

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS

July 13, 2026

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
8:45 – Mike Shelton – AA Building
9:00 –
9:15 –Hugoton Senior Center HVAC Bid Opening
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 Clerk Amy Jo Tharp was also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Shannon moved to approve minutes from the last meeting and from the budget workshop. 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	\$	143,972.10
Judicial District	\$	870.89
Road & Bridge	\$	97,401.78
Airport	\$	42,507.55
Building	\$	1,962.16
Noxious Weed	\$	2,166.13
EMS	\$	9,320.93
Fire	\$	21,749.56
Fire Bequest	\$	52.32
Comm Health	\$	15,424.76
Services for Elderly	\$	88,313.00
Library	\$	86,563.00
Hospital Mntnc Fund	\$	450,000.00
Airport Grants	\$	263,558.94
Sheriff	\$	44,927.67
Landfill Closure	\$	2,350.00
TOTAL:	\$	1,271,140.79

Tron said there are at least three (3) different landmen out in Stevens County looking for land to put data centers on. The data centers are projected to bring in seven to twenty million dollars a year for the county, and plan to connect to the Freedom Pipeline which will also help. Tron said he heard they have cut back on water usage and will take less water than raising corn. The commissioners discussed the positives and negatives of data centers, from less crops for food and increased food prices, to

bringing in funding for the county which will help tremendously with taxes. The state government sets water usage limits which the data centers will have to follow.

Rodney Kelling and Rickey Burrows were in attendance. Rodney mentioned the defibrillators are beginning to have problems and investigated getting them replaced. He brought in a quote for a trade-in on three (3) for three (3) new ones and the price was \$149,997.00. Joe asked about bidding out and Rodney said there are more companies but have a completely different setup than what the employees are used to. Joe asked Rodney if he spoke to the foundation board about a possible grant for some or all the cost of the defibrillators. Rodney has not but will find out if the company will hold the quote until he can hear back from the foundation board. Rodney asked the commissioners if they would like to revise or make a new resolution pertaining to fireworks. The last resolution (02-15) states the county can sell fireworks on July 1 through July 4 and discharge on July 3 through July 4. The City of Hugoton has the same dates for sales, but fireworks can be discharged July 2 through July 4. Rodney also stated the City of Hugoton has ordinances for not discharging fireworks within six hundred (600) feet from the hospital and Pioneer Manor, which had to be enforced over the holiday as there are now homes within that perimeter of the care home. Amy said she will investigate state rules and regulations about permits for firework sales. The commissioners suggested a new resolution to adjust the fireworks discharge dates and include sales permit if needed.

Mike Shelton was on the agenda and came in to relay to the commissioners he is having complications getting the correct information to Pioneer Electric to change over the county building on Cemetery Road. Amy will take care of the issue and get the correct paperwork to Pioneer Electric for the changeover.

Rickey Burrows asked the commissioners if they had a chance to discuss his wage for Emergency Services Director position. The commissioners proposed \$75,000.00 with no additional pay for runs and for Rickey to begin his training under Rodney in August 2026. The commissioners stated once Rickey takes over Rodney's position, he could potentially receive an increase in pay and when all his certifications are completed as well.

Joe made a motion to start Rickey Burrows at \$75,000.00, to begin on August 2, 2026, with no additional pay for runs. Rickey Burrows accepted the position and wage amount. Shannon seconded. Motion carried.

Bids for the Hugoton Senior Center HVAC were opened:

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|-------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Lin Goode | \$9,800.00 |
| 2. 4 Seasons | \$12,980.58 |
| 3. Moss Heating and Air | \$11,475.00 |

Shannon made a motion to accept the lower bid from Lin Goode in the amount of \$9,800.00 for the Hugoton Senior Center heating and air unit. Joe seconded, motion carried.

Jeff Cox was in and mentioned the issue with the John Deere grader was the water pump and is hoping once it has been replaced by the county road mechanic, the issue is resolved and it will not have to

be sent out for repairs. Jeff stated he is waiting for tracks for the landfill dozer. Jeff would like to move Chad Bennett to assistant road foreman, with a two dollar (\$2.00) per hour wage increase. The commissioners gave their approval for Chad Bennett. A former employee has asked for his old job back and wanted to know if the county would rehire him. The commissioners agreed to allow Jeff to rehire Calvin Mann. There are hopes of chip sealing at least eight (8) miles of road this summer and prep work on the north part of Road 5 for chip sealing in 2027. Jeff said Tony is asking if there are four (4) men from road and bridge that could help at the fairgrounds on July 27th. The commissioners told Jeff to ask for volunteers if they are back at work when they are done.

Joe made a motion to accept ***Resolution 26-03, Regarding the establishment of an annual tax levy not to exceed one (1) mil for county building maintenance.*** Shannon seconded, motion carried.

Robert Davis called in and stated that the runway lighting project was completed at the airport and was just waiting on the flyby for the final approval. The entrance road project will begin in 2027 and there is another partial grant which will allow the airport to pay five percent (5%) instead of the usual ten percent (10%). Erick Nordling has resigned from the airport board and Robert stated George Martin was interested.

Shannon made a motion to accept George Martin as airport board member. Joe seconded, motion carried.

Rex Evans informed the commissioners there was water in the memorial hall entry from the rain on Friday. The drywall is having issues due to the moisture coming from the roof. Rex suggested contacting DV Douglass Roofing who specializes in flat roofs to come out and give an estimate on the repairs.

Tron moved to open the hearing for the dissolution of county property:

The Surface and Surface Rights only, including water rights, to Lot One (1), Lot Two (2), Block Fifteen (15) of the Pioneer Addition, Hugoton, Stevens County, Kansas.

No one was in appearance. Tron closed the hearing.

Joe made a motion to sell the Pioneer Addition lots as stated above for ten dollars (\$10.00) each to Cesar Salas. Shannon seconded, motion carried.

Sheriff Ted Heaton came in and informed the commissioners he has hired a new deputy who will be going to training.

The commissioners decided to hold the election canvass on August 11, 2026, at 8:30 AM. in the commissioner meeting room.

Shannon made a motion to retain Lewis, Hooper, and Dick, LLC as the auditors for Stevens County for the regulatory basis fund summary statement of receipts, expenditures and unencumbered cash as of and for the years ended December 31, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, and 2030. Evaluate compliance with

financial assurance regulations documented for the county MSWLF for the years ended December 31, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, and 2030, prepared in accordance with requirements of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). Assist the county with preparing the required budget forms for the county, as of and for the years ended December 31, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, and 2032. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Amy informed the commissioners she inquired with Pioneer Communications about updating the courthouse phone system to be set up to auto assist. The county clerk's office receives an excessive number of calls throughout the day that must be transferred to other offices and was curious about enabling the phone system with a feature that directs phone calls to the desired office. Pioneer stated the phone system could and would take a few hours to set up with this feature but there would not be a monthly fee charged, just the initial set up cost. Amy is waiting to see what the set-up cost would be for the service, will ask courthouse staff about their thoughts on the change to see if they would like auto assist, and then bring the quote to the commissioners for approval. If the other offices would not agree with the update, she will then see about just having it on the clerk's office phone. The commissioners agreed.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman