

## *Minutes of August 23, 2021*

The Board of County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, August 23, 2021 at 9 a.m., Commissioner Kelly, Commissioner Brenner and Chairperson Kathrens were present. Deputy County Clerk Tara Peek recorded the minutes.

Public Works Director Scott Kieffaber and Road and Bridge Superintendent Eric Fritz joined the meeting. Scott discussed purchasing easement from landowners for the bridge replacement project. He submitted an example agreement he found from 2016. The bid came in for the bridge replacement on I and 264 Roads from Husker Steel/Norfolk Construction in the amount of \$203,644.00. The current bridge is 18'4 by 41 feet and the new one will be 24'6 by 45 feet. This price includes the bridge kit. Commissioner Kelly made a motion to approve the \$203,644.00 bid and Commissioner Brenner seconded. Motion carried 3/0. They reported they went to look at the Caterpillar thumb attachment. The cost is \$15,850.00. Chairperson Kathrens suggested they have the current thumb modified. Scott reported that KDOT will be completing their bridge load rating inspections soon and there are 45 in Jackson County. Eric stated that he is pushing hard to get 142 Road complete. The phone lines have been a problem and slows the project. He also stated that he hopes to get to K Road in two weeks to address a water drainage issue. Harbour will be starting the chip seal overlays soon. Eric stated he would like to find some funds to use towards patching the potholes on 110 Road. At 9:44 a.m. Commissioner Kelly made a motion to enter into executive session for personnel with Scott Kieffaber and Eric Fritz present. Commissioner Brenner seconded and motion carried 3/0. Session reopened at 9:53 a.m. The Commissioners agreed to add a new position to the pay plan beginning January 2022. The position will be Environmental Services Specialist held by current employee Don Dillner at a rate of .75 cents more hourly than the current equipment operator positions within that department. Scott stated that shop foreman Bryson Bain has requested the purchase of some diagnostic software in the amount of \$6,795.00. Chairperson Kathrens stated he was not in favor if it would not be used regularly. Holton Recorder Ali Holcomb joined the meeting. Commissioner Kelly made a motion to increase the truck driver wage on the pay plan to equivalent of semitruck driver pay, \$16.67 per hour, effective immediately and Commissioner Brenner seconded. Motion carried 3/0.

Commissioner Kelly made a motion to approve the bid from Coal Creek Construction for the renovations to the Elderly Services building for \$77,930.00 and Commissioner Brenner seconded. Motion carried 3/0. Kelley Construction chose not to submit their bid.

Jackson County EMS owners Brent Teter and Jay Watkins joined the meeting to review their services provided in Jackson County. Other Jackson County EMS staff present were Jonathan Edwards, Kristi Watkins, Aren Sewell, Ronette Robinson, Nancy Pennington, Jacque Jacobsen and Con Olson. They provided reports from January 1, 2021 through June 30<sup>th</sup>. These reports reflect 664 calls. Brent explained that they accept all insurance plans and how they determine their base rate and mileage charges. He reported that nearly half of the calls they respond to do not generate a billable fee. This is often a refusal for treatment or transport but also includes insurance denials and private pay patients.

Of the half that are billable, they report that only 85% will pay something towards their charges. Brent outlined budget issues they are experiencing as higher costs for equipment and medications and decreased call volumes. Jay explained that he routinely, sometimes daily searches for reputable vendor products, comparing prices. One example given was \$70.89 for a box of 10 Epinephrine vials where the same supply cost \$11.99 in 2019. They reported that while the supply availability is better, the costs are still staying high. They did apply and receive CARES funds in 2020 through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). Commissioner Kelly asked about the standby services they provide at county high school football games. They explained that the schools pay a fee and contract for those services. They also provide standby services for the volunteer firefighters when activated for emergency response. Jackson County EMS requested an amendment to the 2022 contract for an increase in fees. Commissioner Kelly asked how the Board would know these issues and needs for an increase won't continue to happen to which Brent replied that they have a 21-year track record of providing local services and are in a very unique situation caused by Covid-19. He stated they had never been in this position before. They agreed to come back next week and discuss further.

Adjourned for lunch from noon to 1 p.m.

Banner Lake Director Kurt Zibell gave his weekly report. He is working on updating the rules and regulations and continuing to spray. He is still seeking bids for UTVs but is having a difficult time finding vendors with any inventory.

At 2:12 p.m. Commissioner Kelly made a motion to enter into executive session for personnel with Lee Hendricks, Scott Kieffaber and Mike Bednar. Commissioner Brenner seconded and motion carried 3/0. Session reopened at 2:25 p.m. No action taken.

At 2:29 p.m. Commissioner Kelly made a motion to enter into executive session for acquisition of real estate with Lee Hendricks and Scott Kieffaber. Commissioner Brenner seconded and motion carried 3/0. Session reopened at 2:35 p.m. No action taken.

Commissioner Kelly made a motion to enter into a consulting agreement with USI Insurance Services effective immediately, authorizing them to negotiate the County's renewal with BCBS and ancillary vendor partners in preparation for the January 1, 2022 renewal. USI will not receive commission at this time nor will they be compensated in the future for assistance provided in 2021. Effective January 1, 2022, USI Insurance Services will then begin receiving commissions as the County's consultant moving forward. Commissioner Brenner seconded and motion carried 3/0.

Signed the following Purchase Orders:

Department	PO #	To	For	Amount
Road and Bridge	6782	Norfolk Contracting Inc.	Fabricated bridge structure and erection.	\$203,644.00

Signed the following payroll change notices:

Department	Name	From	To	Reason	Date / /
Noxious Weed/Recycle	Leon Freel	\$13.96 per hour	\$16.67 per hour	Length of Service Increase	8/10/2021
Road and Bridge	Rebecca McClane	\$16.40 per hour	\$16.67 per hour	Equalizing pay	8/23/2021
Road and Bridge	John Strawn	\$16.40 per hour	\$16.67 per hour	Equalizing pay	8/23/2021
Road and Bridge	Michael Rash	\$16.40 per hour	\$16.67 per hour	Equalizing pay	8/23/2021
Youth Services	Megan Milne	\$	\$20.23 per hour	Hired full time	8/23/2021
Road and Bridge	Michael Bednar	\$16.67 per hour	\$	Resignation	8/26/2021
Attorney	Madelin Davis	\$	\$15.00 per hour	Hired intern	8/16/2021
Sheriff	Anthony Cooper	\$17.54 per hour	\$	Resignation	8/27/2021

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. The next Commission meeting will be Monday, August 30, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Board of County Commissioners  
Jackson County, Kansas

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Ed Kathrens, 1<sup>st</sup> District

Attest:

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Dan Brenner, 2<sup>nd</sup> District

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Kathy Mick  
Jackson County Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keith Kelly, 3<sup>rd</sup> District