

Minutes of September 20, 2021

The Board of County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, September 20, 2021 at 9 a.m., Commissioner Kelly, Commissioner Brenner and Chairperson Kathrens were present. Deputy County Clerk Tara Peek recorded the minutes. Holton Recorder reporter Ali Holcomb joined the meeting. Several patrons joined the meeting.

Commissioner Kelly made a statement to the public, *“The Jackson County EMS came to the Commissioners in August to talk about their current contract with the county. Jackson County EMS said they were over performing the contract and they were losing money. Jackson County EMS said they had been losing money for quite some time. Jackson County EMS didn’t come to the Commissioners with this issue until the budget was already done. We started the budget process in June, they came in August when the budget was already completed. Jackson County EMS wanted to renegotiate a 3-year contract that at the time still had 17 months left. Jackson County EMS wanted to replace the current contract with a new contract that would have a \$241,237 dollar increase for 2022 and a \$65,000 dollar increase for 2023 and 2024. The county would have to increase the mill levy 3 mills at least, by 2024 to cover the increased cost. In response to Jackson County EMS proposed contract the BOCC has informed Jackson County EMS of request to continue with contract fulfillment through 2022 and further re-negotiation could be proposed at the budget time in 2022. The current contract is for \$352,000 dollars through 2022. That contract also includes a paragraph on page 5 that allows Jackson County EMS for any reason may give a 90 day notice to the county for premature termination of this contract. For this reason, we the BOCC have contacted AMR to see their availability to serve Jackson County, in the event Jackson County EMS exercises their right to terminate.”*

Global Medical Response Regional Director (South Region) Jon Antrim joined the meeting to give a presentation of Global Medical Response’s ambulance services, also known as AMR. He stated that they provide air and ground transportation across the nation. Locally he mentioned providing services in the KC metro area, Linwood, Topeka, Allen County, Doniphan County District 2, Wabaunsee, Osborne and Lindsborg. He stated they use evidence-based protocols which are always changing and updated. His company is 1 of 2 CAAS accredited services Kansas. (AMR Kansas City and Sedgwick County EMS) Jon discussed features of their service like transparency in data such as response time, nurse assessment, telehealth, event standbys, and hiring within the communities they work from. He added that they offer good pay and benefits packages and was interested to see what they can offer in Jackson County. Chairperson Kathrens thanked him for coming and stated the presentation was informative. County resident Marilyn Watkins read a statement outlining her reasons for supporting Jackson County EMS including saving her family members’ lives and response time. She also emphasized that Covid 19 has affected EMS’s business and noted they are operating with the same budget since 2018. Commissioner Kelly explained that the Board did not cut the EMS budget, rather they are under contract through 2022. He stated that while ARPA funds may be an option they do not have clear guidelines as to how the money can be spent. He emphasized that they are not seeking a bid, rather having a plan to be prepared should EMS choose to exercise the 90-day termination notice from page 5 of the contract. County resident Marje Cochren stated that Atchison County left EMS to be more equitable after facing

\$100,000.00 increases every year. Commissioner Brenner responded that Atchison County has a different set up and he was unsure of her claims. Holton Recorder reporter Ali Holcomb confirmed that the contract was cut by the previous Board of County Commissioners, not Commissioners Kelly and Brenner. Holton Community Hospital CEO Carrie Saia stated that the hospital providers have nothing but respect for Jackson County EMS and the level of care they provide. Commissioner Kelly added that the issue is not with the quality of service provided but simply the finances. Other patrons asked if the County knew how much AMR charges and will the County honor the current contract with EMS. The BOCC stated they would honor the contract and were only meeting with AMR. Some of the other patrons who spoke in favor of EMS were Troy Meyer, Bob Powers, Jake Spalding, Dr. Colberg, Lydia Theurer, Jacque Jacobsen and Gus Suarez. Commissioner Brenner stated he supported EMS and proposed to set up a committee to work with the ownership of EMS to pursue grants and ARPA funds to help them through this tumultuous time where expenses have increased. He stated that no decision needed to be made today but he would like the Board to consider.

