

April 26, 2022  
Reno County Annex  
Hutchinson, Kansas

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

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a short sectarian prayer led by Pastor Henry Blickhahn, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church.

District Attorney Tom Stanton read a proclamation for National Crime Victims' Rights Week. He and Victim/Witness Specialist Jodie Bryant both accepted the proclamation from Chairman Friesen. Mr. Stanton extended an invitation for the public and commission to attend a support service for victims of crimes on Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the South Hutchinson Community Center. Mr. Stanton thanked Commissioner Hirst for attending the last several years. Commissioner Hirst asked the public to please consider attending this meaningful service.

Emergency Management Director Adam Weishaar gave a brief history introducing Travis Vogt as the new County Fire Administrator beginning on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022. He proceeded to give an update on the Tenawa/Haven Midstream Gas Plant explosion on April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022. They took the necessary precautions and started a one-mile evacuation zone around the gas plant. After getting approval on a disaster declaration, he called for additional assistance from surrounding counties. The Sheriff's Office was on scene evacuating the area and blocking roads and assisting with a drone to be able to access the whole scene. The office buildings were burning however fire fighters were able to cool them down to no longer present a threat. At that time, the fire was under control, and they allowed Haven residents to go back home. The plant operators did an intentional release of pressurized gas. Wichita and CHS were still working inside the parameter along with the State Fire Marshall's Office conducting their investigations and once they finished the plan was to turn the scene over to the plant operators. Fire District #9 was to stay on scene to monitor throughout the evening. Later that night the Command Post was notified of a vessel's compromised relief valve, noting that the vessel was holding 2 to 3 thousand gallons of liquid natural gas. There were ice crystals seen on

the bottom, which indicated the materials inside were boiling. The information was that the vessel could explode at any time. After evaluating this new information, all emergency responders and agencies were immediately called out. The plan was to meet in the Carriage Crossing parking lot to establish a Command Post. It was determined that the maximum blast area was up to two miles which included the City of Haven. When the evacuations started, the post was moved to the Hutchinson Fire Command and Training Center with all hands-on deck, coordinating resources, and pushing information out as quickly as possible. The Salvation Army agreed to open their doors to evacuated residents and after contacting hotels in the area, the evacuees were instructed to go to hotels with no cost to them. Oneok was called to help mitigate the material in the vessel. Based on the Oneok plant professional's knowledge, the risk of explosion had significantly been diminished. A mitigation strategy was formed, keeping our responders and community safe however allowing the roads to be open and get the residents back to their homes. The IFO group was contacted because they were familiar with the situation. After explaining our strategy and a lengthy conversation, it was decided to allow the fires that were still burning to continue to burn so they could take pressure off the plant. All residents were allowed to return home and roadways were opened. Friday, drones were flown over the plant and confirmed the mitigation strategies were still going to work. Crews monitored the area and maintained operations all day, and at 5:20 pm operations were turned over to IFO Group who remains on scene today and believes they will be working for months. The media was great letting our responder's work. He gave a special thanks to Gambino's Pizza who came out and fed our responders, Oneok and CHS for providing experts when they were needed and to all the county departments, fire districts, HFD, South Hutchinson FD, surrounding police and fire departments and all agencies and team partners.

Mr. Weishaar introduced Barbara Nitis, Public Information Officer with the Small Business Administration who spoke about assistance for homes impacted by the Cottonwood Complex Fire that occurred March 5<sup>th</sup> through March 16, 2022. She will be available at the Courthouse for the next couple of weeks to assist residents that qualify in filling out the applications for financial assistance.

There were no public comments.

Commissioner Friesen removed under business items; 8A, 8B, and 8C which would be postponed until the May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022, agenda meeting.

**Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of items 6A through 6F, including the Accounts Payable Ledger for claims payable on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, totaling \$525,613.26, claims payable on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022, totaling \$617,876.16; approval for a proclamation of a State of Local Disaster Emergency due to April 14, 2022 fire with smoke and explosions; approve BOCC final minutes from March 22<sup>nd</sup>, March 22<sup>nd</sup> Study Session, March 22<sup>nd</sup> Special Agenda, March 29<sup>th</sup>, and April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022; approval to send Request for Qualifications pertaining to Reno County Shooting Range at the Landfill; to consider approval for compensation to GLMV Architects for the additional design work on the Courthouse Dome in the amount of \$16,500; approval for Planning Case #2022-02 for **resolution #2022-13; A RESOLUTION APPROVING Z ZONING AMENDMENT REQUEST FROM R-1 RURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT TO AG-AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT FOR THE PURPOSE OF SELLING THE LEGAL DESCRIPTION TO CREATE ADDITIONAL ROAD FRONTAGE FOR AN ADJACENT PARCEL IN THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 32, TOWNSHIP 22 SOUTH, RANGE 4 WEST OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> P.M. IN RENO COUNTY, KANSAS** Mark Yackley (applicant: Ben Maser) to rezone approximately .2 acres of land from R-1 Rural residential District to AG-Agricultural District at 3602 N. Willison Road as presented by staff. The consent agenda motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0. Mr. Sellers commented on item #6D for the shooting range growing in amount but he had no questions.**

Hutchinson Recreation Commission Executive Director Tony Finlay represented The Arts & Humanities Council 2023 Budget Request. He went over the highlights on the summary budget and requested to keep \$7,000 from the county for community events.

Mr. Finlay was also present to give the Hutchinson Recreation Commission's 2023 Budget request for Special Parks & Recreation which is funded by a special alcohol tax. He requested a slight increase from \$10,000 to \$11,000 annually for youth programs in the community. Mr. Sellers suggested to the Board that Reno County should be more involved with the parks, recreation, and humanities in the future.

