

ELLSWORTH COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES

September 27, 2021

The Board of Ellsworth County Commissioners convened this 27th day of September 2021 at the Ellsworth County Courthouse. Stephen S. Dlabal, Jr., was not present for the board meeting.

Members Present:

Dennis L. Rolfs, 1st District Commissioner

Gregory C. Bender, 2nd District Commissioner

OPENING BUSINESS:

Vice Chairman Rolfs called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Commissioner Bender moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Rolfs seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-0.

Commissioner Rolfs moved to approve the Minutes for September 20, 2021. Commissioner Bender seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-0.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Sue Arensman, Register of Deeds, wanted to know if she could give Alamo the go ahead to order the water fountains. Alamo's bid was \$11,240 and the Commissioners allotted \$6,000 to this project through ARPA (America Rescue Plan Act) funds. The County has applied for another grant for water fountains through the Health Department, but the status of this grant is unknown. Commissioner Rolfs made a motion to purchase the water fountains and the installation from Alamo for \$11,240. Commissioner Bender seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-0.

APPOINTMENTS:

Murray Marston, Ellsworth County Sheriff, received \$56,000 in ARPA funds to hire two dispatchers. Sheriff Marston believes he can hire two additional dispatchers for \$60,000. Commissioner Bender asked if the County had the equipment for having two dispatchers on the same shift. Sheriff Marston said the Sheriff's Office had a makeshift console and a handheld radio although this is not ideal.

Dale Houston, Road & Bridge Supervisor, asked if he could get his credit card limit raised from \$1,500 to \$5,000. The County Clerk said she would talk to the County Attorney about the credit card policy, the current policy only allows a limit of \$2,000. Commissioner Rolfs made a motion to go into executive session to discuss non-elected personnel wages with Dale Houston and Shelly Vopat from 9:40 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. Motion carried 2-0. At 9:55 a.m. the Commissioners returned to open session with no action taken.

Jim Kirkbride, Ellsworth County Medical Center (ECMC) CEO, said ECMC is not able to get testing supplies for COVID. Unless the COVID test is due to a Hospital Admission, they are sending the tests to the State of Kansas. Mr. Kirkbride said the tax based money ECMC receives from the County will now be used for purchasing assets rather than going towards operational costs.

Stacie Schmidt, Economic Development Director, presented the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be approved. Commissioner Bender made a motion to approve the MOU for the ARPA funds for Ellsworth County. Commissioner Rolfs seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-0.

Tracey Barton and Shawn Tasset, representing the Kansas National Resource Coalition (KNRC), informed the Commissioners that KNRC works with the State of Kansas on the administration side of government for Counties. KNRC was part of the lesser prairie chicken project where they were able to bring benefits to the landowners and the Kansas Wildlife & Tourism. Mr. Tasset said they have been watching the Nation Heritage Area since 2017. KNRC's goal is to safeguard the landowners and the County tax base. The membership dues are \$5,000 a year. The Commissioners felt this decision should be made when Commissioner Dlabal could be in attendance. Ms. Barton invited the Commissioners to attend a webinar on October 21st.

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice Chairman Rolfs adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Shelly D. Vopat, County Clerk

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