

March 3, 2020
Reno County Courthouse
Hutchinson, Kansas

The Board of Reno County Commissioners met in agenda session with, Commissioner Bob Bush and Commissioner Ron Hirst, County Administrator Randy Partington, County Counselor Joe O'Sullivan, and Minutes Clerk Cindy Martin, present. Chairman Ron Sellers was not available.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance and a short sectarian prayer led by Pastor William Green, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church.

There were no public comments however, Commissioner Bush reminded the public options on how the community could reach out to the commissioners.

Commissioners comments:

Commissioner Hirst thanked County Administrator Randy Partington for touring with him most of the day on Friday visiting the smaller cities in Reno County. He said it was Reno County's turn to host the Quad County meeting. Meetings are once a quarter, with representatives from Harvey, Butler, Sedgwick and Reno Counties to discuss various issues in this region.

County Administrator Randy Partington commented on the Reno County Planning and Zoning special meeting this evening at 4:30 p.m. at the Public Works Facility, 600 Scott Blvd., South Hutchinson regarding boundaries zoning for the southeast portion of the county. They would not be discussing or amending regulations or wind energy only the boundary map. He thanked and appreciated Mr. Hirst taking him around for a tour of the smaller cities in Reno County. He commented that the February sales tax was lower than past years, \$40,000 to \$80,000 maybe 5 to 10 percent, and they will watch trends to see how it may go.

County Counselor Joe O'Sullivan gave an update to the Board and the public on the NextEra wind energy appeals case pending in District Court. He stated the Judge conducted a status conference via phone with attorneys of the parties. The court established a schedule for county and intervening parties to file written responses to the motion for summary judgement. Deadlines for that to be submitted are by March 16th, 2020.

Pretty Prairie Wind will have time to respond to the responses, and ultimately that the court has scheduled its hearing on the motion for summary judgement on Monday April 13th at 1:30 p.m. The court has allowed two hours for arguments and will be open to the public. The hearing will be in the Division II courtroom. The motion for summary judgement was based on one issue, the validity of protest petitions. If the court finds the county decision is upheld or rules against the county, they will control events from there.

There were two additions to the agenda: Dave Johnston, EMS Chief of Reno County bringing changes in the Capital Expenditures with ambulance purchases, and Health Director Nick Baldetti speaking about the Coronavirus and Reno County's preparations.

Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Bush, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of the Accounts Payable Ledger for claims payable on March 6th, 2020 of \$323,734.52 and change orders 2020-112, 113, 123, and 124 as submitted. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 2-0.

Emergency Medical Services Chief David Johnston discussed Capital Expenditures on ambulances that had been budgeted for this year making a couple of changes for a cost savings. He stated they had budgeted for a four-wheel drive ambulance and would be changing that request to a two-wheel drive ambulance. Along with that plan was to re-mount a box on another ambulance and put on a new chassis. They budgeted \$118,000 to mount the box but the bid came back higher at \$125,000 because of electrical issues with the box. He said the four-wheel drive was budgeted at \$225,000 and the two-wheel drive quote was \$195,000, saving \$18,000 this year.

Commissioner Hirst stated there was a big issue with where to store the four-wheel drive ambulance at this time, so maybe in the future one can be purchased. He agreed with the two-wheel drive purchase.

Commissioner Bush agreed to the purchase of the two-wheel drive and asked for the four-wheel drive to be put back into the budget for next year. He had been working with EMS and the Hospital on a five-year plan to get the ambulance fleet back to where it needs to be and at what cost. The four-wheel drive was budgeted in for next year toward the front of the year. He wanted to make sure we have the necessary equipment where they need it before spending \$300,000 on buildings.

Chief Johnston stated their fleet consists of a mix of makes and models of ambulances and he would like to standardize the fleet with using the same manufacturer.

