney said there were a few but not as reliable as the one he has been talking to. Joe suggested waiting until the end of the year to let out for bids as there might be some more funds the county can use to help purchase the SCBA equipment. Rodney asked the commissioners if they wanted to bid out the old generator (SDMO 10KW, diesel) or just put it on PurpleWave.com. The commissioners suggested putting it in the newspaper for bid and Paul suggested to have a reserve amount on the bids. Bid opening for the Emergency Management used generator will be opened on August 12th, 2024, at 9:00 AM with a reserve amount of \$500.00.

Lynne Webb came in and told the commissioners her printer was going out and a new one would cost roughly \$2,495.00 for black and white. Lynne said Jayme, the county treasurer, offered to pay \$1,495.00 or the remaining balance out of the treasurer tech fund to help the appraisers with a new printer. The commissioners agreed the appraisers can get a new printer.

The commissioners asked what can be done with the old commissioner chairs and Amy suggested the Kiwana's sale. They agreed to put the chairs in the Kiwana's sale next year.

Amy relayed to the commissioners Robert Davis should be coming to the next commissioner meeting to discuss the airport manager's job description. Amy also told the commissioners due to the elections this year the county should wait to dissolve townships until the beginning of next year. Amy also asked the commissioners if a resolution needs to be drawn up instructing all department heads to report their department income on a minimum of a monthly basis for accounting purposes. Joe asked if there was a policy for this issue and what the consequences were. Amy said there is a policy but to her knowledge, no consequences as it is up to the commissioners on non-elected personnel departments. Tron stated there were issues within one department due to personal issues, but it should be fixed by now. Joe asked if they needed help and Tron said it had been taken care of. Amy stated there is some due diligence for department heads even if they are having issues but if a person is on the clock, they should still get work done or at least communicate with other departments who are waiting for work information from them. Amy also informed the commissioners she sent out information to all department heads letting them know there is a program through the treasurer's office which allows credit cards, debit cards and on-line checks which citizens can use to pay bills or fees which does not cost the county a monthly subscription plan.

Jayme Rich came in and Amy asked her to explain the pay system for credit, debit, and checks. Jayme said the State has provided government entities with this system which charges the person paying by debit or with credit card a two and a half percent (2.5%) fee and those paying by check are charged \$1.50. She stated the Emergency Management department is set up on the system but not any of the other departments.

Jayne informed the commissioners she has an insufficient check from a citizen on a vehicle tag from 2019. She had followed all protocols, including sending the Sheriff out to retrieve the tag in which she was told the people moved out of state. She then contacted the county attorney, Paul, to try to collect from him but the letters were returned. Finally, she contacted the state for the off-set program, but nothing has worked, and this check remains negative in the account. Jayme said she is requesting the commissioner's write-off the \$304.27 insufficient check and use miscellaneous general funds to clear the check.

Pat made a motion to write-off the 2019, \$304.27 insufficient motor vehicle check by using miscellaneous general funds. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Jayne said there are enough funds in the 2024 budget for her salary to receive an increase. She told the commissioners she would like to request a raise to the amount of her budgeted approval for the rest of 2024. The commissioners approved Jayme's request.

Jayne discussed the upcoming tax sale and Pat asked if KDI will be on there. Paul said he spoke with Michelle Brenwald and Sarah Steele and those are the two (2) people who would be able to answer those questions. Jayme said KDI is not in this tax sale but will more likely be in the next one. Jayme said she is currently looking for another title company to go through as the last one had problems getting information to the tax sale company in a timely manner. The question about KDI being on the tax sale is due to the IRB and no one is clear on if they can be on a tax sale or not. Jayme also stated BOTA usually has the owner pay the amount in full and receive a refund if they are approved but usually does not exempt any portion of taxes if the bills are not paid in full.

Tony Martin came in and said there had been eleven (11) miles of chip-seal completed before they had some equipment break down and only have eight (8) miles left. They are currently blading dirt roads. There is only one (1) weed spraying rig running at this time and last week. Pat asked if the Johnson Grass is getting sprayed and Tony said it was. Tony mentioned a solid waste training workshop in Garden City this Wednesday and Thursday where he, Jeff, and one of the landfill employees will be attending. Tony said the landfill pit is getting closer to being dug and currently the engineers are requesting a one percent (1%) slope in the pit for water from KDHE.

Tron asked Tony about the new water bay and how the asphalt would be run since most of the traffic would be heavy. Tony said he is hoping to have six inch (6") thick asphalt laid but noticed there needs to be dirt work done first. Pat stated he had gone out and sterilized the ground around the water bay.

Tony reached out to Glenn Kerbs and stated there will be a planning and zoning committee meeting around August 20th to get the distance on the windmills changed and start getting the process completed for the commissioners to make a motion.

Tony said Steve Morris is done farming the land out east and does not know what the commissioners have in mind for it. Joe suggested planting grass on the land.

Ross came in and Joe asked about the Moscow Senior Citizens Building. Ross said he spoke with AK Roofing and is waiting to make sure there are no more leaks before he puts new sheetrock up. Joe asked about the lighting and said the light fixtures need repaired and should possibly be moved to LED lights. Amy said there are still some funds from insurance which will help with the cost of the lights and sheetrock.

Amy told the commissioners about the server and the department heads with the courthouse and community health have been searching for a different IT. She stated they have it narrowed down to two (2) different companies and will hopefully decide this week. Joe asked if it would be better to hire in-house IT personnel, but Pat said it would be more costly. The commissioners stated Haskell County is now going with Adams-Brown and to check into them. Amy asked permission to go ahead with a server if it can be done before the August Primary Election.

Joe made a motion to bypass the bid process on a server for the courthouse if it can be installed and running prior to August 6th, 2024. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Amy told the commissioners she reviewed the changes made to the 2025 budget and noticed there were not enough funds budgeted for the treasurer's contractual portion. She asked them to review the amounts before the budget hearing on August 12th. The commissioners reviewed the treasurer's contractual portion and suggested moving \$8,000.00 from one of the contingency areas into the treasurer's contraction portion.

Joe told Amy he would like to see if she can locate the museum's audit as he would like to review it.

Amy asked the commissioners to appoint two (2) electors to destroy ballots, envelopes and associated records that have been sealed from the 2022 Primary Election as stated in K.S.A. 25-2708.

Joe made a motion to allow the county election official to appoint two (2) electors to destroy the ballots, envelopes and sealed records from the 2022 Primary Election. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Jayne Rich came back and informed the commissioners she had not received any deposits from the wellness center until recently and it was only for the month of April. Tron said he spoke with the department head and the issues will get resolved. Amy said communication would be appreciated due to other departments needing to get their duties done in a timely manner.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
AUGUST 12, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Budget Hearing
 8:45 –
 9:00 – Bid Opening – EM Generator
 9:15 – Walter Beesley – 1st Right of Refusal
 9:30 – Glenn Kerbs – Executive Session
 9:45 –
 10:00 – Denise Spence – House
 10:30 – Steve Lewis - Museum

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Attorney and Amy Tharp, County Clerk were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve minutes from the last meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	95,620.02
Judicial District	\$	2,814.08
Road & Bridge	\$	59,676.30
Airport	\$	15,243.68
Election Equipment	\$	770.00
Treas Spec Auto	\$	1,495.00
County Building	\$	10,002.50
Noxious Weed	\$	14,622.85
EMS	\$	10,470.73
Fire	\$	5,848.97
Community Health	\$	21,510.55
Comm Hlth Grants	\$	787.00
Sheriff	\$	100,138.29
Insurance Agency Damages	\$	8,225.69
Alcoholic Treatment Fund	\$	497.76
Reg of Deed Tech	\$	270.20
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>347,993.62</u>

Paul Henderson, Shannon Crawford, and Rodney Kelling were present.

Commissioner Tron Stegman opened the budget hearing at 8:30 AM and asked if there were any public comments. No one had any comments.

Joe made a motion to approve the 2025 Stevens County Budget as reported. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Tron closed the budget hearing. Tron opened the meeting to be held as usual.

Amy told the commissioners Nex-Tech informed Cammie at the community health department there was a data breach via email on August 6, 2024. Amy stated the incident was contained to community health and the Kansas Secretary of State was informed as well as KCamp. Nex-Tech and KCamp are currently working together to make sure there was nothing in the emails to violate HIPPA. Last Amy heard was Friday, August 9th and there was no HIPPA breach. Amy said she has several different quotes for IT and servers she will present to the commissioners at the next meeting. Tron asked what a township officer's responsibilities are. Amy stated functioning townships take care of maintenance of roads, ditches, cemeteries, etc., within their township. Currently, Moscow is the only active township in Stevens County. It has been the only active one for the last ten (10) years according to elections and even longer as far as maintenance.

Tony Martin and Stacey Wood were in attendance.

Rodney inquired with the commissioners about needing to get bids on the new compressor and SCBA's since there is a grant for the compressor. Joe asked Rodney what the approximate costs were, and Rodney replied at this time the cost for the compressor is around \$95,000.00 and the SCBA's are around \$235,000.00 for sixteen (16) of them. The commissioners told Rodney there should be a bid on the new equipment and they do not have to accept the lowest bid. Amy asked when Rodney plans to open bids and Rodney said sometime in November.

Tron opened the meeting up for sealed bids on the generator the emergency services department is bidding out.

1. Carlos Rojo \$600.00
2. Kelly Kirkham \$955.00

Joe made a motion to accept the highest bid at \$955.00 from Kelly Kirkham. Tron seconded. Motion carried.

Walter Beesley was present to discuss the lot west of town which he purchased from the commissioners as Mid America Cattle Co, a corporation, on April 20, 1999. Walter stated the commissioners have first right of refusal on the lot located at:

Lot Six (6) Block Three (3) of the duly filed corrected Plat of the Stevens County Industrial Addition Plat filed in Book Four (4) of Plats Page Seventeen (17) on March 23, 1999, Stevens County Register of Deeds.

Joe made a motion to decline the purchase of the above-mentioned lot in the Industrial Addition and will keep the first right of refusal as a stipulation. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

Glenn Kerbs was present. He requested an executive session for twenty (20) minutes for attorney/client discussion over negotiations.

Joe made a motion to go into executive session for thirty (30) minutes to discuss client/attorney negotiations. Pat seconded. Glenn Kerbs, Tony Martin, and Stacey Wood were present for executive session. Executive session began at 9:15 AM concluded at 9:45 AM. No action taken.

The planning and zoning board will have a public hearing on August 20th at 4:00 PM in the Memorial Hall to discuss wind energy.

