

**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 March 27, 2024. Those present were:

Tyler Vaughan, Chairman	Shane Krull, County Administrator
George Pretz, Pro-Tem	Janet White, County Clerk
Keith Diediker, Commissioner	Shannon Gaboni, Operation Specialist
W. Jene Vickrey, Commissioner	

Absent: Rob Roberts, Commissioner

Visitors: Paul Billups, Barb Billups, Jeff Oliver, Paul Scruggs, Vickie Vetter Scruggs, Courtney Crawford, Marc Cochrane, Sarah Mayerle, Elena Super, Dino Motta, Robert Aschentrop

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Vaughan called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Paul Billups, 14131 W. 243rd Street, returned to address the Commissioners regarding an issue he is having with his neighbors and how they are using the land to run an unauthorized towing company that is zoned Countryside (CS). Mr. Billups would like his neighbor to follow the zoning regulations in place for CS properties and would also like them to put a screen with a berm and cedar trees to block the view of the property. The neighbors had told Mr. Billups to put in the screen on his property to block their equipment and vehicles. Not only is Mr. Billups concerned about the activity on the neighboring property, but he is concerned with the possible disposal of toxins which could affect the water supply to his property. This issue has caused an adversarial relationship to form between the neighbors. Chairman Vaughan asked Kenneth Cook, Planning Director, if there have been any requests or applications from the neighbor for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) or to rezone the property. Mr. Cook said there have been no requests from the property owner to do this. Mr. Cook also stated there is an active building permit on the property so the heavy equipment may be being used for that purpose. Chairman Vaughan encouraged Mr. Cook to look continue to investigate how the property is being used and to make sure the property owner is in compliance with Miami County zoning regulations.

Courtney Crawford, 30842 Indianapolis Road, said her family has been in Miami County for 100 years and she came to address the Commissioners regarding the county purchase of Placer.ai. Placer.ai is a location analytics company that studies visit trends, trade areas, and demographics. Ms. Crawford is a participant in the Miami County Farm Tour and received an email stating the concerns over Miami County tracking people's habits, movements, and AI technology. Ms. Crawford replied to that email that everyone deserves an explanation on what Placer.ai is tracking and from that information, what is being handed over to 3rd party organizations. In the original response it was said that a concerned individual from the farm tour spoke with Janet McRae, Economic Development, but the concern was never addressed, and Ms. Crawford's emails have also gone unanswered. Ms. Crawford, by joining the farm tour a few years ago, said she has never agreed to have her privacy violated, abused and open to international tracking and data gathering. Mr. Crawford emailed her Commissioner several times over the past couple of months with her concerns and those were handed to Ms. McRae. When the farm tour was brought up by Ms. Crawford to Ms. McRae, Ms. Crawford was told that Ms. McRae only wanted to go into depth of that conversation in person and not via email. After emailing her Commissioner again with her concerns, Ms. Crawford's concerns were sent to Shane Krull, County Administrator. Ms. Crawford is confused as to why non-elected officials oversee the AI technology and the Commissioners do not know how to respond. Placer.ai is an invasion of privacy and the tracking of people around the county and in their homes is a violation of the 4th Amendment. Non-elected officials should not be deciding these issues. All Commissioners are responsible for taking action and Ms. Crawford, along with other citizens are calling for the individuals who have put

Miami County at risk to be replaced immediately.

Vickie Vetter Scruggs, 31622 Oak Grove Road, addressed the Commissioners by asking who of the elected official, entrusted by the local people, is reading the consumer report "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly on the use of Placer.ai in Miami County for economic development. This system is being used to track local citizens and visitors and was signed, sealed, and delivered to Miami County by way of the Economic Development Department and the County Administrator. Ms. Scruggs would like to know what qualifications Economic Development has to operate this program. Ms. Scruggs says it is the Commissioners job to make the best decisions for their constituents. Doesn't anyone else see a problem with this, where does it stop and where is the information going that is collected. How much money does AI bring into the county, is it revenue generating, does it pay for itself? Paola, Louisburg, Spring Hill, and Osawatomie are beautiful communities, and all four cities have historic areas that should be vibrant, alive, and hopping but the downtown areas are basically dead. Ms. Scruggs has lived in the area for 19 years and has seen little in economic development. How about giving tax breaks for the local small businesses or grant money to restore downtown. Ms. Scruggs said it is known that Economic Development is set up with Mid-American Regional Council (MARC) which spends millions annually funding political ideologies and promoting policy recommendations that are contrary to individual liberties and our freedoms. Ms. Scruggs would like the community leaders to find out the dangers of these programs, long term damages and where does this information go? Is the information deleted, stored and who has access to it and is monitoring this information? Are the citizens being protected or exploited and is there an option to opt-out?

Marc Cochrane, 1021 Main Street, addressed the Commissioners regarding Placer.ai. He asked if there were checks and balances and are there rules and regulations in place for the use of Placer.ai? It has been brought to his attention that non-authorized people are using the program to track people and whether that is true or not, the rumor is already out there. Mr. Cochrane feels there is no control of the program or has any idea where the information is going and there are no answers for the citizens. He feels the Commissioners have lost control of the flow of information and his advice is to figure out how to control the technology and let everyone know what the rules are. Mr. Cochrane says a lot of people do not understand Placer.ai and evidently neither do the Commissioners.

Dino Motta, 17905 W. 319th Street, wanted to address recording the Board of County Commissioners study session. As a citizen he would like to see the Commissioners study session in its entirety be live streamed. Mr. Motta has attended the study sessions for the past few months and does not see the need for non-disclosure and would like to encourage the Commissioners live stream the study sessions. Mr. Motta said Miami County is not able to demonstrate that it is a great county with facts. He feels one solution would be to develop metrics that demonstrate value and efficient use of publicly provided resources and it would be his privilege to help do so and solve this public relations issue.

Chairman Vaughan said he appreciates local business and the participation in the Farm Tour. It is a cornerstone of Miami County and a big deal for the county. There will be no threats to anyone on the Farm Tour from any department, ever. The Commissioners have all taken a lot of calls on Placer.ai and they are doing a lot of research and are making sure that anything supported by the Commission is adequate and meaningful and they are working with the County Administrator to do so.

Commissioner Pretz said as he understands it, no individual is identified and never will be on the Placer.ai system.

Commissioner Vickrey asked if there was an ability to track an individual through this technology. It is not for that purpose is what we want to know.

Chairman Vaughan said they have more questions for Shane Krull, County Administrator, and they will look into it with the department and get some answers.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Approval of minutes of the county commission meeting on March 20, 2024
- Approval of AP payment vouchers and payroll

Commissioner Diediker seconded; the vote was unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS

Sara Denney, Payroll/Benefits Coordinator, introduced Robert Aschentrop, representative from Lockton, to Discuss insurance rate renewals for the 2024-2025 benefit plan year for county employees. Mr. Aschentrop presented the Commissioners with options from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas, Cigna, and United Healthcare. Ms. Denney requested the Commissioners to go over the options and be ready to decide on healthcare coverage for the employees by next week's commission meeting. No action was taken, and the Commissioners will follow up next week.

Meckenzie Kelly, Health Department Assistant Director, requested the Commissioners to consider authorizing the Chairman to sign the KDHE Aid-to-Local Grant 2024-2025 in the amount of \$156,501.18. Commissioner Pretz moved to approve as presented, Commissioner Diediker seconded; the vote was unanimous.

Janet McRae, Economic Development Director, requested the Commissioners to consider approving a resolution to have its unincorporated areas and the City of Fontana be designated as a Kansas Broadband Ready Community. Commissioner Diediker moved to approve as presented, Commissioner Vickrey seconded; the vote was unanimous. (R24-03-007)

Robert Wardecker requested the Commissioners to table for one week a resolution rezoning 24001-Z Klassmeyer Properties from Countryside (CS) to Commercial (C2). Commissioner Pretz moved table for one week, Commissioner Diediker seconded; the vote was unanimous.

STAFF COMMENTS

Matt Oehlert, Road & Bridge Project Manager, came to give the Commissioners a project update. First, the Old KC Road Rehabilitation Project is intended to start May 6, 2024. Notices will be sent on March 28th to everyone that lives and conducts business and is within a mile radius of that corridor. Traffic control plans will be included with those mailed notices. The legal notice will be posted on April 3rd. There will also be a public meeting from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on April 10th at the Miami County Administration building. Second, the Road and Bridge Department received a grant from the State of Kansas Federal Land Access Program for the road reconstruction at 253rd and Orleans that leads to boat ramp access at Hillsdale Lake. Bidding will start in April, notice to proceed will be May or June and there is an early start date of mid to late June 2024. Third, the bridge at Lonestar Road and Eagle Drive has been opened and bridge 1F2 on 399th Street will have its final walk through this Friday.

Shane Krull, County Administrator, spoke with the Director of Aviation for KDOT with an opportunity for Miami County to participate in a federal aviation project through Senator Moran's office. This will give Miami County the ability to extend the runway at the Miami County Airport by 4000 feet. Miami County will be applying for an approximately \$1,500,000.00 federal grant for this extension.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Vaughan moved to have a Personnel Exception Executive Session to discuss non-elected personnel for 10 minutes beginning at 2:40 p.m. to include the Commissioners and County Administrator. Commissioner Vickrey seconded; the vote was unanimous. No action was taken at this time. Chairman Vaughan reconvened the regular meeting at 2:50 p.m.

Chairman Vaughan moved to have a Personnel Exception Executive Session to discuss non-elected personnel for 10 minutes beginning at 2:52 p.m. to include the Commissioners and County Administrator. Commissioner Vickrey seconded; the vote was 3-yes, 1-no (Pretz). Chairman Vaughan moved to suspend the desire to fulfill the part time position posted in the Economic Development Department, Commissioner Vickrey seconded; the vote was 3-yes, 1-no (Pretz). Commissioner Pretz asked what motivates this movement to which Chairman Vaughan said he thinks they need to revert to the point of budget the need for

any non-statutory department. He wants Janet McRae, Economic Development Director to bring them justification. Chairman Vaughan reconvened the regular meeting at 3:02 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.




Tyler Vaughan, Chairman

ATTEST:


Janet White, County Clerk