

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE GEARY COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES
April 27, 2020

Commissioners Present: Keith Ascher, Brad Scholz, and Charles Stimatze

Others present: Rebecca Nordyke, County Clerk; and Steve Opat, County Counselor

Luisa White, County Counselor's Office, and Jim Fawcett, citizen, arrived at the meeting.

Chairman Ascher called the meeting to order and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Garry Berges, Emergency Management Director/Rural Fire Chief, and Curt Janke, Assistant Emergency Management Director/Assistant Rural Fire Chief discussed the following:

- Presented the purchase agreement between Highland Chemical Engine Company, New Jersey and Geary County for the fire truck that we are purchasing from them.

Todd Godfrey, citizen, arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Opat stated he had reviewed the purchase agreement, everything is in order, and he recommended that it be signed. **Commissioner Stimatze moved to approve the purchase agreement between Highland Chemical Engine Company, New Jersey and Geary County for the purchase of a used fire truck and to authorize Chairman Ascher to sign the required documents. Commissioner Scholz seconded and all voted aye.** Mr. Berges and Mr. Janke left the meeting.

The commission held their review and update:

- Discussed Redfish LLC.

Chrysann Phipps, Director Community Corrections, arrived at the meeting.

The discussion on Redfish LLC continued. Mr. Opat stated the county is not required to make a payment each year, but the agreement requires them to consider a payment each year. He noted that payments for 2015 and 2016 have been made. Commissioner Scholz noted that the three commissioners who signed the original agreement are no longer in office. Mr. Opat reviewed the history of the project and that three attorneys had reviewed the document prior to passage. Commissioner Scholz expressed concern about not continuing the funding for a businessperson who is producing. There was a general discussion about amending the agreement.

Ms. Phipps discussed the following:

- Requested approval of 2021 budgets, comp plans, and the 3rd quarter fiscal report. She stated the Advisory Board (CAB) met and approved the requests.
- Reviewed the Adult Comp Plan. She stated they were not able to implement a new program due to the stay at home order issued due to COVID-19.
- Stated she is concerned about budget cuts from the State; therefore, she is not planning on filling the Administrative Assistant position that will be vacant at the end of June.
- Reported that there has been no turnover in the ISO positions for a year.
- Stated a fiscal committee has been formed within the CAB and reviewed the members.

- Reported that two 2012 vehicles were replaced through a competitive bid process in the four counties that comprise the 8th Judicial District, rather than through the State contract. This helped to put some money into the local economy.
- **Commissioner Scholz moved to approve the adult budget as presented. Commissioner Stimatze seconded and all voted aye.**
- **Commissioner Stimatze moved to approve the adult comp plan as presented. Commissioner Scholz seconded and all voted aye.**
- Reviewed the behavioral health programming grant application, noting the behavioral health liaison contract with Pawnee Mental Health. She stated the funding request is the same as last year. **Commissioner Stimatze moved to approve the behavioral grant and budget. Commissioner Scholz seconded and all voted aye.**
- Reviewed the Juvenile Comp Plan and budget. She stated if the State of Kansas makes budget cuts, she expects to be able to handle them. She noted that the ISOs receive 90% of their funding from the adult budget and 10% from the juvenile budget.
- Reviewed the plans they have implemented due to COVID-19. She expressed concern about how UAs will be handled.

Dan Jackson, Sheriff, arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Phipps continued:

- **Commissioner Scholz moved to approve the juvenile comp plan and budget as presented. Commissioner Stimatze seconded and all voted aye.**
- Reviewed the reinvestment fund application which is done every three years.

Mrs. White left the meeting.

Ms. Phipps continued:

- Continued review of the reinvestment plan.
- Discussed the rent payment, noting she used the same amount for next fiscal year. **Commissioner Stimatze moved to approve the reinvestment plan as presented. Commissioner Scholz seconded and all voted aye.**

Mrs. White returned to the meeting.

Mr. Fawcett left the meeting.

Ms. Phipps continued:

- Stated that she and Sheriff Jackson had plans for ISOs and Sheriff's deputies to work together on a program, but due to COVID-19 those plans have been delayed. Ms. Phipps left the meeting.

A recess was taken from 11:04 a.m. to 11:08 a.m.

Sheriff Jackson presented the monthly report:

- Stated that the checking accounts balance and there were no unusual expenses.
- Reviewed building improvements:
 - All non-emergency work has been suspended.
 - A new refrigerator has been installed.

- Stated Rural Water District #4 has approved use of their land. He stated the next step is to finish the contract. He reviewed the plans for both his department and public works.
- Announced that all training events have been suspended due to COVID-19.
- Reviewed operations:
 - Patrol is answering calls for service, but there is no proactive enforcement.
 - All process service and VIN verifications have been suspended.
 - Current PPEs are sufficient.
- Stated Junction City sent a check for \$253,338.39 which is the payment for the diverted 911 funds. He has sent new direct deposit information and the new interlocal agreement and 911 board bylaws to LCPA.
- Discussed the lawsuit regarding COVID-19. Mr. Opat stated that the Sheriffs of Ford and Geary Counties were added to the lawsuit filed against the Governor by two Churches. He stated he has been in contact with KCAMP and they have been very responsive. He stated it appears that over the weekend, the Governor’s lawyers and the lawyers for the churches have agreed on how to resolve the matter. We have not been informed of anything else.

Mrs. White left the meeting.

Sheriff Jackson continued:

- There was a general discussion on the Governor’s plans to reopen the state and what that might look like.

Jon Thummel, Human Resources Director, arrived at the meeting.

Sheriff Jackson continued:

- Sheriff Jackson recommended that we extend our plan until we see what action the Governor takes. Sheriff Jackson left the meeting.

Mr. Opat presented a letter to Representative Marshall regarding PILT and Secure Rural Schools programs. **Commissioner Scholz moved to approve and sign the letter. Commissioner Stimatze seconded and all voted aye.**

Jon Thummel, Human Resources Director, presented the weekly report:

- Presented and requested approval of the Memo 2020-16. **Commissioner Scholz moved to approve Memo 2020-16:**
 - **Human Resources proposes the following designated holidays be observed for 2021:**

New Year’s Day	Friday, January 1, 2021
Martin Luther King Day	Monday, January 18, 2021
Presidents’ Day	Monday, February 15, 2021
Memorial Day	Monday, May 31, 2021
Independence Day	Monday, July 5, 2021
Labor Day	Monday, September 6, 2021
Columbus Day	Monday, October 11, 2021
Veterans Day	Thursday, November 11, 2021
Thanksgiving Holidays	Thursday and Friday, November 25 and 26, 2021
Christmas Holidays	Thursday and Friday, December 23 and 24, 2021

- I would additionally propose the employee's birthday also be given as a day off. The day should be taken on the employee's birthday, or if that is not practical for departmental needs, then another day may be designated within two (2) weeks of the employee's birthday. If not used within the parameters above, it shall be forfeited. An employee's birthday shall not be used in the calculation of overtime.
- The designated holiday is for a period that the employee is scheduled for on that day up to a maximum of eight (8) hours. This benefit shall be for full time benefit eligible employees only. No unused holidays are payable upon separation of employment.

Commissioner Stimatze seconded and all voted aye.

- **At 11:43 a.m.; Commissioner Stimatze moved for a 5-minute executive session, to end at 11:48 a.m., to discuss legal matters regarding non-elected personnel with Mr. Thummel and Mr. Opat. Commissioner Scholz seconded and all voted aye.** The meeting resumed at 11:48 a.m. with no action taken.

Mr. Opat reported they are dealing with several unemployment notices.

Mr. Thummel left the meeting.

The meeting recessed for lunch from 12:04 p.m. to 1:18 p.m.

Tammy Von Busch, Health Department Administrator, and Charles Martinez, Health Department Deputy Director, arrived at the meeting.

Commissioner Stimatze moved to open the meeting as the Board of Health at 1:18 p.m. Commissioner Scholz seconded and all voted aye.

Ms. Von Busch presented the monthly report:

- Presented a letter for signature regarding the OPEIS grant. **Commissioner Scholz moved to approve the letter. Commissioner Stimatze seconded and all voted aye.**
- Reviewed the rotating schedule that her staff is following due to the COVID-19 virus.
- Stated that Geary, Riley and Pottawatomie Counties are coordinating plans due to the COVID-19 virus in order to avoid confusion for the region. Mr. Martinez stated he is working on that plan, plus they are waiting on the Governor's plan. Commissioner Scholz asked to see the plan. Mr. Martinez stated the EOC has it and he will send a copy to the commission.
- Presented the weekly COVID-19 update:
 - Presented the latest KDHE update. She stated that in the state there was an increase of 397 cases, as well as 7 new deaths.
 - Stated Ford County now has more cases than Johnson County.
 - Stated Geary County has 1 new positive case, and 6 people have recovered.
- Presented the WIC stats.

Mrs. Von Busch and Mr. Martinez left the meeting.

Commissioner Stimatze moved to close the meeting as the Board of Health. Commissioner Scholz seconded and all voted aye.

