

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE GEARY COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES
April 24, 2023

Commissioners Present: Keith Ascher, Trish Giordano, and Alex Tyson

Others present: Therese Hoff, Deputy County Clerk and Betsy Edwards, County Counselor, Tami Robison, Financial Director, Ryan Garrison, PBC member

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

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

The commission held their review and update:

- Commissioner Tyson stated he received an email from Fresh Start, and they are trying to get a grant and would like the commission support. They would like to get on the commission agenda, but Commissioner Giordano wants them to bring in their by-laws and their financial policy before they come in. Chairman Ascher said he talked to Counselor Edwards and the Financial Officer, and he suggested Commissioner Tyson talks to them later.
- Commissioner Tyson stated they had a phone meeting for the Emergency Food & Shelter national board program. The total award was \$8,446.00 and available funds for administration allowance was \$169.00. They discussed various options on disbursing the funds. He said it will be used for utilities and rent assistance. There were nine applicants for this funding.
- Commissioner Giordano attended the Paradox ribbon cutting.
- Commissioner Giordano attended a meeting with Representative Tracy Mann and he talked about the importance of agriculture and world peace, and how important Ks. agriculture is to the world.
- Commissioner Giordano attended the employee task force meeting. She said two people said it was a good calm meeting. Commissioner Giordano wants to change the culture in the county, it is the taxpayer's money, not the county's money. She doesn't know everything about the county, but if there is an employee that can give an idea as to how to save money in the county, it could be an incentive for the employee to receive a reward of some type.
- Commissioner Giordano stated the CVB plan is going well, with developing goals.
- Commissioner Giordano talked about Chairman Ascher calling the meeting with the hospital and the EMS, and her or Commissioner Tyson didn't know a thing about it, or what it was about. Commissioner Tyson said they had good communication last week with the Fire Department, and there was good information shared among the county and the EMS. Chairman Ascher said he was asked by the Fire Department if he could get a meeting set up with Stormont Vail. They had been trying to get a meeting set up but couldn't get anywhere. Chairman Ascher said they have staffing problems. The financial officer said with the money we are giving to the EMS, the county is paying for full time EMS people, then the county might need to adjust their appropriation, because we are paying them too much.
- Chairman Ascher said Commissioner Tyson attended the Fire Station #2 dedication and he gave a good speech.
- Chairman Ascher attended the juvenile detention meeting in Salina.
- Chairman went to the MPO meeting. *Ascher*
- Chairman Ascher attended the Business After Hours at Cloud County.
- Chairman Ascher went to Big Lakes gala for their 150-year anniversary.

Crystal Malchose, Human Resources Director, arrived at the meeting and requested an executive session. **At 10:18 a.m.; Commissioner Giordano moved to go into executive session for 5 minutes to discuss non-elected personnel, to include Counselor Edwards, and the Finance Officer to end at 10:23 a.m.**

Commissioner Tyson seconded and all voted aye. The meeting reconvened at 10:23 a.m. with no action taken.

Ms. Malchose continued with her weekly report:

- Ms. Malchose would like to recommend officially changing Tami Robison's title from Finance Officer to Finance Director. Commissioner Giordano said she deserves that and has worked hard to get all departments to work together. Commissioner Tyson said she has done a good job, and he appreciates it. He feels she is a great asset to the commission and the county. He has learned a lot from her. Chairman Ascher said the hospital work she has done has really been appreciated. Chairman Ascher said there is no change in salary. **Commissioner Tyson moved to change the title of Tami Robison from Finance Officer to Finance Director; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.**
- Presented policy #40.08 change-dress and personal appearance policy. Commissioner Tyson said these policies have not been changed in a long time, and that is why they are being revised. It was reviewed by the employee task force. If an employee is sent home because of their appearance, the first time they can use annual leave, but if they are told more than once to go home, it will be leave without pay. Commissioner Giordano asked about the type of shoes to be worn. Ms. Malchose said good shoes in good repair, and not torn jeans. Commissioner Giordano also stated these policies have not been addressed for years and really needed updated. There is a chance of legal action against the county, if the policies are not in place **Commissioner Tyson moved to approve revised dress and personal appearance policy #40.08; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.**
- Discussed policies that were passed last May, but there have been small revisions, clothing purchase/reimbursement policy #50.33. Commissioner Giordano questioned the logoed office clothing allowance for each category of \$150.00/year, Commissioner Tyson and Chairman Ascher don't think employees are going to go out every year and buy office logoed clothing. Because of IRS regulations, receipts need to be presented. The Financial Officer said there is nothing in the budget to give the \$150 a year to all employees. Ms. Malchose said a decision needs to be made about reimbursement, because public works employees are waiting for this to be approved to submit a receipt for reimbursement. If the department head does not require the employees to wear logoed clothing, then the employees do not need money to buy clothes. Ms. Robison thinks it needs to be tabled until next week.
- Discussed she is proposing an update to policy #20.36, which would increase the deputy stipends in the Register of Deeds, County Clerk, County Treasurer from \$100 a month to \$200 a month. The county commission stipend will remain \$100 a month for the Chairman. **Commissioner Giordano moved to make the changes to Policy #20.36, for deputy stipends to be \$200 a month, and to include the county commission chairman stipend stays at \$100 a month; Commissioner Tyson seconded and all voted aye.**
- Revision to the smoking policy to include smokeless tobacco. It extends the area where employees or citizens can utilize these products, change to at least 30 feet away from doorways, windows to county building, or other building used for county functions. She would like to see a designated area for employees smoking in all county buildings. Chairman Ascher said he would like to see some picnic tables placed in the grassy area by Emergency Management for employees to eat lunch. Smokeless tobacco is still authorized but may be limited or prohibited at the supervisor's discretion. Commissioner Giordano said she thinks all tobacco products need to be banned in the

buildings, she doesn't think it is fair to ban smoking from the building and county owned vehicles but allow smokeless tobacco. **Commissioner Tyson moved to approve policy #40.28; Chairman Ascher seconded, Commissioner Giordano opposed, motion carried.**

John Moyer, and Mike Rhodes, PBC members arrived at the meeting.

Chrysann Phipps, Community Corrections Director arrived at the meeting to discuss:

- Presented the adult comp plan, it is the same as last year. The success rate was 79%, which was a little lower than last year. Ms. Phipps said they had an audit last year and received an exceptional rating. **Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the adult comp plan for 2024; Commissioner Tyson seconded and all voted aye.**
- Presented the juvenile comp plan, not much change from last year. There are new objectives for probation, intake and assessment, and immediate intervention. **Commissioner Tyson moved to approve the juvenile comp plan for 2024; Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.**
- Presented the reinvestment grant that funds a position that supervises immediate intervention and provides programming to the kids on probation. It is a two-year grant. **Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the reinvestment grant for 2024; Commissioner Tyson seconded and all voted aye.**
- Chairman Ascher asked about vehicles, and Ms. Phipps said she is working on getting her quarterly reports done, so she knows how much money she has left to buy vehicles.

Discussed a new program. JCAP youth on probation grant, which is a two-year grant. It is a new program to allow JCAP-youth on probation to attend a gym- it will be a cross fit program mentorship with the coaches and probation staff. The cost would be \$125.00 per youth per month, and she has budgeted it for 2 years. They would purchase shoes and clothing. It is a program after school that she is hoping to get funded. **Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the application for the JCAP grant; Commissioner Tyson seconded and all voted aye.** Ms. Phipps left the meeting.

This is a joint meeting with the Public Building Commission.

Mr. Garrison-Vice Chair of the PBC, called the PBC meeting to order at 11:08 a.m. The Financial Officer said they just need to go over the hospital review. She sent out financials to them to let them know about the cash flow at the hospital.

Ms. Robison said she had correspondence from Preston at Stormont Vail about the IRS money that came back, he thought it would have to be paid back, and they do owe that money back, but not sure of the amount. She discussed the bad debt recovery for March, and Mr. Garrison asked if that amount was good or bad. Ms. Robison said there is still \$8 million left to collect, but probably not expected to be able to collect that. Commissioner Tyson said there are new air handlers being installed at the women's center and the ER, and they are in the bid phase for the boilers. Ms. Robison said anytime the PBC members want a tour of the hospital, it can be set up. Mr. Garrison thinks that will be better to stay on top of the maintenance needs, and not let that lag behind. Mr. Mortenson said there would be no PBC meeting in April and May, and the next one will be in June. Luisa will be sending out the financials each month to the PBC members.

PBC Meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

Mr. Garrison gave public comment on property he owns, and asked if there is going to be a conditional use permit zoning change. It needs to be more than 1000 feet when being notified of some change that is coming to the area. He said that is not far enough for enough property owners to be notified.

