

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 April 16, 2025. Those present were:

George Pretz, Chairman	Laura Epp, County Clerk
Tyler Vaughan, Pro-Tem	Cari Foster, Operation Support Specialist
Keith Diediker, Commissioner	Darcy Wilson, Operations Support Specialist
Paul Scruggs, Commissioner	
W. Jene Vickrey, Commissioner	

Visitors: Robert Gregory

CALL TO ORDER

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Robert Gregory, 29836 W. Lake Miola Drive, talked about building code for a portable building he wants to put on his property and the permit was denied. Mr. Gregory stated he was told he would need to get a current survey, because he has less than three acres, even though the property was surveyed before, and the rebar markers are still there. Commissioner Pretz asked Mr. Gregory if his property was in the county or city limits. Mr. Gregory stated it is in the county. Commissioner Vickrey asked if there was a reason to not use the current survey if the pins are still there? Mr. Gregory stated if you are under three acres they want a current survey. Mr. Gregory stated the survey company wants \$850.00 with a four month wait. If the building is under two hundred square feet you do not need a permit, and the building I am looking at is 330 square feet. I was told by the Codes Department I can get two buildings and put them back-to-back, but I would rather have one building instead of two. My property is two acres. Chairman Pretz invited staff to comment on this concern to address the commission. Kenny Cook, Planning director addressed the commission and stated it falls within the site plan standard that has been in place for twenty plus years. Mr. Cook stated we have had cases in the past where there was not a survey done and the structure was built out of compliance and when the survey was done part of the structure was not on the property. Mr. Cook stated the property is under three acres and the project is within so many feet within the property line; this case meets both of those conditions. Mr. Gregory's project is thirty-one feet to the property line, we usually require forty feet. Commissioner Vaughan asked, "do we have a variance document Kenny, that in unique situations you review it you can use common sense test to say this clearly we can work through this, but we need to document that this was a variance based on a rule, have them sign off on it, us sign off on it?" Mr. Cook stated situations come up quite often, while this is our policy there have been some cases where I used other information to make a decision. Commissioner Vickrey asked Mr. Gregory when the house was built and when the survey was done? Mr. Gregory stated the house was built in 2003 and the survey was done shortly before that. Chairman Pretz asked for clarification on criteria requirements, Mr. Cook reviewed the current criteria. Commissioner Scruggs asked Mr. Gregory to come in and speak because we have been dealing with this for a couple weeks now. Commissioner Vaughan asked Mr. Cook what the process was? Mr. Cook stated making a new policy in how we review these in regard to site plan standards while trying to keep things simple and not a long list of exceptions. Commissioner Vaughan asked the Chairman if he would be okay with Mr. Cook, Mr. Gregory and Commissioner Scruggs sitting down together and work something out for Mr. Gregory's situation for a solution for him while we work on a broader solution? Chairman Pretz stated yes.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Approval of minutes of the County Commission Meeting on April 9, 2025
- Approval of AP payment vouchers
- Approved Order of Corrections
- Add-On: #5 to the Action Agenda, Converting a Refunding Revenue Bond 2020B

Commissioner Diediker seconded; the vote was unanimous.

PRESENTATIONS AND AWARDS AND PROCLAMATION

April 16, 2025

Page 2

Proclamation – Administrative Professionals’ Day. Commissioner Vaughan stated he appreciates all Mackenzie Owens, Office Coordinator, and all the administration assistants that have helped us, it is a hard job. Commissioner Diediker moved to approve as presented, Commissioner Vaughan seconded; the vote was unanimous.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mackenzie Owens, Procurement, stated Sydney Ming, Assistant Finance Director, will be talking for me as I am having a tough time speaking. Ms. Ming requested the Commission Chair to sign the contract with AudioEye. Ms. Ming stated AudioEye provides a tool kit that helps citizens utilize the website how they need to. Ms. Ming stated AudioEye is a toolkit within CivicPlus that allows us to become ADA compliance. Last week the Commissioners had some questions. Ms. Ming stated the 34% we are out of ADA compliance is all web-based content. AudioEye did not go through the PDF files. Ms. Ming stated AudioEye also came down on their price to \$4,000.00 that will not be charged until September 1, 2025, and will be combined with our CivicPlus renewal. Commissioner Vickrey asked Ms. Ming if this is something we can do ourselves? Ms. Ming stated we could bring it inhouse but, we would need a full-time employee. Commissioner Vaughan asked we pay for the first year and then do not do a compliance check again for four years, are we locked in paying \$4,000.00 for the next five years? Ms. Ming stated it renews on a yearly basis so we can opt out. They will be continually monitoring the website; it is not a onetime thing. Each department within the county makes changes to their website continuously so it is not a fix once and revisit in a few years. Ms. Ming stated to answer Commissioner Diediker’s question last week about other companies. Ms. Ming stated Ms. Owens looked into a company called AccessiBe, the cost is \$3,990.00 annually, they will go in and fix the ADA issues but do not continually monitor. Ms. Ming also stated that AudioEye is a part of CivicPlus where the other companies’ programs are not. Chairman Pretz asked will AudioEye be working on the website before September? Ms. Ming stated yes, as soon as it is signed, we will get the enhancements, and they will start working on the website. Commissioner Vickrey stated this saves a lot of staff time and it is a bigger cost to the taxpayers if we choose not to go with AudioEye. Commissioner Vaughan moved to approve the contract with AudioEye for \$4,000.00 per year, added onto our CivicPlus contract, Commissioner Vickrey seconded; the vote was unanimous. (C25-04-001)

