

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE GEARY COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES  
April 3, 2023

Commissioners Present: Keith Ascher, Trish Giordano (ill, joined the meeting by phone), and Alex Tyson

Others present: Therese Hoff, Deputy County Clerk and Betsy Edwards, County Counselor

Krista Blaisdell, County Attorney and Tami Robison, Financial Director arrived at the meeting.

Chairman Ascher called the County Commission meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Ms. Robison presented information on the Nex-Tech contract for the County Attorney. Ms. Robison stated the County Counselor has reviewed the contract to make sure it was good, since it is a 5-year contract and subject to the cash basis law. When she started working for Geary County, she discussed with the commission how there are multiple contracts and vendors for IT services, and she would like to have all the departments under one vendor and contract. She (Robison) contacted Nex Tech and asked if the County could consolidate the County Attorney with the County Office Building and Public Works contracts, would there be any type of savings involved? Nex Tech gave the county \$100 off the Co. Atty. contract and the County Office Bldg. contract. There are also contracts for the Health Department, CVB, Register of Deeds, Emergency Management which will not be due until 2024 and 2025. Ms. Robison will be working with Mr. Jimmie Olmsted with Nex Tech about getting all the contracts due at the same time. There is a 21% increase in the cost which she doesn't like. Ms. Blaisdell stated that she increased the computer equipment, by 2 computers, 2 laptops, 2 Surface Pros, and larger storage capabilities, which would raise the price. Ms. Blaisdell said the last server she bought in 2017 was \$50,000.00, and Nex Tech is taking care of that now. Commissioner Tyson said there is going to be increases in price, everything is going up. Nex-Tech is putting in multi-factor authentication, monitoring the firewall, adding ransomware security and running phishing tests on the system. Ms. Robison said now is not the time to get an IT department. Commissioner Giordano asked about the IT department, do we want to look at that now? Ms. Robison said it is not the time to do it. Commissioner Giordano thinks there will be a time in the future to look at a county IT department. Ms. Blaisdell said Nex Tech has been great to work with, and the contract to include leasing the computer equipment is very beneficial for her office, and she doesn't have to worry about computer replacement in her budget. **Commissioner Tyson moved to approve the 5-year IT contract with Nex Tech; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.** Ms. Blaisdell left the meeting.

Crystal Malchose, HR Director, arrived at the meeting.

Peter Rombold, Attorney arrived at the meeting to discuss:

- Discussed tail coverage for cyber insurance, a rider for insurance coverage for a cyber breach at the hospital. Mr. Rombold said at the last meeting of the Hospital Board of Trustees, he thought the decision was made to not purchase this insurance. He does not think they need to purchase this coverage, there has been an extensive investigation into cyber security, and there has not been anything happening. It was the consensus of the commission to not purchase the cyber breach coverage. Mr. Rombold left the meeting.

Crystal Malchose, Human Resource Director, presented the weekly report:

- Requested an executive session; **Commissioner Tyson moved to go into executive session for non-elected personnel-performance for 5 minutes to start at 10:18 a.m., to include Ms.**

**Robison and Counselor Edwards to end at 10:23 a.m. Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.** The meeting reconvened at 10:23 a.m. with no action taken.

- Stated the next employee task force meeting will be in the emergency management conference room next Wednesday, April 12, 2023. Commissioner Tyson said if there is going to be department head meetings, please send out notification at least a week ahead of time.
- Reported there will be a Web Managers training on April 21 at the Civics Plus office in Manhattan., There will be discussion of the County's website re-design and any changes that need to be made.
- Reported she is working with the Financial Director on preparing budget information for 2024, and the best way to plan for pay increases in the future. Ms. Malchose said a step and scale is the best way to budget. She will be checking on costs with the company that is doing the pay study at the sheriff's department. The new employee evaluation forms have been sent to the department heads.

