

Kiowa County Commissioners meeting minutes - November 23, 2021

The Regular meeting of the Kiowa County Commissioners was called to order on November 23, 2021; at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Donald Oswald. Lening opened the meeting with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those in Attendance: Donald Oswald, Chairman

- Howard "Butch" Robertson, Commissioner
- Mike Lening, Commissioner
- Delisa Weeks. County Clerk
- Tina Adamson, County Administrator

Minutes: Robertson moved, and Lening seconded the motion to approve the November 10, 2021; minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Vouchers: Robertson moved, and Lening seconded the motion to approve the vouchers as presented. Motion carried.

Agenda: Oswald moved, and Lening seconded the motion to approve the amended agenda with one addition. Old Business: County Issues. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Grant Updates: Cindy McCloud, Coordinator of the Kiowa County Economic Development provided an update on the Grants she has applied for. She reported that the Legion Hall had received a grant in the amount of \$235,000.00.

December 1, 2021 is the estimated day that foundation work will start for the apartment project.

Sean Lening, President of GNBank and Ashley Pearson entered the meeting to discuss the Pearson building along highway 287. Pearson wanted to discuss the status of the possible purchase from the county for the building. The County's recent offer on the building was \$200,000. Mr. & Mrs. Pearson stated reasons why they would have to have a minimum of \$235,000. The BOCC stated they would have to discuss it further.

Mr. & Mrs. Pearson exited the meeting. Sean Lening exited the meeting as well at 10:10 a.m.

Landfill Update: Jeff Scranton, Landfill Operator, is asking for roll offs and/or another employee. The cardboard collection is keeping them very busy. The program is keeping the recyclables out of the landfill. Discussion followed with no action taken.

2022 Budget/Shivers Letter: The BOCC thanks Mrs. Shivers for her letter and suggestions.

Oswald moved, and Lening seconded the motion to recess for the lunch. Motion carried at 11:58 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

Kari Linker, Correspondent for Senator Hickenlooper's Office entered the meeting at 1:05 p.m. She enlightened the BOCC of some of the projects Hickenlooper is working on. She discussed the transportation side and repairs to bridges as well as water infrastructure. She exited the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

Lening moved, and Robertson seconded the motion to raise the trash fee from 3 cents to 5 cents per pound for 2022. Motion carried. Adamson will advertise the rate change.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reports and meetings were reviewed and signed.

Windmill Saloon Liquor License: Robertson moved, to approve the liquor renewal for the Windmill Saloon without a fee. Lening second the motion. Motion carried.

OPIOID Settlement Agreements: Chairman Oswald signed agreements with three pharmaceutical companies and the MOU with the State. This is due to the opioid settlement that has been filed by the State.

Ports to Plains Ballot: There were seven positions open and seven people on the ballot. The ballot was voted.

2022 Budget: Discussion followed over the 2022 budget and how we can make cuts. The Auditor reported that Kiowa County can function normally for the 2022 year, but without any other income sources the County will be facing major cuts for 2023. This could include employee positions, transit services, motor vehicle services and public health services.

Adamson presented a scenario of pay scale options for the different entities.

Discussion followed over a four-day work week for all County employees.

Commissioner Lening said he has had constituents questioning how the employees are going to get their work done in a four-day week, when they can't get the work done in a five-day period. Another option was to give office staff a flex day every other week. Discussion followed.

Road Foremen, Watts, Spady and Howard and County Assessor, Marci Miller; entered the meeting to discuss the budget as well. Chairman Oswald informed everyone that County General Budget for 2022 will decrease the reserves by \$600,000.00 leaving just over \$400,000 in the reserve and the Road & Bridge Department will be \$200,000.00 into the reserves for that fund. The concern is that without increases in revenue, the county will be forced to make even greater cuts in the upcoming year. There was discussion that Road & Bridge Department are looking at a year around 4- 10 hour day work week beginning in January.

The Road Foremen discussed how they could make cuts in their department which included doing away with the free load of gravel for citizens of Kiowa County, the possibility of farmers being charged for damage of the ditches with farm equipment and cattle guard repairs may have a fee. There were no decisions made at this time.

Sheriff Frazee and Undersheriff Mike Schneider were also present at the meeting to discuss the Sheriff's Budget. Frazee says 45% of the population lives in the Eads area so he would be having discussions with the town of Eads regarding the agreement between the Town of Eads and the County. Sheriff Frazee did discuss a contract between Bent County and Kiowa County for two beds to hold prisoners for the 2022 year. No decision was made.

Sheriff Frazee and Undersheriff Schneider exited at 5:09 p.m.

The BOCC will have a final decision made at the December 14, 2021 meeting, regarding the budget.

After further discussion by the Board, Oswald said, at this time the County would not be able to purchase the Pearson building. The BOCC voted and respectfully declined to purchase the Pearson building for \$235,000.00. Administrator Adamson will send a written withdrawal of the County's offer. Oswald moved, and Robertson seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:48 p.m. Motion carried.

Chairman

County Clerk