

MINUTES OF
BOARD OF HARVEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
August 5, 2013

The Board of Harvey County Commissioners met in regular session on August 5, 2013 with all three Commissioners present. Chairman Westfall called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

ITEMS ADDED TO AGENDA:

1. Commissioner Krehbiel talked about the flooding that occurred over the weekend and continues at the current time. He has talked with Gina Bell, Director of Planning, Zoning, & Environmental, and suggested that the high water be monitored to determine whether what is occurring is in accordance with the newly drawn FEMA flood maps.
2. Chairman Westfall announced that the Demolition Derby will be held on August 24th at 7:00 p.m. He also reported that the Bull Blowout that is scheduled for this evening will be held despite the rain and muddy grounds, however, some of the bleachers that are normally used for the event will not be there because they are unable to move them there because of the mud.
3. Chairman Westfall reported that someone attending the Harvey County Fair this weekend approached him and told him that he would like the Fairgrounds to be moved to the new location because of all the traffic, noise, and confusion created in the current location. Commissioner Westfall also said that Ann Religa, 4-H Extension Agent, reported that ten dollars has been collected so far for the map project at the Kansas Statehouse.

CALENDAR ITEMS:

1. The Farm Bureau breakfast scheduled for Monday, August 19th at the Breadbasket is listed on the calendar to begin at 7:30 a.m. The prior breakfasts have started at 7:00 a.m. The time will be confirmed.
2. A retirement reception for Margaret Goering, who is retiring from the Health Department, will be held on August 29 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Health Department.
3. Commissioner Krehbiel will attend the Little Arkansas River Drainage District meeting on August 15 at 7:00 a.m.
4. The Republican Party Ice Cream Social will be held on August 15.
5. Byron Warta invited the Commissioners to attend a meeting with the Harvey County EDC on August 12 at the Newton Medical Center Cafeteria at 7:30 a.m.

Minutes of the July 29 Commission meeting were corrected and approved upon a motion by Commissioner Hague, seconded by Commissioner Krehbiel. Motion passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS:

1. John presented **Resolution No. 2013-15**, establishing the county road impact fee, for signing by the Commissioners. The resolution was presented and passed in last week's Commission meeting, but the Commission failed to sign it.

2. Roy Patton, Director of Solid Waste, has been in conversation with KDHE about the disposal of finished cabinet doors from the Norcraft Cabinet Company. They have been placing these in the construction and demolition landfill and KDHE has now ruled not to allow that. As a trial option, KDHE has agreed to allow the material to be ground up and segregated from other C & D material. The ground up material will then be incorporated into the soil east of the scale house at the Transfer Station. This area will be monitored for 18 months to see if this is a viable option for the disposal of this wood waste.
3. The County received an e-mail notification from KDHE stating that both East Lake and West Park have been found to have Blue Green Algae. Although the recent rains have likely eliminated the algae, KDHE will not test again until after Labor Day. Park Rangers will continue to perform the “jar test” and send the results to the State. In the mean time, warning signs have been placed at the swimming areas and boat ramps.
4. John reported that the County will continue to pursue funding for the map project at the State House.
5. A resolution to increase detention fees for state inmates will be presented to the Commission next week.
6. Lonnie Buller, Director of Emergency Management, gave the Commissioners a report on the flooding that occurred over the weekend. Several roads and approaches to bridge structures have been washed out or damaged. The northwest part of the county was hit the hardest. Rain on July 29th and 30th caused a number of homes to be damaged by flooding. Some were in the flood plain and some weren't. Bethel College was hit especially hard. Newton Fire and EMS crews assisted in the transport of nursing home patients to shelters or other facilities. A Declaration of Disaster was signed last week.
7. Sheriff T. Walton reported that they have been busy working to keep flooded roads signed and barricaded.
8. Byron Warta reported that all concrete is completed on the runway project at the Airport and the shoulder work is now being completed. The painting is scheduled to be completed by August 15th.
9. Gina Bell, Director of Planning, Zoning, and Environmental, reported that she will be participating in a conference call with the legal department of the KAC about land use issues with regard to guns.
10. Joyce Truskett, County Clerk, reported that the Election Office was able to obtain 10 electronic poll books at no cost from another county.
11. John reported that, as a part of the Harvey County Wellness Program, fresh fruit is distributed every Friday during the month of August in observance of “Fresh Fruit Friday.”

CITIZENS FORUM:

City Commissioner Bob Smyth invited everyone present to attend the budget hearing for the City of Newton to be held at the Meridian Center on Tuesday, August 13.

Warrant checks in the amount of \$451,377.98 were approved upon a motion by Commissioner Krehbiel, seconded by Commissioner Hague. Motion passed unanimously.

