

Wabaunsee County Commission
Wabaunsee County Courthouse, Alma, KS
Regular Meeting Minutes December 14, 2020

The Board of County Commissioners meeting in session Monday December 14, 2020. In compliance with the CDC guidelines to maintain social distancing Commissioners conduct and record the meeting over ZOOM. Members attending were Joel S. Fager and Jim Suber. Chairman Fager called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. County Attorney Tim Liesmann, Undersheriff Brett Wilson and County Clerk elect Abby Amick were in attendance in person, others joined via zoom.

Executive Session

Commissioner Fager moved to go into Executive Session to discuss non-elected personnel regarding the Economic Development position, Commissioner Suber seconded. Motion passed 2-0. Following Executive Session Commissioner Fager announced the that the Commissioners have offered the Economic Development position to Jim MacGregor of the Alta Vista area. They will negotiate the terms of hire before making any other announcements.

Commissioner Fager reported that there are 11 active Covid cases in Wabaunsee County.

Road & Bridge Update

Road & Bridge Supervisor Thayne Bush brought a request and petition from WTC to do some fiber installation at the intersection of Hwy 99 and Homestead Road, all on state and township easement. It has been signed by Wabaunsee Township. Commissioner Suber made the motion to approve the petition from WTC to place fiber optic cable. Commissioner Fager seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

Bush shared an update on Low Water South Road, the cap is curing now, should be open a week from today. Sunflower Road is closed from East Spring Creek to Quail Road, a wooden plank structure is being replaced, Kolde Concrete is going to pour the abutments, R&B personnel will dig the footings. The Skyline Road project has been preliminarily permitted, going through getting utilities moved, the project is scheduled to be let in April 2021, he expects the project to start in summer of 2021.

Bush asked that Road and Bridge be considered before approving a Conditional Use Permit for the proposed solar farm.

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Solar Farm Discussion

Pat Hughes and Greg Barron joined via Zoom. Hughes submitted a letter on behalf of the Tallgrass Ranchers with concerns for the proposed industrial installation of solar panels on thousand of acres. Greg Barron stated that he lives in Mill Creek Township, and has been a member of Tallgrass Ranchers, since its inception in 2002. Hughes shared his opinion on land use guidelines and the necessity for planning, he suggested a moratorium on developments of this kind (similar to wind turbines). Hughes would like the county to take the time to develop the regulations and guidelines for appropriate development. Commissioner Suber asked what Pat Hughes would suggest, Hughes offered to help draft regulations on behalf of Tallgrass Ranchers in coordination with the Wabaunsee County Comprehensive Plan, Hughes' specialty is Land Use Management planning. County Attorney Tim Liesmann recommended that the commissioners allow the Zoning Board to serve its function.

Commissioner Fager moved to approve the minutes from the September 21 and 28 meetings, Commissioner Suber seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

Treasurer Daily Statements for December 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9 were viewed and signed by Chairman Fager.

At 10:50 a.m. Commissioner Fager moved to adjourn until Monday December 21st at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Suber seconded; motion passed 2-0.

Minutes approved this _____ day of January 2021