

Wabaunsee County Commission
Wabaunsee County Courthouse, Alma, KS
Regular Meeting Minutes April 18, 2022

The Board of County Commissioners meeting in session Monday, April 18, 2022. Commissioners conduct the meeting in person and over ZOOM. Members attending were Joel S. Fager, Rodney L. Allen and Nancy L. Hier. Commissioner Fager called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Road & Bridge Supervisor Thayne Bush, Zoning Administrator Noel Sylvester, Economic Development Director Jim MacGregor, Fellow Amalia Murguia, Treasurer Karen Callaway, Sheriff Rob Hoskins, Undersheriff Brett Wilson, County Clerk Abby Amick and Attorney Tim Liesmann were in attendance in person and others joined via zoom.

Department Head Update

Department Heads reported on discussions around inflation, wages and the cost of commodities as it relates to the 2023 Budget proposals. Departments will figure a 9.5% increase to accommodate inflation in their budget requests. There was discussion about a central fuel station for all county department use.

Road & Bridge

Road & Bridge Supervisor Thayne Bush reported that work is underway on the Hessdale Road bridge replacement. Bush has been asked to consider stock piling pipe for a vendor, allowing for reduced cost of delivery and readily accessible stock for townships and private individuals. Commissioners agreed to proceed once the County Attorney has reviewed the proposed agreement. Bush also reported that additional guidance is coming out regarding the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding, he will keep looking for opportunities to apply for funding.

Economic Development & American Rescue Plan

Broadband Fellow Amalia Murguia announced that the broadband grant application was not selected to move to the next round. The reviewers indicated that recent investment in broadband from the state level in Wabaunsee County and a challenge from CenturyLink were two factors that kept the application from moving forward. The State did comment on the quality of the application and the long-range plan, they encouraged Wabaunsee County to apply again in the third round, where the match will be based on population density and the speed requirements will be much higher. The ARP committee recommends reserving match funds for a future broadband grant application.

Economic Development Director Jim MacGregor shared that the BASE Grant was not selected for funding. He clarified that there is adequate water available at Exit 328 for the current development projects, there is not enough water for additional development at that intersection. Shovel ready projects received higher ranking in this round of applications.

The ARP Committee recommends allocating \$15,000 toward an Economic Impact Study for a Regional/State Visitor Center with additional funding to be matched by regional partners. Commissioners agreed. ARP funding must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and spent by December 31, 2026.

MacGregor requested that the Commission identify a board member to represent Wabaunsee County on the Flint Hills Regional Leadership Board of Directors before the May meeting.

Wabaunsee County Commission
Wabaunsee County Courthouse, Alma, KS
Regular Meeting Minutes April 18, 2022

2023 Budget Requests

MacGregor presented the Economic Development budget request of \$61,779.80; a 3% increase from 2022. Register of Deeds Marcy Merritt presented a budget request of \$110,430.68; an 8.6% increase from 2022.

County Attorney Tim Liesmann presented a budget request of \$126,813; an 8.5% increase from 2022.

Other Business

Commissioners discussed the fires from last week, thanking all that responded and assisted.

Commissioner Allen moved to issue a letter of support for the Eskridge Park Foundation tax credit fund raising application; Commissioner Hier seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Hier moved to approve the minutes of the April 11th Commission Meeting; Commissioner Allen seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioners reviewed and approved expenses for April 7 - 13, 2022. Chairman Fager reviewed and signed Daily Statements from April 7, 8, 11, 12 and 13, 2022.

At 10:32 AM Commissioner Fager moved to adjourn until Monday, April 25th at 9:00 AM; Commissioner Allen seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Minutes approved this 25th day of April 2022.



Joel S. Fager, Chairman



Nancy L. Hier, Vice Chair



Rodney L. Allen, Member



Attest:



Abby L. Amick
Wabaunsee County Clerk