Techs, Inc. owners Brent Teter and Jay Watkins explained they have been in business over 21 years in Jackson County, operate in Nemaha and Osage Counties and have a transfer service as well. Brent stated that they did agree to sign the last contract with reduced funds, under protest, and they have never had to ask for additional funding during a contract before now. Jay added that Atchison County Commissioners came to them for guidance on how to operate their own service and they did assist them. Brent acknowledged that the timing is poor but with the pandemic and increased costs they are making a plea for help. He also stated he liked Commissioner Brenner's proposal in creating an ambulance advisory board comprised of a Commissioner and members representing the Sheriff's Office, emergency management, health department and hospital.

Appraiser Kate Immenschuh, Janell Buck, Scott Kieffaber and Kathy Mick joined the meeting. PVD Director Bob Kent joined via zoom. EagleView managers Alex Stark and Hunter Hampton gave a presentation on flyover imagery and software. Their product provides 5 images of every property, one from each cardinal direction and one straight down shot. They demonstrated the use of the program by showing the tools that can be used to measure distance, area, acres and elevation. The common use is for appraisers, but the program can be utilized for public works, emergency management, e911 and law enforcement too. Use of the imagery reduces time and expense from going on foot to properties and is more safe. Another benefit to the imagery is that it can identify changes where the county can recover property tax for buildings that were not reported. The proposal includes two projects over 6 years for \$89,605.00 each. No action taken.

Banner Lake Director Kurt Zibell discussed sewer issues he has been working with at the lake. He is looking into the cost of upgrading the grinder pumps to a more industrial type and lagoon regulations.

Adjourned for lunch from noon to 1 p.m.

Public Works Director Scott Kieffaber reported that the landfill conference has been cancelled. He submitted information on the HRRR and LSP programs available through KDOT. He informed

Commissioners that the county has been denied project match for I and 260 Roads bridge. Scott reported that K Road ditching should be done by early October. He will need to order 24-inch pipe as they are out of stock at the bridge yard. The crews will start patching on the 27th on 254, 110, 174 and 198 Roads. This should be done in a five-week period without having to take any operators from their graders. Scott submitted a report of call ins from March 8th through September 15th. A total of 304 calls reporting road concerns were received and 240 of those calls had been completed. 13 are in progress. He also reported that in the same time period 82,000 tons of rock have been hauled. At 1:43 p.m. Commissioner Kelly made a motion to open the S2 Lane Vacation Hearing and Commissioner Brenner seconded. Motion carried 3/0. No public comments were made. At 1:44 p.m. Commissioner Kelly made a motion to close the S2 Lane Vacation Hearing and Commissioner Brenner seconded. Motion carried 3/0. Commissioner Brenner made a motion to adopt Resolution 2021-19 Vacating S2 Lane and Commissioner Kelly seconded. Motion carried 3/0.

ROD Tammy Moulden, Treasurer Linda Gerhardt, County Clerk Kathy Mick, Custodian Chad Phillips, Public Works Director Scott Kieffaber, Elderly Services Director Amanda Spalding and Youth Services Director Brooke Smith joined the meeting. Brooke reported that her department is fully staffed and gave an overview of the juvenile justice system operations. Scott reported that the noxious weed and recycling buildings have just been painted. Amanda reported that the dining room is still closed temporarily and they served 130 meals today through carry out and delivery. Chad reported that he has been assisting with moving items for the remodel of district court.

Commissioner Kelly made a motion to approve the written minutes of September 13th and 15th and Commissioner Brenner seconded. Motion carried 3/0.

Signed the following Occupy County Right of Way petitions:

Company	To	Sec/Twp/Rng	Address	Date
Telcom	Plow 1200 feet of 3pr 24 gauge copper cable and bore under 150 Road			8/7/2021
RWD #1	Line improvements	29/9/15	110 th Road	9/9/2021

Signed the following payroll change notices:

Department	Name	From	To	Reason	Date / /
Sheriff	Brentt Donaldson	\$18.92 per hour	\$	Resignation	9/21/2021

The meeting adjourned at 3:31 p.m. The next Commission meeting will be Monday, September 27, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Board of County Commissioners
Jackson County, Kansas

Attest:

Kathy Mick
Jackson County Clerk

Ed Kathrens, 1st District

Dan Brenner, 2nd District

Keith Kelly, 3rd District