

May 16, 2022

The Board of Ellis County Commissioners met in regular session at 5:00 pm Monday, May 16, 2022, in the Commission Chambers, at the Administration Center, 718 Main Street, Hays, Kansas. Chair Robert “Butch” Schlyer called the meeting to order. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioners present: Chair Robert “Butch” Schlyer, Commissioner Joe Leroux and Commissioner Neal Younger. Also present were County Administrator Darin Myers, County Counselor Bill Jeter and County Clerk Bobbi L. Dreiling.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

There were no changes to the order of business.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There will be one executive session.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES

Chair Schlyer asked for any changes to the draft minutes of May 9. No changes were given; the draft minutes were approved as presented.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: _____ **Younger** _____ **Second** _____ **Leroux**

To approve the Consent Agenda items A-G as presented, including the following:

Payment Voucher Claims

Freedom Claims Management dated May 11th in the amount of \$18,716.40

Vouchers dated May 17th in the amount of \$770,764.44

Waste Connections for solid waste dated May 11th in the amount of \$21,234.40

Open Edge for credit card fees dated May 12th in the amount of \$717.44

Disposition: _____ **Motion was carried by a voice vote of three to zero**

ISSUES FROM PERSONS NOT ON THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

Jerry Michaud with Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas discussed with the Commission that Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas (DSNWK) was taking over the Tiny K program through the Department of Health and Environment. Hays Area Children Center originally took care of this program and they were the lead agency for this service. Effective yesterday this program was shifting to DSNWK. DSNWK is requesting that the resources that are provided from the County to Hays Area Children be switched to DSNWK effective May 15th. Michaud said one payment has already been made but asked that the next payment be sent to DSNWK since they are taking on this responsibility. All three commissioners agreed to this arrangement.

HIGH PLAINS MENTAL HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT

Manager of Education and Marketing of High Plains Mental Health Kayleigh Conner gave an update to the Commissioners on High Plains Mental Health annual report. The Commissioners thanked her for the update.

KANSAS NATURAL RESOURCE COALITION (KNRC)

Russell County Commissioner Duke Strobel and Executive Director for Kansas Natural Resource Coalition (KNRC) Tracy Barton discussed with the Commission about a possible membership with Kansas Natural

Resource. KNRC helps counties stay on top of things and gives the counties a good network on what is going on with the State. Barton said they are here to approach the Commission about a membership to KNRC. They monitor 30x30 (America Beautiful Initiative), National Heritage Area, Lesser Prairie Chicken, Rails to Trails and Great Western Trail. Schlyer asked what the cost of membership is. Barton said it is \$5000 per year. There are webinars they present every 6-8 weeks, and at least one meeting every year. It is the same membership fee for every County. Younger said it is something that may be able to be worked into the budget but would like more information on it. Leroux said he would also like more information on it before any decisions are made. Schlyer said they will definitely look at this membership when they start the budget process for 2023.

VICTORIA REST HOME REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Chair of the Victoria Community Coalition (VCC) Project Jeff Pfeifer is asking the Commission for support of the redevelopment efforts at the former St John's Rest Home as follows:

1. On behalf of the County, continue attending meetings regarding the above referenced project to ensure the County's vision, goals and needs are regularly a part of the redevelopment process,
2. Provide letter(s) of support for this redevelopment effort, to be used by VCC in fund raising and grant applications, and
3. Budget \$10,000 for FY2023 to aid in this multi-million-dollar redevelopment effort (specific purpose to-be-determined and documented/approved later, closer to FY2023).