Reno County Emergency Medical Services Chief Dave Johnston presented highlights on their 2023 budget request. The trend is going up on the call volume and transports are about 4 percent or more. He spoke about projected operating deficit increasing

and an increase for salaries. He reviewed the EMS Major Capital Equipment Projections for 2023-2027.

Horizons Mental Health Chief Executive Officer Mike Garrett reviewed their 2023 Budget request. He spoke about four documents for the Board's review and consideration for their funding request. Document #1; number of uninsured clients of HMHC and Reno County for CY13 through CY21. Document #2; Horizons Mental Health Center funding analysis from Reno County for CY08 through CY21. Document #3; HMHC February 2022 and YTD FY22 income statement. Document #4 Direct service hours provided by the Program in Reno County, CY11 through CY21. He reviewed the statement of revenue and expense for the month and year to date ending February 28, 2022. Their request was to maintain Horizon's funding for CY23 at \$452,025. Mr. Garrett will be retiring with hopefully a replacement by July 1, 2022, with the latest early August.

Reno County Museum Executive Director Michael Ables reviewed their 2023 Budget request. He went over the staffing and then commented on the occasional volunteers. He was submitting a request to receive a 7 percent increase from its previous annual allotment which will increase from \$185,000 to \$197,950. He spoke about the various programs and events for the community.

StartUp Hutch Entrepreneur Navigator & Program Director Jackson Swearer gave a presentation breaking down their 2023 Budget request that was requesting an allocation increase of \$10,000 from \$70,000 to \$80,000. He spoke about the funding, loans, and small businesses along with entrepreneurs. Mr. Hirst mentioned he would like to see StartUp Hutch make a larger effort to reach and serve all of Reno County. Program Administrator David Dukart announced his retirement at the end of this year.

T.E.C.H. President/CEO Brenda Maxey stated that TECH would be celebrating 50 years of support and services to all persons with developmental disabilities in our community and Reno County Commission has been a strong partner for 49 of the 50 years. She requested the FY2023 allocation not fall below their FY2022 allocation of \$510,000. She stated she would be retiring this year and introduced Vice-President Kevin Hess who will become CEO July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. The Board thanked Ms. Maxey for her work and welcomed Mr. Hess.

At 10:50 a.m. the Board recessed for a 10-minute break.

At 11:00 a.m. Communications Specialist Laurie Moody gave her yearly update. She reviewed the main objectives for 2021: improve perception of Reno County, increase knowledge of Reno County Departments and Services and increase audience reach. The 2021 initiatives: Health Department COVID-19 vaccine rollout and education campaigns, website re-design, video initiatives for department spotlights. She commented on social media data and changes for 2022 communications.

Administrator Randy Partington presented the CIP budget requests from departments that had a capital expenditure request or planned expenditure for 2023 through 2027 budget years. Budget work sessions will take place in June or July 2022. He reviewed the summary of requests for each department showing 2023 requests and a detailed list of those items. The yellow highlighted areas were in the capital, but they are in the budgets and will show up as contractual commodities since they are tied to capital projects like roads and bridge construction or new vehicles in the Sheriff's Office. In a different capital line-item things were included that are tied to other capital projects that take place each year. A new change for 2023 will be to have auto requests for replacement vehicles sent to Automotive Director Kyle Berg. He will then forward them to Mr. Partington and once they are approved, the amounts will be transferred out of the department budgets and put into the special equipment fund. He also spoke about the courthouse improvement reserve funds. The Board had a couple of questions on budgets. He asked the Board when to schedule budget study sessions for Department Directors, Hutchinson Fire Departments, Emergency Communications to address their budget requests toward the end of June or the first of July finding two days. The Board thought communication is better and asked Mr. Partington to adjust the format bringing in departments if the Board has questions like a month with a 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday extending the agenda meeting. He noted the monthly department reports in the agenda packet.

Mr. Sellers had a question about part-time people to pick up trash at the landfill. Mr. Hirst suggested possibly using Reno County or The State of Kansas inmate workforce. Mr. Partington suggested looking into other options. He updated the Board on the City/County agreements/contracts stating there were some changes made to the drafted copies and Reno County Counselor Patrick Hoffman sent them back to the City of Hutchinson for any questions.

Commissioner Comments:

Mr. Sellers questioned when the discussion on fire mitigation would take place on the recommendations of the Task Force. Mr. Partington replied in May and the resolution will be coming soon. Mr. Sellers asked how the new position for scanning information was coming along. Mr. Partington replied that IT Director Mike Mathews stated the new hire was doing a great job. He commented about the importance of the Emergency Management Department and how active they are and how important they are to the community. Mr. Sellers commented on the Sheriff's Office providing the use of drones for the EM Department and that it was huge addition to the security of our county. He's glad the county is providing a space for the SBA in the courthouse for the Cottonwood Complex Fire applications. Mr. Sellers asked how the removal of files on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor for remodel was going. Mr. Partington replied all departments had been notified to remove the files as soon as possible.

Mr. Hirst commented that he attended, "To the Stars" pertaining to Kansas Department of Economic Development with several Reno County businesses recognized, naming a few of them. He named a couple of regional firms who received honors also.

Mr. Friesen commented on the insurance on the dome repairs, with some work and the amount that was reduced on the work order. He reminded citizens about upcoming elections and he asked Deputy Election Officer Jenna Fager to do bi-weekly updates on candidates for the new commission districts.

At 11:35 a.m. the meeting recessed for a 5-minute break and reconvened at 11:40 a.m. for the special ARPA study session.

Approved:

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Chair, Board of Reno County Commissioners

(ATTEST)

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Reno County Clerk  
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Date