

REPUBLIC COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES
MONDAY, MAY 23, 2022

The Republic County Commission met in regular session on Monday, May 23, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. at the Republic County Courthouse. Commissioners present were Melvin Jeardoe, Edwin Splichal and Doug Garman. Clerk Kathleen Marsicek was present to record the minutes. Deb Hadachek from The Belleville Telescope monitored the meeting.

The meeting was called to order and attendees pledged allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

Pastor Sang Hak Lee, United Methodist Church in Belleville, offered Morning Prayer.

Commissioner Splichal made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion. Commissioner Garman made it unanimous.

Commissioner Jeardoe made a motion to approve the May 16, 2022 minutes. Commissioner Splichal seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Accounts payable vouchers were approved in the amount of \$221,725.14.

Kelvin Blecha and Will Pachta, North Central Kansas Free Fair, requested additional funds to finish the remodeling of the commercial hall addition of inside restrooms. Commissioner Garman inquired what other funding has been applied and awarded or savings funds that are being used. Blecha said that the fair board has used \$40,000 of available fair funds, \$36,000 from the Republic County Foundation grant and the \$60,000 the county pledged but an estimated \$71,000 is needed to finish the project.

The consensus of the board is to assist with the completion of the project with Capital building funds since Republic County owns the building however, the commissioners want a more exact amount necessary to finish the project.

Tommy Koko, Allen Anderson, Billy Wilkins from NextEra joined the meeting along with Tony Strnad Cheryl Runft, Janice Thomas, Debra Filipi, Todd Filipi, Joe Strnad, Marilyn Pachta, Jim Pachta, David Strnad, Chris Pachta, Ella Pachta Robert Lahodny, Annette Bredthauer, Joanne Filinger, Jeanette Sheets, Barbara Fisher, Arlen Clayton, Jennifer Loring as concerned citizens and Dorothy Barnette from CEP.

Barnette introduced herself as part of Climate & Energy Program (CEP) and she invited everyone to join a tour of the Cloud County Windfarm projects on June 1. There will be two tours, the first at 11:00 a.m. and the second at 6:00 p.m. Barnette announced there would be a social time on Thursday, June 2 at 8:30 a.m. at the Belleville Library for a time of question and answers regarding wind energy.

Wilkins announced that many of the citizens in attendance are landowners that have agreed to have turbines on their property. Wilkins and Anderson presented a list of several frequently asked questions with answers regarding wind energy. Issues such as setback, wildlife studies and health issues to people are covered in the handout.

Hadachek asked if the original conditional use agreement from 2016 was still valid. Anderson replied that yes that agreement is still valid even though the original windfarm project is not.

Pachta explained that he and his family are in full support of the wind farm project and it will be good for Republic County.

Filinger stated that landowners that have signed contracts are not taking the rights of their neighbors' property into consideration and it has caused conflicts for many.

Bredthauer advised that the commissioners need to treat all citizens equally and not show favoritism between the citizens with signed contracts and the citizens that don't have contracts.

Cindy Coons, County Treasurer and Travis Boyer, Deputy County Clerk joined the meeting.

At 9:35 a.m., Commissioner Splichal made a motion to recess into executive session for 10 minutes to discuss non-elected personnel regarding paid time off. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion. Commissioner Garman made it unanimous. Those attending the session were the commissioners, Coons, Boyer and Clerk Marsicek.

The board reconvened at 9:45 a.m., taking no action.

Belleville City Mayor Adam Robertson, Belleville City Manager Adam Anderson and Belleville City Councilman James Doyle joined the meeting to update the commissioners on projects in Belleville.

- Doyle asked permission to have the county assist in the loading of dirt being removed from the water drainage area near the Loves' industrial area. Doyle is requesting that the dirt be delivered to the Highbanks racetrack infield. Permission was granted.
- Anderson reported that the fuel tanks at the joint fueling center need to be inspected and asked if the county could use bucket trucks to assist in inspection. Permission was granted.
- Anderson is working with the sheriff's office to compromise the book-in fees for city inmates that will be processed in city court not District Court.
- Robertson and Anderson explained one issue relating to Economic Development of the vacant grassy lot beside Astra Bank. The city had requested seal bids to purchase the lot for projects but the city council has refused all bids.
- The City of Belleville is developing goals that will draw people to Belleville and keep them in Republic County.