Schlyer said he thinks it's a good project for the community. Younger was concerned with giving money for this project and what would stop others asking for money to help with their projects, to which Schlyer agreed. Leroux said he is in support doing something like this in Victoria, especially the daycare and housing portion. He will lend his support to this but he will agree with the other two commissioners' comments on how others will want to have money given to them for their projects. Pfeifer said they will need money for the architecture if they plan on moving forward with this project next year. Schlyer asked what the cost of an architecture would be. Pfeifer said he does not know but there is usually a range somewhere between 3-10 percent of construction costs. Schlyer asked if the money they might give would be a one-time donation, or if they would come every year asking for additional money. He said they would take any money they could get. They are not looking to finance this project into infinity. They are just trying to get the doors open since it has been sitting vacant for ten years. Schlyer said the Board will give this matter some more thought and will see if there is anything that they can come up with.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SCRAPER PURCHASE

Environmental Services Director Justin Craig is asking for an amount to be determined as an upper limit on a bid amount for a used 1998 623F Caterpillar elevating scraper. With the purchase of land for the landfill expansion, after the permitting process is complete there will be multiple new construction & demolition burial cells that will need to be excavated prior to use. With the Commissioners approval, he is asking for an approval amount to be used to bid on a used 1998 623F Caterpillar elevating scraper. If Ellis County would receive the winning bid, the plan would be to have the scraper transferred to Foley Equipment to have some mechanical work done. Public works mechanics have already viewed the scraper and identified a couple issues to be addressed. These items have been factored into the purchase suggested bidding amount. The amount is also being compared to other comparable scrapers that are currently for sale. The price will be determined on the outcome of the auction, but not more

than the amount the commission approves, plus the buyer's premium. It will be purchased through the Solid Waste capital fund. Younger did like the idea of getting it at a good price. He preferred to not say a number in an open meeting so someone watching could be listening to it. Leroux asked if they had a chance to go look at it. Craig indicated they had. He said it was a good investment. Caleb Garner spoke on the scraper and indicated that it was a good deal as well. Garner said it could last as long as 5-10 years. There were a lot of variables, especially on the hours of usage. He said it's not a machine they use everyday at the landfill. He said if they choose not to do a complete rebuild down the road, it would be about 5 years. He felt like it was a great investment. New ones go upwards towards a million dollars. Younger asked if there was a way to say that this is the amount, we want to pay but be on the discretion of Craig to bid upwards if need be. County Counselor Bill Jeter said because of the purchasing policy there needs to be a price set, but good discretion could be used. Jeter said he suggested a motion on a specific amount but subject to good discretion of Craig. There would need to be a ten percent buyer's premium.

Motion: _____ **Schlyer** **Second:** _____ **Younger**
I move to approve the amount of up to \$120,000 for the bidding at Purplewave auction scheduled to end on May 19, 2022, in addition it will also have the buyer's premium and have the Environmental Services Director use good discretion on top of the \$120,000 for the purchase of a 1998 Caterpillar 623F elevating scraper.

Disposition: _____ **Motion passed by a voice vote of three to zero.**

CARE FUNDING AUDIT

County Administrator Darin Myers updated the Commission on the results of the federal audit on the CARES funding audit. In late 2021, Ellis County worked with Adams Brown to complete a single audit on the CARES funding Ellis County received and expended in 2020. The report was sent to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse for their review of the audit. Based on their review, it was determined the report contains no quality issues which would require corrective actions to be taken. They however have agreed with the audit results of several areas of improvement which have already been shared with the commission after work was completed with Adams Brown. There will be no funds that need to be returned. However since receiving the attached document, staff has received word from the Kansas Legislative Division of Post Audit, that Ellis County was one of a few selected counties. The county administrator will be working with their office in the coming weeks to provide more expenditure information to satisfy their review. Schlyer indicated that he thought if the Feds were satisfied the State should be as well.

STRATEGIC PLAN ADOPTION

County Administrator Darin Myers gave an update on the Strategic plan for Ellis County. In late 2021, Ellis County staff started a facilitated process with the Kansas University Public Management Center to help create a strategic plan for Ellis County. The executive team was involved in multiple day sessions with KU to work on this report. Input was also received from different levels of employees within the county. Four focus groups met to include various employees throughout the county. Those groups were the Wage & Benefits committee, communications committee, and the safety committee. In an effort to capture thoughts from future leaders within the county staff, we formed a new group of key leaders who also provided input. A survey was also completed and was available to all 170+ employees. We had a phenomenal response to the survey with nearly 90% of the employees providing feedback.

