

The Board of County Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. with Commissioner McGaughey, Commissioner Shapland, and County Clerk present. Commissioner Stewart joined the meeting via conference phone. Ulysses News Reporter, Tammie Hensley was in attendance. Commissioner McGaughey led the Pledge of Allegiance and Pastor Larry Borthwick provided prayer.

The monthly department head meeting was held with the following in attendance: Denise James, Health Department Administrator; Terri Trotman, County Treasurer, Randy McCauley, Public Works Supervisor; John Crosby, Fire Chief; Jeff Baier, EMS Director/EM Coordinator; Ludivina Gonzales, Senior Center Director; Dana McDaniel, Register of Deeds; Cindy Wellbrock, County Appraiser; Kelly Premer-Chavez, County Attorney, and James Biddle, Sheriff.

Randy McCauley, Public Works Supervisor, presented road crossing permits, which were reviewed and approved. Next, he requested permission to seek bids for road material. It was consensus of commissioners to allow bids for road materials. Lastly, the Public Works Supervisor requested an executive session to discuss personnel. Kevin Shapland made motion to recess into executive session with the Public Works Supervisor for 10 minutes to discuss an employee request under the justification of matters of non-elected personnel. Janet Stewart seconded motion and it carried unanimously. After 10 minutes meeting continued in open session with no action taken.

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Denise James, Health Department Administrator, presented grant information to hire additional help for administering the COVID testing and tracing program. The County can enter into a service agreement and hire for the full-time position, or the County can sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Genesis Health, and they will hire the employee. The two-year grant will start June 22, 2022, with no County obligation for continued employment. County Health would provide space for the employee and employee would work 30 percent of time at County Health. After voicing concerns on benefits, space for employee, and need for additional help, it was consensus of commissioners to ask Genesis Health to administer the grant. Ms. James stated she will return at a later meeting with MOU for use of a Genesis Health employee. Next, the Health Administrator asked for direction on Grant County Community Foundation's letter concerning interest allocation of \$6,844.00 for County Health. Commissioner Stewart advised to take the yearly draw of interest. Thirdly, the janitorial request from prior meeting was discussed. The Senior Center Director rejected the request stating her custodian did not have enough time to clean both the Senior Center and Health Department. It was consensus of commissioners to allow advertising for janitorial service. Lastly, the Administrator requested permission to use the room used by the Senior Center as a breakroom. The Health Department would convert it to Women and Children (WIC) examination room. Since COVID the Health Department needs to space clients more and WIC clients are being

examined in a hallway. The requested room was originally used by both the Health Department and Senior Center nurses and Ms. James asked that it return to its original use. It was the consensus of commissioners to ask the Senior Center Director and Health Department Administrator to the next meeting for discussion of room.

A letter requesting funding was reviewed. Janet Stewart made motion to appropriate \$1,550.00 to the Southwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging for 2022 matching funds. Kevin Shapland seconded motion, and it carried unanimously.

Recommendations were reviewed for a new Ulysses Stampede Rodeo Board member. Kevin Shapland made motion to reappoint Bravane Phelps, Chad McCormick, Ryan Rice, Michael Tarbet, and Wacey Munsell, and to appoint Scott Buxman as new member of the Ulysses Stampede Rodeo Board replacing a vacated position held by Bill Stewart. Janet Stewart seconded motion, and it carried unanimously. Ulysses Stampede Board members will start rotating terms starting next year.

Kristy Anderson, Grant County Recreation Director, presented a bid and requested Grant County pay to replace a pump on the indoor pool. Janet Stewart made motion, due to need, to approve a sole source bid of \$9,500.00 from TEDS Plumbing, and for this expense to be paid from Special Equipment fund. Mark McGaughey seconded motion, and it carried unanimously. Next, the Recreation Director presented an estimate to repair remainder of damaged cement at the pool. She stated they were not ready to do work but wanted to inform commissioners of the obligation.

Discussion was held on a reserve refund from the County employee health insurance company, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas. The \$490,696.33 refund represents saved dollars by using FCMI as a third-party administrator for the first \$12,700.00 used per family plan. Kevin Shapland made motion to move \$400,000.00 of the refund to Grant County Employee Health Insurance fund at Farmer's Bank and Trust, to be used for third party administration of the employee health insurance plan. Janet Stewart seconded motion, and it carried unanimously.

Commissioners voiced concerns with employees being hired that have delinquent taxes. The County Attorney will be contacted to see if it is possible to have a precheck of taxes as condition of hiring with Grant County.

Bob Dale Passini, Grant County Economic Development Director, introduced Fiona Bagwell and Natalie Shaw, NEXtera Energy Resources Project Managers. Tom Fuhrmann, Landmark Appraisal; Cindy Wellbrock, County Appraiser; and Kelly Premer-Chavez, County Attorney, attended this portion of the meeting. Ms. Bagwell relayed they were the largest wind and solar energy producers in the United States. The company is in the early-stage development of a 100-megawatt solar energy plant in Grant County. The 1,000-acre solar energy plant would be located along Highway 160 on the eastern part of Grant County and would feed into Rubart Station Power Plant. The solar energy plant is scheduled to start construction in 2024 and be fully operational in 2025. Mr. Fuhrmann stated the solar energy system would be exempt from ad valorem taxes for ten years before going on the tax roll. Ms. Bagwell conveyed NEXtera would be looking into a Payment In Lieu of Taxes during the ten-year exemption.

Kelly Premer-Chavez, County Attorney, met with commissioners and requested an executive session. Kevin Shapland made motion to recess into executive session for 10 minutes with the County Attorney for discussion of a contract under the justification of privileged attorney-client relationship. Janet Stewart seconded motion, and it carried unanimously. After 10 minutes meeting continued in open session with no action taken.

The suggested updates from Loyd Group to comply with federal funding were reviewed. Kevin Shapland made motion to accept the revised Grant County Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual, adding a Uniform Guidance Policy and Procedures for Federal Grant Awards, and a Conflict-of-Interest Policy. Janet Stewart seconded motion, and it carried unanimously. Next, in preparation to start using American Relief Plan Act (ARPA) funding on April 1, 2022, commissioners directed the County Clerk to inquire on the rules and organize a premium pay recommendation for next meeting.

Kevin Shapland made motion to approve minutes for January 18, 2022, meeting along with claims against various funds of the County: payroll total \$137,381.61 dated January 26, 2021, and voucher numbers ending 166223 totaling \$482,634.58. Janet Stewart seconded motion, and it carried unanimously.

Commissioners adjourned at 11:55 a.m., to meet again in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 15, 2022.


Sheila Brown, County Clerk




Mark McGaughey, Chairman