

June 13, 2022

The Board of Ellis County Commissioners met in regular session at 5:00 p.m., Monday, June 13, 2022, in the Commission Chambers, at the Administration Center, 718 Main Street, Hays, Kansas. Chair Robert “Butch” Schlyer called the meeting to order. Commissioners present: Chair Robert “Butch” Schlyer, Commissioner Neal Younger and Commissioner Joe Leroux. Also present were County Administrator Darin Myers, and County Clerk Bobbi L. Dreiling. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

No changes to the Order of Business.

**EXECUTIVE SESSIONS**

There will be no executive session.

**APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES**

Chair Schlyer asked for any updates to the Draft Minutes of June 6th. With no updates given to the draft minutes, the minutes stand approved as submitted.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion: Younger Second: Leroux

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

Health insurance claims dated June 8 in the amount of \$3273.77

Solid Waste claim dated June 8 in the amount of \$24,089.74

Disposition: The motion passes by a voice vote of three to zero.

**ISSUES FROM PERSONS NOT ON THE ORDER OF BUSINESS**

No issues from persons not on the Order of Business.

**MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT**

Commissioners had no questions on the May Financial Report.

Chair Schlyer announced that each agency would have five minutes to present and then time after that for any questions.

**OUTSIDE AGENCY BUDGET REQUESTS**

As part of the Commission’s budget priorities for 2023, the commission requested outside agencies maintain their funding levels as they received in 2022. Most agencies met this request; however, a couple have increased their funding requests to the commission for next year. There is also one new request from Big Brothers Big Sisters. This year, there is a total of 22 organizations requesting funding. DSNWK is now completing the Part-C childcare program previously conducted by the Hays Area Children’s Center. For 2023, DSNWK is now requesting the same funding amount given to the Hays Area Children’s Center in 2022 to continue the

program in 2023. DSNWK has already completed the transition between the two agencies and are providing those services. Hays Area Children’s Center however is requesting funding for other services. As a reminder, Foster Grandparents and the Senior Companions were not funded this year, as they were not able to use their funding since COVID restricted them from completing their activities and projects. They did however, request to stay on the list for funding once they were able to start again. Future financial impact will depend on approved amount which will be determined by the commission in July. For the 2022 Ellis County budget, the total allocation of funds to outside agencies totaled \$1,107,241. The initial requests from organization for 2023 funding is \$1,387,718, or an increase of \$280,477.

**High Plains Mental Health - \$280,000 - 2023 Budget request**

High Plains Mental Health Executive Director Walt Hill. Hill stated that they received \$280,000 for the 2022 budget and are asking for \$280,000 for 2023. Ellis County is one of 19 counties that utilizes High Plains Mental Health Center. Schlyer said they do a really good job for Ellis County. Leroux thanked the agency for all they do. Younger said to keep up the good work and thanked Hill for the updates throughout the year.

**Grow Hays - \$180,000 – 2023 Budget request**

Grow Hays Executive Director Doug Williams thanked Commissioners for their support in 2022. He introduced some of their directors: James Robben and David Clingan were also present. They are asking \$180,000 for 2023. James Robben started with Grow Hays on June 1<sup>st</sup>. They are involved in the housing development. Williams talked about a levy at a half mill for Grow Hays. Schlyer asked with the 20 percent increase in the budget increase, what would it be used for. Williams indicated it would be used for another employee. Younger said to keep up the good work. Leroux said he was excited to see what is coming on the development. He hopes that Grow Hays extends to the outside of the city limits of Hays.

**Center of Life Experience - \$5,000 – 2023 Budget request**

Center of Life Experience Chair Dawne Leiker requested \$5,000 for the 2023 Budget. Leiker explained that they provide professional facilitation of support in healing at loss of adult, child and suicide. They are looking on bringing a new director, so this is the reason for the increase in budget. Schlyer said they provide valuable services to the community. Leroux thanked her what they do for the community. Younger excused himself.