Health Department Director Nick Baldetti gave the Board an update on the Coronavirus stating the legal medical term is (COVID-19). He gave background on what the virus was first called then it went to COVID-19 and how it looks like it has a crown. He spoke about what was discussed at the state level. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) has been on top of the latest information from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Department of Health at the National level. Every Thursday KDHE gives local agencies updates on the status of COVID-19 in the U.S. and any procedure response recommendations. Emergency Management Departments and local Health Departments are planning and preparing for when the respiratory virus gets here. Mr. Baldetti stated that it's not a matter of if it gets here but when it gets here. He said in the news today that fifteen states had positive tests or individuals being investigated with six dead so far. The dead were in Washington and had strong links of time spent together. All local health and medical partners were present at a meeting on February 13th, 2020 discussing preparedness for individual organizations and as a community determining what each agencies role would be for response. The Health Departments role is a leader in the community then he explained the difference between quarantine versus isolation. He also explained the Health Departments part was disease investigation and to pass along the most updated information to other agencies.

Commissioner Bush asked several questions about coronavirus. How would I know if I'm in contact with someone infected and show some symptoms? Mr. Baldetti answered that generally we are in the middle of a really bad flu and cold season. It is difficult to determine whether you have COVID-19 or regular seasonal colds. Health care facilities would ask questions to dig into who you saw and where you went and came in contact with before testing for COVID-19. Mr. Bush asked about a unique test or does it have indicators like your lab tests? Mr. Baldetti said it is a novel strain with a unique test just for COVID-19 and the traditional testing does not test for this strain. Testing for COVID-19 is only done at Topeka at this time and it is taking 2 to 3 days to get the results so isolate yourself until you know for sure.

Commissioner Hirst asked about being exposed to the virus and what the incubation period before it will show up on testing. Mr. Baldetti said the window is between 2 to 14 days after being exposed to the COVID-19 to test. He also said a normal healthy individual could have very minor symptoms or none at all but could still spread it to others without knowing they were sick. For most people, the symptoms act like a common cold does and you recover but others don't.

Commissioner Bush asked who is responsible for the cost of testing? Mr. Baldetti stated the Kansas Department of Health and Environment is paying for the testing and said it should not show up on your insurance. Mr. Bush commented there had been a number of deaths and asked if it was older and weak immune people? Mr. Baldetti replied it is an accurate statement and the same as the flu. He stated that most people with the standard flu rebound with medication. Older people, young children or people with weak immune systems find them that they need protection and we are concerned about them. It is a novel virus that we don't know that much about and multiple agencies are looking for a vaccine. He spoke about herd immunity for flu shots and how this protects the one in ten of the population who did not get a flu shot. He gave statistics as of February 21, 2020 for COVID-19 versus influenza. There were 75,000 cases of COVID-19 reported in mainland China and of those 2,239 deaths have occurred. In the U.S. there have been 6 deaths and 50 cases of U.S. citizens that have traveled aboard and come back with the virus. Compared to influenza in the U.S. there are 32 to 45 million with the flu and 14 to 21 million have made a doctor's visit for symptoms. 35 to 60,000 have been hospitalized and 18,000 to 40,000 have died from the flu. He said as of February, it had been a really bad season of the flu for the U.S. He stated that COVID-19 could cause death with highly susceptible or weaker immune system individuals and young children.

At 9:50 the meeting recessed for five minutes.

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

At 9:55 Mr. O'Sullivan requested an executive session on personnel matters of non-elected personnel with Human Resources Director Renee Harris and Mr. Partington present. **Mr. Bush moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst**, to go into executive session for twenty minutes to discuss personnel matters of non-elected

personnel requesting Mrs. Harris and Mr. Partington be present. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 2-0.

At 10:15 the meeting returned to regular open session with no formal action to be taken as a result of the executive session and the meeting adjourned until 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, March 10, 2020.

Approved:

Chair, Board of Reno County Commissioners

(ATTEST)

Reno County Clerk
cm

Date