At 9:45 a.m. Commissioner Hague made a motion to go into executive session for a period of 20 minutes to discuss non-elected personnel issues. Commissioner Krehbiel seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously. Also in attendance for the session were John Waltner, Anthony Swartzendruber, Counselor Greg Nye, and Joyce Truskett. Executive session ended at 10:12 a.m. with no action being taken.

The meeting was recessed for a short break and reconvened at 10:25 a.m.

Jim Meier, Road & Bridge Superintendent, reported on activity in the County related to the flooding. Riverside Park at Halstead is currently under water and there is water in the City of Sedgwick. There have been numerous phone calls day and night requesting barricades and road repair. He is in the process of preparing a map of all repairs that will need to be completed within the county after the high water recedes. This includes debris buildup at bridges. He also reported that the used equipment that was listed on the Purple Wave Auction site will be available on Wednesday.

Jim presented an invitation to bidders for painted pavement marking for 18 miles of asphalt surfaced roads. Bids would be due by 5:00 p.m. Friday, August 9th. Commissioner Krehbiel made a motion to approve the invitation to bidders as presented. Commissioner Hague seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

2014 BUDGET HEARING:

Chairman Westfall opened the public hearing for the 2014 budget at 10:30 a.m. In addition to regular staff, the following people were in attendance for the hearing: Ashley Bergner, Leo Stahly, Byron Warta, Marianne Eichelberger, Patrick Mwangi, Lynnette Redington, Laurie Hartke, and Jim Meier. Anthony Swartzendruber, Financial Officer, explained that the notice of the budget hearing has been published as required and copies of the budget have been available in the Administration Office and on line on the County website. The budget hearing is for the Commission to receive public comment only. The actual vote on the budget is scheduled to take place at next week's Commission meeting.

Laurie Hartke stated that both the City of Newton and Harvey County have presented budgets that raise the mill levy and that citizens of Newton cannot afford to pay more taxes, especially those people that are on fixed incomes. She realizes that some services will need to be cut or reduced, but this may be necessary. She asked that the Commission please reconsider raising taxes.

Leo Stahly stated that he is opposed to the budget as presented. He believes that every company has to downsize periodically to cut the "fat" from the organization. He stated that the County has too many employees and that the budget contains funding to add even more. He also is opposed to the Commissioners receiving an increase in salary.

Commissioner Hague pointed out that there is a website that lists every mill levy within the state of Kansas and Harvey County falls at about the 25th percentile range from the lowest. There are many communities that have composite mill levies over 200. He stated that the Commissioners had cut almost a full mill from the general fund budget and that the mill increase is due almost entirely to increased expenditures for roads and bridges in the county.

Commissioner Krehbiel stated that he does not like to raise taxes but it is necessary if the roads in Harvey County are to be kept up.

Chairman Westfall stated that Harvey County ranks the lowest in the State, spending \$236 per person, for county government taxes. The highest in the State is \$3,854 per person for county government taxes. It ranks 101 out of 105 for the lowest mill levy at 31.449. The highest is 129.503 for county government. He also pointed out that when the Commissioners signed the publication form that is prepared by the State of Kansas notifying citizens that there will be a change in valuation and/or mill levy, there is a paragraph in the form that says that the State of Kansas Legislature failed to do it's job to fund the assistance to counties for property tax relief. If the county received the funding that it received from the State prior to 2004, a full mill could be cut from the general fund. He also stated that we have 160 miles of road in the County that have to be kept up. Only six to ten miles of roads per year are being repaired, resurfaced, or upgraded. This is not enough to keep up.

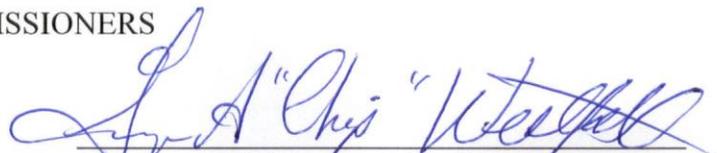
Ms. Hartke stated that she understands the need for roads to be kept up but maybe there are other areas where the budget could be cut. Commissioner Hague stated that the budget was cut by six mills from what was requested by department heads. Many of the expenditures in the budget are mandated by the state constitution.

Mr. Stahly stated that although the budget was cut by six mills, there is still over a 4 mill increase. In addition, there was an increase in valuation, so it is a double whammy.

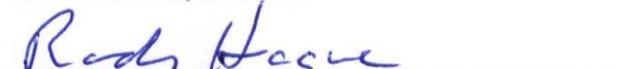
The public hearing was closed at 10:50 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

BOARD OF HARVEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


George A. "Chip" Westfall, Chairperson


Ron Krehbiel, Member


Randy Hague, Member

ATTEST:


Joyce Truskett, County Clerk