Tony Martin was telling the commissioners the road and bridge department will be working on the water dock as soon as weather permits. Tony also told the commissioners that Jeff and he will be attending a landfill meeting at the end of October.

Tony requested an executive session for ten (10) minutes to discuss pending current litigation.

Pat made a motion to go into an executive session to discuss a pending litigation. Joe seconded. Tony Martin and Stacey Wood were present for executive session. The executive session began at 9:50 AM and concluded at 10:00 AM. No action taken.

Joe asked Tony about the lot east of town where Steve Morris was farming, and Tony said it has been getting sprayed and mowed and will continue until they can get it mowed low enough to see what can be done. The commissioners discussed planting grass out there and having the county continue mowing. Pat asked Tony about the landfill and when the new pit project will begin. Tony said they are waiting on KDHE to approve the final request and is hoping the permits will be approved before the new KDHE permit agent replacement comes in. Tony discussed an issue with the Black Hills Pipeline south of town stating there are different session laws from 1876 giving different measurements in rights-of-way.

Tony told the commissioners a representative from Pioneer Communications is beginning a new project and will need to run about fifteen (15) lines. The county requests a permit to be filed which costs \$100.00 per permit. The Pioneer representative asked if there was a way to work with the county to get a discount of sorts for the permit fees. The commissioners stated they will not because they are staying consistent with permits, so it stays fair across the board.

Tony told the commissioners there is a leak on the roof at the road and bridge department and asked if Ross handles those issues. Amy said Ross will look at it and contact companies if needed to make the correct repairs.

Steve Lewis came in and asked the commissioners about the audit they are requesting from the museum. Steve stated Janie Gaskill sent an email to Amy on the museum's profit and loss. Amy reported she has not reviewed her recent emails. Joe asked Steve if the museum has an audit and stated all the other county funded entities turn in an annual audit report to the county clerk. Steve said he will talk with Hay & Rice, LLC and see if they can send something to the county clerk. Steve also discussed the buildings at the museum and that some had to have stucco applied. He said the train station will probably have to have new footers to keep the building from falling.

Joe asked if anyone had heard what will be happening to KDI. He was told there is an EcoDevo meeting tomorrow, and they will hopefully have heard something.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
AUGUST 26, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Cammie Heaton – Comm. Health
 8:45 – Bills
 9:00 –
 9:15 –
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 9:45 –
 10:00 –
 10:30 –

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session Amy Tharp, County Clerk was also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Joe moved to approve minutes from the last meeting. Pat seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	68,669.88
ARPA	\$	10,571.00
Judicial District	\$	848.02
Road & Bridge	\$	47,572.42
Airport	\$	6,490.87
Highway Improvement	\$	8,261.38
911 Wireless	\$	116.69
Spec Law Enforcement	\$	1,815.34
Noxious Weed	\$	4,663.11
EMS	\$	8,260.22
Fire	\$	1,869.31
Community Health	\$	24,085.05
Comm Hlth Grants	\$	-
Sheriff	\$	35,738.85
Reg of Deed Tech	\$	361.60
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>219,323.74</u>

Amy told the commissioners Jan Leonard contacted her about a potential buyer for the KDI plant, but they were concerned about the regulations of what is allowed at the plant. Tron said Jan sent him some messages where the potential buyer noticed a regulation about food production and was concerned if they purchased the plant, would they be allowed to process food. The commissioners stated they have no issues with processing food but would like to visit with the county attorney first to see what needs to be done to make the appropriate changes for the contract on that property.

Cammie Heaton came in and reported the health department had about eighty (80) new patients this year. A representative for WIC will be in town on Tuesday to do a site visit, and Randy Bowman from the state health and environmental department will be out on Thursday for a walk thru. Cammie also stated she has the pandemic plan completed and the state approved it. She said Stevens County is the fiscal agent for KDHE and has received \$2,548.00 for 2024 and will receive \$2,630.00 for 2025. Cammie reminded the commissioners she had requested raises for her staff and herself, but the decision had been tabled. She is revisiting the merit raise and stated with the county being the fiscal agent that receives funding each year, she would like to apply these amounts as an increase to her salary for each respective year. She stated the raises for the other community health department staff would be reimbursed through WIC.

Joe made a motion to approve the raises at the community health department where Cammie will receive the amount made from being the fiscal agent for KDHE, and the other employees will receive raises dependent on the WIC reimbursements for salary/wage payments. Tron seconded. Motion carried.

Rodney Kelling came in and told the commissioners Seaboard Energy would like to have the emergency management DECON trailer for use at their facility. This will come with the understanding if the county emergency management needs the trailer for decontamination purposes and emergencies, the county would be able to have access to the trailer. Rodney said Seaboard offered to purchase a smaller trailer for emergency management to have on their property as payment for the DECON trailer. The commissioners stated there should be an MOU on the DECON trailer and would need Paul to do a purchase agreement for the trade. Rodney informed there is an LEPC meeting on the 4th of September and it will be held at the Seaboard Energy plant. Rodney said he is waiting on a SPEC sheet for the SCBA's so he can put that out for bid.

Amy told the commissioners the courthouse department heads, and community health department have been reviewing all the information gathered from multiple IT companies for a server immediately and new IT beginning December 2024. They have narrowed it down to three (3) different companies:

1. Rusty Tuman – Local - \$1,500/month up to 10 hours then \$150/month w/ annual contract.
2. Leading Edge – Hutchinson – approximately \$3050/month w/ monthly contract
3. Century IT – Garden City – approximately \$3,265/month w/ 3 yr contract

After discussing the differences between the three (3) IT companies, the commissioners chose to go with Leading Edge due to the idea of a monthly contract versus a long-term contract, and lower costs than Century. They felt Rusty had quite a bit on his plate and were concerned about punctuality in handling potential future issues. Due to the urgency of obtaining a new server at the courthouse, the commissioners declined the need for a sealed bid.

Amy discussed the letter she had sent out several weeks ago to airport board members and each commissioner. She asked if the commissioners had any questions concerning the letter. The commissioners did not at this time. Amy also told the commissioners an updated job description for the airport manager will be coming from the airport board sometime in September after their meeting.

Tony Martin came in and said road and bridge will be working on the road by the hotel and water dock. Plans are to begin working on the eight (8) miles of chip and seal and patching holes this week as well. KDHE sent back the landfill monitoring and everything is still good but waiting on the response about the slope at the bottom of the landfill pit. October 1-3, Tony and Jeff Cox will attend a landfill conference with KDHE.

Tony reported the planning and zoning board had their hearing and voted four (4) against and three (3) for the change of the wind tower distance from residence. Tony said the next commissioner meeting is when they will need to announce a hearing for the changes/no changes to the wind tower zoning.

Warren Willis was in attendance and shared that the planning and zoning board had a good meeting and considered the new set back allowance for the wind towers and majority decided to not make any changes. Warren said John Percy stated in the planning and zoning meeting it was not too difficult to get signed waivers over water rights and does not feel the waivers for residential proximity to the wind towers will be difficult either. The planning and zoning board determined they do not have the authority to decide who should have less rights. Warren further elaborated the largest problem with the wind towers will be the setbacks from the county's right of way from the roads which took up forty-two percent (42%) of the wind farm project, and the roads are more of an issue with the larger setback and take up more space than dwellings.

AES, the solar farm company, is waiting on names of property owners and plan to begin their project in the fall of 2025.

Amy informed the commissioners Jayme Rich told her the wellness center has not turned in any deposits for June, July, or August. Amy said she needs the deposits to be made on a minimum of a monthly basis so she can stay in line with the auditors' instructions. The auditors instructed to keep a consistent record of the amount of budget the wellness center must work with since the commissioners and auditors have stated the wellness center is supposed to only operate on what their revenue is. Currently, with no record of recent revenue it is showing the wellness center running in the negative. Amy did state she understands personal issues do occur but also stated everyone has a job to do and each person's responsibility is what keeps the county functioning, and everyone needs to be held accountable if they are clocked in at work.

Ted Heaton came in and reported the issues with KCAMP on Miller and Shuck's vehicles have been resolved and the county should be receiving payment for those two (2) accidents. Ted said he will be purchasing a new vehicle for Shuck as his was a total loss and will be using the funds KCAMP will be paying out.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
SEPTEMBER 9, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Cammie Heaton – Comm. Health
 8:45 – Bills
 9:00 –
 9:15 –
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 9:45 –
 10:00 –
 10:30 –

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Attorney and Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve minutes from the last meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Joe moved to approve the county vouchers. Pat seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	78,379.30
Co. Building	\$	1,803.88
Judicial District	\$	3,118.01
Road & Bridge	\$	165,900.66
Airport	\$	2,916.24
Alcohol Treatment Fund	\$	1,894.56
911 Wireless	\$	-
Spec Law Enforcement	\$	10.00
Noxious Weed	\$	4,812.66
EMS	\$	9,446.67
Fire	\$	3,697.51
Community Health	\$	31,025.03
Comm Hlth Grants	\$	514.97
Sheriff	\$	46,600.66
Reg of Deed Tech	\$	333.00
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>350,453.15</u>

Shannon Crawford was present to observe the meeting.

Amy Jo Tharp presented the commissioners with a letter on county letterhead for the chairman, Tron Stegman, to sign. This letter is stating the Stevens County Hospital is owned and operated by Stevens County and deals with Medicare payments.

Amy Jo gave a copy of a signed invoice to the commissioners from the wellness center for vents which were installed and asked if the bill should be paid out of the building fund. The commissioners discussed the bill and checked on the purchasing policy for the county. They stated they should have received a request for the work with an estimate before work was done, as it is above the \$500.00 threshold and outside of normal purchases for the department. Amy Jo said she spoke with Ross this morning on the bill, and he was unaware the work had been approved and stated he only knew of the estimate but would be unable to attend the meeting to inform the commissioners to get approval. Ross also stated he did not sign off on the bill as he had not even seen it yet. The commissioners agreed to pay the bill out of the building fund but stated the next time it will come out of the department's budget. Amy Jo also showed a bill to the commissioners for A/C repair at the EMT building and it was approved to come out of the building fund as they were aware there were A/C issues and understood the estimated costs.

Amy Jo informed the commissioners Unifirst, the company that furnishes rugs and towels to the courthouse, has dropped off a renewal contract. She is under the impression the county did not want to stay in the contract and want to purchase their own rugs and towels with the building maintenance supervisor overseeing it. The commissioners agreed not to renew the contract with Unifirst, and the maintenance supervisor will need to purchase rugs and towels.