**Council on Aging – \$120,972 – 2023 Budget request**

Ellis County Council on Aging Chair Jolene Niernberger presented the council’s recommendation for the 2023 budget at a total of \$120,972

**Northwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging - \$30,000**

**Foster Grandparents – \$8,552**

**Senior Companions – \$22,050**

**Hays Senior Center - \$37,115**

**Victoria Meal Site - \$2960**

## **Ellis Nutrition Center - \$20,295**

### **Humane Society - \$2,600 – 2023 Budget request**

Humane Society representative Jessica Frieb requested \$2,600 for their 2023 budget. Schlyer noted that food costs have gone up and the same for the Humane Society. Schlyer asked if they just keep the animals until they are adopted. They do as they are a no-kill shelter. They get all their shots before they are adopted. Younger thanked them for their services.

### **Kansas Big Brothers and Big Sisters - \$5,000 – 2023 Budget request**

Kansas Big Brothers and Big Sisters Area Director Jenny Bates is requesting \$5,000. They are a new agency in requesting funding. They serve children from the ages 5-17. They find people in the community to partner to help these children. They currently have 150 kids being served and matched with volunteers. Their office consists of 5 staff members. They have 38 children waiting. Since 2019 they have seen growth. Schlyer asked what made them choose this year to ask for budget. She said they have seen a growth and they have added on an additional staff member and need additional funding. Leroux commented that mentorship is very important. Younger thanked her for what the organization does.

### **Heartland Community Foundation - \$5,000– 2023 Budget request**

Heartland Community Foundation Executive Director Sarah Meitner requested \$5,000 for the 2023 Budget. They would again need the 2023 Budget funding in February for this match. Schlyer said it is a very good program. He said the money goes right back into the community. Younger said it is great what she does for the Community. He did ask that she give an update during the year. Leroux thanked her and asked if she could give an update throughout the year.

### **DSNWK – Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas - \$250,000 – 2023 Budget request**

Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas President/CEO Gerard Michaud asked for \$250,000 for the 2023 budget. They are celebrating 55 years. He thanked the Commission for their prior support. The low unemployment rate is still affecting them in their staffing. They provided services for 160 individuals. The lion share of services is in Ellis County. Schlyer said the services that are provided are needed for the community. Leroux and Younger agreed. Younger thanked them for visiting them throughout the year.

### **DSNWK (ACCESS Transportation) - \$50,000 – 2022 Budget request**

Michaud introduced Wade Kruse with ACCESS Transportation. Public transportation is provided for the City of Hays and Ellis County. The County and City of Hays help with funding the local match from the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) and Federal Transportation Authority (FTA). They are asking for \$50,000 for their 2023 budget which is the same amount as last. They are going to be raising their rates. Since the mask mandate has dropped, they are seeing an increase in rides. Schlyer asked if the cost of fuel is impacting their services. Kruse said it is but they are getting more money from the State to off-set that. Younger thanked them for the services. Leroux thanked them for the feedback throughout the year and said they are

very important to the community.

**DSNWK (Kid-Link Tiny K Program) - \$120,000 – 2023 Budget request**

Sara Bates presented to the Commissioner the Tiny K Program budget request. This has been supported in the past by Ellis County and now the State has asked DSNWK to take on these services. They are asking for \$120,000 which is the same amount as last year. Schlyer asked how many children are being serviced. She indicated there are approximately 120 children using the service. He asked what happens when a child turns four; she said they go to Part B of these services. Leroux and Younger thanked her for her services.

**Hays Area Children’s Center - \$120,000 – 2023 Budget request**

Hays Area Children’s Center President Doug Ford discussed the Hays Area Children’s Center 2023 Budget request of \$120,000. He thanked them for their prior support. This funding would help support the Infant-Toddler Special Services with disabilities from birth to three years of age. Schlyer said this is a very valuable service. Younger and Leroux agreed.

**Ellis County Historical Society - \$150,000 – 2023 Budget request**

Interim Director Amanda Rupp said she was glad that they have been here every two months for updates since they have accomplished so much in the last year. They have been reorganizing and getting active and visible to the community. There were a lot of volunteers in the audience. She said they have gained momentum and hate to see it stop. The project in Victoria could have great gains for them. They have a revenue stream with fundraising events and membership/sponsorship drives. They are going to save the brick church building and stay a part of downtown. She is very proud to say they ended in the black for the first time in many years. They are about \$12,000 ahead. She feels they have outlined why they need the \$150,000 for budget money. Schlyer said he was very skeptical last year. He said they have done a great job since then. He said they are asking for a substantial increase. He asked if it would be use for operation costs. Rupp said it would. She feels they have proven themselves with what they have accomplished in a year. Leroux said they have made incredible progress since last year. He would like to see the building in Victoria work out. Younger thanked them for visiting them throughout the year. He thanked the volunteers in the audience.

**Ellis County Conservation District - \$61,896 in General Funds and \$10,750 for the Ellis County Cost Share Program at a total of \$72,646 – 2023 Budget request**

District Manager Linda O’Neil introduced Allen Roth, Board Chair, Bret Schmidt, Treasurer and Ray Gonzales the SDC management unit. They discussed their program and requested \$61,896 in General Fund and \$10,750 for the Cost Share Program. Their total request is \$72,646 which is the same as last year. Schlyer had no questions and said it is easy to see the conservation practices being utilized. Younger said he has used it and knows multiple people that have. He asked they come visit us throughout the year. Leroux asked that they come in and visit them throughout the year for updates.

### **Western Kansas Child Advocacy - \$10,000 – 2023 Budget request**

Western Kansas Child Advocacy Center Developmental Executive Director Layla Mumgaard is asking for \$10,000 for their budget request. Their request last year was \$5000. The Western Kansas Child Advocacy Center is a safe, child-friendly setting for children to talk with caring adults. There is never a charge for these services. County Attorney Robert Anderson told the commissioners that he was there in support of the Center. He said this group is very important to the community as well as the work that he does. Schlyer asked why the increase in budget. She said the number of services for Ellis County is one of the highest. They lost \$177,000 in funding. They need this additional money to keep providing services. Leroux had no questions. Thanked her for the services they provide for the children that are very vulnerable. Younger echoed Leroux's comments.

### **Options Domestic & Sexual Violent Services - \$10,000 – 2023 Budget request**

Options Domestic & Sexual Violent Services Executive Director Jennifer Hecker is asking for \$10,000 for their 2023 budget. Their headquarters are in Ellis County. They are asking for a 100% increase. Their shelter is operating at 50% of capacity. This was just increased a few months ago from 25%. They are putting people in hotels because of this. Ellis County residents use about 80-90% of their services. Schlyer asked when they would be able to go back to 100% in their shelter. They are working with Ellis County Health Department. She is it is very costly to not utilize them. She hopes by the end of the year they could be back at 100% by the end of the year. Younger said this explains why they budget is doubled. He said they would appreciate a visit throughout the year. Leroux thanked her for her services and for the explanation for the need of the increase in the budget.

### **Ellis Alliance Association -**

There was nobody in attendance to present their budget.

### **CASA of the High Plains - \$4,750 – 2023 Budget request**

CASA of the High Plains Executive Director Kristen Osborne discussed the CASA Program where the Court appoints a CASA volunteer to a child in the court system. They are requesting \$4,750 for 2023. Schlyer said they provide a valuable service to the community. He would like to continue to support their agency. Leroux said they aren't asking for any increase and that is appreciated. Younger echoed what Leroux said but asked if they could come in throughout the year to give them an update.

### **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT – INTERIM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DARIN MYERS**

County Administrator Darin Myers had not report.

### **COUNTY COMMISSION REPORTS**

Younger attended the Grow Hays meeting. Leroux attended the Grow Hays meeting; and helped with the Job Fair at Big Creek Crossing today. He said it was not a big turnout. Schlyer had no report.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, Chair Schlyer stated that the meeting will adjourn at 6:43 p.m. The next regular meeting will be held Monday, June 20, 2022, at 5:00 p.m., Administrative Center, Commission Chambers, 718 Main Street, Hays, Kansas.

BOARD OF ELLIS COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS:

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ROBERT "BUTCH" SCHLYER, CHAIR

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NEAL YOUNGER, COMMISSIONER

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JOE LEROUX, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

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BOBBI L. DREILING, COUNTY CLERK