At 1:37 p.m.; Commissioner Scholz moved for a 15-minute executive session, to end at 1:52 p.m., to discuss legal matters regarding the Convention and Visitors Bureau with Mr. Opat. Commissioner Stimatze seconded and all voted aye. The meeting resumed at 1:52 p.m. with no action taken.

Therese Hoff, Deputy County Clerk, arrived to take the minutes for the meeting.

Troy Livingston, GIS/Zoning Director, Jon Thummel, HR Director, Diane Briestensky-Leonard, Register of Deeds, Travis Lilly, Appraiser, Rebecca Nordyke, County Clerk, Kathy Tremont, Treasurer; Charles Martinez, Assistant Health Department Director, Garry Berges, Emergency Management Director, Sheriff Dan Jackson and Tammy Von Busch, Health Department Director arrived at the meeting.

Chairman Ascher asked the department heads how it has been going with the building closed? Ms. Briestensky-Leonard said good, she is using email for lots of business, and meeting the abstractors at the door to receive paperwork. Mrs. Nordyke said the clerk's office has been running smoothly, making appointments with public that insist on meeting with her and business as usual with staff in the office. Mrs. Tremont stated that the outside drop box is being used quite a bit by the public, and they are doing things online, which seems to be working out. Mr. Lilly stated his office could operate quite a while with the building closed and limited staff. Mr. Livingston stated his office can handle all business without seeing the public. Mr. Thummel stated that everything with his office can be handled electronically and is working out well. Chairman Ascher asked about the mail, Mrs. Nordyke stated after speaking with the postmaster and being told they could not deliver to the east door where the door bell is, that is where the mail comes most of the time, and has been working out well. The HR department has answered the bell at the east door for UPS and Fed-Ex deliveries, except when they knock on the outside windows in the Treasurer's office, and they go retrieve the package. Mrs. Tremont said her office has been very busy with web renewals and a high volume of mail. Mrs. Tremont believes she will have a large amount of public coming to her office to pay the second half of property taxes and register their vehicles, whenever the building opens to the public. Her plan is to only let so many people at a time in her office and will be practicing social distancing. She is having plexiglass put up at each of her stations to try to keep her staff safe. Ms. Briestensky-Leonard said the abstractors are continuing to do work, but she meets them at the door. Mrs. Tremont said there was a citizen trying to get in to pay his taxes, and she found out that his son had the corona virus, and he still insisted he had to come in the building to pay his taxes. Mr. Livingston said his office is able to do things online.

Commissioner Scholz feels rules to be followed once the building is opened to the public: visitors should be wearing a mask, social distancing measures should be followed with no one closer than 6 feet apart, plexi-glass barriers in all offices and all offices should have a plan when the building opens up. Mrs. Tremont stated that Public Works is installing plexi-glass barriers in her office now. Mrs. Tremont is planning on doing a soft opening, at first, doing title work only in the office, and still doing renewals by mail. She is going to put tape on the chairs to keep social distancing, but there will still be people in the hallway, how do you keep track of them? Mrs. Nordyke said there could be 100 people a day to advance vote, as it gets closer to the election, along with the motor vehicle traffic, the staff cannot handle this alone, does the Sheriff's office have any staff that can help do crowd control? Sheriff Jackson said he does not have any available staff to help with the public here. Chairman Ascher asked when would the department heads like to see the building opened? The Governor is probably going to open up the state by the end of the month, but Mrs. Von Busch said the county can do whatever they want to with their building. Sheriff Jackson said he doesn't feel the county building should be closed, while the state opens up, with driver's getting tickets for not renewing their tags. Mr. Lilly said he would like some guidance on how to place the plexi-glass in his office, with his long counter and the configuration of his offices. Chairman Ascher said if we extend this another week, to find out what the governor is going to do, would

that give the department heads enough time to draft a plan and be ready for the public? Mrs. Tremont asked about handling the mail, what procedures should be done in handling the mail? Mrs. Von Busch said the virus can stay on the mail for 3 days. Chairman Ascher said to pick a day to re-open, and what are the procedures that need to be followed? Are we going to take temperatures, ask the health questions and sign-in? Mrs. Von Busch says that everybody that wears a mask can help prevent the spread of the virus, along with protection for themselves, but the most important thing is to wash your hands. A general discussion was held about the VIN Inspections. Mrs. Tremont said they are doing VIN's online, which her or the sheriff knew they could do. Sheriff Jackson said how about doing VIN's by appointment only? He feels that would work for his department. Mrs. Nordyke asked about having a guard at the door, is that something we are going to do? How are we going to pay for it? Commissioner Scholz asked about giving two more weeks of closure to give the offices time to get ready to open to the public so that those offices have time to formulate a mitigation plan. The GIS/Planning Office, Register of Deeds Office, HR and the Appraisers Office all said they can keep their offices closed, things are running smoothly doing things on-line. Mr. Berges said the drinking fountains need to be shut down, and even have the public restrooms blocked off. Ms. Briestensky-Leonard asked about Admin Leave, Mr. Thummel said if the building is open, then it needs to be staffed and not to put employees on admin leave. Sheriff Jackson said for public health reasons, if an office can run everything with being closed, and other offices must have public access, he feels that should be how it is handled. Mrs. Nordyke said she thinks all offices should do the same thing, operating the same way. The commissioners asked about having shorter hours, for instance 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. to the public? Mr. Thummel said that would just be putting the crowds in the shorter days. **Commissioner Scholz motioned to keep the building closed through May 15th, 2020 with mitigation plans for all offices turned in no later than May 11th, 2020; Commissioner Stimatze seconded and all aye.** The group left the meeting except for Sheriff Jackson, Mr. Opat, and Clerk Nordyke.