Tron told Amy Jo the wellness center will be turning in deposits on a biweekly basis so their expenditures will match their receipts. Amy Jo informed Tron the other issue is getting signed invoices in time to be paid and stated she instructed Jordan to only tell the department heads when she needs bills as a reminder, and after that not to pay any bills not turned in on time.

Walter Beesley came in and told the commissioners the property he had previously received permission to sell, in which the commissioners have first right of refusal, cannot be sold until they relinquish their first right of refusal due to the underwriter's request. Tron stated if something is built on the property it eliminates the commissioners as having the first right of refusal. Paul asked the commissioners if the county is even interested in keeping the property or to allow the property to go and take off their first right of refusal.

This pertains to the property located at:

Lot Six (6) Block Three (3) of the duly filed corrected Plat of the Stevens County Industrial Addition Plat filed in Book Four (4) of Plats Page Seventeen (17) on March 23, 1999, Stevens County Register of Deeds.

Pat made a motion stating any previous decisions on the above-mentioned property is declined and the county relinquishes the first right of refusal. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Thea Schnittker, the Deputy Register of Deeds came in and reported to the commissioners with the wind and solar companies coming in, she and Betty have more than tripled the copy work they usually do. Thea stated normally they make around 6,590 copies a year and in July and August of this year, they had made 21,777 copies. Thea asked if Betty could receive some compensation for the "unusual & excessive" time and hours spent on copies (just for the duration excessive copies are being made).

Thea stated she and Betty have been in the office on the weekends working fourteen (14) hours between the two of them to get copies completed within the timeframe the requests must be filled by. The concern for herself is not being able to utilize comp time due to putting in so many hours. Joe asked if hiring a temporary person to help would be beneficial and Thea stated there would be too much training needed which is not practical as there is no time to train a new person. The commissioners agreed to compensate both Thea and Betty for their time for the extra work. The commissioners will discuss with Amy Rich to see the best way to go about compensation so no issues will arise with payroll policies.

Tony Martin, Stacey Wood, and Darren Heger were in attendance.

Tony presented the commissioners with two (2) crossing permits from Pioneer Communications to be signed. Tony said the water dock road has been completed and gave Amy Jo a bill for the work totaling \$79,056.44 and stated ARPA is to pay a portion of the bill. Tony has a new contract for the landfill and asked Paul to look it over concerning the new pit.

Darren Heger said he wanted to report on the proposed change on planning and zoning for the windfarms. Darren said there were good comments and discussions, and he wanted to let the commissioners know he still recommends not making any changes.

Pat made a motion going with the planning and zonings' recommendations on footage of 2,000 feet from residential on the windfarms. No second. Motion died for lack of a second.

Tron made a motion for the footage distance to be whichever is greater between 1,500 foot or two and a half (2 ½) feet times the tip height to a residence on a windmill. Joe seconded, no discussion. Two (2) yes and one (1) opposed. Motion carried two to one, with commissioner Pat Hall being the dissent.

Tony said eight (8) more miles of chip seal on the Hooker/Moscow Road to Seward (County Road 2 and D) still needs to be done. They have been doing approximately two (2) miles per day. There was discussion of building a road by the old KDI plant in the east industrial division. It was decided at this time no road will be built, but possibly in the future.

Warren Willis came in and asked the commissioners what the process is to formally protest the changes the commissioners made on the distance of the tip height to residential the commissioners just made a motion on. Warren said there is no protest on the planning and zoning changes but was curious on how to protest what the commissioners motioned.

Amy Rich was asked to come in to discuss the best way to compensate the Register of Deeds employees. Amy said she suggests for Betty, who is salaried, to add the hours at the agreed rate for copy work that is after normal business hours to her normal salary and do a transfer just for the copy work amount from the copy fund to the salary fund. When asked about comp time, Amy disclosed that if an employee has not used accumulated comp time, the unused balance is paid out after a one

(1) month period. It was agreed Thea could choose if she would like to alternate between getting paid normally for extra hours on copy work after normal business hours (which could potentially generate overtime) and utilizing some comp time other days, which would potentially avoid overtime. This extra compensation for both ladies will only be for the duration of the time these copies are requested.

Tron said he spoke with Johnny Denton about some concrete or asphalt work at the hospital and asked if the county was responsible.

Ted Heaton came in and said he is still down one (1) vehicle and is working on getting a new one to replace Deputy Shuck's. Ted stated he is possibly going to look at different types of vehicles for the sheriff department instead of pickups and stated he is considering a type of SUV.

Added and Abated Orders were reviewed and approved by commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; for tax year 2006 numbers 135-137 total valuation removed 665 and tax assessed - \$45.64, with valuation added in tax year 2006 numbers 138-140 a valuation of 665 and a relief assessment of \$45.64. Total valuation of 0 and total tax assessed \$0.00.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
SEPTEMBER 23, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 –
 9:00 –
 9:15 –
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 9:45 –
 10:00 –
 10:30 –

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Attorney and Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk, were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve minutes from the last meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Joe moved to approve the county vouchers. Pat seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	54,775.71
Co. Building	\$	61.10
Judicial District	\$	416.37
Road & Bridge	\$	182,055.97
Airport	\$	16,877.08
Airport Grant	\$	24,965.00
Alcohol Treatment Fund	\$	-
911 Wireless	\$	113.29
Noxious Weed	\$	-
EMS	\$	12,676.34
Fire	\$	2,441.50
Community Health	\$	24,594.11
Comm Hlth Grants	\$	-
Sheriff	\$	40,659.85
Reg of Deed Tech	\$	115.20
TOTAL:	\$	359,751.52

Rodney Kelling came in and said Seaboard discussed swapping trailers with their corporate attorney and said Seaboard will purchase the decontamination trailer for \$7,000.00 and the county can do what they want with the money instead of swapping. Rodney asked if the commissioners could forgo a sealed bid and accept the purchase of the decontamination trailer by Seaboard, or if they want to go with a sealed bid or put it up for sale. The commissioners stated they will discuss this with Paul when

he gets in. Joe asked Rodney if the fire department needs a new saw because he had heard the saw did not work at the recent house fire. Rodney said the saw they have is about six (6) years old but has always had issues starting up. He stated it is NFPA rated, but you need to heat the spark plug to get it to start, and they do not always have time to do that. The commissioners suggested Rodney investigate battery operated chain saws, so the fuel does not gum up and will hopefully be more reliable. Rodney told the commissioners he had to purchase a new transfer switch for the generator at the radio tower, which will cost about \$3,200.00, stating it should be the last item needed for the new generator.

Ross Sullivan came in and said the roof at the Moscow Senior Center had been completed but the contractors left the old roof transition piece on and did not replace it. He said he told them to tear off the old and put a new one down as well as new flashing. Ross said they foamed over the roof and the flashing and nothing was replaced, so he spoke to the contractors, and they replied that the new bid did not state anything about replacing the flashing. Joe said the wall is still seeping and leaking in the lean-to but not the building. Ross said he will replace the sheetrock in the one room since it is no longer leaking. He said he spoke with the recreation commission, and they will allow him to borrow the sprayer to spray the county grounds, but the county will need to purchase the chemicals. Ross told the commissioners the road and bridge department roof has several leaks around the vents and some other areas. Ross suggested getting an estimate on spraying the roof and getting new vent sleeves, adding that there are some extra funds in the insurance damages account the county could possibly utilize for these repairs. The commissioners asked Ross when he plans on working on the lights at the Moscow Senior Center and the EMS building. Ross replied he will contact an electrician to make sure the wiring is all good in those buildings and begin working on the light fixtures.

The commissioners discussed the decontamination trailer with Paul. Paul responded for the county to stay transparent they need to do a sealed bid or a sale with a reserve price of \$7,000.00. The commissioners said they will talk with Rodney about getting a sealed bid set up with a minimum bid price.

Amy asked Paul about the museum and questioned whether any of their properties titled Stevens County Gas and Historical Museum, Inc. is Stevens County property. She also asked if they were eligible to be insured under KCAMP and if the county appoints any of their board members. Paul said to call KCAMP and find out if they will insure the buildings. The commissioners said they have not appointed any of the board members that they are aware of. Paul suggested Amy contact other counties and see how they are with their museums and if they are incorporated or owned by the county as well as looking into statutes for museums.

Cammie Heaton with the community health department, was in to inform that Casey Settlemyer gave her an estimate of \$525.00 to trim out the trees on the grounds. The commissioners agreed to have Casey clean up the trees at the community health department. Cammie said she purchased seventy (70) doses of flu/COVID vaccines, and it cost around \$8,000.00. She stated the vaccines are only good until May of 2025.

Tony Martin was next on the agenda with updates on his department. Tony said the planning and zoning committee have been reviewing the road maintenance plan with the windmills to see what needs to be changed. Tony said he is working on specs and bid sheets for the new pit at the landfill and hopes to begin work on it soon. He said the asphalt plant is still up and running because there are holes to patch and Morton County plans on picking up some asphalt this week. Tony reported that KDHE wants the asphalt plant shut down by the end of September and the pit completed by April. Amy said the cemetery in Hugoton is expanding and was asked if the county would do the roads. Tony said it would not be a good idea as the equipment the county has is too large for the cemetery roads and last time they helped in the cemetery the equipment did some damage to some headstones. Tony handed a letter to the commissioners from Marcus with the Hugoton Golf Course Board, asking if the county would be able to help them with dirt work at the golf course. The commissioners said the county can provide the dirt and advice but will not do the work.

