

## December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023

The Morris County Commissioner meeting was called to order on Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. Commissioners Jim Barber, David L. Fox and Wayne Kohler were present. Bill Kassebaum, County Counselor, and Chelsey Schmidt, County Clerk, were present.

Others present: Gary Floyd

Jay Simecka, County Sheriff, and Ben Moore, with Ben Moore Studio LLC, gave a report on the Sheriff's Office remodel and expansion project. Discussion was held regarding the current plans to place a parking lot directly south of the Sheriff's Office addition; with the driveway to the parking lot entering from the west. Upon completion of the project, public entry to the Sheriff's Office, Jail and Dispatch will be on the west side of the courthouse. ADA parking must be provided and additional regular parking stalls are needed. Concerns have been expressed about the accessibility and functionality of the parking lot if it were to be located south of the Sheriff's Office addition. If the parking lot were placed south of the Sheriff's Office, it would also require additional expenses with Evergy for boring and relocation of lines and a power pole and expenses for a retaining wall due to the elevation of the area. New drawings proposing parking to be located on the north west corner of the Sheriff's Office were reviewed. This proposal would require the approval from KDOT, as Hwy 56/Main Street is a state highway; it would also require agreement from the City of Council Grove to lower the speed limit of this block to 20 mph. The proposed drawings of the parking lot will be submitted to KDOT for review. The contractor will be advised to pause any work on the parking lot until a final decision can be made.

Dave Owen, Morris County EMS Director, gave a report on Morris County EMS and presented the following run statistics for the month of November:

Ambulance calls:	45
Transfers from MCH to other hospitals:	12
Total number of runs:	57
<i>North County:</i>	13
<i>South County:</i>	44
Year to date total runs:	718

Discussion was held regarding the increasing costs to purchase ambulances and EMS equipment. Commissioner Kohler expressed concerns regarding the projected cost to purchase an ambulance or equipment three to five years from now.

Nate Butler, Kansas House Representative for 68<sup>th</sup> District, visited with the commissioners regarding the upcoming legislative session. It is anticipated that Medicaid Expansion and Local Ad Valorem Tax Reduction Funding (LAVTR) will be topics of discussion. The commissioners requested that LAVTR Funding be advocated for; as this agreement between the State and Cities/Counties has not been honored nor funded since 2004. The original agreement from the State was to share a percentage of certain excise and sales taxes with local governments for the purpose of reducing property tax collections. The commissioners would like to see this funding be paid to counties and cities.

Ryan Michaelis, County Appraiser, visited with the commissioners regarding developing criteria for abating landfill fees for residential properties. There have been several abatement requests for residential properties that are currently vacant but are not determined to be unfit to live in. A

more definitive criteria will be developed and reviewed to determine if a residence is simply vacant vs uninhabitable.

Travis Schweger, Noxious Weed and Waste Management Director, gave a report on the Noxious Weed and Waste Management Departments. Three quotes were received for chemical bids as follows:

<b><u>Chemical</u></b>	<b><u>Size/Unit</u></b>	<b><u>Total Units</u></b>	<b><u>Van Diest</u></b>	<b><u>Nutrien Solutions</u></b>	<b><u>MFA</u></b>
Remedy Ultra	1 gal/1gal	144	\$54.44	\$46.00	\$52.00
2,4-D Amine 4	2.5gal/1 gal	360	\$12.29	\$13.70	\$15.50
Activator 90	2.5 gal/1 gal	180	No Bid	\$16.00	No Bid

Commissioner Kohler (Fox) moved to approve the following chemical bids:

144 units of Remedy Ultra from Nutrien Solutions at \$46.00/unit, for a total of \$6,624.00

360 units of 2,4-D Amine 4 from Van Diest at \$12.29/unit, for a total of \$4,424.40

180 units of Activator 90 from Nutrien Solutions at \$16.00/unit, for a total of \$2,880.00

Grand total of \$13,928.40 will be paid out of Noxious Weed Commodities, currently with a remaining budget of \$57,680.00. Motion carried.

Alex Wooden, Deputy for the Morris County Sheriff's Office, presented a quote from Vigilant Solutions, LLC in the amount of \$2,100.00 for annual maintenance fees for an automatic license plate reader 4 camera system. The County Attorney has agreed to pay this annual maintenance fee in the amount of \$2,100.00 from the Diversion Fund.

