

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE GEARY COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES
May 8, 2023

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

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

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 attended the Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament. He said it was well attended and a good tournament.
- Commissioner Giordano attended the aTa Bus meeting. They will be asking for more funding in their 2024 budget. They are going to be \$150,000.00 short. They will not be asking Geary County for all of that amount. Commissioner Giordano said that Geary County has been carrying this program, but she does not think it should all be on the County. Commissioner Giordano asked them for information on ridership in Geary County. Ridership is up 101% since the pandemic.
- Chairman Ascher attended the Republican convention to appoint a new County Clerk. Commissioner Giordano asked why it was not advertised. Chairman Ascher said he didn't know why it wasn't. Commissioner Giordano asked who they appointed, and Chairman Ascher said Courtney Gilbert. The paperwork goes to the governor today, and she has 7 days to respond.
- Chairman Ascher said the legislature is going to try to resurrect the LAVTR funding, since Senate Bill 252 would take a lot of tax money from the counties if the Governor signs SB 8.

Donna Price, Convention & Visitors Bureau Director arrived at the meeting to give the quarterly report:

- Discussed what is going on at Freedom Park. They are planning to clean it up and make repairs by sections. The MAC and Phyllis Fitzgerald and other volunteers have been cleaning and painting. Ms. Price said Witt Tree Service is taking down trees and brush, you can see the trail now. The National Guard will continue to help with the cleanup and repairs. They have spent \$5,000.00 so far with Witt and he said it would not be over \$15,000.00 to get it cleaned up. There has been 2 truckloads of rock dumped on the trail, and there needs to be 2 more at the top of the trail. Ms. Price said the volunteers are working very well, and much appreciated. Commissioner Tyson asked how much it would have cost to ship the Army equipment back to Washington DC, instead of fixing the trail. Ms. Price said each piece of equipment would have been loaded on a truck to Washington DC, repaired and then probably put in the Smithsonian. The cost would have been several hundred thousand dollars the county would have had to pay to send back the equipment, as per an earlier agreement.
- Discussed their calendar for April, they were very busy.
- Discussed the Transient Guest Tax collections are higher than last year, and the expenditures are lower.
- Discussed a cost proposal for brand development from Mammoth. This would include a discovery meeting, brand definition, key messages development, logo design, style guide and launch a strategy. The board voted to approve Option #1 for \$23,500.00, which would have asset development, Facebook/Instagram prospecting ads, Facebook/Instagram/Remarketing Ads, Google search engine for marketing and Geofencing (Lakes, Outdoor shows) **Commissioner Tyson moved to approve the CVB's advisory board's recommendation to accept the proposal from Mammoth for \$23,500.00; Commissioner Giordano seconded, and all voted aye.**

- Discussed a promotion with the Blue Jays. Someone in Junction City made Blue Jay figures, and they are at the school getting painted. They will be placed around town, and people can find them and receive prizes.
- Discussed the CVB is a member of Sports Kansas. Communities work together to bring sporting events to the communities. There is a very good website called Huddle Up, which the Department of Commerce pays the first year's membership fee of \$20,000.00 and pay ½ the next year and Sports Kansas is paying the other half. There are also attraction development grants available for \$400,000.00. Those grants are only used on brick-and-mortar projects but might help with the Sports Complex.
- Stated this is National Travel and Tourism Week. Ms. Price left the meeting.

Tami Robison, Finance Director presented the weekly report:

- Reported CIC is here, working with the Clerk and Treasurer's offices. The Clerk's office is having trouble balancing before running checks. It is a new system and some things that were done one way might need to be changed now.
- Stated the auditors have taken financial paperwork with them to work on the audit, and it is going well.
- Reported the department budgets have gone to the department heads. The deadline to return them to her is May 26, 2023.
- Reminded the commission she will be out of the office from May 18, 2023, to June 2, 2023.
- Stated it appears the county is not going to need a single audit, it will just be the compliance audit like last year, which is cheaper.

The Finance Director requested Travis Lilly, Appraiser came in to discuss the CAMSO Mfg. business and explained how they pay in lieu of taxes, a certain amount every year, not anything based on their value. It is an economic development tool, and he thinks it goes for 20 years. Mr. Lilly will find the agreement and report back to the commission. Mr. Lilly left the meeting.

Ms. Robison continued with her report:

- Counselor Edwards discussed consideration of a Resolution to consolidate county services as requested by the county commission. It would move payroll and A/P to the Finance Department. The HR Department will also be under the Finance Director in the Finance Department. Counselor Edwards read Resolution 5-8-2023 which states Geary County has general home rule powers as granted under K.S.A. 19-101, which declares that county home rule powers "shall be liberally construed for the purpose of giving counties the largest measure of self-government." Under K.S.A. 12-3901, the Kansas Legislature set forth the authority of political subdivisions to consolidate offices and function to serve the needs of their constituents more effectively and efficiently through consolidating or cooperating in the consolidation of operations, procedures, and functions of offices and agencies of their subdivisions which may be more efficiently and effectively exercised or provided by a single office. The Board of County Commissioners under K.S.A. 19-229 has exclusive control over all the county expenditures. K.S.A. 19-212 assigns the Board of County Commissioners authority to examine and settle all accounts of the receipts and expenses of the county, and to examine and settle all accounts chargeable against the county. In addition, K.S.A. 19-212 sets forth that the Board of County Commissioners is charged with the management of the business and concerns of the county, in all cases where no other provision is made by law. The Board of County Commissioners makes the following Findings of Fact: that payroll is currently housed across three separate Geary County offices including the Finance Office, the County Clerk's Office, and the Human Resources Office. There is duplication of services existing in said operations, procedures and functions of administering the county's payroll. The accounts payable is facilitated by two different offices, including the County Clerk's

