

## *Minutes of November 15, 2021*

The Board of County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, November 15, 2021 at 9 a.m., Chairperson Kathrens, Commissioner Kelly and Commissioner Brenner were present. Deputy County Clerk Tara Peek recorded the minutes.

USI Employee Benefits Consultants Aaron Wells and Trent Nichols joined the meeting to present their approach to health insurance benefit savings for the county. Agent Keith Olberding, County Clerk Kathy Mick and Payroll/Deputy Clerk Sally Alley were also present. Other county employees present were Shari Monaghan, Mary McAsey, Sherri Ladner, Linda Gerhardt, Scott Kieffaber, Linda Jackson, Pat Korte, Kristina Costlow, Jamey Doty and Kurt Zibell. Aaron and Trent reported they had gone to the market with several types of carriers and 25 said they would not accept the County into their group. They stated that the cost structure is the worst they have ever seen and a lot of work needs done. They proposed staying another year with the current plan with BCBS and FCMI and then look into individual coverage through health care reimbursement accounts (HCRA). They stated that this would give county employees an opportunity to choose a plan that best fits their needs from 10-12 choices. The county would subsidize the cost and the employee would pay the remaining premium, cost dependent on which plan they choose. Currently the county pays about \$18,000.00 per employee per year for health insurance. Their usual client cost is \$5,800.00 and the highest they have seen is \$15,000.00. They believe the HCRA option is the best option to reduce costs for the county. There is not enough time to get everyone educated and set up properly before the 2022 year so they would continue with the current plan while they gather more information. They requested that the county have a HIPAA privacy policy drafted and approved so they can seek the individual information needed to gain more response at the market. They reported that FCMI would hold costs level and BCBS is increasing rates 32%. Currently there is \$268,000.00 in the FCMI fund that could be used to help level off the 32% increase, or about \$392,000.00. Sherri Ladner stated that the open enrollment period for married employees has past as it was in October and the rates proposed (pre county funding) were not affordable for employees. They explained that they got the information to the county as soon as they could and there would be no immediate savings. The rates need to be decided and enrollment completed before the December 15<sup>th</sup> pay date for coverage effective January 1, 2022. Trent and Aaron discussed using a third-party administrator, Tria Health, who integrates with BCBS to assist with drug utilization driving costs on a voluntary basis. Jamey Doty asked the Board if any savings they are able to find will be passed along to the employees. Commissioner Kelly stated that the goal was to develop better county benefits with lower costs, but the employees will need to work together with the County to create long term changes. In addition to the health insurance increase, the BCBS dental was increasing by 13%. USI offered a solution for MetLife dental at an 8% increase from last years rates. This would be a \$3,400.00 savings and they would guarantee a 5% rate cap for a three-year period. The vision coverage would remain the same with VSP. They will be conducting a vendor analysis for work site benefits. This will simplify the technology fees and be handled through agent Keith Olberding. The Board stated that they will need to review the funds available for benefits and determine a cost sheet for employees to choose coverage from.

Adjourned for lunch from noon to 1 p.m.

Holton Recorder reporter Ali Holcomb and County Counselor Lee Hendricks joined the meeting. Public Works Director Scott Kieffaber and Road and Bridge Superintendent Eric Fritz joined the meeting. Scott submitted one fuel bid as follows:

- Haag Oil \$21,962.00

Commissioner Kelly made a motion to approve the Haag Oil bid and Commissioner Brenner seconded. Motion carried 3/0. Scott reported that Mid States Materials has agreed to allow the county to prepay for rock at the current price of \$15.45 per ton from the Denison quarry. They have notified all customers that they plan to increase pricing 3-8% in 2022. Hamm Quarry also plans to increase their pricing 12%. The Commissioners agreed to allow Road and Bridge to pre purchase rock at the lower pricing using the funds received from NextEra. Chairperson Kathrens asked how much rock was left to haul for the Parallel Farms agreement. Eric stated that they are almost done. Scott reported that a pipe is scheduled for replacement on M Road, Bryson is welding a thumb attachment today and he is sending the traffic counter in for repair. Crews have been ditching on 246 and J Roads. The subcontractors for the bridge replacement at 158<sup>th</sup> Road have given a December start date. Chairperson Kathrens asked about the bridge on I Road and Scott reminded him that it was scheduled with the subcontractors as well, but no start date scheduled yet. They discussed a tube replacement west of C and 134 Roads where the bridge is in bad shape. Terry is getting a quote for a 6.5-foot pipe. Scott reported that at the recent noxious weed meeting he attended that the topic of chemical cost and supply were discussed. He suggested making another order before the end of the year so they have more inventory. County Clerk Kathy Mick stated that the budget would allow for up to \$15,000.00 in spending but that also would include salaries and utilities for the rest of 2021.

At 1:33 p.m. Commissioner Kelly made a motion to enter into executive session for matters of personnel/employment applications with County Counselor Lee Hendricks, Scott and Eric present and Commissioner Brenner seconded. Motion carried 3/0. Session reopened at 1:43 p.m. No action taken. Commissioner Kelly discussed forming a long-range plan to hire and retain employees for Road and Bridge, possibly meeting with the local high schools to inform graduates of the positions available. Kathy suggested offering part time positions to attract those who need more flexibility because they farm or have other employment. Reviewed the concern/call list generated at Road and Bridge. Eric added that the seeded areas are coming up especially after the rainfall.

At 2:00 p.m. Commissioner Kelly made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss personnel/employee policies with Lee Hendricks, Kathy Mick and Tara Peek present. Commissioner Brenner seconded and motion carried 3/0. Session reopened at 2:29 p.m. Youth Services Director Brooke Smith joined the meeting to get information about the health insurance presentation from the morning. Chairperson Kathrens explained that they don't have any final numbers but that they are trying to keep the benefit the same or better for a lower cost. Returned to executive session at 2:32 p.m. until 2:48 p.m. with Lee Hendricks, Kathy Mick and Tara Peek present under the same personnel/employee policies justification. No action taken.

Chairperson Kathrens left at 2:55 p.m.

Commissioner Brenner made a motion to approve a \$500.00 appropriation to Rossville High School for their post prom program from the alcohol tax prevention fund and Commissioner Kelly seconded. Motion carried 2/0.

Signed the following payroll change notices:

Department	Name	From	To	Reason	Date / /
Road and Bridge	Mark Cole	\$16.67 per hour	\$	Resignation	11/24/2021
Road and Bridge	Caitlyn Renyer	\$16.32 per hour	\$	Resignation	11/24/2021
Road and Bridge	Linda Jackson	\$15.81 per hour	\$16.32 per hour	Promotion	11/25/2021

Signed the following Purchase Orders:

Department	PO #	To	For	Amount
Treasurer	6825	Logan Business Machines	2- Sharp printers	\$5,600.00
Treasurer	6824	Logan Business Machines	1-Lexmark printer	\$3,990.00

Approved Change Orders 2021-16 through 23, 27, 28, 31 through 33.

The meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m. The next Commission meeting will be Monday, November 22, 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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathy Mick  
Jackson County Clerk

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

