

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

October 8, 2018

Commissioner Jack Carpenter called the regular meeting to order on October 8, 2018, at 8:30 a.m. in the commission room of the Court House. Commissioner Goff Searl, Counselor Zoe Newton, Clerk Niki Collier, and Deputy Clerk Becky Smilko were all present.

Commissioner Goff Searl opened the meeting with prayer.

Commissioner Carpenter moved to approve the minutes of October 1, 2018. Commissioner Searl gave the second and the motion passed 2-0.

Road & Bridge Superintendent Joel Haden advised the Board that rock has been applied to Road 12 and Road 22 on Lariat Road. Work has begun on the damaged bridge near the Elk county line. Mr. Haden stated that he had not yet obtained quotes for a side boom mower. Mr. Haden reported that the location Commissioner Searl addressed last week for a bus loading sign has a clear line of vision and he did not believe that a sign was needed. Commissioner Carpenter informed Mr. Haden of an area of road that is washing out on Rd. 22 and needs attention. Commissioner Searl stated that the road sign at Kansas and Rd. 6 needs to be replaced. Commissioner Searl suggested that a report needs to be filed with the Sheriff's Department when roads signs are removed.

HR Administrator Crystal Wade informed the Board about the employee dinner scheduled for Tuesday.

Commissioner Searl moved for a 30-minute executive-session for attorney client privilege. Commissioner Carpenter gave the second. Motion passed 2-0 at 8:45 a.m. Commissioner Shaw joined the executive session at 8:50 a.m. The executive session was extended twice and the open meeting resumed at 9:40 a.m.

Richard Blankinship joined the meeting to discuss the closure of the Animal Shelter. Mr. Blankinship stated they did not have sufficient funding to continue to operate.

Commissioner Searl stated he would like to move to change Mrs. Newton's status to a salaried employee eligible for county insurance. Commissioner Carpenter raised a concern regarding the legality of the change in status referring to a past experience. Mrs. Newton suggested tabling the discussion to allow time to thoroughly research the matter. Commissioner Searl stated that Mr. King had insurance thru another employer and requested compensation in the amount that Chautauqua County would contribute if his insurance was through Chautauqua County. Ms. Wade confirmed this is not the same situation because compensation in lieu of health insurance is non-compliant with the law, however, a change in status to become a qualified employee with KPERS eligible status is appropriate and compliant with the law. After further discussion the Board stated due to the nature of the position they would not require Mrs. Newton to maintain an hourly timesheet, they are confident she works a minimum of twenty hours a week. Commissioner Searl restated the motion to change Mrs. Newton's status to that of a qualifying employee eligible to receive health insurance as of January 1, 2019. Commissioner Shaw gave the second, the motion passed 3-0. Commissioner Searl requested that Ms. Wade provide detailed figures regarding the change of status before the first of the year.

Commissioner Carpenter reminded the Board they had an employee matter to address. Commissioner Searl stated the Board would like an employee to be compensated with a 3% cost of living raise and back pay from August 31, 2017, to current to correct what they believe was an oversight in 2017. Commissioner Searl questioned if taxes would be withheld and was advised all standard deductions would apply.

County Clerk Niki Collier informed the Board that the new fire alarm system has been installed. Mrs. Collier presented a letter from the Kansas Attorney General regarding the procedure of reimbursement to the county for the expenses of deceased minors and letters from the South Central Kansas Aging and Disability Resource Center requesting that the Board reappoint Annie Blankinship to the Cowley County Housing Authority Board and Mr. Allen Moore to the Ten County Aging Board, Inc.. Commissioner Shaw stated he will contact Mr. Moore to see if he is still interested in continuing serving in that position. Commissioner Shaw moved to appoint Annie Blankinship to the Cowley County Housing Authority Board, Commissioner Searl gave the second and the motion passed 3-0.

Commissioner Shaw raised the issue of delinquent solid waste accounts and requested Emily Powell of Solid Waste Department join the meeting. Commissioner Shaw stated that the amount of delinquent accounts from renters is too large. Mr. Shaw requested that going forward the county discontinue trash service for delinquent accounts. Mrs. Powell stated she does not believe that closed accounts should continue to receive ongoing late fees and the annual \$25.00 delinquent fee, as has been the past practice. The Board directed Mrs. Powell to end that practice and instructed her to review accounts and remove deceased billing parties and update the customer information on all accounts. Mrs. Powell stated she would begin working on it right away.

Commissioner Shaw motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 a.m., seconded by Commissioner Searl, motion passed 3-0.

Goff Searl, First District Commissioner

Rodney Shaw, Chairman, Second District Commissioner

Jack Carpenter, Third District Commissioner

ATTEST:

Niki Collier, County Clerk