

# **BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

April 12, 2016

Chairman Goff Searl called the meeting of the Chautauqua County Board of Commissioners to order on Tuesday, April 12, 2016 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. Reta Pipher joined the meeting as observer. Danny Williams opened the meeting with prayer.

Minute's approval: Danny Williams made a motion to approve the minutes of April 5, 2016 as presented. Jack Carpenter seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Joel Haden, Road & Bridge Superintendent provided his weekly road report. Crews are hauling rock to the following: Rd 19 and Quivira, Rd 27 and Union and Rd 19 and Frontier. A cemetery approach was worked at Bronco and Rd 30. A right of way and water drainage issues was worked at Rd 4 and Dalton. Haden received a request to participate in career day at the Sedan School. Commission approves his participation. Commissioners asked Haden to review several road issues since the recent rain.

Chairman Searl offered appraisal information to Pipher on land use value. There was discussion about how the property is assessed. Jeremy Hendren, Appraiser, joined the meeting to discuss the appraisal of Pipher's property. Pipher believes she is paying more than her fair share. Pipher plans to take the issue to Topeka. Hendren stated the state issues values that must used. Pipher and Hendren discussed the buildings on her property and how it is valued. Pipher stated the buildings in question are historical not usable. Pipher offered that her property has been designated as a century farm. Hendren stated he must follow state statutes to maintain his position as County Appraiser. Pipher believes Hendren is not doing his job correctly. Hendren offered that soil types of which there are around 150 different soil types in Chautauqua County are valued differently as required by the state. Some types make the land unusable. Hendren offered a sample of soil types with property joining each other. Commissioners asked that Hendren research issues discussed. Pipher discussed her Walnut street property value. Pipher cares that this county doesn't become a ghost town and something must be done to reduce the tax burden. Commissioner Williams offered that this county has had lowered values and been out of compliance per the state. Pipher wants this county to pull together rather than be against each other. Jack Zimmerman and Lucas McDermott joined the meeting for their appointment. Pipher paid to have her downtown building repaired yet her taxes have been raised. Saving buildings in Sedan is critical to keep the town maintained. Chairman Searl offered that others want the county to prosper. Pipher prides herself on doing all she can to maintain this town. Pipher offered there are several groups of people in this town who are striving to make things better and raising taxes hurts those entities and their efforts.

Jack Zimmerman and Lucas McDermott wanted to talk to commissioners regarding the clean-up of Cedar Vale, KS and the removal of dilapidated houses with home owner approval. G&G offered \$5,000.00 to \$6,000.00 per structure removal and that is too high a price for the City or home owners to absorb. The request is to bring the county excavator and possibly a dump truck to assist with their clean-up effort. The City of Cedar Vale would schedule with Road and Bridge Department for the work. Pipher offered based on her experience, that if a structure has asbestos on it the removal must be inspected if city owned but no inspection if personally owned. There was discussion on how each town in our county has the same issue and if one gets the help then all should get the help. Commissioner Williams offered that a planning meeting needs to be scheduled for input from all municipalities in the county. The County liability needs to be researched and insurance covers us for the use of equipment. The cost from McDermott's view point is diesel fuel. Pipher offered that an Infrastructure committee exists in Sedan for removal of housing and should be contacted. The process for Cedar Vale is owner participation. Jeremy Hendren, Appraiser joined the meeting and offered that Cedar Vale property value should go down based on land sale values once the property is cleared of the buildings. Commissioners will setup a meeting with other county

cities for discussion. Ruth Ritthaler, County Counselor offered how the meeting should be scheduled. Ritthaler asked that we have two weeks to gather information.

Greg Wilkinson joined the meeting to discuss the CQ Hills Blues festival. Wilkinson asked for any support the county can offer. Wilkinson stated that business contributions are lower than in the past. Chairman Searl offered that Wilkinson talk with our HR Administrator for advertising opportunities on our website. Wilkinson asked that a grader do some work on the road and entrance before the festival. Commissioners asked that Wilkinson talk with Joel Haden, Road and Bridge Superintendent for assistance. Amy Goode, Treasurer joined the meeting.

Annie Blankinship, Health Department Administrator, joined the meeting. She received a letter regarding the Senior Care Act from the state. Blankinship has advertised for a housekeeper as one of her employees is retiring. Road & Bridge staff have been working on their generator to fix an issue and she is pleased with their service. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor roof access was discussed from her perspective. Blankinship offered there remains water issues where the old part meets the new part of the building.

Chairman Searl offered information regarding a vehicle purchase for the Sheriff's Department. There was discussion of understanding. Amy Goode, treasurer asked for direction on creating a treasurer's check for the purchase since procedures had been put in place some time ago to reduce the need for treasurer's checks rather than the normal accounts payable check process. The Chairman directed Goode to create a treasurer's check for this instance. Goode also brought documents to show bank balances. Commissioner Williams offered the reports are easier to review than the past report. Goode offered that delinquent personal property letters are being processed and funds collected. Although delinquent personal property letters are required by statute it is a new process for Chautauqua County.

Commissioner Carpenter brought a resolution for signature approving the South Central Solid Waste Authority 2016 Update of the Solid Waste Plan and Revision. Danny Williams made a motion to approve resolution 2016-03. Jack Carpenter seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Carpenter shared information regarding sharpe's containers and disposal of contaminated material.

Commissioners continued discussion regarding the proposed venture with Cedar Vale demolishing homes in the city with owner approval.

Wendy Kirchner, Deputy Clerk brought information on the new phones.

Ruth Ritthaler, County Counselor has talked with the individual wanting to open a treatment facility in Chautauqua County. Commissioners talked about possible locations and options. Ritthaler offered that extensive personal research must be completed before coming to commissioners.

Chairman Searl offered information from a discussion with Register of Deeds regarding usage of the old jail. Commissioner Williams will talk with the vendor who is removing the bars from that area.

Janice A. Fine, County Clerk brought the following to commissioners: 1) Reminded commissioners that Southeast Kansas District meeting in Ottawa Ks., is scheduled for April 14, 2016 and office staff will be attending. 2) Reminded commissioners of the Kansas Department of Transportation meeting on April 21, 2016 in Chanute. 3) Brief update on the new phone system. 4) Discussed the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor roof access and reminded commissioners that it is and always has been my priority to find cost savings, to reduce the tax burden to citizens and limit the counties liability.

Commissioners reviewed and approved the mid-month expenditures for April 2016 as follows:

Fund	Amount
General	\$10,367.56
Equip Reserve	\$751.24
Appraiser	\$203.31
Employee Benefit	\$1,169.84
Health	\$464.40
Noxious Weed	\$5.50
Road & Bridge	\$15,239.77
Special Rock	\$3,857.53
County 911	\$737.36
Solid Waste	\$6,042.22
<b>TOTAL Expenditures</b>	<b>\$38,838.63</b>

Danny Williams made a motion to adjourn at 10:45 a.m. Jack Carpenter seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

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Goff Searl, Chairman, First District Commissioner

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Danny D. Williams, Second District Commissioner

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Jack Carpenter, Third District Commissioner

ATTEST:

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Janice A. Fine, County Clerk