

September 19, 2022
Unofficial Minutes
Russell County Commission Meeting

At 9:00 am Steve Reinhardt made the motion to open the meeting. Daron Woelk seconded, and Duke Strobel approved. Others present for the meeting were: County Attorney Dan Krug, Administrator John Fletcher, and Clerk Mary Nuss.

Daron Woelk made the motion to approve the minutes of the August 22, 29 and September 6th meetings. Duke Strobel seconded, and Steve Reinhardt approved.

Alan Kuntzsch, Public Works Director, updated the Commission on the Hell Creek Bridge repairs and costs. The Commission met by conference call with Thomas Sohm, The Project Manager, Central Federal Lands Highway Division, Project Manager. In 2018 the estimated costs to repair Hell Creek Bridge was \$1.6 million. Today, the cost is \$3.4 million for construction and engineering costs. The Federal Program will only pay \$1.5 million with the County paying the remaining cost of the repairs. The Commission would like to see about applying for a state funding grant with a shared cost of 95/5 with the County cost being 5% of the project. Jordan, with Penco, has also suggested that we apply to Ks Local Bridge Improvement Program for additional grant funding for this project.

The Commission signed the agreement with L & M Contractors for Bridge Abutment Repair work on FAS 20 south of Dorrance.

At 9:46 am Duke Strobel made the motion to enter into a 5-minute executive session for non-elected personnel for an employee evaluation with Alan Kuntzsch and John Fletcher in attendance. Daron Woelk seconded, and Steve Reinhardt approved. At 9:51 am the meeting resumed with no action taken.

At 10:00 am Tony Mahoney read a proposal that included a request of an additional ¼ mill tax levy for additional funding for other cities/townships historical preservation efforts. He asked if the Commission would create an advisory board, with a member from each area, to determine where these additional funds would go to. Larry Hickman stated the importance of increasing the mill levy for funding all historical preservation. The City of Lucas has all their history stored in a resident's basement and it should be displayed for people to see. Heddy Mahoney said she is going to start addressing her Dorrance City Council about funding and even suggested that others go to their local governments to ask for funding. Charmarose Craven, Luray, is trying to preserve a limestone building in Luray that was built in 1899. Steve Kaufman would like to see tax dollars that the city/township residents pay on taxes go back out to that area for the historical preservation of that area. Duke Strobel stated the County needs to do what is best for all the Historical Societies in the County. He asked that they try to organize a committee and see how those funds could be best distributed and how to distribute them. Others present for the discussion were: DVB Director Ashley Wickham, Bev Wooley, Heddy Mahoney, Jeannine

Byers-Long, Malinda Walker, Charmarose Craven, Cinda Palmer, Steve Kaufman, Tony Mahoney, Carla Soukup, Larry Hickman, Steve Boxberger and GIS Director, Chris Brown.

Duke Strobel made the motion to approve the 2023 County Budget of \$17,100,306, levying \$8,362,387.00 with an estimated levy of 75.674. Steve Reinhardt seconded, and Daron Woelk approved. Duke Strobel made the motion to approve the 2023 Gorham Fire District #1 budget of \$182,907.00, levying \$145,313.00 with an estimated levy of 8.207. Steve Reinhardt seconded, and Daron Woelk approved. Duke Strobel made the motion to approve the 2023 Lucas Fire District #2 budget of \$99,716.00, levying \$69,574.00 with an estimated levy of 7.443. Daron Woelk seconded, and Steve Reinhardt approved. Duke Strobel made the motion to approve the 2023 Waldo/Paradise/Natoma Fire District #3 of \$186,746, levying \$117,127.00 with an estimated levy of 4.399. Daron Woelk seconded, and Steve Reinhardt approved. Duke Strobel made the motion to approve the 2023 Dorrance Fire District #4 budget of \$163,123.00, levying \$105,310.00 with an estimated levy of 10.981. Steve Reinhardt seconded, and Daron Woelk approved. Duke Strobel made a motion to approve the 2023 Russell County Fire District #5 budget of \$109,184.00, levying \$97,827.00 with an estimated levy of 4.993. Steve Reinhardt seconded, and Daron Woelk approved.

David Caudill and Ken Fischer Representatives of the Russell Regional Hospital said they are recruiting a new doctor and physician assistant. Salina Ortho will be hosting an out-patient clinic once a month with possible surgeries in the future. The elevator repair is waiting for the new piston to be redrilled. Ken Fischer gave the Commission the current financials of the hospital.