KU only expected a 30% response from the employees. Staff is asking the commission to approve the document to help guide current and future staff on a direction to ensure that Ellis County government is a great place to work, while providing quality services to our community, allowing the entire community to be a better and safer place to live. As part of the process to determine what the county needs to prepare for in the future, staff was tasked to develop a mission statement and values. The mission statement created by staff is:

We provide the highest standard of services, allowing for continued growth and prosperity for everyone in Ellis County.

The values are:

Respect: Treat others the way you want to be treated.

Accountable: Take ownership

Integrity: Do the right thing.

Servant Leadership: Serve others first.

Engaged: Be involved.

The county administrator would like to commend the executive team, focus groups, and the employees for being involved in the process. They had the determination and hope to have a meaningful and productive strategic planning report with the final objective of having the commission support on the final working document. Myers said his plan is to meet a couple of times a year to see what our progress is and to give a report to the Commission. The Commission all liked the plan.

Motion: _____ **Schlyer** **Second:** _____ **Younger**

I move to approve the strategic plan for Ellis County.

Disposition: _____ **Motion passed by a voice vote of three to zero.**

SCHEDULE BUDGET HEARINGS

County Administrator Darin Myers discussed with the Commission that as part of the development process for the 2023 budget for Ellis County, staff has the opportunity to meet with the County Commission at a special meeting. At this meeting, department heads and elected officials have the chance and dedicated time to meet with the Commission regarding their budgets and changes to it. The budget calendar identified July 27 and 28 as the dates to hold special meetings. In discussion with staff, it was suggested instead of having two days of meetings, to possibly reduce it down to one day. Schlyer suggested to have the meeting on Monday, July 25th. Myers said he would check this day out with the executive team and get back with the Commission.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

County Administrator Myers gave feedback on the trip to Washington DC that he and Commissioner Younger took last week. Myers said it was very beneficial to be able to meet with the staffers of Moran, Marshall and Mann. He said there were back-to-back meetings on EAS, infrastructure funding for roads and bridges, inflation, ground water, healthcare and property tax collected on tags that are out-of-state and pay no property tax. He said there were six different county organizations that were in attendance. There were about 57 members out of those delegations. He said they met Moran on the possibility of additional funding on the Northwest Business Project. They talked with Marshall on the wind event that we had in December of 2021. Myers said it's the intangible benefits that we can get in the future from this conference.

COUNTY COMMISSION REPORTS

Younger attended the meeting in Washington DC and said it was very beneficial to attend. He said labor and transportation are trying to allow 18 years old get CDL’s instead of being 21. He said they all did listen. The farming industry is working hard with Mann’s office; the other party is trying to do away with the 2-4D. They are trying to get crop insurance to be more affordable for the farmers. Leroux was appointed by the Kansas County Commission Association to serve on the Kansas Association of Counties’ governing board as the northwest District Commissioner to serve on the board. His first meeting will be at the end of this month on the 25th in Topeka. He thanked those who went to DC. Schlyer had no report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: _____ **Leroux** **Second:** _____ **Younger**

To recess into Executive Session for 20 minutes under the following exception to the Kansas Open Meeting Act pursuant to the preliminary acquisition of real estate exception with the subject to be discussed during executive session is possible land purchase. Those persons to attend are Chair Butch Schlyer, Commissioner Neal Younger, Commissioner Joe Leroux, County Counselor Bill Jeter, by phone Public Works Director Brendan Mackay and County Administrator Darin Myers.

Disposition: _____ **Motion passed by a voice vote of three to zero.**

The Executive Session started at 6:28 pm.

The Open Session resumed at 6:48 pm with no action taken.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chair Schlyer adjourned the meeting at 6:48 pm. The next regular meeting with be held on Monday, June 6, 2022, the Administrative Center Commission Chambers, 718 Main Street, Hays, Kansas at 5:00 pm.

BOARD OF ELLIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ROBERT “BUTCH” SCHLYER, CHAIR

NEAL YOUNGER, COMMISSIONER

JOE LEROUX, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

BOBBI L DREILING
ELLIS COUNTY CLERK