Commissioner Kohler (Fox) moved to approve the Diversion Fund Request in the amount of \$2,100.00, to be paid from the Diversion Fund annually. Motion carried.

Commissioner Fox (Kohler) moved to approve the annual burning permit for Flint Hills RECA for calendar year 2024. Motion carried.

Commissioner Fox (Kohler) moved to approve the minutes from the November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023 commission meeting, as presented. Motion carried.

Gary Kepley, with the Corp of Engineers, visited with the commissioners regarding the Dam Road. The Dam Road was constructed by the federal government along with other roadways throughout the parks. The road was originally chip sealed only. After many years and several wet winters, the condition of the road deteriorated. The Corp was able to obtain funding to redo the road and asphalt it. It was verbally agreed at that point that the county would maintain the road in terms of snow removal. The county already had the equipment to do so, and the Corp did not. The road is again in poor condition and needs milled and resurfaced. The Corp has set aside funding to redo the road in 2024. During winter and snow/ice storms the roadway is a safety concern for traffic to travel across, as well as for employees to be performing snow removal etc. In the event of heavy snow/ice the Dam Road may be gated off until the road department can safely clear the roadway. Although the verbal agreement for the county to provide snow removal to the Dam Road has been in place for many years, a memorandum of agreement between Morris County and the Corp of Engineers will be drafted and approved for documentation purposes.

Three letters of interest were received from firms for construction engineering services for the Morris County HRRR Signage Project 064-C-5260-01 (for the eastern half of the county).

Commissioner Kohler (Fox) moved to appoint the commission to act as the Preliminary Review Committee in order to review the letters of interest and select the top three firms that are to be considered. Motion carried.

The committee approved BG Consultants, Kirkham Michael and Kaw Valley as firms to be considered for the short list.

One fuel bid was received for 5,000 gallons of clear #2 diesel fuel and 3,000 gallons of regular unleaded gasoline as follows:

<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Diesel</u>	<u>Reg Unleaded</u>	<u>Total</u>
MFA Oil	2.986/gal	2.259/gal	\$21,707.00

Commissioner Kohler (Fox) moved to approve the bid from MFA Oil as presented, in the total amount of \$21,707.00. Motion carried.

Shelly Lautt and Jeff Falter gave the following weekly road and bridge report for the week of November 26- December 2:

- Performed snow removal on roadways
- Contacted all school districts regarding obtaining updated/current bus routes
- Brush piles were burned at 2800 Rd. and G Ave., 1800 Rd. and C Ave. and 2100 Rd. and F Ave.
- Trees and brush were cut on DD Ave. from 2050- Diamond Creek Rd. and 2000 Rd. from R-T
- Creek gravel was hauled on 525 Rd. from V-X and 250 Rd. from M-P
- Creek gravel was spotted in on X Ave. from 400-525, DD Ave. from Dunlap Rd- 400, Kahola Rd. from 400-500, Dunlap Rd. from DD-FF, 500 Rd. from Q-R, Q Ave. from 500-575, 300 Rd. from P-Q and 300 Rd. from Q-R
- Air Capital Quarry rock was placed on 2200 Rd. from U-V Ave.

Shelly Lautt and Jeff Falter gave the following weekly road and bridge report for the week of December 3- December 9:

