

REPUBLIC COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES

MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2020

The Republic County Commission met in regular session at the Rolling Hills Conference room on Monday, March 23, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. Commissioners present were Melvin Jeardoe and Edwin Splichal. Marvin Bergstrom was absent. Clerk Kathleen Marsicek was present to record the minutes. Deb Hadachek, The Belleville Telescope, observed the meeting.

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

Pastor Rick Snodgrass, Crossroads Assembly of God Church of Belleville, offered Morning Prayer.

Commissioner Splichal made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner Splichal made a motion to approve the March 16, 2020 minutes and the minutes from March 19, 2020 special meeting. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Accounts payable vouchers in the amount of \$385,604.13 were approved.

The Commissioners advised Pastor Snodgrass to cancel the annual Easter Egg hunt on the Saturday prior to Easter. Knowing many will be disappointed, commissioners suggested some type of activity after the pandemic has passed.

Raymond Raney, Emergency Management Director, and Danielle Swanson, Health Department Administrator updated the commission on COVID-19. At this time, there are 15 counties reporting at least one confirmed case. The closest county is Mitchell. Raney arranged for pickup of safety supplies for Republic County Medical and Emergency groups. Raney and Swanson listen to multiple conference calls daily to stay abreast of changes within the state.

At 9:15 a.m., Commissioner Jeardoe made a motion to enter executive session to discuss non-elected personnel performance for 10 minutes. Commissioner Splichal seconded the motion. Motion carried. Attending the session were the commissioners, Swanson and Clerk Marsicek.

The board reconvened at 9:25 a.m. Commissioner Jeardoe made a motion to appoint Danielle Swanson as Republic County Health Officer effective March 23, 2020. Commissioner Splichal seconded the motion.

Sheriff Ron Blad asked permission to continue to use the courthouse basement as a tornado shelter if needed during this time. Commissioners granted permission.

Justin Ferrell, County Attorney, explained that should Republic County have a positive case of COVID-19, there needs to be a resolution stating protocol of action to keep others safe. Several businesses have voluntarily closed inside services and use drive up or curbside services, however, there are some eating facilities that are trying to adhere to 10 people or less and social distancing or are not putting any restriction on number of people. The County Health Officer has the final decision to shutting down any and all business but the local law enforcement must back that person. Not following these limitations is a Class C Misdemeanor with a ticket and fine only.

Kelvin Blecha and Will Popelka, North Central Kansas (NCK) Fair Board, requested a financial commitment from Republic County before a grant application is filed. The commitment is to assist

with the remodeling of the commercial building by removing the outside restrooms and granting access by both inside and outside the building.

Commissioner Splichal made a motion to commit \$60,000 from the Capital Building Reserve if the NCK Fair board's grant is approved. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Kay Shoemaker and Mike Hadachek, Republic County Development (RCD), announced that Kansas Department of Commerce CDBG Program is encouraging immediate use of the Revolving Loan Fund monies to support the working capital needs of local businesses in Republic County. There is \$400,000 avail. The loans must be used for working capital with a 3-year repayment, no interest and with no principal payment for the first 4 months. Applications will be processed first come first served.

Commissioner Splichal made a motion to authorize RCD officers to approve all loans that meet the requirements. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Shoemaker announced that there would be a regular meeting of the RCD held on Wednesday, March 25. Because there will be more than 10 persons, the people will be split into two buildings and joined by electronic conferencing.

Dusty Zenger, Highway and Solid Waste Director, presented and discussed with the Commissioners the following:

- Zenger announced that maintenance division of the Kansas Department of Transportation is closed for 2 weeks administrative leave.
- Zenger stated that since the weather is not cooperating, the bridge crew is working in the county yard and the road crews are maintaining where they can.
- Since the recycling center is not accepting anything the solid waste department has suspended the pick up of the recycling trailers.
- Zenger explained his concern for the transportation drivers being in contact with the general public during the pandemic and asked if services could be suspended for the next two weeks, but asked for wages for the drivers for their regular hours. The commissioners agreed to allow the suspension of the bus starting March 30 and each driver will receive their regular allotted wages.

Commissioner Jeardoe read an email request for a letter of support for the Blair Center for the Arts to apply for a grant. Commissioner Splichal made a motion to sign the letter of support for the Blair Center for the Arts. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion. Motion carried.

At 10:35 a.m., Commissioner Jeardoe made a motion to recess into executive session for 5 minutes to discuss confidential data regarding financial data of a private business in regards to physician recruitment. Commissioner Splichal seconded the motion. Attending the session were the commissioners and Hadachek. Commissioner Jeardoe requested an additional 5 minutes.

The board reconvened at 10:45 a.m. taking no action.

Beth Ball, Deputy Clerk, presented the commissioners with the new Families First Coronavirus Response Act (HR 6201) update for COVID-19 effective April 2, 2020. Employees can use the new FMLA to take necessary time off to take care of themselves and loved ones during the pandemic. Ball is concerned with employees not getting paid if the county shuts down for 2 or more weeks as precaution.

The consensus of the board is to pay every employee for 80 hours of regular pay if the county is on lock down. After that, the board will re-evaluate the labor laws pertaining to the situation.

With agenda items completed, Commissioner Jeardoe made a motion to adjourn at 11:30 a.m. to attend the Republic County Hospital Board meeting. Commissioner Splichal seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The next regular meeting will be on Monday, March 30, 2020, beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the Commercial Hall at the North Central Kansas Fair Grounds.

ATTEST: _____
Kathleen L. Marsicek – County Clerk

APPROVED: _____
Melvin Jeardoe – Chair

Edwin Splichal– Member

Marvin Bergstrom – Member