

June 7, 2016
Reno County Courthouse
Hutchinson, Kansas

The Board of Reno County Commissioners met in agenda session with, Chairman Dan Deming, Commissioners James Schlickau and Brad Dillon, County Administrator Gary Meagher, County Counselor Joe O'Sullivan and Minutes Clerk Cindy Martin, present.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance and a short sectarian prayer led by Retired Pastor Tim Kraft, Church of God.

There was one addition to the agenda; Quest Center presentation.

Mr. Dillon moved, seconded by Mr. Schlickau, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of the Accounts Payable Ledger for claims payable on June 10, 2016 of \$293,712.71 as submitted. Next item on the consent agenda was the recognition for Francis Mills retirement after 26 years of service with the Maintenance Department. The motion was approved by a 3-0 vote.

Chamber of Commerce Jason Ball reported to the Board on the 2017 funding for Economic Development. He gave a summary of the Hutch Rising capital campaign. Mr. Ball spoke about raising \$1.6 million dollars to develop a five year strategic plan stating most of that funding support was generated from the private sector. The plan was to hire a second person to help with Economic Development and new business recruiting. He noted the added person would help with local business growth in the community, recruiting new businesses, workforce development, and online assistance. The program specialized in areas of local businesses in and out of the community and also concentrated on new businesses. Mr. Ball thanked the Board for their continuing support of \$19,000 and further stated that he and his staff would keep working on economic development whether the Board increased their funding or not.

Commissioner Schlickau questioned how the funds would be used. Mr. Ball replied the funds go to personnel, travel expenses, workforce development, imaging, presentations, and activities of the program. Mr. Ball commented if the Board approved more funding it would go toward better recruiting.

Commissioner Schlickau was inclined to leave the funding level at \$19,000 and not adding additional funding of \$25,000 from the Discretionary Fund as suggested last week by Mr. Deming. He stated that Mr. Ball and his staff were doing a fantastic job.

Commissioner Dillon commented on the good presentation stating he and his firm had supported the Hutch Rising program financially and a lot of the private sector have supported the efforts. It shows the support when you set a goal and still met it. He was glad you got the funding and would like to see the county spend their money elsewhere.

Commissioner Deming wanted to support the Chamber with the additional allocation of \$25,000 to attract better paying jobs in the community. He believed the funds were important and well worth it the support. He noted that the county had been at \$19,000 for support to The Chamber for several years. The City of Hutchinson had put \$58,000 this last year toward the program. He would still be in favor of taking the additional funds out of the Discretionary Fund since it was not spent each year or make other budget adjustments. It is important to have the public and private support for this program and would still favor funding more next year. Mr. Deming commented "Rarely do I suggest items that get support from my colleagues". His fellow Commissioners responded that that was not true.

Commissioner Dillon stated that he fully expected that the Chamber would come back sometime in the ensuing year with a request for additional funding with a new community project and that maintaining the Discretionary Fund was important to consider toward any such request.

Commissioner Schlickau added that all the commissioners are dedicated to bringing economic development projects to the county. Providing additional money to the Chamber was not the limiting factor. Mr. Schlickau stated that there are multiple variables involved, including the business climate and economic conditions. Additionally, Mr. Schlickau pointed out that the Chamber was concluding a very successful fundraising campaign with private donations.

Mr. Ball replied regardless of decision today our program is going to aggressively continue our strategic plan. We want everyone to hear about our projects appreciate the support from public and private sectors. We appreciate the Commissions continued support at any level.

Quest Center David Dukart met with the Board along with Hutchinson Community College (HCC) Dr. Carter File and Steve Porter. Mr. Dukart gave a brief description of the Quest Center's Economic Development purpose. He stated he spends one hundred percent of his time with additional Economic Developments at the Quest Center. The Quest Center brought into Reno County about a half million dollars from servicing the fourteen revolving loans. They work closely with Network Kansas and Reno County Partners.

Commissioner Dillon started the discussion since he was the ex-officio member of the Quest Center Board. He made a simple summary of what he understood the budget to be with Mr. Dukart's salary and benefits, miscellaneous expenses and the two part time employees. Mr. Dukart explained the full time receptionist will be for the Quest Center and Troy Beasler, Outreach Coordinator they are both paid for by HCC not from Quest Center funds. The Quest Center's bottom line is \$82,600 Mr. Dillon stated that HCC was funding much more money toward the Quest Center than the county making HCC a really good partner by helping out with the costs of the computer expenses, rent, salaries, and utilities. He stated we really appreciate HCC as partners.

Hutchinson Community College Dr. Carter File noted that he appreciated the support of Reno County since the Quest Center was about Economic Development and fostering the entrepreneur spirit in Reno County. We believe the partnership is a good one and appreciate the support from the county.

Commissioner Schlickau commented how great the partnership was between HCC and Quest Center and is part of the economic development portfolio for the county. He stated that it was difficult to quantify the amount of funding the county should appropriate. Mr. Schlickau questioned if it should be the role of the Quest staff to discourage a poor business plan from advancing, or allowing a plan to follow a natural decision process. He noted that the amount of money provided to create full time positions was considerably higher with the Quest Center than the return of jobs and investment created through the county's cash incentive policy.