Office and the Finance Office, and a duplication exists in the operations, procedures and functions of these offices. That the administration of accounts payable and payroll across multiple offices has resulted in inefficiency, errors, and duplication of services that are not in the best interest of the county. The Board of County Commissioners of Geary County hereby consolidates the management and operation of Payroll and Accounts Payable to be placed under the Finance Office. The Board of County Commissioners also declares that Human Resources shall be moved under the umbrella of the Finance Department and shall report to the Finance Director. The Geary County Board of County Commissioners hereafter shall consolidate the functions of Accounts Payable, Payroll, and Human Resource under the Finance Office to exercise these functions most efficiently and effectively in the best interest of Geary County. Chairman Ascher stated he really struggled with this change. It will take a lot of things from the county clerk's office, but he thinks with a new clerk coming in with little clerk experience, it is a wise move, and maybe the finger pointing will stop, since it will all be under one office. Ms. Robison stated there are certain HR matters that need to be kept confidential, and she will not be involved with them, ie: work comp or any disciplinary action. Ms. Robison said she thinks it will be a good thing and unify processes with the departments. Commissioner Giordano said she thinks it is a good thing, and the payroll and a/p will not be under an elected official anymore, but an appointed department head, which the commission would have control over. Ms. Giordano hopes that things will get better with the creation of the department.

Crystal Malchose, HR Director arrived at the meeting.

Commissioner Tyson said there has been situations in the past that were not correct in the financials. There cannot continue to be mistakes being made. The taxpayer dollars are not being reviewed correctly. This new plan will take care of things properly and correctly. **Commissioner Tyson moved to adopt Resolution 5-8-2023; Commissioner Giordano seconded, and all voted aye.**

Commissioner Tyson moved to amend the agenda to add an executive session to discuss non-elected personnel. Commissioner Giordano seconded and all voted aye.

Crystal Malchose, Human Resources Director arrived at the meeting to give the weekly report:

- Discussed KPERS retired employees working after retirement. If an employee comes back to work for the same place, after retiring from KPERS, there is no earnings limit, however once they hit \$25,000.00, the county must pay 30% on their earnings. Commissioner Giordano stated she thinks the commission needs to give approval of hiring a former employee full-time, since the county share of KPERS is so high.

Mr. Troy Livingston, GIS/Zoning Director arrived at the meeting.

At 11:13 a.m.; Commissioner Giordano moved to go into executive session to discuss non-elected personnel-pay for 5 minutes, to include Counselor Edwards, the HR Director, and the GIS/Zoning Director to end at 11:18 a.m.; Commissioner Tyson seconded, and all voted aye. The meeting reconvened at 11:18 a.m. with no action taken. Mr. Livingston left the meeting.

At 11:19 a.m.; Commissioner Tyson moved to go into executive session to discuss non-elected personnel for 10 minutes, to include Counselor Edwards and the HR Director, to end at 11:29 a.m.; Commissioner Giordano seconded, and all voted aye. The meeting reconvened at 11:29 a.m.; with no action taken.

Therese Hoff, Deputy County Clerk, presented the weekly report:

- Presented commission minutes for approval. **Commissioner Giordano moved to approve minutes from 05-01-2023; Commissioner Tyson seconded, and all voted aye.**

Mr. Livingston, GIS/Zoning Director arrived at the meeting.

There was a discussion about the MPC board. It was adopted in 2017-a joint measure between Junction City, Geary County and Milford City. Milford City left in 2021. The agreement has not functioned properly in a while. Mr. Livingston said he considers himself a county employee, and 100% of his salary is paid by the county, but 90% of his time is spent on City zoning issues. He thinks he should be spending more time on County issues. He thinks the county could do their own zoning board. Making this change will allow him to focus more on GIS issues he has not had time to complete. Commissioner Giordano would like to see more blights taken care of in the county. Commissioner Tyson is excited about the Sanitarian moving to be under Mr. Livingston’s department. Mr. Karmann uses the GIS products quite often, and it will be good for him to learn the GIS, so if Troy is gone, Lance could help the public. Chairman Ascher asked the Counselor what direction the county should take about wanting out of the MPC joint agreement. Counselor Edwards said the County needs to let the City of Junction City know they want to terminate participation in the Metropolitan Planning Commissioner currently operating to provide zoning and planning services for the City of Junction City, and the unincorporated areas of Geary County. Geary County proposes to end their participation with the MPC no later than July 1, 2023. Counselor Edwards presented a letter for the commission’s approval to terminate the joint agreement. Mr. Livingston said there is a couple cases still pending, but by July 1, 2023, they should be done. Commissioner Giordano asked if the current MPC board would be dissolved, and the county would start over to get a board? Mr. Livingston stated he will put together policies & procedures, and new by-laws for the new board. Mr. Livingston said there is a MPC meeting tonight, can he let them know of this change? **Commissioner Tyson moved to send the letter to the City of Junction City dissolving the joint agreement of the MPC; Commissioner Giordano seconded, and all voted aye.** Mr. Livingston left the meeting.

Public Comment was held-No one was in attendance for public comment.

A discussion was held about the Joint City/County/School District meeting at the end of the month. The school district wants to know if the county has anything to put on the agenda.


Counselor Edwards will not be at the meeting on Monday, May 22, 2023.

The meeting adjourned at 12:11 p.m.



CHAIRMAN-COUNTY COMMISSION

KEITH ASCHER



DEPUTY COUNTY CLERK

THERESE HOFF

5-15-2023

DATE