Tami Robison, Financial Director, presented the weekly report:

- Presented CIP paperwork that was discussed last week, retracting the funding request for the CIC amount for the Noxious Weed software, it was included in the original contract.
- Discussed the budget baseline for 2024 which department heads can use in June. The commission could suggest flat budgets, reduced budgets, no non-essential purchases, only critical, essential, and emergency purchases should be part of the budget, do not include requests for new personnel positions, and do not include strategic planning requests. Ms. Robison's recommendation is to make the budget as restricted as the commission would like to meet the need to be efficient and time effective with the budget process. The HR Director and Finance Officer will work with the department heads on their personnel budgets and Ms. Robison will be available to assist the departments with the contractual, commodities and capital outlay lines in their budgets. The CPI for 2022 was 8%, in 2021 it was 5.1%, costs have skyrocketed, causing the rise in cost. She is not asking for an 8% COLA, she doesn't think the taxpayers should have to bear that burden. She (Robison) would like to propose a 1% COLA and use the grade and step scale the HR Director will be presenting to the commission, the average is usually a 3% increase, she would like to use this number in formulating budgets. This does not guarantee a 1% COLA and 3% step increase, but she would like to use these in formulating the 2024 budget. The sheriff's department will be having the wage study done, which will say what the wages will be, but it is not a guarantee those raises will happen. Commissioner Giordano said with the Sheriff's Department getting KP&F last year, he needs to find ways to reduce his budget to be able to give his employees a raise. Ms. Robison wanted to note that anyone over their pay grade would only be eligible for the COLA increase. Chairman Ascher asked when Ms. Robison would like the decision on the budget, and she said she would like to have it today, so she can get the information out to the departments. Ms. Robison said last year the commission told the departments to keep their budgets flat, due to the economic conditions and tax sentiment of the public. Chairman Ascher stated he does not want to go over the RNR, he would like to see things stay flat. Ms. Robison said with what the appraiser said about an average 14% increase in valuation, it will help the budget. Ms. Robison said with the CIP and facilities funds, the departments do not have to budget for large expenses, it is included in those funds. Ms. Robison said the commission can decide if the different departments request to add new personnel or not. She wants it to be the department's responsibility to request a position at their budget presentation meeting with the commission. Commissioner Giordano thinks the departments can adjust their expenses to decide what their wants vs. their needs and be able to lower their budgets. Ms. Robison said there are now a lot of tools to be able to allow the departments to budget appropriately. Commissioner Tyson said the smaller departments cannot drop their expenses too much, Commissioner Giordano said she thinks they can lower their expenses. Commissioner Giordano is hoping that the departments can work with Ms. Robison to cut their budgets, she feels like most of the departments can cut expenses. The consensus of the

commission is to present budgets reflecting the department’s needs to be aware of the current economic conditions and tax sentiment of the public. Ms. Robison would like the departments to present budgets reflecting statutory requirements and business needs, and to add the verbiage to the departments to not add personnel unless they discuss it with the commission first.

- Unaudited summary statement of receipts, expenditures and unencumbered cash for the year ended December 31, 2022. The beginning cash balance is \$7,352,089.57 and ended up December 31, 2022 \$11,681,524.15. Some of the increase is due to closing out the previously levied funds to the general fund. The Capital Improvement Fund had an encumbered cash balance at the end of the year of \$4.5 million, which is a good strong number.

Ken Dillon, citizen, arrived at the meeting.

Garry Berges, Rural Fire Chief/Emergency Management Director, Curt Janke, Assistant Rural Fire Chief/Emergency Management Director arrived at the meeting and Mr. Berges gave the monthly report:

- Reported year to date fire calls-26, last year was 38, with 17 calls in March.
- Discussed burning the right a way on government hill. It will be done on Friday.
- Reported Station 2 and 10 are completed, there will be a dedication and open house on Monday, April 17, 2023, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Station 2.
- Discussed at Station 1, the commission approved applying the spray on insulation, sent out RFP’s, which are due the last week of the month. Mr. Berges will open on April 24, and hope to award it on May 1. They will need to rent a scissor lift to get up so high, using our volunteer fire fighters to assist with the work, pay them something, he will talk to the Financial Director and the HR Director to see how much to pay them.
- Discussed the Station 6 roof repair. He is waiting for bids. There is a temporary fix on the roof for now, at a cost of \$4,000.00. He can’t use CIP funds, since the Fire Dist. has its own levy. Mr. Berges could use LATCF (Local Assistance Tribal Consistency Fund) funds or increase ad valorem tax dollars to cover the cost of a new building. The rough estimated cost is \$170,000.00. Chairman Ascher asked if a new building needed to be as big as Fire Station #10, Mr. Janke said it would not make sense to put in a same size building with 1 bay, and they are getting prices for a two-bay building.
- Notification of withdrawal of request for public assistance (RPA), FEMA-4504-DR-KS. He talked with the Public Works Director, and there are not any projects to use that money. The Commission Chairman needs to sign the withdrawal form. **Commissioner Tyson moved to approve the withdrawal form; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.**
- Discussed gravel work at fire station 2 and 10, rock cost of \$6,916.13, \$5,671.62 for both stations. **Commissioner Tyson moved to pay \$6,916.13 and \$5,671.62 out of ARPA funds for rock at Fire Stations 2 & 10; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.**

Desree Petra and Karen Augustein, citizens arrived at the meeting.

Jason Britt, Noxious Weed Supervisor arrived at the meeting.

Corey Trumpp, Public Works Administrator, and Jeremie Myers, Assistant Director presented the bi-weekly report:

At 11:00 a.m. Mr. Trumpp opened the sealed bids for Noxious Weed Chemicals:

Van Diest Supply Co.	Lindsborg, KS	\$44,153.80
Sims Fertilizer & Chemical Co	Osborne, KS	No Bid
Agricultural Chemical Solutions	Indianapolis, IN	No Bid
Nutrien Ag Solutions	Clay Center, KS	No Bid

The chemical bid will be reviewed by Mr. Trumpp and Mr. Britt, and a recommendation will be made to the county commission at the next meeting.

Mr. Britt left the meeting.

Mr. Trumpp continued with his bi-weekly report:

- Discussed the C-5164-01 Geary County Public Works property acquisition letters. Geary County will require a temporary construction easement on a landowner's private property (0.345 acres) for the future construction of a new bridge to replace the existing structure on West Lyons Creek Rd. Mr. Trumpp recommended the commission pay a minimum payment of \$500.00 to the landowners for the temporary easements. **Commissioner Tyson moved to pay Thomas Boland \$500.00 for the temporary construction easement; Chairman Giordano seconded, and all voted aye.** There will be another temporary construction easement on property (.07 acres) owned by Mark Kind for the C 5164-01 bridge project. **Commissioner Tyson moved to pay Mark Kind \$500.00 for the temporary construction, a permanent drainage easement, and a small area of right-of-way, grand total of payment \$920.00; Commissioner Giordano seconded, and all voted aye.** These will be paid out of the Special Bridge Fund.

At 11:15 a.m. Mr. Trumpp opened the sealed bids for the 4-H Senior Citizens Center interior painting project:

South Wind Rejuvenation Co.	Junction City, KS	No Bid
Ben Kitchens Painting	Junction City, KS	No Bid
Dillon Painting-Ken Dillon	Junction City, KS	\$9,994.00 start 4-15, done 5-13
Royalty Painting LLC	Manhattan, KS	No Bid
Yunger Bros Painting and Restorations	Junction City, KS	No Bid
Dunn's Contracting & Painting	Manhattan, KS	No Bid
Morgan Painting & Striping	Junction City, KS	No Bid
Howard Painting	Chapman, KS	\$3,470.00 start 4-10, done 4-25
Hurst Residential Repair	Junction City, KS	No Bid
Linda Swarts	Abilene, KS	\$6,800.00 start 5-1, done 5-16
Chad's Painting	Junction City, KS	\$14,929.00
DM Construction	Junction City, KS	\$8,091.75

Mr. Trumpp will take the bids back and review them and come back with his recommendation at a later date.

Chairman Ascher stepped out of the meeting to take a phone call.

