

October 7, 2024

Monday, 5:30 p.m.

The Board of Bourbon County Commissioners met in open session with Commissioners Harris and Whisenhunt and the County Clerk present.

Jean Tucker, Clint Walker, Rachel Walker, Michael Wunderly, Tim Emerson, Pete Owenby, Troy Schell, Jason Silvers, Anne Dare, Michael Hoyt, Debbi Shepard, Shirley Locke, Deb Martin, and Vance Eden were present for some or all of the meeting.

Jim opened the meeting and led the flag salute.

Brandon made a motion to approve the consent agenda which includes approval of minutes from 9/30/2024 and 10/4/2024, approval of payroll totaling \$289,779.42, and approval of accounts payable totaling \$558,232.10. Jim seconded the motion and all approved.

Eric Bailey, Public Works Director, presented the culvert report for September for approval. Eric stated the fuel report was emailed to the Commissioners and the prices are looking good. Eric said FEMA will be here tomorrow to look at Quadrant One of the county and will be checking repairs, debris removal, and culverts that were replaced. Eric said the sales tax came in a little higher than they thought and he plans to do 3000 feet of Maple Road east of 55<sup>th</sup> Street so that they can do preventative maintenance on it next year. Eric stated after they do that, they will put the asphalt equipment up for the year and focus on crack sealing as there are several places that are in need due to the dry weather. Eric said they are hauling gravel and will be taking the screen out to make road rock at the quarry. Eric stated there was some confusion on social media and he wanted to clarify the railroad crossing on Jayhawk Road will be closed Wednesday through Friday according to BNSF. Eric said that the BNSF release noted that they will be working on railroad crossings from Wall Street south into Crawford County. Eric said that he understands residents will be inconvenienced which is why we put the notice out on our website, Facebook page, and the local media sources so that everyone is aware. Eric stated he also contacted the three business in the area of the Jayhawk Road closure. There was road grader training last week which went well and the road graders are working on ditches now to try to improve water flow. Eric stated that there are some areas that look rough and that they will bring in rock if needed. Eric said he was contacted about removing the speed limit sign on Eagle Road between Highway 69 and 255<sup>th</sup> Street but he is going to wait as there is still gravel that needs to be added to the shoulders to complete the road work. Eric said he attended a

Southeast Kansas Regional Planning Commission safety task force meeting via Zoom and handed out a sheet to the Commissioners to outline what was discussed and stated a comprehensive plan is being put together and there will be grant opportunities later. Eric stated that Bright Speed will move their phone line on 85<sup>th</sup> Street between Xavier and Yale Roads so that we can finish mowing both sides of the road. Eric stated the area on Xavier Road going up the hill has bedrock showing so they will have to bring in dirt and clay and then lay rock on top of that to fix the road. Eric stated false information was on social media stating that Bourbon County is going to drain Elm Creek Lake and make it into a rock quarry. Eric said that the Commissioners are only going to take core samples on the area in the southeast corner that the county owns to test the quality of the rock to see if a quarry is feasible. Eric reiterated that we are not going to drain nor close Elm Creek Lake.

Sheriff Bill Martin and Eric Bailey discussed the safety committee that the Commissioners asked Eric to form. Sheriff Martin stated last week KWORCC came in and explained the safety committee and what would be needed and required. Sheriff Martin said this is a brand-new program with KWORCC and currently only 6 out of the 80 members have formed a committee. Sheriff Martin stated the savings to the county would be \$6,000 per year and the committee would need to consist of at least 6-8 members. Sheriff Martin said the Commissioners will need to decide if we are going to form a safety committee or if we want to wait a year for KWORCC to get the program established. Eric said that they have 12 county employees who have volunteered to be on the committee and that includes public works employees and elected officials. After discussion it was decided to have departments work in house on their safety plans and get an update from KWORCC in six months.

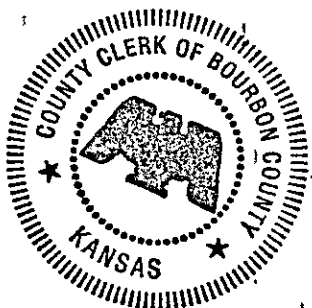
Jennifer Hawkins, County Clerk, discussed the upcoming General Election and went over what electioneering is. Jennifer stated that KSA 25-2430 outlines electioneering and defines it as "knowingly attempting to persuade or influence eligible voters to vote for or against a particular candidate, party or question submitted, including wearing, exhibiting or distributing labels, signs, posters, stickers other materials that clearly identify a candidate in the election or clearly indicate support or opposition to a question submitted election within any polling place on election day or advance voting site during the time period allowed by law for casting a ballot by advance voting or within a radius of 250 feet from the entrance thereof." Jennifer explained this means that there cannot be any t-shirts, hats, flags on vehicles, magnets on vehicles, pins, or other wearable advertisement containing a candidate's name or slogan. Jennifer said that the statute exempts "bumper stickers that are affixed to a motor vehicle that is used to transport voters to a polling place or to an advance voting site for the purpose of voting." Jennifer said that any political yard signs near a polling place cannot be within 250 feet of an entrance. Jennifer stated a lot of people do not know about electioneering so she is going to get the information on our website and in the newspapers.

Brandon said that they have been working on getting communication towers put up in the northwest part of the county for several years. Brandon said there is \$125,000 in ARPA funds that need to be allocated by the end of the year and suggested using the funds on the communication towers as it will be used to get radio signal for our first responders. Jim said that they need \$106,000 for the hospital from the ARPA funds. Jim said that \$500,000 total is needed and they are going to use \$395,000 from the equipment fund and the rest from the ARPA fund. Jim suggested working with the CFO to look for other funds to put the towers up. Brandon said he would as he wants to get the towers up for our first responders. Jim asked County Counselor Justin Meeks to come in and speak about healthcare.

Brandon made a motion to amend the agenda to allow Justin to speak about healthcare in Bourbon County. Jim seconded the motion and all approved.

Justin Meeks said they had an unscheduled meeting today with the hospital and other players involved. Justin said that Freeman came into the healthcare discussion in May 2024 because of the work done by KRI and Legacy. Justin said that mid-August during an executive session an issue with equipment was brought up and as of today all equipment will be returned to the facility. Justin said the issue with the title to the building has been resolved and closing should occur within 5-7 business days then KRI can finalize with Freeman. Justin said the only thing left will be for the County to give Freeman \$500,000 and the City of Fort Scott will give \$600,000. Justin said Freeman will show how the money will be spent. Jim said they had a good meeting at Freeman where they met with the CEO and COO who he stated are excited with the news. Jim said Clifton has been involved in healthcare for three years and wants the public to thank him for his work as he has done a good job.

Brandon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:05. Jim seconded the motion and all approved.



THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
OF BOURBON COUNTY, KANSAS

 Chairman

 Commissioner

ATTEST:

*Jennifer Hawkins*

Jennifer Hawkins, Bourbon County Clerk

10-15-2024

Approved Date

\_\_\_\_\_, Commissioner