At 11:26 am Steve Reinhardt made the motion into enter in a 15-minute executive session for attorney-client privilege with Dan Krug, Fred Whitman, and John Fletcher. Duke Strobel seconded, and Daron Woelk approved. At 11:41 am Duke Strobel made the motion to extend the session an additional 5-minutes. Steve Reinhardt seconded, and Daron Woelk approved. At 11:46 am the meeting resumed with no action taken.

It was the consensus of the Commission that on October 10, 2022, the Courthouse will be closed to the public, but the offices will be doing internal safety training.

Chris Venters, EMS Director, informed the Commission that the air conditioner at the building went out and needs to be replaced. The Commission gave the authority to have it replaced by Aaron Steinert, owner of Big A Contracting, LLC. The approximate cost is \$7,000.00.

At 11:50 am Duke Strobel made the motion to recess the meeting for lunch until 1:00 pm. Steve Reinhardt seconded, and Daron Woelk approved. At 1:00 pm Steve Reinhardt made the motion to re-open the meeting. Daron Woelk seconded, and Duke Strobel approved.

At 1:00 pm Steve Reinhardt opened the public hearing for the County Neighborhood Revitalization Plan. Daron Woelk seconded, and Duke Strobel approved. Mike Parsons

highlighted that in the Plan, properties are not transferrable to the new owner if sold during the plan. Duke Strobel made the motion to close the NRP hearing. Daron Woelk seconded, and Steve Reinhardt approved. Daron Woelk made the motion to approve Resolution 2022-15 approving the Russell County Neighborhood Revitalization Plan and the Interlocal Agreement with the twelve Townships and three school districts, contingent upon the approval of the Kansas Attorney General’s Office. Duke Strobel seconded, and Steve Reinhardt approved.

At 1:17 pm, Duke Strobel made the motion to enter into a 5-minute executive session for non-elected personnel for an employee evaluation with Mike Parsons, Ashley Wickham and John Fletcher in attendance. Daron Woelk seconded, and Steve Reinhardt approved. At 1:22 pm the meeting resumed with no action taken.

Ashley Wickham, CVB Director, updated the Commission on Travel and Tourism in the County. The Transient Guest Tax at the hotels is up \$22,805.51 from last year. Ashley has been busy making ‘Welcome Bags’ for several events taking place this fall, placing ads in various Visitor Guides, and attending meetings.

Patty Driscoll, Member of the ROAR Art Show, brought 2 bids in for LED lighting for the 4-H Building. She asked if the Economic Development could help apply for a grant through RCACF for the lighting. It is a very short 9-day turnaround time to get this completed. The Commission they would approve the grant process, but also informed Patty that it doesn’t make this first round they could possibly apply in the March 2023 round of grants. If the grant is approved this round, the lights will not be installed in time for the 2023 ROAR Art show in October. Steve Reinhardt made the motion to approve the bid for Led lights and fans from O’Ryan Electric in the amount of \$8,733.16 to apply for the grant. Duke Strobel seconded, and Daron Woelk approved. County Attorney, Dan Krug, pledged a \$1,000.00 from the Diversion Fund for matching funds for the grant application.

Checks were approved and signed to be deducted from the following funds:

100	GENERAL	\$	79,999.74	260	HEALTH	\$	2,670.99
110	ROAD & BRIDGE	\$	74,274.24	290	GORHAM FIRE	\$	30.31
120	SPECIAL BRIDGE	\$	726.32	300	LUCAS FIRE	\$	553.40
130	NOXIOUS WEED	\$	3,726.49	310	WAL-PAR-NAT	\$	3,190.34
140	4H	\$	973.21	320	DORRANCE FIRE	\$	9,910.89
150	CVB	\$	3,266.52	328	RS CO FIRE #5	\$	1,986.81
155	ED	\$	2,662.55	330	APPRAISER	\$	2,194.79
180	ELECTION	\$	339.43	360	SOLID WASTE	\$	1,277.59
190	AMBULANCE	\$	8,796.94	380	EM TELEPHONE	\$	3,294.12
				718	CIT. RVW BRD	\$	940.41

At 2:15 pm, Steve Reinhardt made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Duke Strobel seconded, and Daron Woelk approved. The next meeting for the Russell County Commission will be October 3, 2022, beginning at 9:00 am in Commission Chamber, Courthouse.