Mr. Trumpp continued with his bi-weekly report:

- Discussed the County Engineers Report he has submitted to KDOT. Mr. Trumpp recommends approval of the report. **Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the County Engineers Report; Commissioner Tyson seconded, and both voted aye.**
- Presented a road maintenance agreement between Shilling Construction Company and Geary County. Shilling Construction has requested permission to utilize certain Geary County Roads in eastern Geary County due to the closure of US-177, in the performance of their current projects with KDOT. Shilling Construction has agreed to utilize and accept the haul route approved by the Geary County Public Works Department. Mr. Trumpp recommends approval of the road maintenance agreement. **Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the road maintenance agreement with Shilling Construction; Commissioner Tyson seconded and both voted aye.**

Chairman Ascher returned to the meeting.

Mr. Trumpp continued with his bi-weekly report:

- Reported KDOT has invited one individual from Geary County to participate in one of the upcoming six regional KDOT districts meetings taking place in April at the KDOT headquarters in Salina on April 17 from 1-4. Mr. Trumpp will be attending this meeting.
- Reported Associated Insulation has a tentative start date of April 10, 2023, for the Pennell Office Building asbestos remediation. It is supposed to take 6-8 days.
- Reported the 2023 Ks. County Highway Association annual spring conference and exhibition is scheduled for Tuesday, May 16 and Wednesday, May 17, 2023, in Manhattan. Dale Evans, Jeremie Myers and Mr. Trumpp will be attending the conference.
- Reported they are planning on installing the county office building bollards on April 11, 2023.
- Reported the building maintenance garage door is old, worn out and broke. It needs to be replaced. He has received 4 quotes: E-Z OH Garage Door Co.-\$3,057.39, Heartland Door & Window-\$3,535.95, Overhead Door-\$3,562.00 and The Garage Door Place-\$2,181.26. He selected the lowest quote of The Garage Door Place to be paid out of the Facilities Fund.
- Reported Jeremie Myers will be attending the Caterpillar safety training days and factory tour in Little Rock, Arkansas on May 8-10, 2023. This is an all-expense paid training provided by Foley Equipment and he will be joined by Geary County's Caterpillar sales rep Nick Stringer. Source Well will also be presenting cooperative purchase opportunities.
- Reminded the commission the landfill will be open for spring cleanup- brush and tree disposal Saturday, April 15, 2023 and Saturday, May 20, 2023.

Crystal Malchose, HR Director arrived at the meeting and introduced:

Representatives from Bukaty-Cortny Hutchison and Emily Ahlvers gave an update on the county's benefits trends. Ms. Ahlvers gave an overview of benefits through 2021-2022: Bukaty Companies provided benchmarking reports to show plan designs were not in line with other counties, other companies throughout Kansas within the same employment size and on a national average. The complaints during the 2021-2022 plan year were around vision benefits. Worksite benefits were dated and expensive and the carrier was unresponsive. Some benefits offered through Geary County employees could obtain through KPERs at a better price. Most other counties/cities and competitors were offering HAS plans which was feedback HR received from new employees. Dental from Delta Dental was getting an increase for the 2022-2023 plan year. The benefit plan recommendations were: Create cost savings to enrich plan offerings and have a plan design that drives employee consumerism and employee engagement. The renewal from BC-BS was going to be 13.44%. Bukaty created plans for employees that would be cheaper and better. Delta Dental was going up 3% in 2022-2023, and going to MetLife, they were able to offer two options to employees, A buy-up plan that includes Ortho for less than the current Delta Dental plan. MetLife offers in and out of network benefits so employees would not have to change their dentist. Three plan design changes took place within the medical plans and the county moved to a fully insured platform. The savings for these changes were significant, almost reaching \$200K annually. With the changes: they encompassed the needs of all employees, follow prescription compliance and reduce employees' out-of-pocket costs while controlling future plan costs. Employee Navigator streamlines processes and helps to follow compliance and will file 1095's for Geary County and is at no cost to the county. Ms. Hutchison reviewed the claims incurred and paid from Aug. 1, 2022-Feb 28, 2023. When groups run between 65%-85%, that is where groups typically run for a favorable renewal. Even with one high cancer claimant and one high pharmacy claim, Geary's current count is in a favorable position. Bukaty has worked on issues with Dental Network/ID Cards, Vision Network-there are three vision providers in Junction City, and they do not accept Superior, however 2 of the 3 do not accept mainstream vision providers. Other carrier options will be explored in attempts to accommodate more

providers. MetLife has offered a rate guarantee on all lines of coverage until 1-1-2025. In order to move the FSA to a calendar year, a yearly enrollment window will have to take place for 8/1, then again 1-1-2024, then the benefit year will be on a calendar year. This will be conducted through employee navigator and Bukaty representatives can be on site to assist. Ms. Hutchison and Ms. Ahlvers left the meeting. They will be meeting with employees from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the conference room.

Diane Briestensky-Leonard, Register of Deeds arrived at the meeting and gave the quarterly report:

- Presented revenue numbers from the ROD office. In 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2022 \$83,963.50 went to the General Fund. The first quarter of 2023 the amount to the General Fund is \$53,473.25 and the amount of revenue generated in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2023, was down \$39,302.25 from 2022. March numbers were increased from Jan. and Feb in 2023. Ms. Briestensky-Leonard left the meeting.

Sherri Childs, County Treasurer arrived at the meeting and gave the quarterly report:

- Said things are going good, and they have been busy.

Desree Petra and Karen Augustein arrived at the meeting.

The public comment session was held:

- Desree Petra asked if the Flint Hills Regional Council has any control over the City or County. Ms. Petra requested copies of the interlocal agreements, the county counselor will get them to her.
- Ms. Petra asked who appoints the EDC members, Commissioner Tyson explained how the members are appointed, and they try to get builders, realtors, and businesspeople. She asked about the EDC Director, and why the county has her, commission said she was hired as the EDC Director. She said Ms. Dean was for the slaughterhouse right away, is there any way to see if there is somebody better than her? Ms. Petra and Ms. Augustein said they have given information to the city, but they don't seem to listen.
- Commissioner Giordano said there is a joint city-county MPC board, and they are an advisory board, that advises the city and the county. The two ladies left the meeting.

Rebecca Nordyke, County Clerk discussed:

- Presented Commission Change Orders for approval; **Commissioner Tyson moved to approve 2022-305 through 2022-311. Commissioner Giordano seconded, and all voted aye.**
- Discussed future commission agendas.

Deputy Clerk Hoff presented County Commission minutes for approval: **Commissioner Tyson moved to approve the minutes from the March 27,2023; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all aye.**

The commission held their review and update:

- Commissioner Tyson attended the greeting for General Poppas at Fort Riley.
- Commissioner Tyson will be attending the CVB meeting this week.
- Commissioner Tyson said the commission needs to address a couple of issues concerning transporting patients from the hospital.
- Reported they had the joint City/County/USD meeting. He discussed funding options for different projects and if the entities could work together.
- Commissioner Giordano said it was a very good joint meeting, with good interaction of all entities. The school district will be hosting the next one, allowing the community to be there.
- Commissioner Giordano attended the Pawnee Mental Health meeting and they are looking at another building in Manhattan. They are running out of room.
- Commissioner Giordano attended the Girls on the Run fundraiser. It is a program to help build confidence in girls, by giving them life skills.

- Commissioner Giordano attended Shrek at the Opera House
- Commissioner Giordano attended the Car Show at the high school, it was very well attended.
- Chairman Ascher said the PBC toured the sheriff's department and jail. The PBC wants to keep abreast of the infrastructure over there, so they know how things are going in the building. Commissioner Giordano said Public Works needs to be more involved in the building. Chairman Ascher said there is obsolete fixtures in the building, and there is not much room.

Counselor Edwards discussed Foundation for the school which is having a teacher appreciation banquet for USD 475 to be held on May 1 at the Marriott. They are requesting the county to contribute \$350 for a table. It begins at 6 p.m. **Commissioner Giordano moved to sponsor a \$350 table; Commissioner Tyson seconded, and all voted aye.** This needs to come out of the commission budget.

The meeting ended at 1:11 p.m.

*Keith Ascher*

CHAIRMAN-COUNTY COMMISSION

KEITH ASCHER

*Therese Hoff deputy*

DEPUTY COUNTY CLERK

THERESE HOFF

*4-24-23*

DATE