

Wabaunsee County Commission
Wabaunsee County Courthouse, Alma, KS
Regular Meeting Minutes February 27, 2023

The Board of County Commissioners meeting in session Monday, February 27, 2023. Commissioners conduct the meeting in person and over ZOOM. Members attending were Nancy L. Hier, Jim MacGregor and Rodney L. Allen. Commissioner Hier called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Road & Bridge Supervisor Thayne Bush, Assistant Supervisor Josh Hinch, Zoning Administrator Noel Sylvester, Appraiser Ryan Michaelis, Deputy County Clerk and Transportation Coordinator Alissa Barber, members of the public Anthony Hiegert and Bruce Waugh, Sheriff Rob Hoskins, County Clerk Abby Amick and County Attorney Tim Liesmann were in attendance in person, others joined via zoom.

Public Transportation

Deputy County Clerk and Transportation Coordinator Alissa Barber reviewed updates to the Wabaunsee County Public Transportation Policies, including grievances and cancellations. Commissioner MacGregor recommended a wording change.

Commissioner Hier moved to adopt the Public Transportation Policy as updated in February 2023; Commissioner MacGregor seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Appraiser Update

Appraiser Ryan Michaelis provided a Summary of 2023 Preliminary Real Estate Values. The Wabaunsee County 2023 Assessed Value is \$88,552,674; an increase of 11.3% (or \$9,000,750) over 2022. Ag saw an increase of 1.4%; Commercial saw an increase of 32.3% (without new construction is 11.6%); Residential and Farmhouses total increase is 12.9% (without new construction is 10.9%). In comparison to the surrounding counties, all saw a similar percentage increase. Change of Notice mailings will go out on March 1st to every property owner. Michaelis also provided updates on legislation currently being discussed in the Capitol.

Road & Bridge Update

Road & Bridge Supervisor Thayne Bush reported that the annual meeting with the Townships was held Thursday evening, 9 of the 13 Townships attended. Bush provided an update on Bridge 25 near Maple Hill, the concrete abutments have been poured. They have experienced theft at the worksite, including rebar, tools, supplies and the storm water management book. The theft was reported to the Wabaunsee County Sheriff Department. Last Friday and Saturday night multiple roads in the Paxico area experienced vandalism of road signs. More than 20 signs were runover, costing the county a substantial amount of money to repair and replace. Any information that the public has regarding vandalism or theft should be reported to the Sheriff Department.

Bush provided two quotes for the replacement of the oldest mower tractor. Quotes were provided by KanEquip and PrairieLand, Bush recommended accepting the lower quote by PrairieLand. Commissioners agreed. Assistant Supervisor Josh Hinch reported that the new tilt trailer had been picked up and placed into service.

9:54 AM Commissioner Hier moved to enter executive session for 15 minutes to discuss employment for non-elected personnel; Commissioner Allen seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

10:09 AM Commissioners returned from Executive Session. Commissioner Hier moved to accept, with regret, the resignation of Thayne Bush effective March 18, 2023; Commissioner Allen seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Zoning Update

Zoning Administrator Noel Sylvester provided an update from the February 16th Planning Commission Meeting. The hearing items approved by the Planning Commission will be held during the March 6th Commission Meeting. The Planning Commission voted 11-1 in favor of banning commercial solar development in Wabaunsee County.

Wabaunsee County Commission

Wabaunsee County Courthouse, Alma, KS

Regular Meeting Minutes February 27, 2023

The next step in that process is for the Planning Commission to go through the full process of revising the Zoning Regulations. It will be on the agenda at their next meeting (April 20th).

The City of Alma submitted a recommendation for Kevin Griffith to represent the City on the Planning Commission. Commissioner Jim MacGregor moved to approve the appointment of Kevin Griffith to the Planning Commission as the City of Alma representative; Commissioner Allen seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Sylvester reported that he knows the Symphony in the Flint Hills is coming up on June 10th outside of Eskridge, but he has not received a special event permit. The size of the event requires Commissioner approval for the permit. Commissioners asked that all services involved in the facilitation of the Symphony in the Flint Hills be included in a future meeting regarding the event.

10:28 AM Commissioner Hier moved to enter executive session for 10 minutes to discuss employment for non-elected personnel; Commissioner MacGregor seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

10:38 AM Commissioners returned from Exec Session, leave was granted.

Extension Update

K-State Research and Extension Agents Bernadette Trieb and Shannon Spencer presented an update. Spencer shared that soil and water testing are available through the Extension Office, as well as forage testing. A highlight of the Ag Programming coming up included: April 20th Backyard Flock (poultry overview), May 2nd Pasture Management, Fly Control and Pink Eye; Jr Producer Days on K-State Campus in March; YQCA trainings required for competing at the State Fair and KJLS; and March 3rd is Cattlemen's Day at K-State. K-State is coordinating a CRP project across the State, Wabaunsee County will have a location participating in that study.

Agent Trieb provided a Family & Consumer Sciences update. The Hypertension Awareness Prevention Pilot Program is available to all residents. Trieb and two volunteers provided Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK), they spent 94.5 hours educating 325 beneficiaries resulting in savings of \$154,880 for Wabaunsee County residents. The average age of beneficiaries is 75.5.

Extension is coordinating a Spring Break Out Camp for the first time, it is a one night camp near Harveyville. Trieb attended a Money Habitudes training and Count Your Pennies training. The Third Grade County Department Tour held in February was a great success, the classes all shared their appreciation for the opportunity to tour the courthouse and learn from each office. Stay Strong Stay Healthy is coming up in McFarland.

Agents reported on 4-H Day, recently held in conjunction with Pottawatomie County. Wabaunsee County entries were up, there were several Club Events with an estimated 90 kids participating.

Comprehensive Plan

Economic Development Director Stephanie Imthurn began the review of the Comprehensive Plan by reading the Vision Statement, "Looking to the future to preserve our rich cultural history for the next generation with the tolerance to consider new ideas, opportunities and innovations for Wabaunsee County's prosperity while protecting our awe-inspiring Flint Hills landscape."

Bruce Waugh shared that he believes it was about 25 years ago that the County contracted with Dr Keller and some graduate students to revise the Comprehensive Plan. They sent questionnaires to all county residents. Commissioner Hier shared that the 2019 Comprehensive Plan update was facilitated by a committee of residents

Wabaunsee County Commission
Wabaunsee County Courthouse, Alma, KS
Regular Meeting Minutes February 27, 2023

from across the county. Christy Crenshaw shared via zoom chat that the natural landscape is the County's most distinguishing feature and should be preserved.

Commissioners determined that they were not looking to rewrite the entire document; rather, they would like to review the document, evaluate the objectives, tasks and resources, and determine if any updates need to be made. The steps were laid out as follows: start with the Vision Statement, then the Goals and Objectives through 2023, then the Tasks and finally the Resources. Commissioners asked Imthurn to gather a committee to begin the review process and schedule monthly check-ins with the Commissioners. Commissioners would like read-aheads prior to the meeting so that they can come prepared with thoughts and questions.

Other Business

District Court Clerk Emma Leuthold and Deputy Register of Deeds William Wagner presented an update from the Vending Machine Committee stating that the machine is in need of repair and that sales are not covering the cost of food items. The Committee recommends selling the machine on Purple Wave Auction. Commissioners agreed.

Commissioner MacGregor reported that he had followed up with Thayne Brethour regarding lighting at the Plaza of the Flint Hills. Brethour worked with engineers and professional planners when establishing the layout of the site, lighting was determined based on their recommendations. Additionally, Brethour receives complaints from customers requesting more lighting at the site. Brethour is looking into options for shrouding the lights or modifications that would direct the light in the areas that need it.

Commissioner Hier moved to approve the minutes of the February 6th Commission Meeting; Commissioner MacGregor seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioners reviewed and approved Expenses from February 9-22, 2023. Chairman Hier reviewed and signed Daily Statements for February 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22 and 23, 2023. Commissioners reviewed and signed Tax Abatement 2022-AB25 in the amount of \$577.06 and Added Taxes 2022-19 in the amount of \$59.22; and 2022-18 in the amount of \$18.36.

At 11:32 AM Commissioner Hier moved to adjourn until Monday, March 6th at 9:00 AM; Commissioner MacGregor seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Minutes approved this 6th day of March 2023.



Attest:

Abby L. Amick

Abby L. Amick
Wabaunsee County Clerk

Nancy L. Hier
Nancy Hier, Chairman

Rodney Allen
Rodney Allen, Vice Chairman

James W. MacGregor
James W. MacGregor, Commissioner