

August 30, 2022
Reno County Annex
Hutchinson, Kansas

The Board of Reno County Commissioners held an agenda session 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 Reverend Dr. J Ted Blakley, Grace Episcopal Church.

There were no public comments or additions to the agenda.

Mr. Sellers moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of items 6A through 6E, including the Accounts Payable Ledger for claims payable on September 2nd, 2022, totaling \$206,607.82; approve June 14th, June 28th, July 19th, July 26th, August 9th, August 15th Primary Election Canvass, 2022; approve **resolution #2022-18; A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTS AND REPORTS TO WAIVE THE REQUIREMENTS OF K.S.A. 75-1120a; approval proposal from Casco Industries for a Bauer Breathing Air Cascade System for Reno County Fire District#9 in the amount of \$45,861.00, approve proposal from Karpel Solutions for new prosecutor software "Prosecutor by Karpel" divided by Information Services \$85,000 and District Attorney \$21,000 for total cost of \$106,000 and authorized the County Administrator Randy Partington to sign the contract, as presented by staff. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0. Mr. Sellers commented that he appreciated the notes from the administrator before the meetings.**

7A Mr. Sellers moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst, to open the County Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing for the purpose of answering objections of taxpayers relating to the Revenue Neutral Rate. The Board voted to approve the motion 3-0.

There was no discussion.

Mr. Sellers moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst, to close the County Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing. The Board voted to approve the motion 3-0.

7B **Mr. Sellers moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen**, to open the Budget Hearing for the purpose of hearing and answering objections relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of ad valorem tax for the County 2023 Budget. The Board voted to approve the motion 3-0.

There was no discussion.

Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen, to close the Budget Hearing for the proposed use of all funds and the amount of ad valorem tax for the County 2023 Budget. The Board voted to approve the motion 3-0.

7C **Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Sellers**, to approve resolution #2022-19; **A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF RENO, KANSAS TO LEVY A PROPERTY TAX RATE EXCEEDING THE REVENUE NEUTRAL RATE** for the 2023 County Budget. Mr. Friesen asked to review the budget. Mr. Partington showed a chart, giving a brief history of the taxes levied, not the mill levy, along with the percent change of those taxes levied for each year and the inflation rate for those perspective years showing the difference between the increase or decrease within the budget and the inflation rate. Mr. Partington went over the numbers on the chart for taxes. The Board had made all the cuts that could be made in the budget and not cut services or programs. Mr. Sellers appreciated the chart made by the county administer. He spoke about the importance of government leaders to work together commenting that the other two members did a good job with give and take on the budget. Mr. Hirst mentioned in the interest of the taxpayers the Board may want to keep better track on what the outside agencies are doing with the funds from the county. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

7D Mr. Partington recommended the Reno County 2023 Budget for discussion and adoption. He said approval for the 2023 Budget with the 2023 Ad Valorem Tax of \$25,549,032. He noted that the mill levy decreased but was slightly above the revenue neutral rate. The current mill levy is 39.498 and the \$25.5 million dollar budget was 37.810 with the slight mill levy decrease, the revenue neutral rate was 37.468 a little less than .4 mill above the revenue neutral rate. **Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Sellers**, to approve the Reno County 2023 Budget as presented by staff. Mr. Hirst agreed with Mr. Sellers that the Board had good discussions on areas to cut in the budget. Mr. Friesen thought it went well also, but stated that Reno County taxes were still high and would like to keep the mill levy lower. Mr. Hirst thought the county mill levy was in good

shape, stating any government entity can do three things; increase taxes to keep up with items we have no control over, cut services to keep the mill levy down, or increase the asset value of the county. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

8A Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen, to open the Special Districts Revenue Neutral Rate hearing for the purpose of answering objections of taxpayers relating to the Revenue Neutral Rate. Mr. Partington gave explanation of the fire, sewer, and water districts that the Commission oversees, 13 of 16 will exceed the revenue neutral rate because of operations of each district. The motion was approved unanimously.

Reno County resident in Fire District #2 Harley Phillips addressed the Board with concerns over the last two years the fire district had increased their two million budgets by another \$600,000 which was 9 percent over the revenue neutral rate. He asked if the Board had taken notice of this increase. The Commissioners clearly stated that the City Council of Hutchinson sets the budget for Fire District No. #2 and advised Mr. Phillips to speak with the City of Hutchinson's Council regarding his concerns. He thought funds should not be spent on tree removal.

