

MINUTES  
MORTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
1025 Morton, Elkhart, KS  
March 13, 2023

JW called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. with open doors.

Present: JW Finn, Chairman; Jim Tucker, Vice-Chairman; Andy Bane, Commissioner; Clint Floyd, County Counselor and Gina Shores, County Clerk.

Denny Huebner with Church of God opened with prayer.

Commissioners approved Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> amended minutes on a motion by Jim, seconded by Andy, UYV. Commissioners signed 1 P/R form and Warrant Register; 1 A/P Warrant Registers listed below.

2023		
General		\$99,442.56
Road & Bridge		\$23,249.18
Weed		\$1,511.70
Airport		\$1,718.34
Sheriff		\$7,380.94
Fire		\$1,254.59
Health		\$4,396.05
Capital Improvement		\$460.05
Ambulance		\$3,095.01
911		\$546.11
Employee Ben		\$0.00
Payroll W/H		\$1,137.55
Emergency Prep fund		\$390.00
Sales Tax Hospital		\$19,467.65
Special Equip		\$72,867.78
Treas. M/V		\$176.05
E Comm. Loan Fund		\$3,037.63
Civic Cntr. Dep Fund		\$190.00
Total		\$240,321.19

Zoom meeting at 9:15 with Michelle Needham, with KDOT. Discussed the notice to proceed for County Road S for Syracuse Dairy. She stated with the Notice to Proceed and the amounts that funds are already ear marked for Morton County Road S project.

This is not unusual for the legal department not to have the updated Supplemental agreement ready by bid opening.

Vicki—Treasurer. She received a letter outlining scope of services from Klenda Austerman LLC for proceeding with our tax sale. Based on Vicki's recommendation a motion by Jim, seconded by Andy, UYV to proceed with this company. There is one property that is not included as there is a question of ownership it is the booster station in Taloga township.

Alexis—Economic Development. She expressed how well the YEC (Youth Entrepreneur Challenge) went and the students did great, one of the students is going on to the state level. March 29<sup>th</sup> is the Rural Champion meeting in Topeka, she is driving to Dodge City and carpooling with others. The Chamber Banquet is March 21<sup>st</sup>. The Chamber meeting in April they will be doing an Indeed training, to help with job postings within the county.

10:30 met with Frank Mercurio, Syracuse Dairy; CW Harper, Kirkham-Michael; a representative for JKL Construction; Dana and Chris Road Department. Commissioner Finn opened the meeting discussing needing an updated supplemental agreement with KDOT and an updated agreement with Syracuse Dairy. Frank stated the owner was not here today, but expressed they want to proceed if the bids are not above \$1.2 million, otherwise they may have to re-look at it. CW with Kirkham-Michael explained that we can open bids and approve them until a later date, up to 30 days. Commissioners agreed to open the bids. 2 Received. 1 paper, 1 electronic.

Smokey Hill—\$1,697,825.20

JKL Construction—\$1,092,085.23

A motion by JW, seconded by Jim, UYV to table accepting bid until next meeting. Kirkham-Michael will review bids for completeness and we receive the agreements with KDOT and Syracuse Dairy.

Chris—The letter to Merit, regarding the terms of accepting the contaminated soil, has been sent and neither he nor Clint have heard from them. Sheldon and Gericho need to go pickup the rebuild in Pratt. Overnight stay approved by JW, seconded by Andy, UYV. The will have County Road 16

Project this year. The estimate is \$613,000 and want to do this in June. Then grind County Road 2. A motion by JW, seconded by Andy, UYV to proceed with sending out for sealed bids with an opening date of April 10<sup>th</sup>.

Kevin—Golf. Gary Ellis is home for 6 weeks, and Mo Houtz will be out later this summer. Kevin is asking to hire 2 part-time summer help 16-18 years of age. Commissioners approved to advertise and start at the part-time hourly rate of \$14/hr. Bathroom renovations from gifts and grants.

Patrick—Hospital. Our facility was 1 of 6 hospitals selected for the Rural hospital achievement award by Texas A&M. Theresa Tolan has started as temporary DON, to get them through the Critical Access designation timeframe. Still need 3 more RN's to be able to open the Geropsychiatry unit. Dr. Loya will be here hopefully by summer.

Pain management and colonoscopy services will start within a month or so. Patrick applied for a couple grants with SASHA(opioid control) and another Senator Jerry Moran Grant. Nurse Practitioners have been hired, Lindsey Alvarado and Anjali Giri and Robin Shelton coming soon. On the finance side, the last 3 years books are all caught up and January 2023 has been the best revenue month during his tenure. This year is going to be very expensive, with starting services and having more staff. Next year will be better. Patrick and Richard have been working on a succession plan. Patrick expressed appreciation to the County for being good partners with the hospital. The Hospital also needs an IT administrator, discussion took place about hiring together. Clerk mentioned there is a college student possibly interested in part-time IT job.

Barbie—Civic Center. She presented 3 quotes for the diamond polish for the floor repair from the leak that happened in December 2022.

Treadwell--\$52,000

Concrete Reflections -\$28,512

Stover Concrete Creations--\$35,770.75

The epoxy quote for \$38,600 is for an upgrade. Tabled until sent to KCAMP for their response.

Barbie also checked surrounding areas rental rates on food service trucks/RV's etc. She drew up a contract form for the Commissioners/Counselor to review.

Clerk asked for an increase to \$5,000 on the County Credit card. A motion by JW, seconded by Andy, UYV to approve credit card increase. A motion by Jim, seconded by JW, UYV to approve Ted's plumbing to do the outside line at the Sheriff's office and ask Greg to install the water heater at the Health Department to be paid from County building. A motion by Andy, seconded by Jim, UYV to approve transfer from Special equipment \$71,235.78 to golf capital outlay. There was further discussion regarding concerns about the County Attorney billing and no replies from either Judge Peterson or Paul Kitzke to the letter sent by the Commissioners. Commissioners asked the Clerk to contact Judge Peterson about being on the Commissioners agenda. The Commissioners felt the lack of response was inconsiderate to the Commissioners and the tax payers. It was unprofessional and simply unacceptable.

Commissioners asked Shelby to come in and confirm the DigitalAlley quote for the first-year payment. She confirmed the way it was stated in the minutes. They asked her about concerns of cases being thrown out. She explained the graffiti case at Cunningham Park and the Baseball fields, there was video and a witness, that case got dismissed. She is asking for a raise for Teresa Mathies, since she has completed the Academy. Approved on a motion by JW, seconded by Jim, UYV for \$2/hr. raise for completing the academy and handles the drug dog.

A motion to adjourn at 1:35 by Andy, seconded by JW, UYV.

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JW Finn, Chairman

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Jim Tucker, Vice-Chairman

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Attest:

Andy Bane, Commissioner

Gina Shores, County Clerk