Mrs. Hoff left the meeting. Clerk Nordyke resumed taking the minutes.

Mr. Opat reviewed the status of the federal lawsuit in which the Sheriff was added to the original lawsuit against the Governor regarding COVID-19. He stated a motion has been filed and we are waiting to hear from the judge about a 2-week extension. Sheriff Jackson stated he is doing his duty under the constitution. Mr. Opat noted the action is not against the county, but only against the Sheriff.

Chuck Otte, Extension, arrived at the meeting.

Nicole Mader, United Way Director, arrived at the meeting.

Sheriff Jackson left the meeting.

The recess was not taken.

Mr. Otte presented the bi-monthly report:

- Reviewed the staffing levels they are maintaining under COVID-19.
- Stated that farmers continue to work and prices are the biggest impact to them. He expressed concern about the meat processing industry.
- Reviewed federal legislation regarding livestock procedures.
- Stated he has fielded several calls regarding crops and gardens freezing due to the cold weather.
- Stated that all bookings at the 4H/Senior Center will be cancelled through May 15, 2020 so that it stays in line with the action taken by the Commission for the Geary County Office Building.
- Suggested leaving the annual meeting with the Fair Board on hold due to the COVID virus. The commission agreed.

- Stated that K-State has suspended all “face-to-face” functions. He expects a decision about the Geary County Free Fair will be made in mid-May. He noted that K-State can say that no 4H projects or extension agents can help with the fair.
- There was a general discussion regarding the mitigation plan for the Extension Office. Mr. Otte left the meeting.

Mrs. Mader provided an update on food distributions programs in Geary County related to COVID-19:

- Stated the United Way has distributed 3,000 meal kits since March 14, 2020 at school sites.
- Stated that Wheels of Hope has a mobile distribution on the third Thursday of each month. She stated they are struggling to restock.
- Stated the Food Pantry has changed their hours and distribution methods. In addition, the application process has been relaxed.
- Explained that if the United Way received donations for other entities, i.e. the Food Pantry she gives them 100% of the donation.
- Thanked the commission for their help in the community.
- Stated that under the grocery assistance program, they use gift cards from local businesses in order to support those businesses.
- Reviewed the different churches that provide weekly community meals. Ms. Mader left the meeting

Rebecca Nordyke, County Clerk, presented the weekly report:

- Presented a voucher from the Appraiser’s Office that was not turned in timely and needs to be paid. The commission approved the voucher.
- Presented goals that were used in preparation of the 2020 budget and inquired if the commission wanted changes for the 2021 budget. The commission opted to take it under advisement.
- Inquired about instructions to give to entities for 2021 budget requests. The commission directed that the budgets are to be turned in May 18, 2020; keep at 2020 levels, no raises at this time, appointments are not required.

The commission reviewed and discussed the letter from Jeff Underhill, Chairman Junction City Area Chamber of Commerce, requesting an additional \$3,000 to help fund a matching gift card program that will be used in an effort to help local businesses due to the COVID-19 virus. **Commissioner Scholz moved that since the County Commission, in an effort to save money by not spending funds for AUSA and in addition to the county’s funding of the EDC and MAC who are using the funds for the Power Up JC Program, the county will include yet another additional \$3,000 for the Power Up JC Program. Commissioner Stimatze seconded and all voted aye.**

Clerk Nordyke inquired about putting up plexiglass in her office due to COVID-19. She stated public works provided a quote of \$779.50. The commission stated she should proceed as she saw fit.

The press conference was not held since no members of the press were in attendance.

The meeting adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Keith Ascher
CHAIRMAN - COUNTY COMMISSION
KEITH ASCHER

Rebecca Nordyke
COUNTY CLERK
REBECCA NORDYKE

June 1 2020
DATE