- Routes were worked and graded; fixing bad areas
- Air Capital Quarry rock was placed on P Ave. from 2600-2800, M Ave. from 2700-2800, 1300 Rd. from T-U, 1700 Rd. from J-P, 1700 Rd. from K Ave.- Parkerville Rd., Parkerville Rd. from 1300-1400, Parkerville Rd. from 1500-1600, 1800 Rd. from C-D, D Ave. from 1600-1700, 2400 Rd. from Q-T, 2500 Rd. from Q-T 2800 Rd. from M-P, 3000 Rd. from Z-BB, 3100 Rd. from BB-FF and Old Hwy 4 from 300-400
- Mid States Materials (Wilsey location) base rock was put on P Ave. from 2700-2800
- Creek Gravel was placed on Old Hwy 4 from 300-400, Old Hwy 4 from M Ave.- 575 Rd., Z Ave. from 200- Dunlap Rd., D Ave. from 900-1000, 1200 Rd. from D-F and G Ave. from 1100-1275
- Weed-eating was done around signs, guardrails and culverts on Skiddy Rd., Dunlap Rd., Woodbine Rd., Old Hwy 4 blacktop, J Ave. from 1800-2200, BB Ave. from 2200-3200, 2800 Rd. from T-BB, 2600 Rd. from Q-U, 1800 Rd. from U-V, Lake Rd., Four Mile Rd. and 1800 Rd. from A-C
- Started Old Hwy 4 detour costs negotiations with KDOT
- Gravel extension permits were completed and sent to the state for the Casey and Sturgeon creek gravel sites
- KCAMP incident claim from November 8<sup>th</sup> was closed; no damage costs reported
- Jeff and Shelly met with Kaw Valley Engineer, Chad McCullough, on upcoming project work
- Jeff attended the Kansas Association of Counties Conference in Wichita, December 5-7

Four sealed bids were received for the sale of county property located in Latimer, Lots 5-12, Block D, (also known as the “Latimer Shop”), and are as follows:

<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Robert F. Alexander	\$ 334.12
Larry & Dawn Engel	\$ 505.00
Floyd Albrecht	\$2,015.50
David Spiker	\$2,150.00

Commissioner Kohler (Fox) moved to approve the bid from David Spiker for the “Latimer Shop” in the amount of \$2,150.00. Motion carried.

Discussion was held regarding removing a portion of 600 Rd. going south from H Ave. from minimum maintenance status. A new home is being built and will require public access.

Commissioner Barber (Kohler) moved to approve the proposal from Ebert Construction for the replacement of the deck for the Sunflower Bridge and to authorize Jeff Falter to sign the rental agreement. Motion carried.

The contract with Ebert Construction will be \$9,119.90/day for crew rental; with a proposed minimum of 2 days and maximum of 5 days. The additional cost of \$16,750.80 will be charged for the metal decking. Morris County is to purchase the concrete and reinforcing steel for the bridge deck.

Commissioner Fox (Kohler) moved to approve the payroll liabilities from December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023 in the amount of \$44,605.00.

Commissioner Kohler (Fox) moved to approve the accounts payable vouchers from December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023; in the total amount of \$105,342.70. Motion carried. The breakdown by fund is as follows:

General:	\$ 36,889.61
Road & Bridge:	\$ 17,195.29
Special Bridge:	\$ 2,182.76
Reappraisal:	\$ 291.55
Health Dept Flowthru:	\$ 1,031.00
Noxious Weed:	\$ 2,872.47
Ambulance:	\$ 546.77
Capital Improvement:	\$ 5,333.25
Equipment Reserve:	\$ 30,000.00
ARPA Funds:	\$ 9,000.00

Commissioner Fox (Kohler) moved to approve payroll in the amount of \$105,889.73. Motion carried.

Commissioner Fox (Kohler) moved to approve the accounts payable vouchers as presented; in the total amount of \$73,152.40. Motion carried. The breakdown by fund is as follows:

General:	\$ 5,865.77
Road & Bridge:	\$ 33,238.88
Reappraisal:	\$ 194.41
Noxious Weed:	\$ 57.60
Morris County 911:	\$ 955.58

Capital Improvement: \$ 31,777.90  
Equipment Reserve: \$ 1,062.26

Commissioner Kohler (Fox) moved to accept the resignation letter from Dean Miller from the Morris County Hospital Board of Directors, effective December 31, 2023. Motion carried.

Dean Miller has served on the Morris County Hospital Board of Directors since April of 2010. The commissioners thank him for his service to Morris County and our communities.

Commissioner Fox (Kohler) moved to appoint David Senne to the Morris County Hospital Board of Directors, effective January 1, 2024. David Senne will fill the un-expired term, previously held by Dean Miller. The term will expire on December 31, 2024. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kohler (Fox) moved to approve closing county offices on Friday December 22<sup>nd</sup> at 1:00 p.m.; employees will have a “working lunch”. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 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**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Barber, Chairman

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
David L. Fox, Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chelsey Schmidt  
Morris County Clerk

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Wayne Kohler, Member