Katherine Wilber, concerned citizen, reported that she has contacted Johnson Monument regarding rock for the front steps and left a message for Hoge Masonry to contact her about this project. Wilber does not have a firm quote because she needs the dimensions of the area needing fixed. Wilber will be sending a letter to the Kansas Historical Society and will ask others to send letters to assist with the repairs of the front steps.

Kenneth Robbins, Highway, Transportation and Bridge Administrator presented for review:

- The weekly community concerns and projects completed report.
- Robbins is short 5 employees at the R&B department.
- Robbins announced additional culverts have been ordered for the road repairs with damaged culverts.
- Robbins presented for approval to utility agreements between Rural Water District #2 and Republic County.
 - Waterline under 260 Rd at sections 18 and 17, T-2, R-1W

- Waterline under 150 Rd at sections 20 and 16, T-3, R-3W.
- The last City to hold a cleanup is Republic on June 6.

Commissioner Splichal reported that he attended the Juvenile Detention meeting last week.

Trish Voth from Foulston Law Firm joined the meeting.

At 10:25 a.m., Commissioner Jeardoe made a motion to recess into executive session for 30 minutes to discuss Attorney Client information regarding the proposed windfarm agreements. Commissioner Splichal seconded the motion which was made unanimous by Commissioner Garman. Attending the session were the commissioners, Voth and Robbins.

The board reconvened at 10:55 a.m., taking no action.

At 11:00 a.m., Commissioner Garman made a motion to recess into executive session for 1 hour to discuss Attorney Client information regarding the proposed windfarm agreements. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion which was made unanimous by Commissioner Splichal. Attending the session were the commissioners and Voth.

The board reconvened at 12:00 p.m., taking no action.

At 12:01 p.m., Commissioner Garman made a motion to recess into executive session for 20 minutes to discuss Attorney Client information regarding the proposed windfarm agreements. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion which was made unanimous by Commissioner Splichal. Attending the session were the commissioners and Voth.

The board reconvened at 12:21 p.m., taking no action.

At 12:22 p.m., Commissioner Splichal made a motion to recess into executive session for 10 minutes to discuss Attorney Client information regarding the proposed windfarm agreements. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion which was made unanimous by Commissioner Garman. Attending the session were the commissioners and Voth.

The board reconvened at 12:32 p.m., requesting Trish return with updated agreements on June 6.

Filinger and Bredthauer returned to the meeting following the executive sessions. Filinger asked the commissioners to take into consideration the setback issues planned by NextEra measure from the residence foundation not their property line. Filinger also wants to know what the complaint procedure is and if the turbines are built the concrete base will use an extreme amount of water. Filinger uses well water and if the project to build these bases use that water, how will the land owner water their livestock let alone have residential water?

Filinger and Bredthauer thanked the commissioners for taking their time before making a decision on this project.

Commissioner Garman appreciated the important questions and no matter how this issue turns out someone is not going to agree, but the commissioners' goal is to do what is best for the county.

Commissioner Garman announced that all the material supplied from the Republic County Responsible Wind Energy Group has been received and carefully reviewed by all the commissioners. The Commissioners do appreciate the work and research.

Commissioner Jeardoe announced that he will be attending the Pawnee Mental Health meeting on Tuesday, May 24.

After reviewing the requested promotion of Nick Baxa to Deputy Register of Deeds, Commissioner Splichal made a motion to approve the promotion and wage increase from \$12.00 to \$12.75. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion. Commissioner Garman made it unanimous.

Discussion regarding the future of the Republic County Health Department services was held and the decision to search for a new Health Department Administrator and staff is priority.

Commissioner Garman made a motion to create a search committee to assist with the hiring of the employees of the Health Department. Commissioner Splichal seconded the motion which was made unanimous by Commissioner Jeardoe.

In the meantime, the commissioners have appointed Dr. Nolan Beavers as the Medical Director and Medical Officer through 2022 to meet the requirements to maintain Home Health services.

The Commissioners requested that a public service announcement be on the radio and Belleville Cunningham station to announce that the only services allowed at the Health Department will be the Home Health services offered to private pay clients.

At 1:30 p.m. Commissioner Jeardoe made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Splichal seconded the motion. Commissioner Garman made it unanimous.

Due to Memorial Day on Monday, May 30, the next regular meeting will be on Tuesday, May 31, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. at the Republic County Courthouse.

ATTEST: _____
Kathleen L. Marsicek, Republic County Clerk

APPROVED: _____
Doug Garman – Chair

Edwin Splichal – Member

Melvin Jeardoe– Member