

COMMISSIONERS PROCEEDINGS
SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
8:45 – Vernon Anderson
9:00 – Phillip, Elaine, Tony
9:30 – Tony Martin – Road/Bridge
10:00 – Cornelius Wiebe – Entrances on Optima Road

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

General	\$	94,220.38
Road & Bridge	\$	66,625.73
Airport	\$	3,150.38
County Building	\$	127.23
Noxious Weed	\$	4,124.14
EMS	\$	7,887.24
Fire	\$	4,661.59
COVID Grant-Election	\$	114.50
Community Health	\$	15,044.96
Community Health Grants	\$	3,244.94
Sheriff	\$	37,656.15
Emp Benefits	\$	2,585.30
Emp P/R Misc W/H	\$	33.75
Alcohol Treatment	\$	250.00
Non-Specific Equipment	\$	28,792.32
SPARKS	\$	327,768.22
Airport Grants	\$	30,486.77
Highway Improvement	\$	5,280.98
TOTAL:	\$	632,054.58

Paul Kitzke said he would talk with the company out of Wichita who is handling the county's tax sale and report what he finds out.

Joe said he would be interested in having Lewis, Hooper & Dick, LLC find out what happened with the airport grants and where the amount is off. The other commissioners agreed.

Rodney Kelling came in and presented the commissioners with a renewed disaster declaration which will extend until rescinded, instead of updating on a monthly basis. He informed the commissioners the new ambulance will hopefully, be in Hugoton in two (2) weeks.

Elaine Rowden with the wellness center came in and the commissioners asked when she plans on retiring. She said she is looking at January or February of next year. The commissioners asked if she had any advice for a replacement and if the position could be part-time instead of full-time. Elaine said at times it was slow and times they were busy. The commissioners asked Elaine to write up an explanation of her typical workday.

Joe asked if the SPARKS fund could supply the wellness center with a washer and dryer to clean the towels due to COVID and extra cleaning. He said this would alleviate Elaine having to take the towels into her own home for cleaning.

Community Health Department had a bill for a heating and air conditioning lease agreement and the museum had a sprinkler system they were requesting to be paid out of the building fund. The commissioners stated the sprinkler system and HVAC lease are not a building issue and therefore, should be paid out of their prospective accounts.

Phillip Willis and Tony Martin were in attendance. Joe asked if they have plans on merging the three (3) entities since Phillip will be retiring at the end of this year. After a short discussion, the commissioners are leaning towards Koda Rich (county landfill employee) obtaining his weed license and being the supervisor over the landfill and weed departments. This will be under Tony's supervision as public works director. The landfill/noxious weed secretary, Michelle, will still keep her position to help with the daily bills and work. The commissioners were in agreement and a final decision will be tabled until later.

Tony said he will lose three (3) employees, two (2) are retiring, by the end of September. He would like to look at hiring one (1) person to help with the landfill/weed department as a replacement since no CDL will be required.

Amy informed the commissioners the agreed upon start pay for sheriff is \$52,000 as per motion made earlier this year due to elections.

Phillip said he met with an engineer on Tuesday about the pits for the landfill and asked if he should bid it out or have the landfill employees dig it. The county will have three (3) years before they need to make use of a new pit. The commissioners said maybe that is something the county employees could start working on and save money instead of having it bid out and costing the county more funding.

Tony Martin said Larry Hickey is retiring the end of September and Derek Hermreck has turned in his resignation and his last day is September 18, 2020. Tony said there is more asphalt work to be done. The asphalt plant computer broke down and will hopefully, have it running this week.

Sheriff Ted Heaton and Undersheriff TJ Steers were in attendance and had nothing new to report.

Abram Gonnig, Pedro Giesbrecht, Johnny Wiebe, Pete Wiebe, Peter Wiebe and Jacob Neufeld came in to discuss with the commissioners about culverts on the west city limits in the southwest part of Hugoton, located on the Barber property they are considering purchasing. It is understood the property was divided into lots to be sold. The attending gentlemen want to discuss with the commissioners about putting in culverts for driveways for each of the lots. The commissioners expressed their safety concerns with so many outlets/inlets for driveways in such a short distance on a busy highway.

Abram asked if they paid for a way to lower the speed limit in that section if the commissioners would consider allowing the driveways. The commissioners said people are not really attentive with speed limit signs and don't feel it would help the safety situation.

After much discussion, the commissioners felt the city should be involved and there should be a limit on driveways (entrance/exits) within certain distances. The commissioners also feel it would be best to put in an access road for the properties to accommodate school buses, trash trucks and regular traffic. Abram, Pedro, Johnny, Pete, Peter and Jacob do not want to lose any part of the land they plan on purchasing to an access road installation and are concerned about a gas line running along the ditch.

The commissioners decided there would need to be an access road and will not put in culverts along that property for multiple driveways going onto the highway. Abram said he is not sure he will purchase the property but will talk with the seller to see if there can be a better solution.

Tony suggested the commissioners make a resolution allowing a limited number of entrances within a certain amount of miles along a blacktop road.

Amy Jo told the commissioners Donna Norton, the accounts payable clerk will be going part time by October 2.

The commissioners asked Amy if she knew what Ross was wanting to discuss with them. She said he might be wanting help with the kitchen to replace Marilyn Harris's position especially if he helps with the Wellness Center. She isn't sure if that is all he wanted to discuss. She told the commissioners he should be attending the next meeting since he could not stop in today.

The commissioners asked Amy Jo how much the Treasurer's Motor Vehicle wage usually is at the end of the year. Amy said it ranges from \$8,000.00 – \$9,000.00 but has seen it declining in the last five (5) years. The commissioners asked for the County Clerks salary and what the Treasurer's

current salary is. Amy said her salary is roughly \$44,000.00 per year and the Treasurer's without the Motor Vehicle is roughly \$44,500.00 and with Motor Vehicle included is roughly \$52,000.00. They asked if she knew the current deputy Treasurer's wages and Amy told them it is roughly \$35,800.00 currently for 2020. Commissioners discussed and decided the starting salary for Treasurer would be \$36,000.00.

There was discussion about the Community Health Director's position when she retires. Amy was asked to research other counties and get wages for the whole department and what requirements they have for the director's position.

Amy asked the commissioners if they want to change the retirement gifts depending on years. At this time, anyone who retires gets up to a \$250.00 gift. The commissioners tabled this discussion for another day.

By motion, the Board adjourned.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman