

January 11, 2022  
Reno County Annex  
Hutchinson, Kansas

The Board of Reno County Commissioners held the agenda session at the Annex Conference Room with Chairman Ron Hirst, Commissioner Daniel Friesen and Commissioner Ron Sellers, County Administrator Randy Partington, County Counselor Joe O'Sullivan, and Minutes Clerk Cindy Martin, present.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a short sectarian prayer led by Pastor Mike Rose, South Hutchinson United Methodist Church.

Commissioner Hirst welcomed to the first agenda meeting in 2022.

There were no public comments.

There were two additions and one change to the agenda; Resolution 2022-02 added to the consent agenda, Memorandum of Understanding with Johnson County Medical Examiner's Office added under business item 7A, change the first scheduled executive session to 15 minutes instead of 30 minutes. **Mr. Sellers moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen**, to approve the agenda items as amended. The motion to was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

**Mr. Sellers moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen**, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of items 6A through 6E including the Accounts Payable Ledger for claims payable on January 7, 2022, totaling \$245,311.17 and claims payable on January 14, 2022 totaling \$1,202,510.14; approval to purchase one 2022 Ford F-150 Responder pickup from Midwest Motors for a net cost of \$12,693 for the Sheriff's Department, approval to purchase four 2022 Ford Interceptor SUV Hybrids from Midway Motors for a net cost of \$114,708 for the Sheriff's Department, approval of resolution declaring and establishing certain regulation of the streets and highways pursuant to K.S.A. 8-2002 (Mohawk Road and Clark Road), **Resolution 2022-02; A RESOLUTION RENEWING A PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF LOCAL DISASTER EMERGENCY FOR RENO COUNTY, KANSAS.** Emergency Management Director Adam Weishaar stated resolution 2022-02 did not include any mandates it was just to be able to receive supplies from the State of Kansas. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

Mr. Sellers commented that he was glad to see the Sheriff using two local companies for bids. Mr. Hirst commented that the Hybrids must be working for the Sheriff's Department.

Reno County Death Scene Investigator for the District Attorney's Office Daniel Nowlan gave explanation to the Board for the Memorandum of Understanding with the Johnson County Medical Examiner's Office to perform autopsy services for Reno County. He stated that currently Reno County contracted with the Sedgwick County Forensic Science Center (SCFSC) to handle all forensic medical examinations, toxicology, and autopsies for Reno County. For the last fifteen-years SCFSC Pathologist Scott Kipper has acted as the Reno County Coroner. They elected to step back and no longer provide services for Reno County because of a large volume of cases from other surrounding counties. He stated with using Johnson County it would have an increased cost to transport a body. He suggested using Elliott Mortuary for local removal until the morning at a cost of approximately \$600.00. He said Sedgwick County charges ala carte for an average cost of \$2560 per autopsy and Johnson County has a complete package cost of \$2,300 but there is an increased transport cost per case. An autopsy is required on any unnatural death and the cost would be reduced with more external examinations. He and his staff are getting certifications to do more external examinations on site.

Tom Elliott, Elliott Mortuary in Hutchinson, voiced his concerns for the use of a local doctor to cover instead of sending bodies to Olathe. He was also concerned for the cost to families having the responsibility of paying for a return trip of their loved one when Reno County pays to have it transported for the autopsy.

**Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Sellers,** to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Reno County and the Johnson County Medical Examiner's Office for autopsy services as presented by staff and authorize County Administrator Randy Partington to sign the contract. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

County Planner Mark Vonachen met with the Board to recommend approval for a tabled item from December 14, 2021. Planning case #2020-09 a request by the Reno County Planning Commission for a series of text amendments to the April 2016 Edition of the Reno County Zoning Regulations regarding Commercial Wind Energy Conversion Systems (CWECS).

He referenced the draft from January 29, 2021 and explained this was the original document from the Planning Board recommendation version with no corrections. He explained the two changes; first amendment was under Article 23-101 first page to eliminate the second paragraph since Reno County prohibited wind in current zoned areas; second amendment was a typo error on page 23-6 under letter E speaking about Article 23-107 2E and changing the E to D. **Mr. Sellers moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen,** to approve the recommendation of the Reno County Planning Commission, in case #2020-09, received on January 29, 2021, as proposed to be amended by the County Planner, on adoption, for a series of text amendments to the April 2016 addition of the County Zoning Regulations regarding Commercial Wind Energy Conversion systems. A discussion ensued seeking to clarify that it is the original recommendation of the Planning Commission and not subsequent revisions discussed by the County Commission prior to the matter being tabled in February 2021. Mr. Sellers confirmed the clarification and Mr. Friesen reconfirmed his second.

Further discussion ensued by Commissioners Hirst, Friesen, and Sellers regarding the original recommendation. Mr. Hirst stated the matter deserved further study. By consensus of the majority vote the matter needed to be resolved on this day. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 2-1 with Mr. Hirst voting no, not because he did not think the progress was a good starting point but because he thinks it can be improved.

Mr. Vonachen also gave explanation for a tabled item from 12/14/21 Planning Case 2021-14 a request to amend the jurisdiction of the Official Zoning District Boundary Map as identified in Article 1-103 of the Zoning Regulations. He stated this adds the CWECs zoning district to any property in the un-zoned area only for Commercial Wind Energy systems as adopted today with Article 23. He provided a map with green areas as zoned where wind energy systems are now prohibited and the blue area as current un-zoned where wind energy could be allowed with the proper (CUP) Conditional Use Permit. **Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Sellers,** to approve the request from Planning and Zoning on the Special District. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

County Administrator Randy Partington discussed the Reno County Employee Classification and Compensation Study. He stated that after the agenda meeting December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the Commission approved a 2 percent cost of living for all employees in effect the first pay period of 2022.