NEW BUSINESS

Sandra Lucas, County Appraiser, requested the Commissioners to approve the purchase of new office furniture. Ms. Lucas stated we want to use the carryover money from 2024 to cover the cost of new office furniture. We have \$24,000.00 in the 2025 budget and carryover from our 2024 budget in the amount of \$25,000.00. The cost of the six desks, cabinets, shelving, and two cubicles is \$47,988.45. Commissioner Vickrey asked what was the total cost? Ms. Lucas stated \$47,988.45, with using the 2024 carryover money of \$25,000.00 we will spend \$22,988.45 of the 2025 money budgeted. Commissioner Vickrey asked you will have \$22,000.00 left in reserve? Commissioner Pretz stated a couple thousand in reserve. Commissioner Vaughan moved to approve as presented, Commissioner Pretz seconded; the vote was unanimous.

Sandra Lucas, County Appraiser, gave the Commissioners and update on the appeals and said she believes there are 326 on the informal appeals which is down from last year at 337. The difference from last year is we did not have the payment and protest from the year before. The Appraiser’s Office has had 156 appeals so far which is lighter than the previous year at over three hundred. Chairman Pretz asked if Ms. Lucas had heard her last appeal. Ms. Lucas stated no, informal appeals was yesterday April 15, 2025. We have some next week, so we are getting close, and the mail date statute is May 20, 2025.

Eric Sandberg, Road and Bridge Director, appointed Darryl White as Noxious Weed Supervisor for 2025. Mr. Sandberg stated Mr. White has over 15 years’ experience and has expressed his desire to be the Noxious Weed Supervisor for one more year as he is looking to retire. Commissioner Diediker moved to approve Darryl white as the Noxious Weed Supervisor for 2025, Commissioner Vickrey seconded; the vote was unanimous.

Sara Denney, Interim Human Resources, requested the commission approve the rate renewals from BCBS of Kansas to provide insurance for the county employees for the 2025/2026 benefit plan year. Ms. Denney stated we have come down to a self-funded administrative service only (ASO) plan design. It is going to be the same plan

design we currently have with a proposed 6% over current plan. The cost share and budget projections reflect the following assumptions:

- 3.8% overall rate increase on both plans
- \$125k specific stop loss
- 125% aggregate
- No plan design change
- 100% paid employee only coverage, both plans
- 80% paid tier / family coverage, both plans
- No change to employer HSA contributions
- BCBS has agreed to provide the county with a \$55,000 admin fee credit

This plan is going to be based on admin fees which is your fixed costs and our plan cost which would be the cost of coverage. The fixed costs are estimated to be \$739,000.00 with the \$55,000.00 credit going to that as well as expected returns on pharmacy rebates that Lockton estimates to be \$189,000.00. Commissioner Vaughan asked Ms. Denney to go over the HSA amounts to employees for self and family. Ms. Denney stated Miami County contributes \$211.32 per month which is \$2,535.00 a year per employee and \$369.44 per month which is \$4,433.00 a year for employee and family. Commissioner Vaughan stated to all our employees under the PPO plan especially employee only, you are missing out on free money inside the HSA plan. Commissioner Vaughan thanked Ms. Denney and the commission, we have been working towards this for several years. Thank you for all your hard work. Commissioner Vickrey stated we should not see an increase but see a lower cost this year than the prior year. Commissioner Vaughan moved to approve as presented, Commissioner Vickrey seconded; the vote was 4-1 nay-Diediker.

Sara Denney, Interim Human Resources requested the commissioners to approve the rate renewals from Delta Dental of Kansas for the 2025-2026 benefit plan year. Ms. Denney stated Delta Dental came back for a three percent increase for the 2025/2026 plan year. Delta Dental of Kansas did not want to lock in the three percent rate for more than one year. Ms. Denney recommended we take the three percent increase for this benefit year. The impact for Miami County is \$4,371.00 which will be a cost of around \$.54 per month for employee and family. Commissioner Vaughan moved to approve as presented, Commissioner Scruggs seconded; the vote was unanimous.

