

The Board of County Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. with all members and County Clerk present. Ulysses News Reporter, Sarah Loewen was in attendance. Commissioner Long led the Pledge of Allegiance and Pastor Steve Swann provided prayer.

The monthly department head meeting was held with the following in attendance: Jeff Baier, EMS Director/EM Coordinator; Dana McDaniel, Register of Deeds; Shaun Minks, Public Works Supervisor; Denise James, Health Department Administrator; James Biddle, Sheriff; Mari Honstead, Civic Center Manager; Ludivina Gonzales, Senior Center Director; and John Crosby, Fire Chief. Commissioner Long announced he and Commissioner Martin will tour County facilities on February 16th.

Shaun Minks, Public Works Supervisor, reported on meeting with Chris Wagner at Pioneer Electric concerning power pole disposal. Mr. Wagner relayed to Minks they were hauling used power poles back to eastern Kansas to be repurposed for FEMA projects, or releasing them for building fences, or releasing them to grind up for mulch. To the Public Works Supervisor's knowledge Pioneer Electric would not be hauling any more power poles to Grant County Landfill. Next, discussion was held on plans and dollars needed for a new trench at the Transfer Station.

Kelly Premer-Chavez, County Attorney, met with commissioners and requested executive session. John Martin motioned to recess into executive session to consult with the County Attorney for 10 minutes concerning the nationwide opioid lawsuit and a petition for foreclosure under the justification of privileged attorney-client relationship. Mark McGaughey seconded motion, and it carried unanimously. After 10 minutes the meeting continued in open session with no action taken.

A discussion was held on the unacceptableness of credit cards vouchers and receipts from departments to the County Clerk's Office for processing. Commissioner Long directed the clerk to draft a letter from commissioners explaining the problems that are occurring and ask for their assistance in correcting them.

Mark McGaughey motioned to approve minutes for the January 17, and January 31, 2023, meetings along with claims against various funds of the County including additional bills presented, payroll total \$141,607.86 dated January 25, 2023, and voucher numbers ending 168971 totaling \$911,938.94. John Martin seconded motion, and it carried unanimously.

Jeff Baier, EMS Director/EM Coordinator, met with commissioners and requested executive session. John Martin motioned to recess into executive session with the EMS Director/EM Coordinator for 10 minutes to review a possible full time hire under the justification of personnel matters of non-elected personnel. Mark McGaughey seconded motion, and it carried unanimously. After 10 minutes the meeting continued in open session.

It was the consensus of commissioners to allow the EMS Director to offer a full-time position to an existing part time employee. Next, discussion was held on Senate Bill 212, a bill relating to staffing on ambulances in rural counties. The EMS Director relayed he fully supported the bill. Commissioner Long directed the EMS Director to draft testimony so commissioners could promote the bill. Thirdly, Mr. Baier presented the Solid Waste Committee Members for 2023 and requested approval. Commissioners by consensus reviewed and approved the members. Lastly, the EMS Director reported the bearings in the garage door opener on third bay were replaced and the opener still is not working. After discussion on safety and emergency need, it was consensus of commissioners since \$600.00 had already been spent, to try and repair allowing \$700.00 for additional repair.

Steve Brom, Director, and Southwest Health Transport Board Members, Marvin Meile, John Nickel, Elizabeth Mathes, Ruby Romero, and Patrick Russell, Bus Driver, met with commissioners. Mr. Brom requested the County provide housing for their transport bus. The bus is currently located at a local residence. The bus was acquired through a KDOT grant and the grant requires the bus be housed. Pending a call to KCAMP and drafting a contract between Grant County and Southwest Health Transport, Commissioner Long asked for a motion of approval to house the bus. Mark McGaughey motioned to allow Southwest Health Transport to house their bus in the quiescent building on Airport property for a period of twelve months, to start after insurance and an agreement are in place. John Martin seconded motion, and it carried unanimously.

Denise James, Health Department Administrator, met with commissioners and requested executive session. Mark McGaughey motioned to recess into executive session with the Health Department Administrator for 10 minutes for a performance review under the justification of personnel matters of non-elected personnel. John Martin seconded motion, and it carried unanimously. After 10 minutes the meeting continued in open session with no action taken.

Tom Fuhrmann and Terry Lawhon, Landmark Appraisal, met with commissioners. Mr. Lawhon explained there was a court case at the Board of Tax Appeals involving grain elevator machinery being considered personal property not real estate which settled October 2022. They feel Grant County could have two elevators pay second half taxes under protest. The probable worst case is the taxing entities could lose a combined total of \$39,849.00 in taxes collected for 2023 budgets.

Marieta Hauser, Chamber of Commerce Director, requested permission to use the Fire Station for two Legislative Coffee Meetings, February 18th and March 18th. It was the consensus of commissioners to allow the use. Next, she requested permission to use the Fire Station June 16th thru 21st for Grant County's Time Station when Race Across America comes through Ulysses. It was the consensus of commissioners to allow the event. Lastly, discussion was held on Wikipedia's listing of Grant County, Kansas first organization date of March 20, 1873. The Chamber Director relayed they were going to tie the Home Products Dinner into 150 years of Grant County. It was the consensus of commissioners to allow the Chamber Director to organize a committee to have a community celebration.

The Austin Peters Group proposal for a Market Pay Range Survey Update was reviewed. Mark McGaughey motioned to approve Austin Peters Group proposal at a cost not to exceed \$12,850.00, and allow this expense paid from the Courthouse General fund. John Martin seconded motion, and it carried unanimously.

Mark McGaughey motioned to appoint Janet Stewart to replace the expiring term of Ray Velasquez and to reappoint Bill Stewart and John Nickel to the Board on Aging. John Martin seconded motion, and it carried unanimously.


The clerk presented a new cleaning contract from Southwest Janitorial Service, LLC to clean the Courthouse. The contract was updated after the Law Enforcement Center dropped the service. The contract was reviewed and approved. Discussion was held on the requirements to clean. It was consensus to advertise for cleaning to see if a local service would be interested.

John Martin motioned to approve a Road Department Operator One new hire and wage as recommended by the Public Works Supervisor. Mark McGaughey seconded motion, and it carried unanimously.

After reviewing the contract for 2023 GIS Map Maintenance, Marty Long motioned to renew their agreement with Kimble Mapping at a cost of \$9,000.00 and allow this expense paid from the Courthouse General fund. John Martin seconded motion, and it carried unanimously.

Commissioner Long opened discussion on the jail project. James Biddle, Sheriff, joined the meeting. After reviewing costs and staffing needs it was consensus the County would pursue a 40-bed facility. Next, the land owned by County that would be big enough to build on was reviewed. The Sheriff relayed he would want to move all his department to the new location. It was consensus property around the Airport will work the best. Thirdly, discussion was held on what date a special question could go on an election ballot. It was consensus to try for the November Election. Fourthly, architect firms were reviewed. The clerk was directed to contact HMN Architects and Treanor HL Architects to request a meeting with them.

Mark McGaughey motioned to adjourn at 1:00 p.m. John Martin seconded motion, and it carried unanimously. Commissioners will meet again in regular session on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.


Sheila Brown, County Clerk




Marty Long, Chairman