Commissioner Giordano said the county already has a bigger area for property owners to be notified. Mr. Garrison said he has heard that an RV park wants to be put out by his property, but he didn't receive any notification about it because of the distance. The commission said they could discuss this with Mr. Livingston, Zoning Director. Commissioner Giordano said Mr. Livingston is supposed to be informing the county commission of any kind of zoning changes proposed. Mr. Moyer asked about the joint member appointment, and Chairman Ascher asked Counselor Edwards. She said the city feels they should have that position. Mr. Garrison and Mr. Moyer left the meeting.

Tami Robison, Financial Officer presented the weekly report:

- Reported the County Attorney will be coming to the meeting to get a decision on the security proposal she discussed last week.
- Requested an executive session at the end of the meeting. **Commissioner Giordano moved to amend the agenda to include a request for an executive session at the end of the day for non-elected personnel, Commissioner Tyson seconded and all voted aye.**
- Ms. Robison commended the clerk and treasurer's office teamwork for working together to get the financials done.

County Attorney, Krista Blaisdell, arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Robison continued with her weekly report:

- Ms. Blaisdell discussed the video security update and access control. She requested to use her forfeiture funds, or transfer diversion funds that were moved to the general fund, to the CIP fund, to pay for the security equipment. What would the commission like her to do?
- Commissioner Tyson said to get all of the security work done now, instead of waiting. There are 3 options-1st floor only, 2nd-only integrate 1st and 2nd floor, 3rd-do all floors and integrate all cameras, at a cost of \$22,694.27. Chairman Ascher is in favor of doing the whole project. Commissioner Tyson said it doesn't usually work to have old equipment and new equipment to work together. **Commissioner Giordano moved to pay the 3rd option and use the PBC depreciation funds that was transferred to the CIP funds; Ms. Robison's recommendation is to use the PBC funds from the depreciation fund which was transferred to the general fund for the security camera project, and access control; cost of cameras \$22,694.27, access control-\$9,286.68. Commissioner Tyson seconded and all voted aye.** Ms. Blaisdell left the meeting.

John Poole, citizen arrived at the meeting.

Mr. and Mrs. Scott Hoch arrived at the meeting.

Garry Berges, EM/Fire arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Berges opened the sealed bids for insulation at 236 E. 8th St.:

Critchfield Sprayfoam Insulation	Waterville, KS	No Bid
H&H Spray Insulation	Chapman, KS	\$22,905.50
Topshot Spray Insulation	Topeka, KS	No Bid
Wet Paint Productions- John Poole	Manhattan, KS	\$23,383.57

Mr. Berges will take the bids back to review and report back to the commission with his recommendation.

The regular commission meeting recessed and department head meeting started at 12:00 p.m.

Arriving at the department head meeting were: Charles Martinez, Health Department Director, Garry Berges, Rural Fire/EM, Sherri Childs, Treasurer, Chrysann Phipps, Community Corrections Director,

Crystal Malchose, HR Director, Corey Trumpp, Public Works Director, Diane Briestensky-Leonard, Register of Deeds, Tami Robison, Financial Officer and Ginger Kopfer, Extension Office.

HR Director stated Wednesday, April 26 is administrative professional day, and the employee appreciation breakfast will be held, with donuts, fruit, and coffee provided. Ms. Malchose stated members of the employee task force went to Civics plus to give input and receive training on the redesign of the county's website. It should take 6-8 months and will be easier to use.

Financial Officer-stated the auditors will be here this week and will be working closely with the clerks and treasurer's office.

Emergency Mgmt/Rural Fire-stated they have had 33 calls this month. Fire station #6 dedication

Health Department Director said they are restructuring their social media.

Public Works Director said there is a problem with the Conroe Bridge project on Ascher road and they have moved the completion date to June 9.

Community Corrections Director said the floor project is still going on. The ISO's are back in the building, but using the ARP offices. They are hoping to have the floor project done by June. Abilene is doing an 8-part article on Drug Court, she wants to start up a similar one in Geary County.

Commissioner Tyson said keep up the good work and he appreciates all the work the department heads do.

Commissioner Giordano said at the employee task force meeting, it was discussed any employee that has an idea to save the county money, and be more efficient, there would be an incentive for the best idea. There will be more discussion later. She appreciates the great teamwork the Clerks and Treasurers office has had getting things done.

Chairman Ascher appreciates everybody coming to the department head meeting. The department heads left the meeting except Mr. Berges and Mr. Trumpp.

Members of the public arriving at the meeting were: From Alta Vista, Ks-Dawn Shofner, Lisa Horne, Ken and Genevieve Kemp, Nancy and Robert Horne, Scott and Joan Hoch, Rocky Ramsour, John Poole, Kip

and Sharon Hoffman, Ron Say, Mary Sutton, Tammy Roddy, and Pam Say. From Junction City, Roger O'Neill.

The regular commission meeting started at 12:15 p.m. The public comment session was held:

Chairman Ascher said there would be a limit of 3 minutes per person.

Mr. Berges stated he received a phone call from Jim Schmidt stating the McDowell Creek Bridge was going to be closed. Mr. Berges said in a letter he received from KDOT, dated April 21, 2023, on Monday, May 1, they will begin construction on BR #026, carrying McDowell Creek Road over I-70. The project will remove and replace the existing bridge deck for the structure crossing I-70. The bridge will be closed and traffic will be directed to detour using I-70 throughout the summer. The project is anticipated to be completed in early October. This is a state project, and they usually have a pre-meeting, but Mr. Berges and Mr. Trumpp were not informed. Chairman Ascher asked why they waited so long to inform the public, and Mr. Trumpp said he would have to ask KDOT. Mr. Trumpp stated with K177 closed because of construction, this is not good timing to close McDowell Creek bridge.

Ron Say said he was told there was a meeting this afternoon about this project. This could be put off until November, when the K177 project is done.

Tammy Roddy said this would impact the whole town of Alta Vista. She also asked where the meeting is being held. Nobody seemed to know where the meeting was going to be. Commissioner Giordano said the project is a safety concern.

Scott Hoch said he has to feed cattle and can't move hay to them.

Robert Horne stated he is worried how an ambulance could get to his home, it will be a 30-minute delay, and the Manhattan ambulance will have to go to Junction City first, delaying it.

Roger O'Neill-JSix Farms-Moyer Ranch location manager had a map showing the ranch, if the bridge is closed, how will he get 300 semi loads of hay to his cattle, they will be using low weight bridges on the off county roads.

Joan Hoch, works in Manhattan, and the people living in Council Grove, and working in Manhattan are having to find alternate routes, with no cell phone service. She is on the road very early in the morning, which is a safety issue.

John Poole said there is a low underpass on Exit #311, and equipment may not be able to get through. Chairman Ascher said the project will happen at some time, but this is not the right time. They need to wait until K-177 is open. There was a lack of communication with the public involved. Commissioner Tyson agreed it is not a great time, there are too many other projects already in the works. Ms. Hoch asked if the public should be contacting somebody. Ms. Robison said the county could put it on their social media about the concerns.

Nancy Horne thinks they can wait until K177 is open.

Commissioner Giordano said we just need to let KDOT know what could go on if they close the road.

Mary Sutton, Jackson Township Board, said the north side was going to be done first, as per a rep from KDOT.

Chairman Ascher said they will try to contact some one with KDOT to find out what is going on.

The commissioners, Mr. Trumpp and Mr. Berges need to let KDOT know this is not a good time to do this project.

Chairman Ascher asked the group if they receive any information to please pass it on to the county commissioners.

Deputy Clerk Hoff presented commission minutes for approval:

Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the commission minutes for April 3, 2023; Commissioner Tyson seconded and all voted aye.

Commissioner Giordano moved to approve the commission minutes for April 10, 2023; Commissioner Tyson seconded and all voted aye.

Commissioner Tyson moved to approve the commission minutes for April 17, 2023; Chairman Ascher seconded and both voted aye.

Deputy Clerk Hoff presented 2022-Commission Change Orders for approval. **Commissioner Tyson moved to approve 2022-292 and 2022-293; Commissioner Giordano seconded, and all voted aye.**

At 12:56 p.m.; Commissioner Giordano moved to go into executive session to discuss non-elected personnel, to include Counselor Edwards, HR Director and the Finance Director for 30 minutes to end at 1:26 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 1:26 p.m. with no action taken.

The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Keith Ascher

CHAIRMAN -COUNTY COMMISSION

KEITH ASCHER

Therese Hoff deputy

DEPUTY COUNTY CLERK

THERESE HOFF

5-1-23

DATE