Sheriff Ted Heaton and Undersheriff TJ Steers were in attendance. Ted told the commissioners one (1) of the flag poles at the sheriff's office was knocked down by a vehicle and the person's insurance is willing to pay \$7,000.00. Ted said he spoke with AK Roofing, and they quoted \$13,000.00 for replacement. Ted asked if Paul would write a letter to the person's insurance company to get a complete replacement on the flagpole or take action against the individual. Discussion about how to resolve the issue resulted in Paul talking with the individual's insurance company and if nothing else, the county will contact KCAMP and let them do their litigation on this issue. Ted said there is new equipment that takes panoramic photos of accident scenes which will be better than multiple photos. The main issue with this new piece of equipment is the cost of around \$16,000.00 which Ted stated he has funds in his special law enforcement to pay for the equipment. Pat asked if there are any recurring fees for this equipment and Ted answered there is, but the first initial is for the equipment and training. The commissioners asked if Ted has any officers for the SRD (School Resource Deputy) at the schools. Ted replied there is not a set officer, the school calls if they need someone to appear, and at least one (1) time a day a deputy shows up at the schools to check in.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
OCTOBER 15, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 –
 9:00 – Hospital/David and Angela Piper
 9:15 –
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 9:45 –
 10:00 –
 10:30 –

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Attorney and Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk, were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve minutes from the last meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Joe moved to approve the county vouchers. Pat seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	129,068.38
Co. Building	\$	4,036.53
Judicial District	\$	1,237.67
Road & Bridge	\$	175,369.01
Airport	\$	17,299.99
ARPA	\$	12,072.00
Library	\$	96,692.25
911 Wireless	\$	1,452.78
Noxious Weed	\$	14,817.06
EMS	\$	18,093.05
Fire	\$	16,941.15
Community Health	\$	46,232.20
Comm Hlth Grants	\$	208.00
Sheriff	\$	88,498.38
Non Spec Equipment	\$	24,637.51
Emp Misc1 W/H	\$	100.00
Treas Tech Fund	\$	1,971.64
<u>TOTAL:</u>	\$	<u>648,727.60</u>

Ross Sullivan came in and told the commissioners the doors at the EMT/Fire building have been installed. Ross showed the commissioners the estimates for LED lights at the Moscow Senior Center and EMT building which totals \$2,165.59. Ross also told them the generator at the community health

department is down and believes the radiator is plugged as it keeps throwing an alarm. The commissioners agreed to have LED lights put in at the Moscow Senior Center and the EMT building in Hugoton.

Dave Piper and Angela Piper with the hospital came in. Dave said they will be holding a finance training session for hospital board members and plans to extend the invitation to the commissioners as well when they decide on a date and time. Pat asked if there was a certain statute determining how many terms a board member can serve. Dave replied he was unsure but knew at the current time the Stevens County Hospital Board members may serve three (3) terms of three (3) years each term. Dave and Angela stated the hospital financials are good for August and the hospital is moving in the right direction. The hospital now has a pulmonary resuscitation physician, providing financial training to staff, and writing for grants among other improvements. The hospital has received funds for a van for the Pioneer Manor as well.

Dave reported the only issue currently is the massive size of the Pioneer Manor. They are starting to see where repairs need to be made and will become more expensive as time goes by. Several months ago, the Pioneer Manor sustained damage from a lightning storm which knocked out their door alarm system and there were no replacement parts to fix the system as it was antiquated. The new system they had to purchase was roughly \$91,000.00 and approximately \$13,000.00 to hire temporary staff to walk the hallways to make sure residents did not leave without being noticed. To date, KCamp has not paid anything for the insurance claim and stated they can only pay around \$30,000.00 for the upgraded system. The commissioners told Amy to investigate what can be done to help get closure on the insurance claim for the system at Pioneer Manor. There is a bill from Lin Goode for some work done at the hospital, clinic, and pharmacy for their sewer including concrete work in the amount of \$23,500.00.

Dave informed the commissioners he had attended the Kansas Hospital District meeting in July and was told out of the United States, Kansas tops the list of high-risk hospitals closing. Dave also said United and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas are the worst at paying hospitals or clinics for care. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas have the patients pay twenty-five percent (25%) while all other states have the patients pay fifteen percent (15%).

Pat instructed Amy to approve payment for a bill from Lin Goode in the amount of \$23,500.00 for the hospital. Tron and Joe agreed. Joe asked Dave if there were any heart specialists or a way Dr. Farhoud could come back to see patients. Dave said Dr. Farhoud now sees patients through Telemed at the hospital in the specialty clinic.

Jayme Rich came in and told the commissioners the wellness center is five (5) months behind depositing checks. Jayme also stated the sales tax submissions received from the wellness center lack paperwork and she has tried to contact the department and has yet to receive an answer. The sales tax submissions are due on the 25th every month and have started to affect the treasurer's office regarding balancing. Jayme also informed the commissioners that the county has received tax money from KDI, and they are paid in full, and Best Western is still making regular payments on their taxes.

Tony presented the commissioners with some crossing permits for signatures. He said one of the crossing permits is to run down the center line and the only issue is waiting for a survey to be completed. Tony also told the commissioners the county roads are in bad shape due to no moisture and all the trucks hauling for harvest. Joe said Road 21, north of Road V, appears to have had some heavy equipment dragged and the road is torn up. Tony said he will drive out and look at the road to see if anything can be done at this time. He informed the commissioners APAC bid out a project on Kansas State Highway 56 and would like to stockpile some asphalt in Stevens County. The commissioners told Tony they did not see a place where asphalt can be stockpiled at this time.

Tony said the planning and zoning board met with Glenn Kerbs and they will have a public hearing on November 20th at 3:00 PM in the Memorial Hall to discuss Travertine Solar Energy's conditional use permit.

He reported on the landfill that they are waiting on Scout Energy to come out and see if the gas lines are sturdy enough to withhold the weight of heavy equipment going back and forth during the new pit build. Bidding for construction of the new pit will hopefully begin soon. Paul suggested whoever gets the bid should get a bond.

The county appraiser, Angela Eichman came in and requested a five (5) minute executive session over non-elected personnel for a question about unpaid leave.

Joe made a motion to enter executive session for ten (10) minutes over non-elected personnel about leave of absence. Tron seconded. Executive session began at 10:17 AM and concluded at 10:21 AM.

Joe made a motion to allow Lori Rome to receive additional days of unpaid leave if it becomes necessary for her to exceed five (5) days. Tron seconded, no discussion, motion carried.

Joe asked Angela if the county needs to hire someone to do the Seaboard Energy Plant appraisal. Angela suggested the county hire someone who has experience in bioenergy appraisals to appraise Seaboard. Angela informed the commissioners she plans to review the board of tax appeals order to see what the district judge says after the Seward County hearing. Angela also suggested the county set back some money in case Seaboard pays taxes and goes to the board of appeals and the county is ordered to pay the taxes back.

Rodney Kelling came in and asked the commissioners if they had a chance to review his raise request. Joe asked Rodney how much of a raise he is wanting to receive, and Rodney said \$10,000.00 per year. He said he will have invested enough time in KPERS to be able to retire in June of 2026 but is not sure at this time if he will continue working past that date. Tron said the commissioners will table the raise request and let Rodney know soon.

Paul Kitzke said he reviewed the request by Flora Foods, Inc., on the county's restrictions to the property Flora Foods recently purchased from KDI. Paul said Flora Foods want the restrictions on selling to another company lifted and the nuisance restrictions waived as they will follow industry

standards. The request for waiving and lifting of restrictions needs to be approved by the Board of County Commissioners. The commissioners do not have issues with Flora Foods manufacturing foods and will permit that use. The commissioners want to retain the restrictions on building and nuisance currently.

Amy asked the commissioners if she should contact the museum and have the Stevens County Gas and Historical Society Board come to the next meeting to discuss the insurance on the properties. Amy said she received a request from the museum to put a newly purchased building onto the KCamp insurance and noticed the property was deeded to Stevens County Gas and Historical Museum, Inc. She stated she looked back at all the other property deeds and all of them are deeded that way except for the well which is deeded to the City of Hugoton and the large storage building along Jefferson which is deeded to the Stevens County Board of Commissioners. She discussed this issue with KCamp, and they asked if the museum board was appointed by the county commissioners, and she told them no. KCamp said they will continue to cover the museum's property at this time but had suggestions of the museum turning all their property over to the county and doing an annual lease of \$1.00, or the museum will need to acquire their own insurance for the properties deeded in their name. The commissioners discussed the issue and are willing to see if the museum would like to have the property with the storage shed transferred from the county to the museum. Amy was instructed to call the museum board to the next commissioner meeting to discuss the property.

Amy said she received a letter from the library stating Wanda Shaddix resigned from the library board, and they would like to have Tina Mueller appointed to fill the vacated spot until April of 2025, which is the end of term for the position.

Pat made a motion to appoint Tina Mueller to fulfill the vacated position of Wanda Shaddix on the library board until the end of term. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Amy told the commissioners paperwork was received from the community health department for the raises and noticed one salary is going to be more than what is anticipated for the grant to cover.

Amy told the commissioners when Leading Edge came out to begin onboarding for the new server and IT, they went to the wellness center and noticed the computers are very obsolete and one of them is a 1998 Acer Aspire. Amy asked if Leading Edge could get a price quote on new computers for the wellness center. The commissioners discussed the issue and asked if one (1) computer could work for the wellness center instead of two (2) and Amy said it would need to be decided after Leading Edge has more time to look at the specifics at the wellness center. The commissioners told her to let them know when she finds out what needs to be done.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
OCTOBER 28, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – HUB/Karen Vines
 9:00 –
 9:15 – ROD/Thea Schnittker
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 9:45 –
 10:15 – Jim Ghummm – Pioneer Lots
 10:30 – Museum Board/Property

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session with Joe Thompson via phone. Paul Kitzke, County Attorney and Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk, were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve minutes from the last meeting. Tron seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Tron seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	72,677.98
Co. Building	\$	23,686.00
Judicial District	\$	686.38
Road & Bridge	\$	44,183.49
Airport	\$	2,763.20
Airport Grants	\$	1,350.00
Ambulance Bequest	\$	20.00
Fire Bequest	\$	20.00
Noxious Weed	\$	4,130.36
EMS	\$	8,451.36
Fire	\$	1,783.16
Community Health	\$	10,803.77
Comm Hlth Grants	\$	-
Sheriff	\$	35,181.23
TOTAL:	\$	205,736.93

Amy called Joe Thompson for the commissioner meeting. Tron asked about the lots at the Pioneer Addition and was curious to see what Pat and Joe's thoughts were on Jim Ghummm's request in which he will be coming in to discuss with them. Joe questioned if it was a deal breaker and stated if Jim's request is allowed, the covenants will have to be changed and so will the contract with Jim and the county. The commissioners feel Jim wants to add a lot to the one (1) in which he had finished a house

on so there will be more property for the potential buyers to have a yard. The commissioners agreed to discuss this topic more when Jim comes in.

Karen Vines with HUB came in. Amy Rich was in attendance. Karen stated the insurance rates have gone up by three percent (3%) as opposed to a higher percentage, as it has in the last couple of years. Karen also said there are some things changing in Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas (BCBS). Beginning in 2025, Telehealth will no longer have a co-pay. Prescriptions will have a copay every month even if they are prescribed for more than one (1) month, unless purchased by mail. There will also be a utility in BCBS called Smart Shopper which gives names of physicians who conduct certain types of procedures and if someone utilizes them, they can get a cash reward from BCBS.

