

August 3rd, 2021

The Morris County Commissioners met on Tuesday, August 3rd, 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:

Linda Eldridge, County Treasurer, discussed future staffing changes that will occur in the Treasurer's office. Farmers & Drovers Bank will be implementing account policy changes for authorized signers. The policy changes were discussed.

Discussion was held regarding the AETNA healthcare proposal vs the BlueCross BlueShield renewal. In order to remain under the BCBS grand-fathered plan that the county currently has in place, a 12% (approximately \$129,000.00) premium increase would be required. Commissioner Kohler (Barber) moved to approve the annual renewal for BCBS as presented. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kohler (Barber) moved to approve the invoice for the 2021-2022 USD 417 Sports Program Ads in the amount of \$60.00. Funds are to be paid from the Diversion Fund. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kohler (Barber) moved to approve the invoice from Bolton Chrysler Dodge to replace the transmission in the 2015 Dodge Van for public transportation in the amount of \$3,524.38. Motion carried.

The commissioners continued to review drafts of the 2022 budget.

Janet Edwards, courthouse custodian, discussed recent plumbing repairs that had to be addressed in the jail.

Shelly Lautt, County Road Assistant, and Jeff Falter, County Road Foreman, gave the following weekly road and bridge report:

- Continue to mow on the Delavan, Latimer and Council Grove routes
- Continue to stockpile and screen creek gravel
- Completed the 2019 FEMA paperwork
- Received a permanent burn permit for the OS-99 Bridge location
- The State of Kansas did not qualify for the ER funds. Replacement of the box culvert on Parkerville Rd. and 1700 Rd. will not get reimbursed. The next option is to wait until fall applications and apply for cost share monies.
- Completed stockpiling chips at the Skiddy/Woodbine intersection mixing strip
- The John Deere 644 loader is at Murphy's for repairs
- Graded up 2100 Rd., south of the OS-36 Bridge and placed creek gravel
- Beginning patching on the Woodbine Rd.

Brady Hedstrom with BG Consultants, reviewed the bids that were opened last week for the RS-210 (Kelso) Bridge Replacement and recommended that the bid from Bridges Inc. be awarded.

Commissioner Barber (Kohler) moved to approve the bid for the RS-210 (Kelso) Bridge Replacement from Bridges Inc. in the amount of \$597,890.00. The estimated project start date is Dec. 1, 2021 and will be approximately 160 working days. Motion carried.

Commissioner Barber discussed a minimum maintenance road at DD Ave. off of Diamond Springs Road. He requested that the culvert at that location be removed and sloped as a low water crossing.

Max Amos discussed the Noxious Weed and Waste Management Director position and expressed concerns regarding the current management of certain noxious weeds in Morris County.

Commissioner Kohler (Barber) moved to approve the accounts payable vouchers as presented; in the total amount of \$529,815.66. Motion carried. The breakdown by fund is as follows:

General Fund:	\$ 97,096.74
Road & Bridge:	\$ 14,607.50
Special Bridge:	\$ 160,000.00
Reappraisal:	\$ 350.99
Health:	\$ 47,500.00
Noxious Weed:	\$ 118.31
Ambulance:	\$ 60,000.00
Solid Waste:	\$ 642.12
Mental Health:	\$ 28,000.00
Hospital Maint.	\$ 63,500.00
Bond & Interest:	\$ 58,000.00

Commissioner Kohler (Barber) moved to approve the minutes from the July 27th, 2021 meeting. Motion carried.

Dr. Daniel Frese, County Health Officer, and Kevin Leeper, Morris County Hospital CEO, discussed the current status of COVID 19. CDC guidance has confirmed that vaccination, although it is effective in decreasing the severity of illness, it has not been proven to be 100% effective against contracting or spreading the Delta variant. Due to the spread of the Delta variant, the larger area hospitals reaching patient capacity, children and young adults being more susceptible to severe illness from the Delta variant, school start dates approaching and children under the age of 12 not being able to receive the vaccine, the County Health Officer will plan to issue a mask requirement for Morris County. Dr. Frese asked that he have the commission's support and backing to issue the mask requirement. Discussion was held. Commissioner Barber stated that he felt that a number of residents would not abide by the requirement and they would not have faith in the health care recommendations or vaccinations until someone close to them has been affected. Commissioner Kohler and Barber reported that they did not wish to see the virus become out of control as it did last fall and result in shut downs for businesses and schools. They expressed that they would support the requirement if Dr. Frese felt that it was in the best interest of Morris County and protecting the health of the public. Commissioner Fox stated that he did not feel he would support the requirement.

The meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m.

--Meeting minutes can also be found on the county website: www.morriscountyks.org

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

OF MORRIS COUNTY, KANSAS

David L. Fox, Chairman

ATTEST:

Wayne Kohler, Member

Chelsey Schmidt
Morris County Clerk

Jim Barber, Member