

Wabaunsee County Commission

Wabaunsee County Courthouse, Alma, KS

Regular Meeting Minutes October 25, 2021

The Board of County Commissioners meeting in session Monday, October 25, 2021. In compliance with the CDC guidelines to maintain social distancing Commissioners conduct and record the meeting over ZOOM. Members attending were Joel S. Fager, Nancy L. Hier and Rodney L. Allen. Commissioner Fager called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Health Department Administrator Ray Finley, County Attorney Tim Liesmann, County Clerk Abby Amick and Economic Development Director Jim MacGregor were in attendance in person and others joined via zoom.

Health Department Covid Update

Health Department Administrator Ray Finley reported on the Covid numbers for the County: 11 active cases, 18 deaths and 0 in the hospital. The Health Department is always available to answer question by phone, Covid booster shots are available.

Economic Development

Economic Development Director Jim MacGregor provided an updated on the State Dept of Commerce Economic Impact study of Tourism, during the state study the county can request a county specific study at a cost of \$2,500. MacGregor indicated there is no current data available to the county, so he would like to contract for this study this year. MacGregor indicated there is room in his current budget. Commissioners agreed.

The American Rescue Plan steering committee continues to meet and discuss requests as they are presented. Submission have come in from 4 of the 7 cities so far; there is no promise on funding and no specific timeline provided. All of the projects are for water and sewer infrastructure so far. The committee will continue reviewing requests and make recommendations as they are able.

When discussing Broadband, the feedback from providers is that the ARP funding is not sufficient to make an impact. There are clusters that are just outside of the current WTC footprint, extending the WTC line a ½ mile or 1 mile would service these clusters. The committee is still working to see what the possibilities are.

MacGregor report that he has heard concerns from residents with Mercury Broadband regarding the quality of service. Subscription with Mercury was lower than anticipated. There are dozens of subscribers that are satisfied, but there are a handful who are voicing concerns, mostly around customer services. Mercury is confident that they have identified the problem, and they are fixing it.

The Flint Hills Regional Council is overseeing the update of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Flint Hills Economic Development District. Commissioner Hier and Economic Development Director Jim MacGregor are providing local feedback on the CEDS; public comment is also encouraged. In late November there will be a final draft and a decision to approve the updated CEDS.

The CDBG Administrator has submitted the paperwork to the state for the first draw of the CDBG funds in the amount of \$120,000; this first payment will provide the awards to 11 of the 14 awardees.

At 9:29 AM Commissioner Fager moved to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing Financial Affairs of an Individual or Business under Attorney Client Privilege of a CDBG Grant Application for 5 minutes. Commissioner Hier seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

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At 9:36 AM Commissioners returned from Executive Session. No action was taken.

Road & Bridge Update

Road & Bridge Supervisor Thayne Bush presented a used bucket truck for purchase in the amount of \$49,500; Commissioners agreed. Bush is also looking at a used motor grader to replace the 2005 (oldest in the fleet) located in the Eskridge District. Bush reported that road striping will start this week with more than 30 miles to be completed.

Zoning Update

Zoning Administrator Noel Sylvester provided an update on the recent meeting of the Planning Commission, where they considered one CUP renewal for CX Construction. The hearing will be held November 8th, Commissioners indicated that they would like to see the applicant current on fees before approving any future permits.

Sylvester reported that his office has processed 2 building permits and 3 septic inspections in the last month. He is working on filling the vacant Planning Commission position. Commissioners gave approval to move forward with the iWorQ Software agreement and signed the contract.

Zoning Hearing

10:02 AM Commissioner Fager called the Zoning Hearing to order.

County Attorney Tim Liesmann presented the updated Zoning Regulations with changes to the language to include short term rental with a definition, remove the term B&B and add short-term rental to the Conditional Use Permit required list, and shifting the list numbers as a clerical update.

Commissioner Hier moved to adopt Resolution 2021-48; a Resolution Amending the Zoning Regulations to Modernize Language Concerning Short-Term Rentals; Commissioner Allen seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Empower House Ministries

Melissa Landis, Executive Director of Empower House Ministries and Gayle Taylor-Ford Executive Director of Therapy Services, LLC informed the Commissioners of the recovery residence for female addicts that they are opening in Emporia. They are informing all the neighboring counties and asking Commissioners to consider directing a portion of the alcohol tax toward their organization. Commissioners asked if there was an estimate on the number of Wabaunsee County residents that may benefit from the facility, the response was that all counties share the same struggles with addiction, the capacity of the residence will be 14-18 women. Commissioners indicated that they would like to know what level of support is provided from surrounding counties before making a decision. Currently the alcohol tax is directed to Crosswinds Mental Health Services.

Other Business

Commissioners Fager and Hier shared updates from the sessions that they each attended at the Kansas Association of Counties Conference last week. County Appraiser Ryan Michaelis and Road & Bridge Supervisor Thayne Bush also reported on the sessions that they attended.

Commissioner Hier moved to adopt Resolution 2021-49; a Resolution Cancelling Certain Checks or Warrants of Wabaunsee County, Pursuant to the Provisions of K. S. A. 10-815; Commissioner Allen seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

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County Attorney Tim Liesmann provided a building committee update. During the final meeting with P1 closing out the project, a list of items that the vendor perceived to be 'out of scope' was presented. The Building Committee recommends compensating P1 for three of the items included in the original request: new glass panes in the court room, additional plaster work and DOAS system for a total of \$12,809.00. Commissioners agreed.

Commissioner Allen moved to appoint John Waugh to Cemetery District #5 Board, replacing the late Charles Waugh; Commissioner Fager seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Allen moved to accept the resignation of Darrin Boline as Wilmington Township Trustee and appoint John Flach to the unexpired term; Commissioner Hier seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Hier moved to increase the benefit of the Advance Life Insurance policy provided to County Employees to \$25,000; Commissioner Allen seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

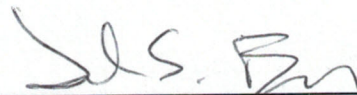
Commissioner Hier moved to approve the minutes of the October 4th Commission Meeting, Commissioner Allen seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioners reviewed and approved expenses for September 30 – October 20, 2021 and payroll for September 20 – October 17, 2021.

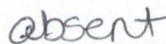
Daily Statements were reviewed and signed by Chairman Fager for the dates of October 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13 and 14, 2021.

At 11:18 AM Commissioner Hier moved to adjourn until Monday, November 1st at 9:00 AM. Commissioner Fager seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

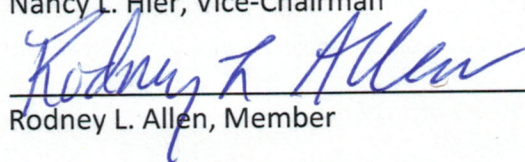
Minutes approved this 1st day of November 2021.



Joel S. Fager, Chairman



Nancy L. Hier, Vice-Chairman



Rodney L. Allen, Member

Attest:



Abby L. Amick
Wabaunsee County Clerk