Joe left the meeting.

Rodney came in and presented the commissioners with a quote from Stryker for annual services of the electric cots on the ambulances. The quote was \$11,616.00 beginning October 2024 through October 2025. The commissioners decided not to continue with maintenance service and just pay on an as needed basis. Rodney told the commissioners the hospital transfers are getting harder to do in the middle of the night as there are not many who can take the transfers long distances due to their other jobs and without being a safety concern for his employees. He plans to speak to the hospital about changing the times the county EMS can do transfers. Pat and Tron agree. Rodney asked if they had time to discuss the proposed raise for his salary and Pat and Tron said Joe is not on the phone at this time and does not want to decide until he is in.

Thea Schnittker with the register of deeds office came in and stated they have funds in their tech fund and would like to help emergency services purchase some newer computers as the ones they are running now do not handle the programs that are needed. Thea also said they are looking at updating their own computers and equipment with their tech fund. The auditors suggest they spend the funding until there is no more than \$50,000.00, as per state statute. The commissioners agree with their usage of the tech fund.

Tony Martin and Randy Moore are in attendance.

Tony told the commissioners Randy Moore is retiring at the end of October and has been with the county road and bridge department for twelve and a half (12.5) years. The commissioners congratulated Randy for his years of service and Tony stated he presented him with a retirement gift for his service.

Tony brought in several line crossing permits which need to be signed. He said there are three (3) companies so far which will be bidding on digging the new landfill pit. Bids for digging the new pit are due November 27th and bidding will begin on December 9th. Tony stated he is confident with the new company Terracon and feels they are doing a great job for the landfill.

Tony said planning and zoning will hold a public hearing on November 20th at 3:00 PM in the Memorial Hall to go over the Travertine Solar Farm conditional use permits and road maintenance agreements. The commissioners and Tony discussed the wind farms stating that if they are mainly all within one (1) school district but pay to the other school district it will be good for ten (10) years. But, when they go on the tax rolls, that one (1) school district will be out of the funding. They discussed the substations for the energy companies as to how many and where those will be located.

Amy called Joe back for the next several discussions via phone.

Jim Ghumm and Lisa LeNeve were in to discuss the property Jim purchased in the Pioneer Addition. Jim stated the house he recently built takes up most of lot five (5) and he has a potential buyer who would like to have the lot to the north of the house (lot 6) as well. Jim understands his contract was for six (6) lots with one (1) house per lot. Lisa said the extra lot for this house will be the deal breaker on whether the potential buyer wants to purchase or keep looking. The commissioners stated if they make changes to the covenants, they will either have to make it a case by case basis or only make this one exception. However, by making an exception it will open room for more exceptions to the rest of the lots available, and they are unsure about doing so. Pat stated he is unsure due to more unattended consequences. After further discussion, the commissioners agreed to allow the lot north of the current house to be added to that property. Paul will work on a variance and change the contract for Jim to sign.

Pat made a motion to deviate from the original contract with Jim Ghumm over the property located at Block 17, Lots 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and allow lots 5 and 6 to be combined into one property. Tron asked if there was any discussion, Joe asked if it could be tabled, and Lisa stated they do not have a buyer ready to purchase at this time. Discussion ended; Tron seconded. Joe opposed; motion carried.

Steve Lewis, Kim Lewis, Cathy Clark, Duane Williams, Sheryl Hayworth, Linda Brooks and Jim Bell were all in attendance from the Stevens County Gas and Historical Museum, Inc. Board. Tron told the museum board the county would like to deed over lots 11-15 in block 82 in the City of Hugoton to the museum. It was also noted this is due to the fact KCamp stated they can no longer cover the museum property as it has always been assumed it was owned by the county. Pat also stated there was discussion of not appropriating the museum in the future as the county has done in the past but will continue to appropriate at this time. Questions were asked whether the taxpayers would get a break if the museum were not funded by the county and if Seaboard Energy's taxes help fund anything. Pat stated the taxpayers will not get much of a break if the county funds the museum, but the valuations keep dropping. As for taxes from Seaboard Energy, the federal government declared them exempt due to the fact it's biofuel/energy and those types of companies are exempt from taxes for at least ten (10) years. Cathy Clark stated the museum board did not realize by following Mr. Porter's will to obtain property with the funding he provided would get them kicked off the insurance.

Pat made a motion to deed over the property located at block 82, lots 11 through 15 in the City of Hugoton to the Stevens County Gas and Historical Museum, Inc. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Amy suggested considering a revision of the sick hour donations policy in the Personnel Policies and Procedures. Policy number E6 (4), which states: If it is known by the supervisor or personnel that either party intends to terminate his/her employment with Stevens County he/she is no longer eligible to donate or receive any M/B/E leave.

Pat made a motion to strike the current policy E6 (4) in the employee manual. Tron seconded. Motion carried.

The commissioners discussed some people who have shown interest in the hospital board for the upcoming positions. Amy informed the commissioners the statute KSA 19-4605 states the commissioners have the authority to set the terms and number of years per term for hospital board members. Pat said he would like to leave the current rules in place as most of the members are no longer interested after serving nine (9) years.

Amy asked the commissioners if November 12th or 13th would work to canvass the General Election as the 11th is Veteran's Day. The commissioners stated having the canvass the same day as the commissioner meeting works best. Amy said she will hold the canvass on November 12th at 8:30 AM and begin the commissioner meeting once the canvass is closed.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
NOVEMBER 12, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – GN2024 Canvass
 8:45 –
 9:00 –
 9:15 –
 9:30 –
 9:45 –
 10:00 – Tony Martin
 10:30 – Pioneer Communications – BEAD Grant

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk, was also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	116,455.50
Co. Building	\$	1,923.10
Judicial District	\$	1,649.75
Road & Bridge	\$	85,828.03
Airport	\$	3,364.31
Non-Specific Equip Fund	\$	13,385.05
Treas Tech Fund	\$	157.99
Fire Bequest	\$	822.98
Noxious Weed	\$	7,265.32
EMS	\$	8,033.03
Fire	\$	3,720.31
Community Health	\$	15,567.83
Reg of Deeds Tech Fund	\$	8,808.57
Sheriff	\$	43,809.93
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>310,791.70</u>

Amy informed the commissioners the State of Kansas has not approved of the canvass so it will have to be held at another time. She said she contacted people on the agenda and told them to come in whenever it is convenient as there will be no canvassing this morning.

Richard Vertrees came in and said he had a discussion with Tony Martin about giving a bid for doors and latches on one of the fairground buildings. He said he made an appointment with Tony for this past Friday and realized he had a prior engagement. Richard said he contacted Tony to choose a

different day or time and had not heard back from him. Richard said he called Tony and there was a disagreement between the two (2) and he brought the commissioners a printout of the texts sent back and forth. Richard said he just wanted to make sure he is still in good standing with the commission for future bids on projects. The commissioners assured him there will be no issues moving forward with bids. Joe told Richard the Moscow Senior Center building was leaking after this most recent rain. Richard said he would look at it. Joe also told Richard the rain is coming in from the sides as well.

Amy said some of the department heads are requesting either the full day off or half a day on December 24th due to Christmas Day being on a Wednesday. Pat agreed to allow departments to be closed on December 24th for a half-day.

Kasey Krueger with Pioneer Communications came in and presented the commissioners with information on the BEAD Program. Kasey said they are asking for support from the county but not funding. There will be three (3) project areas in Stevens County running fiber throughout. Pioneer Communications goal is to build lines to support 10,000 by 10,000 megawatts for the future. Kasey said he is requesting a letter of support to be signed on the county's letterhead showing support for the grant.

Amy told the commissioners she has some funds left in the clerk tech fund and would like to purchase a new fax machine for the treasurer's and clerk's office as the one (1) currently used is antiquated and cannot keep up with modern fax machines. She also plans to use some of the funds to purchase new desktop scanners as theirs have been having issues.

Rodney came in and requested a ten (10) minute executive session over non-elected personnel pay. Pat made a motion to go into an executive session for ten (10) minutes over non-elected personnel pay. Joe seconded. Executive session began at 9:19 AM and concluded at 9:21 AM. Commissioners cancelled the executive session until the county attorney can be present.

Tony Martin came in and introduced Tony Mellini with Terracon. Tony Mellini showed the commissioners some maps giving diagrams of where the new pits will be in conjunction with the gas lines. Tony Martin said they will be moving the concrete and trees to a different area of the landfill to get ready for the new pits. Tony Mellini said the KDHE waived three (3) cells from having clay liners as the cost would be around two million dollars. They are currently waiting for Scout to see what is proposed for safely driving heavy trucks over the gas pipelines that run underneath. Tony Mellini said he is working with Kirkham Michael about building concrete slabs over the pipelines as an extra safety measure which will be costly but should last the lifetime of the landfill. The commissioners said they would reach out to Jimmy Kraisinger and let him know the county will be using some of the land he is currently leasing for the expansion.

Tony Mellini said the bids for digging the new landfill are due to the road and bridge department by November 27th and the opening of the bids will be held on December 9th at 10:00 AM in the commissioner's meeting room.

Tony Martin said the road and bridge department is working on winterizing the asphalt plant today. He also said he plans to attend the landfill meeting tomorrow in Liberal and the KAC in December. Tony said thirty-one (31) miles of roads have been restriped.

Tony reminded the commissioners the planning and zoning committee will hold a public hearing on November 20th over Travertine Solar. He said the pilot agreements aren't quite done but will be before the commissioners review the turnout of the public hearing.

Joe said Blane Marshall has roll-off from the Pheasant Heaven charity event and wanted to know Tony's thoughts on waving the tipping fee. Tony said he would hate to waive the fee even though it is a non-profit organization, because it would have the potential to open up issues with other organizations.

The commissioners asked Joe about the mobile home in the country and if the owners have picked up any permits for the new home. Tony stated no one has come in to pick up any permits.

Angela Eichman came in and told the commissioners she is still waiting on the outcome from the Arkalon hearing to decide about going forward with valuating Seaboard Energy. Angela stated the National Helium had stipulations which caused no need for a hearing.

Tron told Rodney that Paul will not be in the meeting today and stated he feels the salary is good where it is. Rodney asked if there were any other opinions and Joe said he was thinking about revisiting it at the beginning of the year. Joe said he is in favor of tabling the salary decision again until the end of the year.

Angela came back in and requested executive session over non-elected personnel to replace a position in the appraiser's department. Pat made a motion to go into executive session for ten (10) minutes. Joe seconded. Executive session began at 10:35 AM and ended at 10:37 AM. The commissioners told Angela the position needs to be published in the newspaper.

