

MINUTES
MORTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 8, 2007

Bob called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with open doors.

Present: Bob Boaldin, Chairman; Allen Tucker, Vice-Chairman; Ron DeGarmo, Commissioner; Eric Witcher, County Attorney; Mary Gilmore, County Clerk

The Agenda was reviewed and approved with additions.

Minutes of the December 29, 2006 meeting were read and approved with corrections, as directed by the Commissioners, on a motion by Allen, seconded by Ron.

Bills were reviewed and approved for payment.

The Commissioners discussed the Civic Center Field Report #15, indicating the contractor is still waiting for the insulation to dry out from the recent storms. Consensus of the Commissioners was that they would like some assurance in writing that the insulation will dry out and that the contractor will be responsible for any problems caused from any insulation that does not dry out.

At this time the County Clerk administered the Oath of Office to District 1 Commissioner, Ron DeGarmo and to Sheriff Justin Holliday.

The election of officers for the Morton County Commissioners was held. Motion was made by Ron, seconded by Allen, to keep the officers as they were in 2006: Bob Boaldin, Chairman; Allen Tucker, Vice-Chairman.

Motion was made by Allen, seconded by Ron, to transfer funds from the General Fund to Special Equipment Reserve; Rural Fire to Special Fire Equipment; Noxious Weed to Special Noxious Weed Equipment; Ambulance to Special Ambulance Equipment; and Road and Bridge to either Special Highway Equipment or Special Highway Improvement.

Motion was made by Ron, seconded by Bob, to designate the Tri-State News as the official newspaper for Morton County.

Motion was made by Ron, seconded by Allen, to designate the First National Bank of Elkhart and the Colorado East Bank as the official depositories for Morton County.

Motion was made by Bob, seconded by Allen, to increase the base salary for full-time employees to \$1650/mo.

The Commissioners signed Salary Resolution 2007-1, Resolution 2007-2 (GAAP), the Payroll Form, the List of County Officers for Secretary of State, the Public Official's Bond for KCAMP, and the Change Orders from the Appraiser's Office.

A review was made of two bills submitted from Fiss Architecture. Approval to pay these bills was given on a motion by Ron, seconded by Allen.

The Clerk reported that the transfer of funds within the Road Department's 2006 budget could not be made because it was already over budget. The new road grader that was ordered will have to be paid from Special Road Equipment.

A discussion took place concerning the payment of salary for the outgoing Sheriff; he had requested to be paid through the end of January. The Clerk stated that it has been the policy of the County to pay an outgoing elected official for half of the month only. A discussion also took place concerning continuing the outgoing Sheriff's insurance. The Clerk mentioned that her office has attempted to get the COBRA form signed by Loren but to no avail. He would be allowed, under COBRA, to continue coverage under the County's health insurance for a period of time; he would have to make payment directly to Blue Cross Blue Shield. Consensus of the Commissioners was to not do anything different from what we have done in the past for other outgoing officials.

A call was placed to Ashley Fiss, Fiss Architecture, regarding concern over the insulation and also to discuss her bill. Ashley stated she is still working under the original contract at this time. Ashley also said she will talk to Ken Kure and relay the Commissioners' request for assurance in writing that when Orr Construction says the insulation is dry, it is really dry, and if something goes wrong due to wet insulation, they will fix it.

A discussion took place concerning the sidewalk around the Civic Center. Ashley said we have shown on the plans to have grass from the building and out 10 ft., then a 6 ft. sidewalk.

The Commissioners reviewed and approved payment of the Kansas Association of Counties 2007 Membership Dues in the amount of \$2510.56 on a motion from Allen, seconded by Ron.

Allen reported on the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Assisted Living Facility and the pre-construction meeting following lunch. The Commissioners reviewed the dates of the monthly construction meetings. The meetings will be held in the hospital classroom at 10:30 a.m. each month.

A review was made of the letter to Gary Baker from the Kansas Department of Agriculture regarding Morton County's application for additional water rights for the golf course.

The Commissioners directed the County Attorney to proceed with closing the land purchase in Oklahoma with Darren Buck in an effort to purchase additional water rights for the golf course from Ernie Barnes, on a motion by Allen, seconded by Ron.

A call was placed to Steve Rice concerning the funds budgeted for the purpose of getting additional water for the golf course.

Brandi Fleming entered the meeting and presented the Health Department Report from 1/1/2006 through 12/31/2006.

Brandi requested approval for her and Kristi Winters to enroll in the on-line Kansas Public Health Certificate Program 2007-2008. Cost of the tuition is \$1000 each and Brandi said she would pay for the tuition out of her grant money, if accepted into the program. Motion to approve enrollment, if accepted, was given by Ron, seconded by Allen.

At this time Tim Hardy, Brandi Fleming, Deb Schnurr and Tony Hoyt met with the Commissioners to give a detailed update on efforts made by EMS, Fire, City and County law enforcement, City and County employees, and volunteers during the emergency disaster caused by the recent snow and ice storms. The Commissioners expressed their sincere appreciation to everyone involved for their work during this disaster.

Tim reported that they have had two debriefings since the disaster and asked if consideration could be given to purchase a generator for the Civic Center. The Civic Center would have the most space available to be used as a shelter, if something should happen in the future. The team reported that although the generator is the biggest need, there are other items that will need to be purchased, such as blankets.

Deb stated they need a generator at the EMS building in order to keep the meds stored on the ambulances at the right temperature, and to open the bay doors. Deb also mentioned that they need an inverter in each of the Expeditions. The Commissioners asked Deb to get estimates on these requests.

Deb presented the EMS 2006 report of total receipts (\$98,446.28.) Deb also requested approval for Tausha to attend the Medicare Part B Ambulance Supplier Workshop in Wichita on February 22. Approval was given on a motion by Bob, seconded by Allen.

Tony reported that last year EMS purchased some hand held radios from grant money but they need a few more. Also, Deb and Tony each need a radio/pager (cost is approximately \$675 each.) Approval to purchase two radio/pagers was given on a motion by Allen, seconded by Ron.

At this time the Commissioners and Tim Hardy discussed the street layout for the Civic Center. A call was placed to Tim Campbell at SEDCO but he was out of town and would not return until Tuesday morning. Tim Hardy said he would contact Mr. Campbell on Tuesday and let him know that we do not like the current proposed layout.

The meeting recessed at noon for lunch and reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

Charley McKinley met with the Commissioners and presented the Road Department's December report. A discussion also took place concerning the parking lot for the Civic Center, as well as drainage from the Civic Center with all of the cement and asphalt around the building. Charley will visit with Curtis at Kirkham-Michael about this.

Leon Ellis presented the monthly Landfill/Weed report and discussed bids for crushing the cement at the Landfill. Lee Construction will be a little more expensive, but they are closer (Garden City). Recycled Materials Co. has not given a firm bid (hidden costs?) Leon said he has not heard back from the Nebraska firm. Consensus of the Commissioners and Leon was to hire Lee Construction because he has fewer miles to move the equipment and his bid is firm. Motion to hire Lee Construction was given on a motion by Ron, seconded by Allen.

Vienna Lee met with the Commissioners and said she has visited more with the individuals interested in constructing a biodiesel plant in Morton County. They have not purchased the land yet but they do have their feasibility study completed. They are still trying to get their LLC.

A discussion took place concerning where Grant County markets the use of their Civic Center. Vienna said she visited with them and they do not market outside the community.

Vienna reported that Curtis Milburn did not paint the rental building, just put primer on the walls. Vienna offered to paint the walls. Consensus of the Commissioners was that Vienna could paint during her working hours and if she had to paint at night, charge the County for those hours. Amanda Ankrom plans to begin moving into the rental space on January 24th.

Vienna also reported on the recent meeting with Mike Hayden regarding the grand slam hunting promotional for Wildlife and Parks. Vienna would like to invite four or five people who are interested in the project to attend a meeting in Eldorado in April. Approval was given on a motion by Allen, seconded by Ron.

Vienna mentioned that she attended a meeting in Dodge City regarding the Santa Fe Trail Horse Race. There are a lot of national groups backing this event.

At this time Karen Toadvine, Ray Don Jones, Leonard Hernandez, and Kevin Shook met with the Commissioners. A discussion took place concerning the need to raise the annual membership dues because of the costs involved in attempting to get additional water to the golf course. Following the discussion the Advisory Board recommended that the Single and Family Membership dues be increased by \$50. Recommendation was also made that the green fees be increased by \$3.00 each (weekdays and weekends); twilight fees be increased by \$3.00; Junior Membership dues not be increased; no increase for cart

sheds. Motion was made by Ron, seconded by Bob, to accept the Advisory Board's recommendations. NOTE: Clubhouse rent will not increase.

Justin Holliday, Sheriff, entered the meeting and reported he would like to hire Nate Gant, an officer currently in Hugoton; he has already attended the Academy. There would, however, be a contract buyout between Morton County and the City of Hugoton in the amount of \$10,079.90. Following a discussion motion was made by Ron, seconded by Allen, to hire Nate Gant at a starting salary of \$2200/mo. and to approve the buyout of his contract with Hugoton.

Sheriff Holliday also recommended that Jeff LaRue continue working part time with the Department at an hourly wage of \$14.71/hr. Justin recommended James Burnett return to part time status at an hourly wage of \$9.50/hr. The Commissioners approved these recommendations on a motion from Allen, seconded by Ron. Justin stated that Brent Buser will remain Undersheriff at his current salary.

Justin mentioned that the Sheriff's Department does not have a Taser policy and recommended that the County discontinue use of the Taser immediately until a policy is in place. Recommendation was accepted.

A discussion took place concerning Santos, the drug dog. The dog is between the age of 8-10 years old and is just sitting outside in the kennel. The dog has not had a handler since Brian Peitz was denied approval to get certified with the dog (dog and handler must be certified together.) After visiting with professional drug dog handlers and trainers it is estimated that it will take about one year to get Santos retrained and certified and then he would be at the age recommended for retirement. Justin recommended the County retire Santos but he does not want to phase out the dog program. Justin mentioned he would be interested in having the dog and would be willing to make a donation towards purchasing a small, trained dog (Justin also mentioned that Santos has a wound on his leg from a biopsy done in 2002 and this needs immediate attention.) Haskell County is the closest department that has certified working dogs. It is estimated that a dual purpose dog will cost between \$5000-\$6000. Consensus of the Commissioners was to not spend any more money on Santos for training. Justin reminded the Commissioners that the County does still have the kennel, collar, muzzle, leashes and electronic shock collar that can be used for the new dog. Following the discussion the County Attorney offered to purchase a new dog out of the Diversion Fund.

The Commissioners expressed their best wishes to Justin in his new position as Morton County Sheriff. Justin stated that he has an open door policy, whether he is at home or in the office. Justin thanked the Commissioners for their time and left the meeting.

Deb Schnurr entered the meeting and requested signatures from the Commissioners on Resolution 2007-3 and Proclamation (Proclamation of a State of Local Disaster Emergency for Morton County, Kansas.) The Commissioners signed the Resolution on a motion by Ron, seconded by Allen.

Vicki Peacock, County Treasurer, met with the Commissioners and recommended hiring Gayle Weeks for the part time position in the Treasurer's office. Motion was made by Bob, seconded by Ron, to hire Ms. Weeks at a wage of \$9.50/hr. The application was signed.

Vicki asked the Commissioners if they have a building schedule for the Assisted Living Facility. They do not have one but placed a call to Leonard Hernandez, CEO. Mr. Hernandez said he would get one to Vicki.

Vicki requested that the Commissioners consider giving Jan Rodriguez a bigger raise than she received; Vicki said she asked for more for Jan than she received. The Commissioners stated that other supervisors had requested more for their staff but those requests were also reduced. Vicki said she does plan to deputize Jan and requested she receive \$25/mo. more. A discussion took place concerning the Treasurer's Special Auto Fund. The Commissioners asked if there would be money available to pay Jan the added salary from that fund; Vicki said there would be. Motion was made by Allen, seconded by Ron, to approve paying Jan an extra \$25/mo. from the Treasurer's Special Auto Fund.

The Clerk reported that Charles Milburn was elected to Richfield Township Clerk and currently holds the office of Richfield Township Treasurer. Mr. Milburn has notified the Clerk that he does not want to accept the position of Township Clerk but wants to keep his office as Treasurer. Following a discussion, and according to KSA 25-1606, the Commissioners appointed Sam Dunn to fill the vacated position of Richfield Township Clerk on a motion by Allen, seconded by Ron.

A discussion took place concerning the roof leaking at the Extension/Health Department building. Bob has visited with Jerry Ryman and Mr. Ryman feels he can make the necessary repairs as soon as the weather turns nicer.

The next meeting of the Morton County Commissioners was scheduled for January 22nd.

The Commissioners signed the Hospital Second Addition Plat on a motion by Ron, seconded by Allen.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned on a motion by Allen, seconded by Ron.