Lucas Mellinger, Assistant County Administrator, requested the Chairman to sign the Capital One Bond agreement. Mr. Mellinger stated this is the next step in the process to paying off the detention center. This is the scheduled convertible bonds that were issued in 2020 issue B. Commissioner Pretz moved to approve as presented, Commissioner Vaughan seconded; the vote was unanimous. (A25-04-018)

STAFF COMMENTS

Matt Oehlert, Road and Bridge Engineering Project Manager, reported on closing two bridge structures last week on Monday. Bridge 9-G.1 is located 335th Street east of Plum Creek Road. Mr. Oehlert stated the super structure in both bridges is the limiting factor for the closure. For bridge 9-G.1, three out of five floor beams have section loss. Commissioner Pretz asked when was the bridge inspected and when was it inspected before? Mr. Oehlert stated the bridge was inspected April 1, 2025, and is on a two-year rotation. Mr. Oehlert stated bridge 21-D.1 is located on 239th Street east of Indianapolis Road. Mr. Oehlert stated five out of nine super structures had holes in them. Mr. Oehlert showed the commission pictures of both bridge failures. Mr. Oehlert said they have provided public notice of the closure on the website, signs posted at the intersections at each bridge location, notice to the schools, email blast to emergency responders, and social media. Mr. Oehlert stated bridge 21-D1 is on the 2025 budget to be repaired and was going to be bringing that to the commission in a month or so to be replaced, but Bridge 9-G.1 is unique so I will give the commission several options for replacement and also the consideration for permanent closure if the governing body chooses to do so. Commissioner Scruggs asked what Mr. Oehlert looks at for permanent closure? Mr. Oehlert stated the biggest factor is detour, another factor is the development impact, and what is the bridge used for.

Christena Beer, Public Health Director, handed out a packet. Along with the EMS and the Sheriff's Office she gave a post event recap for the Miami County Wellness Event update on the Health Initiative for first

responders that was held on April 5, 2025. Ms. Beer stated we had about 160 people attend, we had around 30 organizations join us from our region, it was a great day overall. The event was focused on getting our heroes, our helpers, servants the resources that they need. We pulled in \$3,500.00 in scholarships to purchase the raffle items. We came in under budget. We had several organizations volunteer their time to organize the event, put together welcome bags and run the event. Commissioner Vaughan asked if there is events like this in other counties or is Miami County unique? Ms. Beer stated there are events similar to this in other counties but nonspecific to first responders, so this event is unique. Matt Kelly, Undersheriff, stated the uniqueness of this event is everything we had, we provided childcare, we tried to provide everything that would eliminate someone from attending. Commissioner Vaughan stated he thought it was great that they got sponsorships, put on an awesome event, it was fantastic. Matt Gamblin, Deputy Chief EMS, stated he has been with the county for 28 years. For 17 and a half years I was the Deputy Coroner and Death Investigator. This program is very important to me, two years ago my life almost ended because of everything I had seen. Commissioner Scruggs asked if this programs major focus is on mental health? Mr. Gamblin stated it was. To hear a more in-depth post event update please visit the recorded video on our county's web site.

<https://miamicoks.portal.civicclerk.com/event/758/media>.

Laura Epp, County Clerk, stated we have early voting going on now for the Louisburg Library District 1 in the Clerk's Office from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm Monday – Friday, until May 5, 2025, at noon. It is open to anyone that lives in the Louisburg Library District 1 which covers the east side of our county. Ms. Epp stated you can go out to the website under County Clerk /Elections, Elections, Special Elections. Click on the election you want, and you will see a general description of the election, the question on the ballot, links to statutes, polling locations and any other election details you need. Commissioner Vaughan asked if the website was ADA compliant? Ms. Epp stated that tool is going to be beneficial, trying to keep up with ADA compliance, new laws, regulations, and making sure we are meeting the constituents' constitutional rights. I think it is very important for us as a county as a whole. Thank you for that investment.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Commissioner Vickrey, stated he is thankful for all the first responders and the work they do and how important it is to keep everybody able to do the work.

Commissioner Scruggs, stated I recently read the level of mental health issues in teenagers is the same as it was in adults in the 1950's that go into mental institutions.

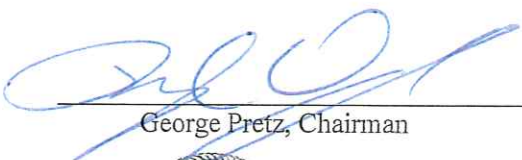
Commissioner Vaughan, stated this morning we had a lengthy budget conversation around Road and Bridge. I look forward to the publics input and I hope we get some participation. This is the core part of our job.

Chairman Pretz stated thanks to the taxpayers of Miami County and our entire staff to do what we do in this county, keep it going.

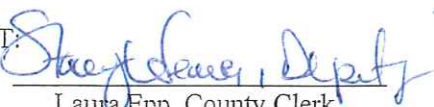
ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:03 p.m.

(Seal)


George Pretz, Chairman

ATTEST:


Laura Epp, County Clerk