Ross Sullivan was in attendance.

The commissioners told Amy to order hams from Gene's Heartland for employees for Christmas.

Susan Schulte with GIS came in and told the commissioners she has prices for her laptop, desktop, and plotter printer head. She said she has enough funds in her GIS Equipment Fund account and is requesting approval for the purchases. The commissioners said they approve the purchase of equipment needed.

Amy said she still has not received approval from the state for the canvass and will contact them when she hears back to set a date and time.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS – GN2024 CANVASS/SPECIAL
NOVEMBER 14, 2024

Agenda

9:00 – CANVASS – GN2024
9:15 –
9:30 –
9:45 –
10:00 – Special Meeting - Holiday Schedule

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met to canvass the 2024 General Election Results. Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk, was also present. Tron called the meeting to order.

The commissioners had sixty-three (63) provisional ballots to review. Twenty-Eight (28) provisional ballots did not count due to either not registered prior to registration deadline, no photo ID and did not provide one prior to canvass, did not sign provisional envelope prior to canvass, and registered late after deadline so was not in the pollbook.

Thirty-five (35) provisional ballots counted due to photo ID received prior to canvass, signature provided prior to canvass, name change for a Stevens County registered voter, and change of address within the county.

Tron closed the canvass and opened for a special meeting discussing the county holidays.

The holiday list for 2025 provided by the county clerk was approved:

Wednesday, January 1 st	New Year's
Monday, February 17 th	Presidents' Day
Friday, April 18 th	Good Friday
Monday, May 26 th	Memorial Day
Friday, July 4 th	Independence Day
Monday, September 1 st	Labor Day
Monday, October 13 th	Columbus Day
Tuesday, November 11 th	Veterans Day
Thursday, November 27 th	Thanksgiving
Friday, November 28 th	
Thursday, December 25 th	Christmas
Friday, December 26 th	

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS –SPECIAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 19, 2024

Agenda

9:00 – County Facilities Maintenance Supervisor Position

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a special meeting to discuss the open position for County Facilities Maintenance Supervisor. Paul Kitzke, County Attorney, and Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk, were also present. Tron called the meeting to order.

Pat said something needs to be done in the hallway by the Memorial Hall and elevator as there is water coming in from the ground outside. Amy said she had Tron come in and check on it around election time so someone can see it is not coming in from the doors. Pat said he will call V&B Concrete to see what can be done. The commissioners discussed the issue and feel like there should be some kind of footer about twelve inches (12”) running underground along the exterior wall with a riser of about six inches (6”) to see if that will help stop the water. Also, have a door person check out the front doors of the courthouse to see what needs to be done to keep dirt and rain from coming in when the wind is out of the south.

Amy said Unifirst is agreeing to take almost half (1/2) off the bill for the courthouse to keep the county's business. The county has until September 2025 to come to a decision.

Bob Johnson came in to greet the commissioners.

The commissioners discussed the possible candidates from the various applications they have received for the county facilities maintenance supervisor position. Out of the five (5) applications received, the commissioners chose to offer Michael Mendoza the position. The commissioners called Michael Mendoza for a phone conference to discuss the position. After discussing the position and working on wages, Michael said he would reach Paul Kitzke tomorrow to let him know if he will be taking the job or not.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
NOVEMBER 25, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – Cammie Heaton
 9:00 – Rex Evans
 9:15 –
 9:30 – Tony Martin
 9:45 –
 10:00 –
 10:30 –

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session. Paul Kitzke, County Attorney and Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk, were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Joe moved to approve minutes from the last meeting. Pat seconded. Motion carried. Pat moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	112,820.99
Co. Building	\$	525.00
Judicial District	\$	800.00
Road & Bridge	\$	74,678.99
Airport	\$	2,122.15
ARPA	\$	18,198.00
911 Wireless	\$	116.59
Noxious Weed	\$	4,266.96
EMS	\$	10,625.02
Fire	\$	1,929.30
Community Health	\$	13,792.51
GIS Equipment	\$	4,170.66
Diversion	\$	379.64
Sheriff	\$	72,658.16
TOTAL:	\$	317,083.97

Shannon Crawford was in attendance.

Pat said he contacted V&B Concrete and scheduled an appointment to meet about the concrete outside the Memorial Hall. Pat said V&B Concrete did not show. Amy said she contacted All Glass out of Liberal and Mitch told her he would be in either this week or the next to look at the front (south) doors of the courthouse.

Cammie Heaton came in and reported there is a confirmed positive of whooping cough in the county. She said the second-grade class did a body fair and the high school freshmen are doing tours of the community health department. Cammie also stated she will need to transfer funds from the community grant fund into the community health fund for salary, since some of the health department's wages are from grants. She said she has orders coming up for vaccines, especially RSV and has already done several vaccines at the care home. Cammie stated that in prior minutes Amy mentioned her wage increase was covered by the PHEP grant and Cammie wanted to clarify that most of the grant will cover her wage but there is enough in her budget to cover the overage of the salary amount.

Cammie said she was approached a while back about the possibility of Project Hope using the back half of the community health building. She states she has reservations about the idea as there will have to be a wall built to divide the two offices. The commissioners agree that at this time it would not be wise to have Project Hope in the community health building due to HIPPA.

Pat brought up the email from Amy Rich stating there is a department who is still not getting completed and signed time sheets in for payroll and said he feels if there are no time sheets there should be no pay. Amy Jo reiterated that if a department is having issues, whether it is computer related, personal, etc., there needs to be some sort of communication so her office can do the job that is required.

Rex Evans was in. Tron said he had spoken with Rex on the phone, after the first candidate for the position declined, and relayed the pay is \$21.00 per hour. Rex said he would be able to work at that wage, but he would still have to keep his coaching position at the high school unless his wage is \$22.00 per hour. Pat mentioned the insurance being paid for a family plan by the county and Rex agreed it was a perk.

Joe made a motion to hire Rex Evans for County Facilities Maintenance Supervisor with a starting pay of \$22.00 per hour with the job duties as described in the job description. Tron seconded. Motion carried.

Joe asked if Jayme Rich could come down and go over the most recent tax sale.

Jayme came down and told the commissioners every parcel sold for more than was anticipated. She reported there were three (3) parcels of land and about one hundred twenty (120) parcels of minerals. Joe said there was a person who purchased some of the property but there was a mix up on the title work. Jayme stated the title company which was used did not get all the title work completed and about two (2) parcels did not get caught until later, but the issue had been resolved. She said the county received about half (1/2) if not more than what was owed on delinquent taxes for all properties sold. Joe asked when the next sale would be, and Jayme said it depends on how many people pay off their delinquent taxes. She said she sent letters out to inform people that their property will be on the next tax sale if it is not paid, and hopes it will get tax payments coming in. Jayme said the hotel has not paid anything since July but did get their 2019 taxes paid in full. She

said from 2023 to 2024, \$932,000.00 has been received for real estate delinquent taxes just by having tax sales.

Tony Martin came in and said he has concerns with the City of Hugoton electric department. He stated the flashing traffic lights on the Hooker/Moscow, Optima/Hooker, and Evans/2nd pose issues if the city is unable to help. He said the city would be quick with sending someone out to make repairs if the lights quit working. They did it in a quick and timely manner and did not charge the county a fee. He said now, it's up to Pioneer Electric and he is curious as to how much that would cost and if they will be able to make repairs in a quick manner or if it will take longer since they are in Ulysses. Tony said he looked up solar lights for those intersections and was quoted at around \$1,200.00 per light. Pat asked if solar lights were really needed, and Tony said something needs to be at those intersections due to the high risk of accidents. Tron agreed with Tony about the solar lights leading up to those intersections. The quote Tony received for six (6) red flashing lights, six (6) amber flashing lights and solar is \$15,780.00. Tron and Joe approved the flashing lights and solar signs and told Tony to get them ordered.

Tony said there is a landfill meeting at 9:15 AM at the landfill.

Tony told the commissioners they will need to review and approve of the conditional use permits from Travertine Solar. He stated Glenn Kerbs will be sending copies of the agreements for the commissioners to look over and hopefully decide on them at the next commissioner's meeting on December 9th.

Tony requested an executive session for ten (10) minutes over current litigation. Joe made a motion to go into executive session for ten (10) minutes over current litigation, Tron seconded. Executive session began at 10:17 AM with Amy Tharp in attendance and ended at 10:27 AM.

Tony stated he is going to the KAC meeting in Wichita and hopes to visit with Kirkham Michael about road maintenance and make sure everything is covered with the conditional use permit with Travertine Solar. Tony also mentioned if someone wants to protest the solar farms, they are instructed to send letters to the Stevens County Clerk explaining their protest. Tony stated he hopes everything is ready by December 9th, so the commissioners can approve and sign. The planning and zoning board requests Tron not to sign as he has interest in the solar farm. Joe said he would like to have one (1) meeting before finalizing this agreement as he would like to discuss the tax exemptions. He said he would like to see something in the agreement that at the end of ten (10) years of being exempted from the tax roll and having a pilot program the county will continue to pay the difference if the pilot program is more than the taxes. Also, if at the end of ten (10) years the government decides to make renewable energy tax exempt for life, he would like to see the energy companies continue to pay at least three percent (3%) of their earnings.

Tony said he received a call from an upset individual about the landfill. He stated this person loaded up junk feed at the grocery store and went to the landfill to dump it and the landfill employees turned this individual away due to the moisture recently received. Tony said he spoke to the landfill

employees, and they stated they did not turn anyone away. Tony elaborated that what happened was that the person driving to dump the feed had gotten stuck and the landfill employees had to help pull them out.

Amy asked the commissioners for a final decision on whether they want Nex-Tech to continue with the Microsoft 365 account until the contract is completed or pay off the rest of the contract which is around \$11,000.00 and have Leading Edge take control. The commissioners agreed to allow Nex-Tech to continue with the Microsoft 365 contract until it expires.

Jayne Rich came back in and asked if she was allowed to write off taxes that are older than twenty-five (25) years for personal property, gas royalties and heavy equipment (16/20). The commissioners agreed.

The commissioners asked Amy if the coroner fee per autopsy is \$3,000.00. Amy stated the transport from Hugoton to Topeka is \$3,000.00 and the autopsies range anywhere from \$1,200.00 to \$2,400.00. Shannon asked if the autopsies were the county's responsibility. Amy replied, any unattended death inside the county is required to be paid by the county, however the autopsies involving anyone under the age of eighteen (18) is reimbursed by the state. Pat asked Paul if the county was released from the judicial district for autopsies and if so, is there anywhere closer. Paul said he would find out.