Mr. Dukart replied it was hard to put into numbers since most of theirs were single companies. He named a few and said there were a lot of entrepreneurs out there that they had

helped. If you are an entrepreneur starting out today you may see them on Facebook or a website.

Conservation District representative Chloe Wilson presented an overview of the Conservation District for the past seventy years. The Conservation District is basically a service for the community and has been focused on soil and water conservation since the dust bowl. They have two efforts to deliver information to Reno County through education and outreach programs that are primarily targeted toward the children and they administer the \$30,000 KASHA funds from State of Kansas. She explained what WRAPS stood for; Watershed Resources Area Protection Strategy which in this area would be the Cheney Lake Watershed. Conservation District administers the grant funds of \$270,000 they are passed through us nothing comes out for the Conservation operational budget. She stated for those grant funds the Conservation District does not have any discretion over how the funds are spent it is dictated by EPA just for the Cheney Watershed District. We have not gotten an increase from the county since 2006 and since 2009 we have been operating in the deficit using the current reserve we put back from grass seed sales in the 80's and 90's which is \$92,000 but by the end of the year will be around \$74,000. She commented that was why they were asking for the additional \$4,500 funds and went from a \$83,000 budget to \$71,000 for 2017. She noted the \$4,500 was a large increase however she believed that it should have been requested to spread over the last ten years keeping up with inflation rates. Support comes from the State of Kansas \$21,761 and \$40,500 Reno County we are very limited on ways of earning money since we are a service organization. We sell grass seed but have to be extremely creative on how to get funds grass seed sales are grandfathered in and rental of the grass drills in support of the CRP grasslands effort. We will apply for a small grant that is for education.

Commissioner Schlickau commented on the \$4,500 asking how the additional funds would be used. Ms. Wilson stated we want to eventually operate in the black less in the red. We would like to do additional education with the Earth Balloon for the younger children with another goal to reach the high school and college age kids with conservation information may be using more social media.

Commissioner Deming asked if other counties had Conservation Districts that were supported with county tax funds. Ms. Wilson thought that most of them did support their districts and to receive state matching funds they must have county funds. Mr. Deming asked if there were any multi-districts. She was not aware of any but would like to investigate the possibility of a multilevel district after speaking with Extension Office's Director Jan Steen. Mr. Deming then consulted with Mr. Meagher about other counties funding Conservation Districts. Mr. Meagher replied he was not sure he had not checked. He questioned Ms. Wilson if the county gave additional funds of \$4,500 with the \$21,761 if the county puts in more money are you at a maximum. She responded that the maximum allowed by the state is \$25,000 and they have been trending downward, if county more we would not get more from state.

Cheney Watershed Project Coordinator Lisa French addressed the Board regarding the Conservation District's support. She stated every county in the State of Kansas has a Conservation District but they are supported at very different levels. The state puts in matching funds up to the \$25,000, the counties put in varied amounts depending on the conservation they do. Reno County is very active with conservation with more CRP contracts than any county in the State of Kansas. Cheney Watershed has Federal funds that are very significant they do not handle those monies but provide assistance. Cheney Watershed partners with those Federal funds. Cheney Watershed is partners with the City of Wichita for a cost share, with half of Reno County being in the watershed district. She gave an example of State funds that Ms. Wilson administers may pay 60 percent of a project or Federal funds might pay 70 percent we can access an additional 30 percent in the form a check from the City of Wichita that goes directly to the farmers for costs they may incur implanting a certain conservation practice.

Mr. Meagher asked is it the City of Wichita's water utility that supports that fund since it is a major water source. Ms. French said yes it was their public works department and their water utility. She stated those funds help leverage additional KARSHA funds and helps getting practices done above the reservoir.

The Board decided to wait to further discuss agency funding requests. Commissioner Schlickau recommended shifting the payments for the K-96 Corridor Association and Sheriff Chaplain out of the Commissioner Discretionary Fund and into the

Courthouse General Fund to keep fees and memberships itemized in the same fund.

Commissioner Schlickau discussed dues paid out of accounts.

Both Commissioner Schlickau and Deming indicated they would like to see all dues consolidated in the same budget area so total dues expenditures could be better identified. Mr. Meagher indicated this would not be a problem.

Mr. Meagher updated the Board on the Mortgage Registration Tax and Recording Fee Revenue. He stated that May Mortgage Registration Tax was down \$27,756.09 from same time last year. Recording Fees were up \$7,367.10 for the month of May and for the year we were down \$7,995.47 from same time in 2015.

Human Relations Director Renee Harris met with the Board for her regularly scheduled meeting. Mrs. Harris discussed the following: county picnic today, wellness personnel and bio-metric testing being done by Health Department with equipment purchased through the Wellness budget, wellness portal being done in-house by Information Services, self-insurance meeting, Couch to 5K, and results of the Healthy Living Challenge.

Mr. Meagher offered the Board to tour the remodeled Courthouse Annex since the final walk thru was last Friday.

At 10:10 the meeting adjourned until 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, June 14, 2016.

Approved:

Members of the Board of Commissioners:

cm

Approved:

Chair, Board of Reno County Commissioners

(ATTEST)

Reno County Clerk
cm

Date