

## **August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

The Morris County Commissioners met on Tuesday, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. Commissioners Wayne Kohler, Jim Barber and David Fox were present. Bill Kassebaum, County Counselor, and Chelsey Schmidt, County Clerk, were present.

Others present: Billy Kryger, Pastor Berean Baptist Church, Tom Ohm

Chris Blackledge, County Emergency Manager, provided a report on emergency management. Discussion was held regarding local fire departments receiving emergency badges.

Shandi Andres discussed the Morris County Extension Office taking over the scheduling responsibilities for the fair building. Finding a replacement for Karen Allen to manage the cleaning and maintenance of the fair building was also discussed.

It was announced that Ryan Michaelis, Morris County Appraiser, has been nominated and elected to serve as the vice-president for the Kansas County Appraiser's Association (KCAA) in 2022. He will serve as the president-elect in 2023 and president in 2024.

Dr. Daniel Frese, Morris County Health Officer, and Kevin Leeper, Morris County Hospital CEO, discussed the current status of COVID-19 and the mask requirements. The commissioners reviewed a letter from local physician Dr. Melanie Byram expressing support of the mask requirement. Dr. Frese reports that larger referral hospitals are remaining to be at staff and/or bed capacity which is very concerning to health officials.

John Lee, Noxious Weed and Waste Management Director, provided a report on the Noxious Weed and Waste Management departments.

The applicants that were interviewed for the Noxious Weed and Waste Management Director position were discussed.

Commissioner Barber (Kohler) moved to approve the minutes from the August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kohler (Barber) moved to approve the accounts payable vouchers as presented; in the total amount of \$122,438.34. Motion carried. The breakdown by fund is as follows:

General Fund:	\$ 17,444.37
Road & Bridge:	\$ 100,949.16
Noxious Weed:	\$ 345.90
Solid Waste:	\$ 2,765.50
Morris County 911:	\$ 933.41

Jeff Blosser, County Road Engineer, gave the following weekly road and bridge report:

- Continue to mow on the Dwight, White City, Delavan and Council Grove routes
- Stockpiled and screened creek gravel last week; the bearing went out on the screener
- Completed patching the Burdick blacktops and the Herington Sale Barn Rd.
- Undercut and installed a French drain on the Sale Barn Rd. and are finishing the hot mix patch
- Started patching the Four Mile Rd.
- KDOT has reviewed the RS-210 (Kelso Bridge) plans and had no comments or revisions; the contract has been sent to Bridges Inc. to obtain their approval/signatures
- Installing culverts on V Ave. between 2600 & 2700 Rd. and on AA Ave. between 3100 & 3200 Rd.

Commissioner Kohler (Barber) moved that the commission go into executive session to discuss a non-elected personnel matter for 10 minutes with Bill Kassebaum and Chelsey Schmidt present. Motion carried.

The commission entered executive session at 1:15 P.M.

The commission returned to open session at 1:25 P.M.

Jeff Blosser will be resigning from his position as Morris County Road Engineer effective October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Commissioner Barber (Kohler) moved to approve the Cost Share Agreement with KDOT for the Dunlap River Bridge as presented. Motion carried.

A test drive was done on the Sterling dump truck that the county had planned on purchasing. A small air leak was found and the truck needs a new engine mount. Reed Equipment Co. is fixing these issues. Discussion was held regarding purchasing alternative trucks.

Commissioner Barber (Kohler) moved to rescind the initial approval to purchase the 2012 Mack Dump Truck in the amount of \$49,750.00. and to instead approve the purchase of the 2015 Mack Dump Truck from Reed Equipment Co. in the amount of approximately \$85,500.00. Funds are to be paid from the Equipment Reserve Fund. Motion carried.

The commission meeting was moved to the downstairs meeting room at 2:00 p.m. for a discussion regarding the mask requirements.

Those in attendance for the meeting were: Aron Dody, Steve White, Adam Dirks, Michael Austin, Nancy Randall-Endacott, Cheryl E. Kincaid, Kathy L Fox, Candace Boardman, Brenda Davids, Julie Hower, Dusty Manson, Dan Wainwright, Logan Litke, Brenda Johnson, Matt Johnson, Pastor Billy Kryger, Dr. Daniel Frese, Tom Ohm, Davin Spaulding, Frank Hartman, Nikki Day, Eli Day, Dani Day, Lexi Day, Linda Viar, Kelley Judd, Kevin Leeper, Andrea Messer, Caroline Zimmerman, David May, Tyler Anderson, Tami Dragone, Brad Brintle, Beth Brintle, and Denise Hartman. (*Others in attendance were unknown and did not sign the attendance sheet*)

Several people read letters and made statements expressing their opinions regarding the recently issued mask requirement. Some of those who spoke were: Michael Austin, Kelley Judd, Denise Hartman, Brenda Johnson, Kevin Leeper, David May, Beth Brintle, Tyler Anderson, Adam Dirks, Brad Brintle and Tami Dragone. Comments and opinions were shared opposing the mask requirement and asking that it be rescinded. Comments and opinions were shared in support of the mask requirement.

The commissioners ended the public discussion at 3:30 p.m. and the regular meeting was moved back to the commissioners meeting room.

The commissioners continued to discuss the mask requirement.

Commissioner Barber reported that he would consider withdrawing the requirement because the residents in his district were not in favor of wearing masks.

Commissioner Kohler and Commissioner Fox reported that while our hospitals and referral centers continue to be short staffed and at capacity they did not believe it was in the best interest of the county to withdraw the mask requirement.

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

--Meeting minutes can also be found on the county website: [www.morriscountyks.org](http://www.morriscountyks.org)

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**OF MORRIS COUNTY, KANSAS**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**David L. Fox, Chairman**

**ATTEST:**

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**Wayne Kohler, Member**

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**Chelsey Schmidt  
Morris County Clerk**

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**Jim Barber, Member**