Discussion was had over hospital board replacements due to two (2) members having completed their terms and Shannon will have to resign due to his election into the commissioner position. There have been a few people interested, and they stated they will have to decide soon.

Paul said he believes the commissioners should not give the property to the museum as previously mentioned at the past meeting due to it being county owned and will possibly need to receive bids on it. He said he will investigate the matter further and let the commissioners know what he finds.

The commissioners moved to change the December commissioner meeting from December 23rd, 2024, to December 20th, 2024.

Added and Abated Orders were reviewed and approved by commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; for tax year 2024 numbers 2-17 total valuation removed 3,403 and tax assessed -\$678.16, with valuation added of 2,957 and a relief assessment of \$584.60. Total valuation of -446 and total tax assessed -\$93.56.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

After the meeting, Amy Jo swore in the upcoming commissioner, Shannon Crawford, to fulfill Pat Hall's vacancy beginning December 1, 2024.

The county commissioners opened the re-canvassing for the 2024 General Election. No changes made at the re-canvass other than posting the appeals court totals by precinct. Canvass concluded.

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
DECEMBER 9, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – Flora Foods – Agreement Discussion
 9:00 – Theresa & Lisa with Lewis Hooper & Dick
 9:15 – Jayme Rich – Treasurer
 9:30 – Tony Martin – Public Works
 9:45 –
 10:00 – Solid Waste - pit bids
 10:30 – Solar Farms (Travertine) – Agreements

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session with Shannon Crawford as the replacement for Pat Hall (commissioner district 2). Paul Kitzke, County Attorney and Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk, were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Joe moved to approve minutes from the last meeting. Shannon seconded. Motion carried. Joe moved to approve the county vouchers. Shannon seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	116,611.49
Co. Building	\$	6,851.11
Judicial District	\$	1,223.03
Road & Bridge	\$	56,356.28
Airport	\$	5,082.97
Clerk Tech Fund	\$	588.04
911 Wireless	\$	-
Noxious Weed	\$	4,656.93
EMS	\$	7,054.06
Fire	\$	8,088.30
Community Health	\$	13,581.53
GIS Equipment	\$	2,179.01
Diversion	\$	-
Sheriff	\$	51,813.47
<hr/> TOTAL:	\$	<hr/> 274,086.22

Mike Shelton came in and requested assistance from the county for utilities in 2025. Also, he expressed he would like to see the courts inform people of their services for those who need help. The commissioners agreed to help with AA's utilities for 2025 and told Mike to speak with Paul about suggesting the judicial system inform those who need help of their services.

Rodney Kelling was present and checking in. There was nothing new from the commissioners or Rodney currently.

Theresa Dasenbrock and Lisa Axman with Lewis, Hooper & Dick introduced themselves and said they will be in the county on December 11th, for pre-audit work. Theresa told the commissioners she has begun her retirement phase and 2026 will be her last year.

Paul Kitzke stated the agreement with Flora Foods came back to him and they want to waive the nuisance and restrictions of building expansion. The company will still have to abide by the government restrictions on nuisance and others, so he is unsure why they want the county's restrictions lifted. Paul commented he is not sure the commissioners should agree to waive everything they are requesting since they are allowed to produce food. Paul would like to see documentation on how they plan to use the property. The commissioners agree with Paul on the subject.

Amy informed the commissioners; a Federal Court ruled that the Department of Labor overstepped its authority under the FLSA to increase the earnings threshold for salary exempt employees, and the rule was vacated; therefore, the three (3) Stevens County employees who were going to have to transition to an hourly wage earner will remain as salaried.

Amy told the commissioners the county received an IRS penalty of \$172.80 due to some incorrect information on a W-9 form from a previous contractor in 2021 (who is now currently an employee). This employee did not complete the requested information for the clerk's office by the deadline which brings the penalty charge. If the employee completes the requested form at any time, the IRS will reimburse the county.

Amy asked the commissioners if they want to allow all departments to close at noon on Christmas Eve or if each department needs to go by their respective half (1/2) day. The commissioners agreed half (1/2) day per department hours.

Amy asked the commissioners if they are going to discuss a cost of living adjustment for 2025. Tron commented that social security is giving a two-point-six percent (2.6%) increase. The commissioners will discuss COLAs for 2025 at the next meeting.

Amy said Joe asked if it would be better to hold commissioner meetings on Tuesdays or leave them on Mondays. The commissioners discussed the change and decided the meetings should stay on Monday.

Amy presented the commissioners with updated MOUs for the community health department and hospital. These MOUs have been updated to change the names of the previous department heads to the current ones. The arrangements will remain the same regarding emergency situations that give the hospital and community health department the right to have access to the memorial hall in the event of an emergency. The commissioners signed off on the updated MOUs and Amy informed them she will get signatures from the hospital and community health department heads.

Amy presented the commissioners with the Kansas Department of Health's current report of the water pollution control permits for agriculture to be reviewed.

Amy asked if the commissioners wanted to re-open the discussion about neighborhood revitalization (NRV). Previously they chose not to renew due to the drop in valuation. Jan Leonard approached her about a new contractor group interested in the Pioneer Lots and told them the NRV program would be very beneficial to this group. The commissioners replied they would like to visit with the contractor group first before they decide to renew the NRV for Stevens County.

Jayme Rich came in and updated the commissioners on the bank situation, stating this year in interest, the county has brought in \$958,000.00 which is \$35,000.00 more than previous years due to looking at the interest between two (2) banks in Stevens County. Jayme also stated the state bank fund does not always give more money in interest than the county banks but sometimes they do. Jayme told the commissioners the treasurer's office will be closed on December 26th and 27th this year to allow her staff to have time at home with family over the holidays, understanding they will have to take accrued time for these days. State statute requires a \$5 daily fee when an elected official closes their office outside normal commissioner approved closures, so Jayme presented Amy \$10.00 in cash to deposit into the county's general fund for the two (2) additional days her office will be closed. The commissioners asked about tax sale funds and where those go. Jayme said the money goes to the district court to pay newspapers, attorney fees, etc. Whatever is left, the district court will write a check to the county and those monies will go into the county general fund account.

Colby Wade, Page Bolin, Krista Tortorice and Michael Hudson with Travertine were in attendance.

Tony Martin came in and handed the commissioners a crossing permit to be signed. He presented the commissioners with the waste management plan which is due December 15th for the year 2025 and suggested the commissioners adopt the resolution for this plan.

Joe made a motion to adopt ***Resolution 24-04, Waste Management Plan for 2025***. Shannon seconded. Motion carried.

Tony mentioned the mailbox at the landfill was torn up and is currently being repaired and most of the road and bridge employees took a defensive driving course which will help the county's insurance costs. Tony commented the KAC was good this year and very informative and helpful.

Tony handed the bids for the landfill development to the commissioners and said the consultant, Tony would not be coming in for bids as they all met the specs and are comparative. The bids will be opened at 10:00 AM by the commissioners.

Glenn Kerbs and Darin Heger are expected to be in attendance for the discussion over the Travertine conditional use permits.

Tony reported the noxious weed inspection came out good and mentioned just a couple issues. There are some chemicals in the shed which were outdated, and a citizen whose chemical license expired was still purchasing products which shouldn't have been. The county has ten (10) days to comply and KCAMP will be coming down to do a county inspection soon to make sure everything is up to code.

Joe asked how the tire recycling was going, noting the amount the county received compared to the amount of money the county spent on this. Tony mentioned it was a \$30,000 difference, as the county received \$50,000.00 to take tires but had to pay out \$80,000.00 for the recycling company. Tony also stated the charge for taking tires is decent and would hate to up the charge and find tires in ditches and fields.

Tony explained to the commissioners he is looking for a mechanic to replace Wes when he retires at the end of this year.

Joe said he would like to have comp packets made up for each employee.

Sheriff Ted Heaton, TJ Steers and Cuyler Miller stopped in. Ted was just checking in. The commissioners asked how his staff is doing, and Ted said he is running with six (6) deputies and plans to stay with that number.

Shannon asked Tony if the county used to dig their own pits for the landfill. Tony told him they did, but the county has been waiting for four (4) years for KDHE to give the approval and now they are out of time and will have to have this project contracted out.

There were three (3) bids received by the deadline of November 27th for the landfill pit project.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1. Stoppel Dirt LLC | \$ 909,519.49 – No completion date listed |
| 2. MJE, LLC | \$1,042,505.70 – projected completion date June 2025 |
| 3. Sporer Land Development | \$1,142,177.38 - projected completion date March 2025 |

Joe made a motion to approve the bid from Stoppel Dirt LLC in the amount of \$909,519.49 and to be paid out of the landfill closure fund. Shannon seconded. Motion carried.

Glenn Kerbs requested an executive session over contract negotiations for ten (10) minutes, including Stacey Wood, Tony Martin and Paul Kitzke in the meeting. Joe made a motion for a ten (10) minute executive session over contract negotiations. Shannon seconded. The executive session began at 10:25 AM and concluded at 10:35 AM. Another motion by Joe was made to reconvene at 10:35 AM for fifteen (15) minutes for the executive session over contract negotiations. The executive session ended at 10:50 AM. Motion was made by Joe to go back into executive session at 10:50 AM for ten (10) minutes over contract negotiations. Executive session ended at 11:00 AM. No action taken.

Darin Heger told the commissioners the planning and zoning board unanimously approved the Travertine Solar conditional use permits, along with the decommissioning and county contribution agreements.

Page with Travertine Solar expressed their appreciation of the county's work to move forward with solar farms. She would like to have more time to work on the road use/maintenance agreement to make sure it's beneficial for the solar farms as well as for the county.

Glenn Kerbs presented the commissioners with ***Resolution 24-05 Conditional Use Permit Plan for Travertine Solar***. He said the zoning board considered the conditional use permit on November 20th and unanimously approved for the application to be granted. He stated there were three (3) main conditions in the plan:

1. Travertine will conform with all performance standards required by the county's planning/zoning regulations code, and all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.
2. Construction of the project shall be in accordance with the approved development plan.
3. Timeline of phases for construction and all the agreements required by Stevens County planning will be in place before construction begins.

Glenn informed the commissioners the fourteen (14) day protest period has gone by, and the county clerk has not received any protest from the public.

Shannon made a motion to accept ***Resolution 24-05 Conditional Use Permit for Travertine Solar***. Joe seconded; Tron abstained. Motion carried.

