

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
<u>Reg of Deed Tech</u>	\$	<u>110.60</u>
<u>TOTAL:</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 Settemyer 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