

## **July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

The Morris County Commissioners met on Tuesday, July 27<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

The commissioners interviewed Travis Schweger for the Noxious Weed and Waste Management Director position. John Lee, Noxious Weed and Waste Management Director, was present for the interview.

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

Greg Watkins, with Watko Benefit Group, presented the commissioners with healthcare plan options that were obtained from alternative insurance companies. A department head meeting will be held in the afternoon to discuss the options presented.

Commissioner Kohler (Barber) moved to approve Resolution 2021-11 appointing Ryan Michaelis as the Morris County Appraiser for a term of 4 years. Motion carried.

Commissioner Barber (Kohler) moved to approve the minutes from the July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting. Motion carried.

Dr. Daniel Frese, County Health Officer, Candra Good, County Health Nurse, and Kevin Leeper, Morris County Hospital CEO discussed current concerns regarding COVID 19. The health department reports that approximately 49% of eligible Morris County residents age 12 and above have received the vaccine. At this time children below the age of 12 are not eligible to receive the vaccine. We are now preparing to face the widespread Delta variant of COVID 19. The Delta variant is at least 3 times more transmissible as the original COVID 19 strain. (For every person that is infected with the original COVID 19 strain, that person would infect approximately 2 other individuals. For every person that is infected with the Delta variant strain, that person would infect approximately 6 other individuals.) The Delta variant is also proving to infect and have much more negative effects on children and young adults as compared to the original strain. Kansas City area hospitals (Children's Mercy, KU Medical Center) and Topeka (Stormont Vail) hospitals are already reaching capacity to be able to accept incoming patients. This is very concerning to our local health care system, as a large portion of our patient population needs transferred to higher levels of care. With nearly half of our eligible Morris County population being unvaccinated and all Morris County children ages 12 and under unable to receive the vaccine, health officials cannot stress enough the importance of becoming vaccinated, wearing masks, and social distancing. The Delta variant infection rates are rapidly increasing, hospitals are reaching capacity, school start dates are quickly approaching; we must be proactive or we will overwhelm our health systems and put our children and our communities at risk.

The commissioners will release a public service announcement regarding COVID 19.

Commissioner Kohler (Barber) moved to approve hiring an additional COVID 19 contact tracer for the Health Department. The salary and payroll liabilities will be paid from the American

Rescue Plan Act Funds. The funds will be allocated through January of 2022 and can be re-evaluated if needed. Motion carried.

Brady Hedstrom with BG Consultants, BJ Harlan with A.M. Cohron & Son Inc., and Barbara Buller with Bridges Inc. were present for the bid opening for the RS-210 (Kelso) Bridge Replacement. Four sealed bids were opened and are as follows:

<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Bid</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Working Days</u>
A.M. Cohron & Son Inc.	\$703,570.31	Nov. 1, 2021	110 days
Bridges Inc.	\$597,890.00	Dec. 1, 2021	160 days
King Construction Co.	\$783,289.20	Dec. 1, 2021	150 days
Reece Construction Co. Inc.	\$838,156.90	Dec. 1, 2021	120 days

Brady Hedstrom with BG Consultants, will review the bids and provide a report and recommendation at next week's meeting.

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

- Continue to mow on the Dwight, Delavan, Latimer and Council Grove routes
- Continue to stockpile and screen creek gravel
- Continue to work on 2019 FEMA Flooding paperwork; completed paperwork for the low water crossings and debris; remaining paperwork being completed is for the gravel surfacing
- Completed the Department of Water Resources Permit application and design work for the repair of the OS-99 Bridge; will need to get permits for repairing the foundations
- Awaiting information regarding whether or not the state will qualify for ER Funds
- KDOT's Hwy 177 bid was received last Wednesday; the total for the 2 projects will be \$52,307,811.00
- Begun stockpiling chips at the Skiddy/Woodbine intersection at the mixing strip
- Graded up 2100 Rd., north of the OS-36 Bridge and placed creek gravel on that stretch of road
- The John Deere 644 Loader has dropped at least 1 cylinder. It is suggested that it will take a reman motor, at a minimum. A 270 Komatsu from Barry Tractor has been rented to stockpile chips.

Commissioner Barber (Kohler) moved to approve the quote from Murphy Tractor & Equipment Co. for replacing the engine and associated parts for the John Deere 644 Loader in the amount of \$38,683.00. Motion carried.

Two used dump trucks are for sale from Reed Co., LLC. as follows:

2009 Sterling LT8500	\$39,500.00
2012 Mack Granite GU713	\$49,750.00

Commissioner Barber (Kohler) moved to approve the purchase of both dump trucks as presented for a total of \$89,250.00. Funds are to be taken from the Equipment Reserve Fund. Motion carried.

The county has received notice that Mid States Materials plans to increase rock prices \$0.50/ton as of August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Warranties on the MT-3 and MT-4 tractors will expire at the end of August 2021. A quote from KanEquip with various protection plan options was reviewed.

Commissioner Kohler (Barber) moved to approve the Premier Protection Plan, 1-year extended warranty, in the amount of \$2,313.00 for each tractor. Motion carried.

The commissioners interviewed Justin Richardson for the Noxious Weed and Waste Management Director position. John Lee, Noxious Weed and Waste Management Director, was present for the interview.

Commissioner Kohler (Barber) moved to approve the gross payroll and employer paid liabilities as presented, in the total amount of \$192,089.68. Motion carried.

Department head meeting was held at 2:45 p.m.

Those present were Chelsey Schmidt, John Lee, Corrine Blosser, Ryan Michaelis, Shelly Lautt and Linda Eldridge. Alternative healthcare plans were reviewed. Discussion focused primarily on a plan offered through AETNA. Employees will be provided with the plan comparison for AETNA vs BCBS and are to contact all providers to verify physicians and hospitals that are in-network and verify covered medications and pharmacies. Department heads are to take information back to their employees and provide feedback to the commissioners by next week's meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 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**

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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