

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS

June 22, 2026

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
8:45 – Rickey Burrows – Interview for Emergency Mgmt. Director
9:00 –
9:15 – Nicole Kinser – Hugoton Senior Center HVAC
9:30 – Jeff Cox – Public Works
9:45 –
10:30 – Cesar Salas – Pioneer Lots

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session with all members present. County Attorney Paul Kitzke, and County Clerk Amy Jo Tharp were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Shannon moved to approve minutes from the last meeting. Joe 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	\$	70,280.20
Judicial District	\$	362.04
Road & Bridge	\$	46,995.16
Airport	\$	10,181.66
Building	\$	290.14
Noxious Weed	\$	2,099.12
EMS	\$	7,894.33
Fire	\$	6,072.58
Fire Bequest	\$	749.12
Comm Health	\$	11,563.30
Alcohol Treatment Fund	\$	419.67
Airport Grants	\$	11,543.81
Sheriff	\$	40,536.10
911 Wireless	\$	2,555.67
TOTAL:	\$	211,542.90

Pat Hall, Cammie Heaton, Jennifer Featherston, and Andy Moser were in attendance.

Cammie Heaton told the commissioners the health department held “Dash Day” for kids and had a good turnout. She mentioned WIC usually helps fund the program, but due to lack of funding, other local agencies helped fund some prizes and shirts. There is a confirmed case of Pertussis (whooping cough) in Seward County and Cammie believes there are some cases in Stevens County of those who are not vaccinated. In 2025, the health department did onsite vaccinations at the elementary school during enrollment. This concluded with only seven (7) children receiving vaccines in a ten to twelve

(10-12) hour day. Cammie stated she would rather have the health department open for extended hours on certain days to accommodate those needing vaccines for school instead of hauling equipment and staff to the school. The commissioners agreed to allow the health department to extend their hours during a specific time to allow vaccinations for school enrollment.

Rodney Kelling came in with Rickey Burrows. Rodney updated the commissioners on the fire at the cotton gin, stating it will need to burn itself out as there is no way to get to the fire source and extinguish it. It is believed lightning caught the cotton on fire. The commissioners spoke with Rickey Burrows regarding the emergency services director position. He was the only applicant for the job. Rickey expressed the need for change, and he feels he can lead the emergency services department in a good direction. He mentioned staffing the Moscow area with more firefighters and EMTs. The commissioners asked how long it will take for Rickey to get all his credentials. Rickey responded that it will possibly take two (2) years to complete training. Rickey informed the commissioners he has some certifications completed and he is in his fourteenth (14th) year of being an advanced EMT. Rickey asked that the commissioners give him enough notice of start date (at least two weeks) so he could tell his current employer he will be leaving. The commissioners questioned if five (5) months of training under Rodney would be sufficient and Rickey stated it would be. Joe said there is controversy regarding pay for that position as the current director is receiving a set salary plus compensation for each run. Rickey would like the salary to be \$90,000.00 without separate compensation for runs. The commissioners will be discussing salary for training and for when Rickey officially steps into Rodney's position.

Joe made a motion to hire Rickey Burrows to replace Rodney Kelling as the emergency services director in January 2027. The salary will be tabled until a further date. Shannon seconded. Motion carried.

Jennifer Featherston and Andy Moser dropped in to discuss a question about buildings for older residents. She said there was word floating around that a developer wants to construct some apartments across from Pioneer Manor for a senior age group population to where they have independent living but would be able to attend functions at Pioneer Manor. Jennifer stated it would be nice but not feasible for the county at this time. Jennifer said the care home maintenance is still looking for a reliable used pickup as the ones they have found are outside the budget at this time.

Nicole Kinser and Karen Rich attended and discussed the failing air conditioning system at the Hugoton Senior Center. The unit is over thirty-five (35) years old and is having a hard time keeping up with the temperatures. They presented a quote from Lin Goode and Co., LLC, for a new system to replace the A/C unit and furnace. The commissioners noted the quote was above \$5,000.00 and informed Nicole and Karen to place an advertisement in the newspaper requesting sealed bids for a new unit. The commissioners agreed to open sealed bids on July 13th, at 9:15 a.m.

Tron asked Andy and Jeff if the planning and zoning board had discussed data centers yet. Andy said they are watching what Ford County does and will use them as an example. There was further discussion of data centers, but no decision was made.

Jeff Cox asked the commissioners if the landfill could be closed on July 4th and allow the employee who works Saturdays to work that Monday, June 29th, instead. The commissioners agreed to the request. Jeff informed the commissioners the 655 Crawler from the landfill is in Ulysses for repairs to the undercarriage and approximate cost is \$50,000.00 - \$55,000.00 for parts and labor. There was a short discussion over dozers for road and bridge and trying to decide the best way to go about it. Jeff also mentioned needing a new truck and sprayer for the noxious weed department.

Cesar Salas was last on the agenda and expressed his interest in purchasing two lots in the Pioneer Addition. He originally chose block 16 but changed his mind to lots 1 and 2 of block 15 in the Pioneer Addition. The commissioners explained to Cesar that lot 2 of block 15 is eight (8) feet less than the other lots due to a previous issue. Cesar said the house he has planned to build will still fit on that lot. Cesar brought in his computer and showed the commissioners the two (2) houses he will be building and the layout. The commissioners agreed and will hold a public hearing for the disposal of lot 1 and lot 2 of block 15 in the Pioneer Addition to be held on July 13, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. in the commissioner meeting room.

Tron opened the public hearing for the sale of lot 1, lot 2, lot 3 of block 8 to OC Quality Homes, LLC. for \$10.00 each. No one present had any objections. Shannon made a motion for OC Quality Custom Homes, LLC to purchase the discussed property for \$10.00 per lot. Joe seconded, motion carried. Tron closed the public hearing.

Amy said she spoke with the auditors about the housing authorities going through the county for grants, and they confirmed other counties do allow their housing authority to go through the county for grants. Amy also mentioned some issues with disgruntled employees and asked the commissioners to give directions at the next meeting to assist in some resolve. The estimated valuation for Stevens County is 106,318,427. Amy explained the value would have been higher, but she has set out the lower value to compensate for the loss the county will have when Seaboard Energy finishes their BOTA before the actual value and levies go out in November.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman