

Board of Crawford County Commissioners

Commissioners' Journal

2024, SEVENTH MEETING

CRAWFORD COUNTY COURTHOUSE, COMMISSIONERS' BOARD ROOM
Girard, KS. Friday, January 26, 2024 10:00 AM

The Crawford County Board of Commissioners met pursuant to Kansas Statutes.

Annotated Chapter 19, Article 2, Section 18 in due and regular session with open doors.

Commissioner Carl Wood served as the presiding officer.

Commissioners Bruce Blair and Tom Moody were in attendance.

County Clerk Lisa Lusker and County Counselor Jim Emerson were seated with the Board.

Chairman Wood led the Pledge of Allegiance.

UNDER THE HEADING BUSINESS FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING CONSENT AGENDA

On motion (24-053) of Commissioner Moody and the second of Commissioner Blair that the consent agenda be approved including:

1. Approval of the **January 23, 2024** minutes of the Board of County Commissioners, and
2. Authorizing the Chairman to sign the previous week's vouchers.

Yeas: Commissioners Moody, Blair and Wood

Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

The motion prevailed and the consent agenda was approved.

SIGNING OF MOTIONS

The County Clerk presented the following motions for Commissioners' signatures:

Motion 24	45	That the consent agenda be approved including: Approval of the January 19, 2024 minutes
Motion 24	46	To approve giving the 2024 Rock bids to Triad Engineering for review and recommendation
Motion 24	47	To approve the ARPA drawdown request for January 2024
Motion 24	48	To approve the health insurance coverage for an additional Crawford County Soil Conservation District employee during the training period

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Motion 24	49	To recess this open session and go into a closed executive session for a period of not more than 20 minutes to discuss Non-Elected Personnel to discuss county employees and to include the Board of County Commissioners and to reconvene by 10:37 AM
Motion 24	50	To approve payment of \$44,000 for a 2015 Freightliner Semi Truck to Purple Wave and to pay the funds from the Road & Bridge Equipment Reserve Fund
Motion 24	51	To recess this open session and go into a closed executive session for a period of not more than 15 minutes to discuss Non-Elected Personnel to discuss county employees and to include the Board of County Commissioners and County Counselor Jim Emerson and to reconvene by 10:53 AM
Motion 24	52	To recess this open session and go into a closed executive session for a period of not more than 20 minutes to discuss Non-Elected Personnel to discuss the county employees and to include the Board of County Commissioners and County Counselor Jim Emerson and to reconvene by 11:14 AM

UNDER THE HEADING NEW BUSINESS

PROCLAMATION AND ORDERS OF THE BOARD

MESSAGES FROM CRAWFORD CO LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND OPENING OF ANNOUNCED BIDS

MESSAGES FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Item One: Crawford County Attorney Reina Probert requested an executive session for 15 minutes to discuss Non-Elected Personnel.

On motion (24-054) of Commissioner Moody and the second of Commissioner Blair to recess this open session and go into a closed executive session for a period of not more than 15 minutes to discuss Non-Elected Personnel to discuss the attorney’s office and to include the Board of County Commissioners, County Counselor Jim Emerson, and County Attorney Reina Probert, and to reconvene by 10:21 AM.

Yeas: Commissioners Moody, Blair and Wood

Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

The motion prevailed.

The Commissioners went into Executive Session at 10:06 AM and reconvened the Open Session at 10:18 AM with no action taken except to go back into open session.

MESSAGES FROM THE PUBLIC

Item One: Mr. Don Brown and Mr. Michael Clancy, RenoDry USA addressing Courthouse basement. Mr. Clancy stated that they had done an inspection of the Courthouse basement in December 2023 and that there were some flooding issues due to

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the rain that had occurred, but he mentioned that the flooding aside there is a severe issue with moisture climbing the foundation from the basement. He explained to the Commissioners that when the moisture level is high it also has a high salt level which gets inside the masonry and expands causing a good amount of damage. Mr. Clancy mentioned the areas nearby that they have helped including the Memorial Hall in Fort Scott and Commissioner Moody asked if that had been done about 12 months ago and Mr. Clancy confirmed it was around 7 to 8 months ago. Commissioner Moody asked if they should start seeing progress in this short amount of time and it was answered that they absolutely should. Commissioner Wood mentioned he thinks it is more important to first control the water that is coming in and causing flooding which contributes to the moisture problem as well or else he believes it will just be a constant battle fighting the moisture within the walls already. He mentioned he is not doubting their procedure but believes the source needs to be stopped first before drying out and continuing on. Commissioner Moody asked where the water goes after they install their equipment because its still going to continue on its path when it comes through the cracks of sidewalks and ground. Mr. Clancy stated they dry out the buildings and make it easier to identify where the source of the moisture is so that it is easier to find and fix. He stated until the dry out the building they will not know where the source of the water is coming from. Commissioner Wood asked about their equipment and Mr. Clancy stated its not a machine and that it is actually a series of antennas that produce frequency and break up the bond of the molecules so that it cannot cling to the masonry. Commissioner Blair asked what their longest job has been and Mr. Brown mentioned he believes their longest client has been a courthouse in Minnesota and that they have been working with them for about 6 years now. There was some more discussion about how the water is making its way down to the foundation of the courthouse.

MESSAGES FROM OTHER GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES

Item One: Mr. Jay Byers with City of Pittsburg discussing some of the roads in Pittsburg. He stated they are trying to find a way to secure some funding for these roads to be fixed around the industrial parks and some around residential area. He is specifically addressing the roads from Highway 160 down to Atkinson, and from Free Kings Highway to Rouse. He mentioned that these roads need to be completely rebuilt because they were never made for the type of traffic that they are experiencing and that his is a very expensive project being an estimated 6 million dollars per mile. This funding is outside of the city's ability. Mr. Byers mentioned they are looking for some grant funding and would like to apply for a specific grant and he mentioned that he is not the greatest at putting together the information to apply for these grants as it is a very specific and difficult process. He mentioned he was able to do some of this in the previous year to apply but that it is beyond his capacity. Mr. Byers said he discussed with TranSystems, an engineering firm, in regards to this and mentioned that they have great knowledge on these grant applications and to get this engineering firm to put together these grant proposals will also be costly. The quoted amount for TranSystems to put together the grant proposals for the City of Pittsburg is \$53,000 and he is asking if the Commissioners would be willing to split the cost of this amount with the City of Pittsburg. Commissioner Moody asked what all districts this area covers and he asked if Mr. Byers has reached out and discussed with the City of Frontenac since it is in close proximity to them as well. He mentioned they have tried to discuss with them in the past. Commissioner

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Wood asked about the land the City of Pittsburg owns within the industrial park area and asked if that is going to be developed with existing plans already or if they are unsure of what will be placed there and Mr. Byers mentioned he is unsure but knows that there is a great deal of interest within the industrial park and anticipate a considerable development of that area within the next five years. Commissioner Wood mentioned from 4th street to Atkinson he gets several complaints about truck traffic through there and stated this is a problem that needs fixed as well. Commissioner Wood asked if they had any plans on expanding further north in the industrial park and he mentioned that at this time they do not have plans to do that. Commissioner Moody said he is not in favor of splitting this cost until they discuss with the City of Frontenac because he mentioned he does not understand how they are going to carry out this project if a percentage of it is within Frontenac and they are not on board with it. Mr. Byers mentioned in the past they have not been opposed to the project because it is a safety concern and he does foresee any issues with this. Commissioner Wood stated he already discussed with County Counselor Jim Emerson about this and that they have \$20,000 in future infrastructure within the ARPA funding and Mr. Emerson confirmed this and stated this would qualify. Commissioner Wood asked how much he thought would come of this grant and he mentioned he believes it will be a 90/10 contribution but could possibly end up being an 80/20 contribution. Commissioner Moody said they can try to set up a meeting with City of Frontenac and Mr. Emerson called on Wednesday to try to discuss with them but the gentleman he needs to speak with was out and he left a message for him but has not heard back from him. Commissioner Blair asked what their timeline was for this and Mr. Byers stated the grant is due on February 28th but that they need to know as soon as possible. Mr. Emerson stated he believes the chances are better when using TranSystems. Mr. Emerson will try to contact City of Frontenac again and Commissioner Moody stated h will stop by as well. Commissioner Wood asked if the grant proposal will only include City of Pittsburg and Mr. Byers mentioned he would like it to include the county as well and Frontenac too if they decided to pitch in. Commissioner Wood stated Mr. Emerson will be in contact with Mr. Byers.

MESSAGES FROM APPOINTED OFFICIALS NEW BUSINESS

Item One: County Clerk Lisa Lusker presented a Tax Roll Correction, correcting an error in the assessing of Personal Property owned by Jay Hodges and to request an abatement in the amount of \$30.16 from the 2020 and the amount of \$22.72 from the 2021 tax rolls. Ms. Lusker explained Mr. Hodges is deceased and passed away in 2019. The County was notified of his death in 2021 and the 2010 Rivercraft trailer was deleted for 2022 but failed to remove for 2020 & 2021.

On motion (24-055) of Commissioner Moody and the second of Commissioner Wood to approve the Tax Roll Correction, correcting an error in the assessing of Personal Property owned by Jay Hodges and to request a refund in the amount of \$30.16 from the 2020 tax rolls and \$22.72 from the 2021 tax rolls and authorize the Chairman to sign.

Yeas: Commissioners Moody, Blair and Wood

Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

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The motion prevailed.

Item Two: Ms. Lusker presented the funds requests for Elderly, Historical, Special Alcohol, and Parks and Recreation funding that they discussed earlier today in a work session to distribute the funding. She stated she needs a motion to accept these requests as well as three signatures.

On motion (24-056) of Commissioner Moody and the second of Commissioner Wood to approve the Elderly, Historical, Special Alcohol, and Parks and Recreation funding requests for 2024 as presented.

Yeas: Commissioners Moody, Blair and Wood

Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

The motion prevailed.

Item Three: Ms. Lusker stated that Lyle from Red Cross came in to the office with the votes from the annual Battle of the Badges chili cook off. She mentioned that every year her office tallies the votes they receive at this event and this year the fire department won with 56 votes and the police department received 40 votes.

Item Four: County Counselor Jim Emerson mentioned he had a request for a work session from Communications Director Tim Mikrut on Tuesday January 30th at 9:30 AM to discuss the towers in Arma. The Commissioners agreed.

Item Five: Mr. Emerson discussed that County day at the Capitol is approaching on Thursday, February 8th from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM and is a newer event that is taking place. He stated he has not been able to attend either of the years that it has occurred and he mentioned that since they are interested in some of the legislature taking place that it would not hurt to attend this year. He mentioned that since it starts so early in the day they would probably need to go the night before and if anyone is wanting to go they need to let Mr. Emerson know by next Tuesday so he can register them. Commissioner Wood asked if it will only be the KAC putting this one and he said he believes you get set up at the Capitol and then have options on what you would like to listen to or who you would like to speak with. He also explained to Commissioner Wood that this is a different event than what he is thinking of.

Item Six: Mr. Emerson discussed an overall ARPA update. He mentioned they have a report that is due in about a month and they have \$19,090 that has never been allocated. He said they would like to have that allocated before they do the report so that it will show that all of their money has been allocated, and to do this he discussed that there are two spots to put it which includes Administration or the Future Infrastructure. They can move it somewhere else, if necessary, later on down the road but that those are two options on where it can be put for now. Commissioner Moody asked if Mr. Emerson has a preference on where it gets put and he answered that he does not have a preference. Mr. Emerson also mentioned they are contacting different entities that have outstanding funds to get an update but that they are really wanting an in person update on the Large Childcare projects and preferably in late February or early March so that they can plan to

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have representatives present in the meeting for that update. Commissioner Moody said he would prefer late February and Commissioners Blair and Wood stated that would be okay with them. Mr. Emerson suggested either Friday, February 23rd or Tuesday, February 27th. Commissioner Wood asked if this would include all updates or just childcare and Mr. Emerson stated for now it would just be for the Large Childcare project.

On motion (24-057) of Commissioner Moody and the second of Commissioner Wood to allocate \$19,090 of ARPA funding in to the Administration account.

Yeas: Commissioners Moody, Blair, and Wood

Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

The motion prevailed.

Item Seven: Commissioner Blair discussed a road problem on 70th starting at Gooding road and going back to the South. He said there was fly ash put on years ago and that it raises to the surface and causes thick, black mud. A couple houses on this route have paid for dust control which seems to help it a bit and he wants someone to come assess and see what they can do about this issue. He mentioned it is about a four mile distance which includes a lot of material and has been a problem for years. The freezing has brought it to the surface and he just does not know how to go about fixing it yet. Commissioner Wood says he is curious if they could grind it up, put some rock in, and then seal it off and Commissioner Blair says they have continuously put rock on it and it has not solved their problem unfortunately.

OLD BUSINESS

Item One: Mr. Emerson addressed putting out for bids the storage facility by the Sheriff's department that has previously been discussed in work sessions. He said that they have specs laid out for the building and for equipment needed and he believes there is plenty of detail included now for them to be ready for this. He explained that bids will be due Thursday, March 7th and will be opened Friday, March 8th. Commissioner Wood asked who designed this and Mr. Emerson answered Steve Birchmeier designed and also Rebecca Kelly was involved as well. He mentioned the first bid will be the stand alone building for the Clerk's office and then there will be an alternate bid for a building the same size for Emergency Management. Mr. Emerson said that the drawings were gone over with the architect and that they have not yet had any questions with the specs. Commissioner Wood asked if there is any prep work that can be done by the county to save money or if it is a turn key job but Mr. Emerson said he believes it is a turn key job. Commissioner Wood asked Ms. Lusker if she could show him the specs after the meeting and she answered yes, she could.

On motion (24-058) of Commissioner Blair and the second of Commissioner Moody to advertise for bids on the storage facility by the Sheriff's Department.

Yeas: Commissioners Moody, Blair, and Wood

Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

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The motion prevailed.

Item Two: Commissioner Blair said he had Mr. Emerson look up some information for him yesterday in regards to some questions on the windfarms and what the county's role is in it. Commissioner Blair stated that since three quarters of the county is unzoned he stated there is nothing we can really do and moratorium on windfarms can only be effective if the county is planning on zoning and is the final step to being able to buy some time and therefore, the ultimate answer to someone being unfavorable of the windfarms in an unzoned area of the county is to do countywide zoning. Mr. Emerson stated this is correct. Mr. Emerson explained he did a lot of research yesterday and the whole purpose of doing a moratorium is to be allowed some time to study the issue and he believes it would be a good time to go over our comprehensive plan that needs updated because the last time it was looked at was 2002. He mentioned he talked to other counties that are also doing this process and they have had some luck with it and to do a moratorium though he mentions they really need to hear from the public. He explained that this will also heavily involve the zoning department. Mr. Emerson also mentioned you would not have to fully zone the entire county, but could even just extend the boundary to protect some more of the desired areas. Commissioner Blair asked what the process looks like if someone were to want to extend the zoned boundary and Mr. Emerson said that would come about in the comprehensive plan process that includes several public hearings as well.

Item Three: Commissioner Moody brought up the Franklin bypass projects cleaning up the properties. He mentioned the location is good and it has begun today. Mr. Emerson mentioned he listened to a hearing on Sedgwick county's nuisance bill and he felt like their director of codes explained to the committee very well on how that law will help the county.

EXECUTIVE SESSION continued

Item Two: County Counselor Jim Emerson requested an executive session for 15 minutes to discuss Non-Elected Personnel.

On motion (24-059) of Commissioner Wood and the second of Commissioner Moody to recess this open session and go into a closed executive session for a period of not more than 15 minutes to discuss Non-Elected Personnel to discuss county employees and to include the Board of County Commissioners and County Counselor Jim Emerson and to reconvene by 11:49 AM.

Yeas: Commissioners Moody, Blair and Wood

Nays:

Present but not voting:

Absent or not voting:

The motion prevailed.

The Commissioners went into Executive Session at 11:34 AM and reconvened the Open Session at 11:42 AM with no action taken except to go back into open session.

OLD BUSINESS continued

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Item Four: Mr. Emerson mentioned they have discussed raises for county employees in a couple of different meetings trying to find the best way to handle it for this year. He believes the fair solution they have come up with would be cost of living increase at 3% rate with a minimum raise of \$0.60 per hour and a maximum raise of \$1.00 per hour, a \$200/month increase for elected officials, a \$100/month increase in Commissioner vehicle allowance and this will be effective at a back date of December 21, 2023. Mr. Emerson mentioned Director of Fiscal Services Randi Ryan should be able to get this taken care of on the next payroll at the end of February.

On motion (24-060) of Commissioner Wood and the second of Commissioner Blair to approve a cost-of-living increase for county employees at a rate of 3% with a minimum raise of 60 cents per hour and a maximum raise of \$1.00 per hour, to approve a \$200.00 per month increase for Elected Officials, and to approve an increase in the County Commissioner vehicle allowance by \$100.00 per month with these increases effective retroactive to December 21, 2023.

Yeas: Commissioners Wood, Blair, and Moody

Nays:

Present and not voting:

Absent or not voting:

The motion prevailed.

UNDER THE HEADING FUTURE BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

FUTURE BUSINESS:

Item One: January 30, 2024 – 9:30 AM Work session with Communications Director Tim Mikrut for update on Arma towers.

Item Two: January 30, 2024 – 10:00 AM Public hearing on vacating Platted Alleys & Streets located in Knecht's Addition and Aurelio Rondelli Subdivision, Crawford County, Kansas.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Item One: February 8th, 2024 – 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM County Day at the Capitol. One or more Commissioners may be in attendance.

UNDER THE HEADING MOTION TO ADJOURN MOTION TO ADJOURN

Item One: Adjournment

On the motion of Commissioner Wood and the second of Commissioner Moody to adjourn the [January 26, 2024](#) meeting of the Board of Crawford County Commissioners at 11:44 AM and to reconvene at the next regularly scheduled time with open doors.

Yeas: Commissioners Moody, Blair and Wood

Nays:

Present but not voting:

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Absent or not voting:

The motion prevailed.

In Testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed my official seal and submitted these minutes for the approval of the Board of Crawford County Commissioners.

Lisa Lusker
County Clerk

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This submission completed at the Crawford County Courthouse in Girard.

[Taken RJA 1/29/2024 2:00 PM/amended BKW 1/29/2024 3:35 PM](#)