

**THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF MIAMI COUNTY, KANSAS**

The Board of Miami County Commissioners met in regular session, in the Commission Chambers, Miami County Administration Building, Paola, Kansas, on January 03, 2024. Those present were:

George Pretz, Pro-Tem	Shane Krull, County Administrator
Keith Diediker, Commissioner	Stacey Weaver, Deputy County Clerk
Rob Roberts, Commissioner	Shannon Gaboni, Operation Specialist
W. Jene Vickrey, Commissioner	

Absent: Tyler Vaughan, Chairman

Visitors: Jeff Oliver, Hunter Witt

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Pretz called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Roberts moved to approve the Consent Agenda, as follows:

- Approval of minutes of the county commission meeting on December 27, 2023
- Approval of AP payment vouchers and payroll
- Add-On: Order of Correction of Irregularities
- Add-On: Amendment to Employment Agreement – Shane D. Krull

Commissioner Vickrey seconded; the vote was unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS

Holly Ray, HR Director, requested the Commissioners to approve an amendment to the Personnel Rules & Regulations by adding the Pregnancy Discrimination Act & Lactation Break Time. Miami County has and is required to comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act which includes the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, PUMP for Nursing Mothers and Pregnant Workers Fairness Act. There should be no cost other than signage on lactation rooms and the possibility of chairs. Commissioner Diediker moved to approve as presented, Commissioner Roberts seconded; the vote was unanimous.

The Commissioners were requested to consider an amendment to the Employment Agreement (A21-01-003) between Miami County and Shane D. Krull, County Administrator. The term for which Mr. Krull agrees to serve Miami County as County Administrator is extended until December 31, 2026. Commissioner Vickrey moved to approve as presented, Commissioner Roberts seconded; the vote was unanimous. (A24-01-001)

STAFF COMMENTS

Kenneth Cook, Planning Director, asked Commissioner Pretz to announce that on Monday January 29, 2024, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. an appreciate dinner will be held at the Whistle Stop at 901 6th Street, Osawatomie in which two or more Miami County Board of County Commission members might be present as well as possible quorums of the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and the Board of Code Appeals.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Commissioner Roberts said that next week the Kansas Legislature will convene for it's 2024 session where 165 men and women across the state who are elected by the citizens to represent our wants, wishes, concerns, thoughts and ideas will meet. Over the last 20 years the Kansas Legislature has neglected to fund two very important items that would help offset some costs at the county level. Commissioner Roberts said both him and Commissioner Vickrey have both spoken publicly in different forums and it is time that this Commission and any citizens that are listening and watching to convey to your representatives how important it would be

to your county should the Local Ad Valorem Tax Reduction Act (LAVTR) be funded, and the City-County Revenue Sharing be provided for as it was 20 + years ago. This was an arrangement through the Legislature and local county and city governments to help offset some of the revenue changes that were about to come into play because of changes in tax policies, tax policies that have affected every city and county in the State of Kansas. Contrary to what some people believe property taxes is a way the city and county funds it's required and demanded services. There is a stipend of sales tax that helps offset some of that and some fees and interest that the County has gained by wisely investing the County's money. Property tax is the number one core source of revenue. Commissioner Roberts and the other Commissioners hate the fact that the property taxes have exceeded some people's ability to pay them but not a single one of the Board of County Commissioners had anything to do with how the value of Miami County citizens properties became. They are not the County Appraiser, they are not the Kansas Department of Revenue and they don't oversee or manage it but those people do and they follow the rules and regulations that are set through statute by the 165 men and women who chose to be State Legislators. They set the statutes administered by the Governor's staff or whomever administers those rules. Miami County wants to lower your taxes and there is not a person here who wants to see it go up and the Board of County Commissioners chose to raise taxes this calendar year to provide wage increases to Miami County employees so they would be retained. Work force is a vital key to provide services that are mandated by the State of Kansas, and it would be the best thing a State Legislature, whether it be the House or the Senate, to fund LAVTR and the City-County Revenue Sharing to the tune that is already in law. The State has over \$3,000,000,000.00 in excess cash that it outside of the State budget. Commissioner Roberts would like to see if collectively, as a County, join the other Kansas counties to lobby our legislators to fund those two programs. Commissioner Roberts said he and every Commissioner across the state that he has visited with are very open to finding ways to properly provide for the services that the County is mandated to provide. How does the County pay for them? Commissioner Roberts stated, "come on State Legislators, help us figure this out". There are over 500 elected officials in county government that would love to sit at a table with the 165 Legislators to figure out a better way or less way to tax the people. When you make a deal with county government the deal needs to be fulfilled and to fulfill it means when you make a promise you need to keep the promise. In the 16 years Commissioner Roberts has been with Miami County the budget has balanced every single year and 2024 will be no different. Miami County does not spend more than what is brought in and find they ways to pay for what needs to be done. Kansas State government has to be equally responsible as the County. If the legislators cannot come up with solutions to solve the property tax problem, then they need to be replaced. The property tax problem did not start yesterday, it started 25 years ago when the entire tax system in the State of Kansas got monkeyed with and changed. Things happened across 25 years that impacted how and who gets taxed and who doesn't get taxed. Commissioner Roberts is challenging the Miami County Board of County Commissioners to speak out as himself and Commissioner Vickrey have done. Both have done webcasts and Commissioner Roberts has written letters, but they are just 5 leaders of 35,000 citizens that need to stand up and say enough is enough and somebody help them get this solved.

Commissioner Vickrey added that it is clear in statute that the LAVTR has to be spent on property tax reduction by county government. There are no if's and but's about that. If it is funded the county has to reduce property tax to an equal amount. For citizens out there that want to have lower property taxes this is one solution.

Commissioner Roberts added that state legislature has been misleading people for years that it is a slush fund but that is impossible for it to be a slush fund. When the County fills out the State paperwork to put in the amount of money that is needed for the next year's budget two questions are asked on the state form; How much money did you get for the LAVTR and the City-County Revenue Sharing? Commissioner Roberts then asked Lucas Mellinger, Finance Director, what happens when any amount of money is entered into these line

items. Mr. Mellinger replied that it reduces the mill levy. Commissioner Roberts said there is no slush fund. If the County receives \$1,000,000.00 from the state, the state form automatically reduces the amount of money the county needs. A slush fund cannot possibly be created, the amount of money will be reduced because they are coming with it. Commissioner Roberts then asked Shane Krull, County Administrator if he was accurate. Mr. Krull replied that yes, Commissioner Roberts is accurate and the state budget form for the LAVTR is embedded in the form, the self-feature has been disabled and it has been 20ish years since it has been in place and the City-County Revenue Sharing was suspended a year or two later and just made an automatic deduction in your Ad Valorum Tax collection. Commissioner Roberts said as the citizens are listening to his comments, Commissioner Vickrey's comments and the comments of Miami County's professional staff to please quit letting people mislead you. The fact is the state provides the funding as required by statute and taxes will go down, it's the law. Commissioner Roberts said he does not care what anyone has said it is not a slush fund, cannot be a slush fund and that is a slap in the face to county governments across the state to think that. He challenges 165 men and women to go and do their job, help figure out how to reduce property taxes and quit blaming the other party for doing it. Let's work together.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.




Tyler Vaughan, Chairman

ATTEST:


Janet White, County Clerk