

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 Ghumm – 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 Ghumm'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 27<sup>th</sup> and bidding will begin on December 9<sup>th</sup>. 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> would work to canvass the General Election as the 11<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 AM and begin the commissioner meeting once the canvass is closed.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

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Tron Stegman, Chairman