The conditional use permit includes agreements which will have Travertine Solar contribute to the county annually for ten (10) years beginning when the project goes into operation. This also includes the idea that after eleven (11) to twenty (20) years, depending on tax, Travertine agrees to pay the difference in the county taxes and the payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) agreement.

Joe made a motion to approve the conditional use permit from Travertine Solar as presented for the county. Shannon seconded; Tron abstained. Motion carried.

Shannon made a motion to approve the USD 210 agreement which is also subject to approval by USD 210 which would be the same payment arrangement with different amounts. Joe seconded; Tron abstained. Motion carried.

Glenn said the decommissioning agreement for Travertine Solar is a twelve (12) month period which triggers the decommissioning of solar farms. From the date the project begins, Travertine must set aside funding to pay for the removal of the solar farms. Page stated if the solar farms fail, they will be responsible for the removal of the solar farm and repair of the grounds used.

Joe made a motion to approve the decommissioning agreement with Travertine Solar as provided. Shannon seconded; Tron abstained. Motion carried.

Glenn told the commissioners he is working on the road use and maintenance agreement and would like to meet again when it gets completed.

Amy told the commissioners they need to get people appointed to the hospital board before the end of this year to replace Shannon Crawford, Benny Cabrera and Seth Gillespie. The commissioners discussed the possible candidates for hospital board: Colleen Musgrove, Yvonne Jackson, and Susan Smith. The commissioners

stated they knew Colleen and Yvonne but did not know Susan. They will look over Susan's resume and discuss it at the next meeting.

Shannon made a motion to appoint Colleen Musgrove to replace Shannon Crawford on the Hospital Board. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Shannon made a motion to appoint Yvonne Jackson to the hospital board to replace Benny Cabrera. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Joe said he read over what the KNRC is discussing, and he stated there is a national interest in a transportation corridor. This corridor is five (5) miles wide and gives the federal government the ability to have imminent domain. Joe relayed he hopes this gets derailed as the line comes south of Dodge City and takes up half (1/2) of Stevens County on down into the panhandle.

Abatement Order for tax year 2024 and tax number 18 was reviewed and approved by the commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; total valuation removed 1,602 with a relief assessment of \$259.55

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
DECEMBER 20, 2024

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – Rex - Building
 9:00 – Longevity of employees
 9:15 – Edgar Ortuño – OC Quality Custom Homes
 9:30 –
 9:45 –
 10:00 –
 10:30 – Steve Lewis - Museum

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session with all members present. County Clerk Amy Jo Tharp and RoGlenda Coulter from the Hermes were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Joe moved to approve minutes from the last meeting. Shannon seconded. Motion carried. Joe moved to approve the county vouchers. Shannon seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	111,323.26
Co. Building	\$	3,623.08
Judicial District	\$	1,938.41
Road & Bridge	\$	38,370.01
Airport	\$	12,402.61
ARPA	\$	109,738.50
911 Wireless	\$	116.69
Noxious Weed	\$	4,863.42
EMS	\$	8,535.36
Fire	\$	5,656.33
Community Health	\$	15,451.67
Treas Tech Fund	\$	152.52
Sheriff Special	\$	7,305.45
Sheriff	\$	34,763.24
TOTAL:	\$	354,240.55

Rodney Kelling came in and informed the commissioners it is time to appoint someone to be the Southwest Kansas Homeland Regional Council Member for Stevens County. Rodney said the appointment is for two (2) years.

Joe made a motion to appoint Rodney Kelling as the SWK Homeland Regional Council Member from Stevens County. Shannon seconded. Motion carried.

Rodney informed the commissioners he is over on one line item in his budget and explained it is due to a health insurance issue between the community health department and EMS. Amy told the commissioners the revenue and expense will not reflect in a single line item, but the overall budget is fine.

Rex came in and told the commissioners the water fountain on the third (3rd) floor is having issues draining due to the p-trap being full of coffee grounds, reporting he and Pat Hall worked on the fountain drain and there was no clear resolution for a fix. Rex asked if he could remove the water fountain, cap off the lines, and put something decorative in its place. He stated the courts have a drinking water supply without the fountain. The commissioners agreed to remove the water fountain and cap the lines.

Rex said he plans to see how much it would cost to have someone clean the upper windows at the courthouse. The commissioners discussed with Rex whether Unifirst should keep the services for rugs and rags at the courthouse or have the county purchase rugs, and have Rex clean them periodically. The commissioners decided to have Rex contact Unifirst and see if they will honor their proposed rate for the five (5) year contract. Rex mentioned he went through his inventory list to get it prepared for 2025 and noticed the hedge trimmer and carpet shampooer were missing. Amy told him she thought both were broken and had been discarded. The commissioners told Rex to purchase a hedge trimmer and shampooer for the courthouse.

Rex communicated to the commissioners he reached out to Service Janitorial about getting on a revolving contract for some of the paper supplies (toilet paper, paper towels). V&B Construction called Rex last Friday and told him they would meet up with him to inspect and discuss what can be done about the hallway by the Memorial Hall doors to keep water from coming in. Flatlanders repaired the snow blower at no cost due to it still being under warranty. Amy and Rex asked the commissioners if they wanted to start replacing tables in the Memorial Hall with the plastic ones. The commissioners first agreed it would be a good idea but then later recanted as the rectangular tables are sturdy and have lasted and the plastic ones do not seem to hold up. Amy asked if it would be beneficial to at least swap the round tables with plastic ones since they are heavy to move around compared to the rectangular ones. The commissioners agreed.

Ted Heaton, Tyler Anderson, Kyrie Esarey, Cammie Heaton, Lori Rome, Phillip Thompson, and Tom Torrey were in attendance.

The commissioners acknowledged Stevens County full time and part time employees who have reached longevity anniversaries:

- 10 Years: Tyler Anderson (FT), Kyrie Esarey (PT), Cammie Heaton (FT), Tom Torrey (PT)
- 20 Years: Robert Rich (FT)
- 25 Years: Chad Bennett (FT), Phillip Thompson (PT)
- 30 Years: Roger Beesley (FT)
- 40 Years: Lori Rome (FT)

Courtney Leslie with the City of Hugoton Police Department came in and informed the commissioners there was an accident between a sheriff vehicle and a city police vehicle on November 1st. She mentioned she would like to get her vehicle fixed and had contacted Ted Heaton and TJ Steers and had only heard back from TJ. She remarked the repair cost is around \$800.00 to \$900.00 and would like to get it taken care of. Courtney would like to get information about the county's insurance and a report of the accident. Amy said she will send over the information she has received and stated she still has not heard back from KCamp on the issue yet.

Ted Heaton verbalized the county has a \$500.00 deductible and it would be ridiculous for the insurance to cover such minor damage.

The commissioners discussed the newly proposed MOU with Flora Foods. Joe relayed that Paul explained the MOU still has the current stipulations but allows food production in the MOU and approves the document.

Joe made a motion to accept the Memorandum of Understanding between Flora Foods and Stevens County as presented today, December 20, 2024. Shannon seconded. Motion carried. The commissioners and county clerk signed the MOU with RoGlenda Coulter as notary.

Joe called Rodney on speakerphone and asked if the LED lighting at the EMT building was completed. Rodney replied the lighting was replaced in the conference room and meeting room. He mentioned he would like to eventually get the lights replaced in the hallway and offices as well.

Edgar Ortuño with OC Quality Custom Homes was next on the agenda and presented the commissioners with ideas of a contracting project on some of the Pioneer lots. He stated with a Rural Housing Incentive District program (RHID), he can build more affordable homes. Unfortunately, homes cannot be built for under \$250,000.00 due to inflation caused by the pandemic. Edgar said he can put a package together for state incentives and have the county attorney create an agreement to get licenses and applications from the state. Edgar would like to begin building and developing on four (4) of the lots as soon as possible and eventually keep expanding with the help of RHID. Edgar remarked the first thing which needs to be done is for the county to get RHID.

Amy asked the commissioners if they have a replacement for Shannon on the planning and zoning board. They replied they are still trying to find out who to appoint as a replacement. Amy asked if they had thought of who would replace Seth Gillespie on the hospital board, and commissioners commented they are trying to find someone from the Moscow community.

Neal Gillespie and Jonathan Percy from Eco Devo came in.

Amy said Jan Leonard asked if the county would reconsider starting the neighborhood revitalization plan. The commissioners agreed it would be a good idea and asked Amy to see what documents she can gather for Paul to review.

Tron asked Jonathan and Neal if there was anything they needed. They responded that they wanted to discuss the county doing another neighborhood revitalization plan which had just previously been answered. Neal said he wanted to discuss the Eco Devo budget by stating the work Jan Leonard does as a part time employee and traveling from Goddard to Hugoton is immensely appreciated. The Eco Devo board would like to see more funds for Eco Devo and slowly restore the budget to what it was because when Jan retires, they will have to find a full-time person to replace him. Joe said the Eco Devo budget was cut by the county due to the valuation dropping. At this time, they would like to request an extra \$5,000.00 per year. Tron informed Neal he was just getting ready to inform the other two commissioners about a \$5,000.00 check the county received for tourism from Boot Hill Tourism. Neal commented there is a tourism board for Stevens County, and he had heard of the funds. The commissioners entertained the idea of using the \$5,000.00 received for tourism to give to Eco Devo.

Steve Lewis and Jim Bell with the museum were in attendance. Tron told Steve the Buddy Heaton Exhibit was nice and impressive. Steve commented there was a great turnout. Steve then said he came to the meeting due to the idea of the county having to bid out the county owned lots that have been part of the museum. Joe expressed he knew the county sold property to other people in the past with only having the purchaser come in stating they are interested and then the county places an ad in the newspaper for a public hearing instead of going through a bidding process. Steve mentioned adverse possession. Joe said he would consult with Paul and see what can be done and the commissioners said they will not let the property go if it must be bid out.

Amy asked the commissioners if they were going to give employees a COLA for 2025.

After further discussion amongst the commissioners regarding a COLA, Joe made a motion for all Stevens County employees to receive a three percent (3%) COLA for 2025 effective January 3rd, 2025, pay date. Shannon seconded. Motion carried.

Added and Abated Orders were reviewed and approved by commissioners and given to the County Treasurer; for tax year 2024 numbers 19-26 and 28-33, with a total valuation of 52,690 removed and tax assessed -\$9,793.44; and number 27 with valuation added of 276 and a relief assessment of \$50.60. Total valuation of -51,385 and total tax assessed -\$9,742.84.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman