

October 16, 2023

Monday, 5:30 p.m.

The Bourbon County Commission met in open session with all three Commissioners and the County Clerk present.

Jason Silvers, Clint Walker, Diane Striler, Dean Striler, Patty Ropp, Dee Yount, Michael Hoyt, Deb McCoy, and Rachel Walker were present for some or all of the meeting.

Jim Harris opened the meeting with the flag salute followed by a prayer led by Nelson Blythe.

Clifton Beth made a motion to approve the consent agenda which includes approval of minutes from 10/2/23 and 10/10/23, approval of payroll totaling \$221,649.43, and approval of accounts payable totaling \$297,503.99. Nelson seconded the motion and all approved.

Michael Hoyt discussed the prior proposal to commit taxpayer dollars to an ER. Michael asked for an explanation of why the prior emergency rooms failed and questioned the Commissioners decision to postpone repairs in order to pay the proposed \$500,000. Mr. Hoyt suggested putting the issue on the ballot for the people to decide how much to spend on an emergency room and whether they want it to be sales tax or bond.

Becky Gray, Executive Director of Building Health Inc. which is a non-profit subsidiary of Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas, presented information to the Commissioners about the public transportation services they are now providing in Bourbon County. Dee Yount was also present and he runs transportation services for Community Health Center after they took over the Care Van from Via Christi in November of 2022. Dee explained there is currently one vehicle in Bourbon County with dispatching available Monday thru Friday from 7:30-6:30 for non-emergent transportation. Becky said there is no cost to riders or the community as Dee bills Medicaid and they receive grant dollars. Becky explained they are just asking for a letter of support from the Commissioners to submit with their next grant application. Nelson questioned where the grant was coming from and Becky informed them it is KDOT with federal funds. Jim asked how much the grant is and it was explained that it is for \$1,200,000 for several counties. Clifton asked how they are informing the county of the service and Dee stated they are advertising in the newspaper, on Facebook, and the CHC center as well as distributing cards and notifying businesses. Clifton made a motion to sign a letter of support for the Care Van transportation service. Nelson seconded the motion and all approved.

Diane Striler with Christmas on the Bricks explained they are trying to elevate Fort Scott by taking things already here and making them better to make something for the community to enjoy and bring people in to stay and shop. There will be a candlelight tour from November 30<sup>th</sup> thru December 3<sup>rd</sup>, a parade on Thursday, a tree lighting ceremony with children signing and fireworks, a live nativity scene by Bethel Church, stores will be open late, there will be firepits designed by Neice and supervised by the Boy Scouts, pictures with Santa throughout the weekend, wooden booths on Wall Street where vendors will offer various items including selling shirts and ornaments commemorating the event, there will be a gingerbread decorating contest, horse drawn carriage rides, historic tours, and a downtown tree decorating contest for businesses to compete in. Diane stated a lot of people are helping out but that it takes a lot to put on an event of this caliber. They want to make things affordable for families and are designing the booths and other items used to be disassembled so they can use in future years. There has been fundraising done for the event, several businesses are sponsoring, they received a Community Foundation grant for \$2,000, have applied for a Wal-Mart grant, and have reached out to Craw-Kan and Everygy. Diane asked for \$2,500 from Bourbon County to go toward this event that will hopefully be a great thing for everybody here. Jim said it certainly sounds like a great event. Diane said they have worked hard to get different events to bring in more people. Nelson said he would do a private donation later but doesn't want to use taxpayer dollars. Nelson made a motion to decide if we participate and Jim asked Clifton if he wanted to think about it and Clifton said yes. The motion died due to a lack of a second. Jim asked that Diane give them a week to decide and look at finances.

Eric Bailey, Public Works Director, said the asphaltting on 233<sup>rd</sup> Street is now complete and they are waiting on chips and will start at Garland as soon as they have enough. A belt on the conveyor broke and was repaired but then the generator went down but they anticipate having it fixed tomorrow and will start crushing. They will start in Garland ½ mile east of the railroad tracks and will try to get a mile completed on Eagle Road. Eric said they will start prepping the road which will be a inconvenience, but will be worth it in the end. The crew will replace culverts in the area and will notify the public if the road will be closed. There was a dip on the bridge near 215<sup>th</sup> Street and Valley Road which has been fixed with asphalt. Clifton said he drove over the bridge today and thanked Eric's crew as he said it couldn't be done any better. Jim asked if the dip was due to a culvert and Eric said they had it looked at and it was due to the extreme dry weather. Eric said they are still out mowing roads, repaired a guardrail on a bridge located on Osage Road between 235<sup>th</sup> street and 69 Highway, and cleared out silt from a bridge at 85<sup>th</sup> Street and Xavier Road. Eric stated last meeting Nelson questioned a 4-way stop at 85<sup>th</sup> Street and Kansas Road so he drove the area and there are some blind spots and several areas of concern so he would not be opposed to a 4-way stop. Clifton said he is all for stop signs as his son was in a wreck where there was a blind spot and is for speed limits on gravel roads too. Nelson made a motion to make 85<sup>th</sup> Street and Kansas Road a 4-way stop. Clifton seconded the motion and all approved. Eric asked for citizens to call himself or the Commissioners if there is a road complaint instead of posting on social media. Eric said if they don't know of the issue, they cannot fix it. Eric said he can be reached at 215-5183, [ebailey@bourboncountyks.org](mailto:ebailey@bourboncountyks.org), and there is even a spot on our website where a road issue can be submitted and will be sent to himself and the Commissioners.

Jennifer Hawkins, County Clerk, asked about designating Bourbon County voting delegates for the upcoming Kansas Association of Counties meeting in December. It was decided to make Jim the voting delegate for Bourbon County with Clifton then Nelson listed as alternate delegates. Jennifer said early voting will start on October 26<sup>th</sup> and would like to use the Commission room again this year as it works better than setting up the booths in hallway. Jennifer said she could set the chairs up in front of the voting booths for the October 30<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Commissioners agreed to allow early voting in the Commission room again this year.

Susan Walker, CFO, asked how the Commissioners would like to handle the June/July SEHP employer contribution and said she just needs to know by next June. Susan asked for a 5-minute executive session.

Clifton made a motion to go into a 5-minute executive session under KSA 75-4319 (b)(1) to discuss personnel matters of individual nonelected personnel to protect their privacy to include all three Commissioners and Justin Meeks and will return at 6:20. Nelson seconded the motion and all approved. Clifton made a motion to resume normal session at 6:20 with no action. Nelson seconded the motion and all approved.

Shane Walker requested a 5-minute executive session.

Clifton Beth made a motion to go into a 5-minute executive session under KSA 75-4319 (b)(4) to discuss data relating to financial affairs or trade secrets of corporations, partnerships, trust and individual proprietorships to include all three Commissioners, Shane Walker, Justin Meeks, and Susan Walker and will return at 6:27. Nelson Blythe seconded the motion and all approved. Clifton made a motion to resume normal session at 6:27 with possible action. Nelson seconded the motion and all approved.

Shane Walker said Golden Arrow Corporation, a local builder, met with the state about a tax program that gives a tax reimbursement to the builder at 80% for 20 years for new homes and said all he needs from the county is a letter of support. Jim asked if it was a letter of support for new housing and Shane said it would be a letter of support for him applying for tax credits and reimbursement. Shane said the homes that would be built would be around \$215,000. Jim asked if without this state incentive program would he build. Shane said it is something other builders could apply for. Nelson asked if he would be getting a tax credit if he builds the house. Shane explained he has to build the house to the standards of the state program and would receive the tax credit and the other is once the house has been sold and is on the tax roll. Nelson suggested the builder come and present information about the houses. Clifton asked if it would affect the MIH since to his understanding, we can only support one as a county. Shane said the City of Fort Scott will be discussing this matter tomorrow at their meeting and Clifton suggested waiting to ensure this will not affect the support that we have already given to MIH. Jim agreed and

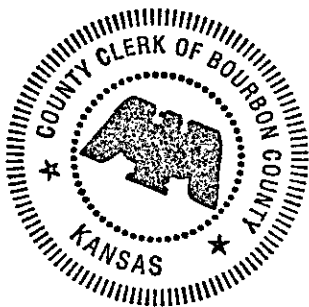
feels the contractor should come in and discuss the project and do some research to see if it would affect MIH. It was decided to wait to see what the City of Fort Scott does at their meeting tomorrow.

Jim requested a 15-minute executive session.

Clifton made a motion to go into a 15-minute executive session under KSA 75-4319 (b)(1) to discuss personnel matters of individual nonelected personnel to protect their privacy to include all three Commissioners and Justin Meeks and will return at 6:54. Nelson seconded the motion and all approved. Clifton made a motion to resume normal session at 6:54 with no action. Nelson seconded the motion and all approved.

Nelson said he wonders what people want to do and questioned if they want to spend \$500,000 for an emergency room. Jim stated it is either spend \$500,000 for an emergency room or spend at least that for more EMS. Jim said he has heard from a lot of people and they are mainly of yes and a few no. Clifton said he has heard a lot of support. Nelson questioned about next year and asked if we should throw good money after bad. Clifton said healthcare is pay to play and that there will have to be a subsidy by the city, county, or REH. Clifton addressed Michael's comment that we failed three times with an emergency room and said we succeeded for years with Via Christi. Clifton also said if we would have kept the building, we would have had to spend at least \$2,000,000 on it. There have been comments made online about putting an EMS station in western Bourbon County and Clifton stated that would cost at least \$1,000,000. Jim reiterated Clifton's comment that there would have to be a subsidy by someone. Jim informed the County Clerk and Susan Walker to issue the budgeted longevity around Thanksgiving as we did last year.

Clifton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:04. Nelson seconded the motion and all approved.



ATTEST:

*Jennifer Hawkins*

Jennifer Hawkins, Bourbon County Deputy Clerk

10-23-23

Approved Date

THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
OF BOURBON COUNTY, KANSAS

*[Signature]*, Chairman

*[Signature]*, Commissioner

*[Signature]*, Commissioner