The Board had a large discussion on the percentage paid to the City of Hutchinson for Fire District #2 coverage and area funds.

Mr. Sellers moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen, to close the Special Districts Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

8B Mr. Sellers moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst, to open the Budget Hearing for the purpose of hearing and answering objections relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of ad valorem tax for the Special Districts 2023 Budget. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen, to close the Budget Hearing. The motion was approved unanimously. Mr. Hirst mentioned that the Board did review a lot of the budgets before approval.

8C Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen, to approve resolution #2022-20; A RESOLUTION TO LEVY A PROPERTY TAX RATE EXCEEDING THE REVENUE NEUTRAL RATE FOR THE SPECIAL DISTRICTS

2023 BUDGET. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

8D The Board mentioned that fire coverage was going up in the county. Mr. Sellers commented that since Fire Districts 2 through 9 were outside the City of Hutchinson, he did not believe the citizens pay much attention to changes in those districts. Mr. Hirst said it was time to review the townships regarding roads and equipment intergovernmental agreements. Some of these agreements would be in areas not having much of a tax base. **Mr. Hirst moved, seconded by Mr. Friesen,** to approve to adopt the Special Districts 2023 Budget as presented. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

9A Solid Waste Director Megan Davidson recommended approval to award bid for a seven-acre Cell 8 construction at the Reno County Solid Waste Department to Unruh Excavating LLC out of Moundridge, Kansas in the amount of \$1,797,740.00. The Board asked if the complaining about waste charges was still going on. Ms. Davidson stated that after June 1st and giving the public explanations, the on-site complaints were at a minimal and currently there were no complaints. **Mr. Sellers moved, seconded by Mr. Hirst,** to award the bid to Unruh Excavating LLC as recommended by staff. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

10 County Administrator Randy Partington updated the Board stating that two weeks ago a request was made for architects to assess building needs for Reno County. Two contractors showed interest, GLMV and SJCF Architects out of Wichita, Kansas. Interview both companies with a small committee with one commissioner on that committee. Mr. Friesen appointed Mr. Sellers until the end of this year for an assessment plan. A consultant would be good for the study phase one. Mr. Hirst stated that an outside consultant along with Mr. Sellers with four months left, would be fine to get a long-range plan. Mr. Partington spoke about making accommodations for five commissioners in the Veterans Room or agreement to revamp for the January 2nd week for new commissioners.

Commissioner Comments:

Mr. Sellers spoke about the County Administrator working on moving The Highlands Water District recommending they move it as soon as possible to The City of Highlands. He was proud of the 25 Reno County employees that volunteered on a Saturday (United Way Workday) where he saw results on their paint project. He

appreciated everyone helping the community. Mr. Partington read the list of names from that day. On a personal note, Mr. Sellers wished his 90-year-old brother, Mert Sellers, Happy Birthday.

Mr. Hirst invited the public to attend the SCKEED Meeting at the Prairie Hill Vineyard in Colwich, Kansas on September 22nd at 1:30 p.m. The Office of Rural Prosperity has opened up applications for a seed grant for communities under 5,000 population. The grant is to support Economic Development in those smaller communities. Grant applications will be open from August 29th close Friday night on September 30th, he read the categories the grant qualifies for. He said everyone get ready for a great fair.

At 10:10 the meeting recessed for five minutes.

The meeting reconvened with all Commissioners, County Administrator Randy Partington, County Counselor Patrick Hoffman, and Minutes Clerk Cindy Martin, present.

At 10:15 a.m. Mr. Friesen moved, seconded by Mr. Sellers, to move the Board into executive session until 10:30 a.m. with the County Administrator Randy Partington, County Counselor Patrick Hoffman, Emergency Management Director Adam Weishaar, and County Fire Administrator Travis Vogt, the subject matter to be fire district personnel and the justification for the executive session is to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 3-0.

At 10:30 a.m. the meeting adjourned until 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, September 13th, 2022.

Approved:

Chair, Board of Reno County Commissioners

(ATTEST)

Reno County Clerk
cm

Date