The Commission by consensus tabled the Classification and Compensation study for the financial true cost from Mr. Partington. He stated that in the future the Human Relations Department would be offering a resolution that encompasses other items included in the Arnold Group study. He identified three areas from the budgeted information that were the most important; approval of the new pay scale, approval of the compensation plan and address the 100 percent compression and approve the compensation philosophy that supports the "Grow/Build-Buy up" modeling for the hiring rates of employees that is based on both internal and external experience. He gave an example of internal/external experience. If approved today the items listed above are recommended to be effective for the 2<sup>nd</sup> pay period in February 2022. The pay scale presented by the Arnold Group was a \$1.9 million increase, however figuring the budget for 2022, considering who was employed from April or May of 2021, then added six percent to all funds to the pay scale, it covered all but approximately \$430,000 plus as a net that was missed. The General Fund will be short \$579,597 for budgeted wages at the 100 percent compression. If sales taxes remain flat in 2022, the county will have more in collected revenues than was budgeted by \$750,000. He spoke about tax levied funds and departments funded and not funded by property tax. **Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Sellers**, to approve the recommendation of staff to adopt the new pay scales and address compression at 100 percent and approve the Grow/Build-Buy initiative for hiring ranges taking effect the 2<sup>nd</sup> pay period of February 2022 as recommended by County Administrator. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

Mr. Hirst stated they will pause the audio/video for the executive sessions. After the executive sessions they will be returning live.

Mr. Friesen questioned Public Works Director Don Brittain about work being done in the Arkansas River Channel. Mr. Brittain stated the county was moving the channel to the middle of the bridge instead of the side. KDOT signs for 82<sup>nd</sup> Ave and going north are missing some signs. The 56<sup>th</sup> Street signs were put up by Mr. Brittain.

County Administrator report:

Mr. Partington stated the company doing the courthouse renovations will report to the Commission to explain their timeline. He spoke about Financial Reports.

County Commission report/comments:

Mr. Friesen mentioned the Kansas Farm Bureau has a campaign school for potential candidates for elected office and noted that they have 20 slots available. It is a two-day event from start to finish and is on February 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> in Manhattan, Kansas for \$300 or \$250 for members. He thanked and appreciated county staff as the commission went through the pay study and got staff up to market rates staying competitive in the future.

Mr. Sellers said last Thursday he attended the annual Reno County Soil Conservation District meeting out at Dillon Nature Center. He stated we fund them approximately \$47,000 yearly. He said they do a lot of good work in Reno County, and he appreciated them for all the assistance they give farmers and ranchers in Reno County.

Mr. Hirst stated that there are two events at the Capital coming up. Local Government Day will be taking place on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022, from 1 pm to 7 pm and County Day at the Capital will be taking place on February 16, 2022, from 8am to 3pm. He stated that they are using a new approach with booths at the event. He appreciated the other Commissioners having patience with his study on CWECS.

At 10:35 a.m. the meeting recessed for ten minutes.

The meeting reconvened with all Commissioners, County Administrator Randy Partington, County Counselor Joe O'Sullivan, and Minutes Clerk Cindy Martin, present.

**At 10:45 a.m. Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen,** to recess into executive session for a period of 15 minutes to discuss a matter concerning non-elected personnel, the applicants for the Reno County Counselor position, in order to protect the privacy expectations of the applicants. Mr. Hirst requested that the County Administrator Randy Partington and County Counselor Joe O'Sullivan remain for the discussion, following which the Board will reconvene in regular session and a formal decision may be made. In addition, a motion into a second executive session on a separate matter is expected. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

**At 11:00 a.m. Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen,** to recess into executive session to confer with the Board's legal counsel on a privileged legal matter pertaining to a contractual matter between the City of Hutchinson and the County.

The session is expected to last for 30 minutes following which no formal decision is expected and the Board will reconvene in regular session. Persons requested to remain for the executive session are the County Counselor Joe O'Sullivan, County Administrator Randy Partington, and the Reno County Sheriff Darrian Campbell. Following the executive session, a motion for a third executive session on a separate matter is expected. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

**At 11:30 a.m. Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen,** to recess into executive session for a period of 15 minutes to discuss a matter concerning non-elected personnel of the county in order to protect the privacy expectations of the personnel involved. The County Administrator Randy Partington is requested to remain for the executive session. No formal decision will be made during the executive session, following which the Board will reconvene in regular session and attend to remaining matters on the agenda. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

**At 11:45 a.m. Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen,** to extend the executive session for an additional 15 minutes on the non-elected personnel requesting Mr. Partington leave the session. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

**At 12:00 p.m. Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen,** to extend the executive session for an additional 15 minutes on the non-elected personnel. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

**Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Sellers,** that after review of the County Administrator's performance, they recommended an increase of base salary to \$154,500 plus deferred compensation. Mr. Hirst commented that the motion should include normal reimbursable expenses. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

Mr. Hirst read the next item for consideration was a contract of the County Counselor position that was previously held for many, many years by Joe O'Sullivan who would be retiring. **Mr. Sellers moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen,** to approve and sign the contract presented today with the independent contractor agreement for County Counselor between the Board of Reno County Commissioners and Patrick G. Hoffman, Attorney at Law. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

**Mr. Sellers moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst,** to approve the reorganization of the Board of County Commissioners, nominating Commissioner Daniel Friesen to be Chairperson for the year 2022. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 2-1 with Mr. Friesen abstaining.

**Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst,** to approve the Vice-Chair as Commissioner Ron Sellers. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 2-1 with Mr. Sellers abstaining.

At 12:20 p.m. the meeting returned to regular session and adjourned until 12:30 p.m. Tuesday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Approved:

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Chair, Board of Reno County Commissioners

(ATTEST)

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Reno County Clerk  
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Date