

May 31st, 2022
Reno County Annex
Hutchinson, Kansas

The Board of Reno County Commissioners held a Work 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. This session was recorded not live.

At 11:00 a.m. Commissioner Friesen outlined the session process with staff presenting, Board discussion, public comments, and answer questions last.

Environmental Health Supervisor Darcy Basye gave explanation of what regulations were in place and what she does with environmental health and septic permits pertaining to wastewater. Topics she would review are an overview of program, county water prevalence and geology as it pertains to water, contaminates in wastewater and influences on groundwater/surface water, current codes, wastewater permit process, soil profiles, staff challenges, misconceptions, case management, and website transparency. Ms. Basye gave a presentation on education of wastewater components and history of wastewater with the different soil types in Reno County and various systems used or recommended. The current code was from 2003 any revisions had to be approved and within Kansas Health and Environment regulations. She explained Reno County had very unique soils all over the county with variances in the water table. Some geology had differences within the same owner's property. Ms. Basye discussed the pollution source from nitrates and how high amounts can affect people and animals. She showed maps with sensitive areas for water and potential for pollution in the Equus beds. She stressed the protection of water was their prime objective. She went over the federal and state numbers of nitrates. They wanted to protect ground water on small lots. The sanitation policy met state codes and exceeded it. She explained the permit and application process for first time sites and how packets were copied for both the owner and contractors. Their office met bare minimum of codes for systems on inspections since it was not their job to police systems for owners. Sometimes a delay could be caused by the flood plan or delays could happen with zoning permits which could hold up the environmental permits. She said they were now fully staffed with four people and their calendars were full.

Marsha McConnell, 3616 E. 43rd Avenue, was a realtor in Reno County and wrote a letter of concern. Her concern was not the requirements, but the timely matter involved for permits. She gave an example of a property sale on September 8, 2021, with results around December 23rd, 2021. She thought the codes should be reviewed from an outside source. Ms. Basye gave a rebuttal on the delay.

Ron Vincent, 901 E. 95th Avenue, Carl Vincent Services was concerned with shallow water and the protection of water. He briefly discussed the limiting of systems that could come into Reno County with their (Environmental Health) policy not code. He believed the code was nineteen-years old and should be reviewed and updated.

Commissioner Sellers had to leave the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Commissioner Hirst would like to have a conversation with the Health Department regarding the review of codes with an outside consultant. He did not believe Reno County was that unique with their soil types.

Commissioner Friesen would like to see a committee put together to discuss the strict level of 10 mg nitrate and would speak with the County Administrator to put some recommendations together.

At 12:40 p.m. the meeting adjourned until 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, June 14th, 2022.

Approved:

Chair, Board of Reno County Commissioners

(ATTEST)

Reno County Clerk
cm

Date