

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

September 8, 2015

Chairman Goff Searl called the meeting of the Chautauqua County Board of Commissioners to order on Monday, September 8, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. in the commission room of the courthouse. Commissioner Jack Carpenter and Danny Williams were present as was County Counselor, Ruth Ritthaler and County Clerk Janice A. Fine. Danny Williams opened the meeting with prayer.

Minute's approval: Danny Williams made a motion to approve the minutes of August 31, 2015 as presented. Jack Carpenter seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Minute's approval: Danny Williams made a motion to approve the Budget Hearing minutes of August 31, 2015 as presented. Jack Carpenter seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Joel Haden, Road & Bridge Superintendent provided his weekly report. Cathy Sanders, R&B Office Manager joined the meeting. Chairman Searl and Joel Haden attended the meeting with the landowner and Engineer regarding the Cook Bridge. The county wishes to purchase an easement for the work on the new Cook Bridge. The easement required is much larger than previous bridge easements. The landowner has provided a cost for the permanent easement. Sanders offered the logistics on this bridge project. Danny Williams made a motion to pay \$6,000.00 for a 3 acre permanent easement as requested by the landowner necessary for the Cook Bridge Project. Jack Carpenter seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. Sanders brought the utility agreements for signature. Commissioners signed the utility agreements.

Crews are hauling rock to the following: Rd 10 and Saddle, Rd 11 and Saddle, Trail and Hwy 99 east, Rd 31 and Junction, Rd 31 and Kansas south of Lone Cherry, Independence shortcut between Rd 31 and Rd 32, Rd 28 and Valley south, Saddle and Rd 27 and Trail and Rd 23. A right of way on Valley is complete.

There was discussion regarding a citizen's request to review personal property. Ruth Ritthaler, County Counselor shared some of her research but continues to research the difference between real property and personal property.

Amy Goode, Treasurer joined the meeting to discuss department business. Goode introduced Delena Santos whom she hired. Santos has experience with tags and taxes from a few years back in Missouri. Goode offered that there were several titles left unapproved from previous treasurer employees. Goode continues to work on issues to be compliant.

Crystal Wade, HR Administrator joined the meeting to discuss department business. Wade presented travel requests for employees. Wade discussed the third quarter employee luncheon as it is scheduled for September 30, 2015.

Jeremy Hendren, Deputy Appraiser joined the meeting as requested by commissioners. Commissioners had received a resignation letter from the current Appraiser Jeremy McCully effective September 30, 2015. Commissioners know that Hendren is state certified and qualified to be appointed as Chautauqua County Appraiser. There was discussion on this possibility. Hendren had questions regarding district boundaries. Hendren will work with the County Clerk to make sure boundary maps are correct.

Chairman Searl recessed the regular meeting at 10:05 for 15 minutes to wait on the vendor from Kansas Communications. Chairman Searl called the regular meeting back in session at 10:20 a.m.

Cleve Hudson with Kansas Communications joined the meeting to discuss a possible new phone system. Cindy Weaver, Crystal Wade, Annie Blankinship, Doris Bracken, Linda Kline, Cathy Sanders, Dee Wade and Jennifer McNown joined the meeting to discuss any known issues with Kansas Communications after the presentation. Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) phone system service is being discussed as a possible solution for phone services. AT&T has notified the county that if we continue on the plexar system with them the monthly rate will continue to increase until the county moves to a different system as AT&T wishes to discontinue the plexar system. The cost difference to remain with AT&T and convert to a new system is a minimum of \$50,000.00 greater than moving to a VOIP phone system. The county employees in attendance asked questions unique to their office needs. There was positive feedback from employees.

Janice Fine, County Clerk advised commissioners of misinformation being discussed by the public regarding the prior Deputy Treasurer. Ms. Loftin's decision to resign was not prompted nor advised by any county employee that we know of. The county would have preferred Ms. Loftin to remain a county employee. Any statements made regarding how busy the Treasurer's Office was during Ms. Loftin's final days would be true. The Treasurer's Office was very busy for Ms. Loftin as well as Treasurer Goode when she was allowed to take office. Loftin nor Goode asked for any help during that time. Kansas Statute clearly states that no one from the County Clerk's office is advised to conduct any Treasurer business as it is considered a Conflict of Interest. There must always be separation of duties between these offices as each office provides checks and balances for the county.

Danny Williams made a motion to adjourn at 11:22 a.m. Jack Carpenter seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Goff Searl, Chairman, First District Commissioner

Danny D. Williams, Second District Commissioner

Jack Carpenter, Third District Commissioner

ATTEST:

Janice A. Fine, County Clerk