

REPUBLIC COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES

MONDAY, JULY 11, 2022

The Republic County Commission met in regular session on Monday, July 11, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. at the Republic County Courthouse. Commissioners present were Doug Garman, Melvin Jeardoe and Edwin Splichal. Clerk Kathleen Marsicek was present to record the minutes. Deb Hadachek from the Belleville Telescope observed most of the meeting.

The meeting was called to order and attendees pledged allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

Lay Pastor Al Urich, Lutheran Church in Belleville, offered Morning Prayer.

Commissioner Splichal made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Jeardoe made a motion to approve the July 5, 2022 minutes. Commissioner Garman seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Accounts payable vouchers were approved in the amount of \$344,864.55.

Commissioner Garman presented a retirement plaque for 30 years of service to Republic County to Barry Porter, County Appraiser and wished him well in his retirement.

Following discussion regarding the approved funding to complete the commercial building remodel, the consensus was to use the capital improvement funds instead of the ARPA funds.

Kay Shoemaker, Treasurer for Republic County Development, presented the biannual reports for the State of Kansas for signatures.

Kurt Childs, Kelli Childs, Jennifer Loring, Robert Lahodny, Tommy Kokko, Alan Anderson, Alan Sheets, Jeanette Sheets, Melody Joy, Joanne Filinger, Matt Dowell, Katherine Wilber and Brenda Danielson joined the meeting for open forum.

Kurt Childs, Republic County Responsible Wind Energy Group spokesperson, asked the commissioners to place a non-binding referendum question of the county citizens on the wind turbine project on a ballot. Childs stated three reasons for this vote.

- Many persons are unwilling to speak up, for or against, because they own businesses or have family members on the opposite side.
- None of the commissioners were elected based on their stance on wind turbines.
- Conflict of interest. Two commissioners have relatives that have contracts with NextEra for turbines.

The question for the ballot would be;

“Do you support 10x wind turbine height setbacks for non-participating landowners so as to not deprive them of their ability to use and enjoy their property as they see fit?”

Lahodny asked if that restriction would apply to ALL structures that landowners would build or just turbines?

Filinger shared that she read in a contract that landowners could not build a structure over a certain height if you were a participant.

Anderson responded that there are definitely differences with zoned and not zoned counties.

Danielson represented a drawing comparison of the tower to a two-story residence.

Kelli Childs invited everyone to attend the information meeting at the commercial building on Friday, July 15 at 7:00 p.m. to hear from other people who have lived under or around wind turbines.

Commissioner Jeardoe asked Childs if a representative from NextEra was invited to present information regarding the possible project and Childs said that they were not on the schedule.

Wilber reported that she is still researching for contractors and supplies to assist with the repairs of the front steps of the courthouse.

Jerry Strnad, Wayne Pachta and Brenda Mikesell, Republic County Conservation District, presented their annual request for funding. The request remains the same as the 2022 request of \$37,500.00.

Commissioner Splichal made a motion to approve the request from the Conservation District. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion which was made unanimous by Commissioner Garman.

Kenneth Robbins, Highway, Transportation and Bridge Administrator and Stacey Bowen presented for review:

- The weekly community concerns and projects completed report.
- Robbins reported that the grant received for the baler for the recycling center does require that the equipment be purchased by a certain date. The baler will be stored at the county shop area until a recycling center can be developed.
- A used patching machine has been located on an auction and Robbins asked permission to purchase it. Commissioner Garman made a motion to approve the purchase. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion. Commissioner Splichal made it unanimous.
- Robbins presented a wage change sheet for the part-time bus driver that has been promoted to full-time with full benefits.

Jimmie Blecha, Honorable Mayor of Munden, announced that the City of Munden received a \$5,050 grant from the Republic County Community Foundation to assist with updates in the city park. Munden has also applied for a Dane Hansen grant to assist with cleanup of the city.

Blecha asked if member that are appointed by the commissioners such as Republic County Economic Development or volunteers at the county fair were covered by the Republic County's insurance if an issue should arise. Clerk Marsicek will contact the county's insurance carrier for the answers and report back to Blecha and the Commissioners.

At 10:00 a.m., Commissioner Garman excused himself from the rest of the meeting.

At 10:15 a.m., Randy Hofmeier, County Auditor, presented the first draft of the 2023 Republic County proposed budget for review and updates.

At 11:00 a.m., the Commissioners contacted the Cloud County Commissioners via phone conference.

At 11:05 am, Commissioner Splichal made a motion to recess into executive session for 15 minutes to discuss non-elected personnel regarding the appraiser candidate. Commissioner Jeardoe seconded the motion. Motion carried. Attending the session were the Republic County Commissioners, Cloud County Commissioners, Cloud County Clerk Shella Thoman and Clerk Marsicek.

The board reconvened at 11:20 a.m. Commissioner Jeardoe made a motion to appoint Toby Marco as the Republic County Appraiser to be shared with Cloud County with a joint salary of \$80,000. Commissioner Splichal seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Marco starting day will be July 18, 2022.

Hofmeier rejoined the meeting to finalize the 2023 proposed budget. The Revenue Neutral Rate hearing and the regular budget hearing will be held on August 22, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

Levi Whitley, EMS Director, joined the meeting at 11:45 a.m. to discuss issues at the Ambulance station.

Whitley has contacted two businesses for quotes to replace the lighting in the bay area of the station.

Whitley announced that Ty Sothers was accepted into Paramedic schooling that will start on August 9th at Barton.

At 11:50 a.m., Commissioner Jeardoe made a motion to recess to executive session for 10 minutes to discuss non-elected personnel regarding employee performance. Commissioner Splichal seconded the motion. Motion carried. Attending the session were the Commissioners, Whitley and Clerk Marsicek.

The board reconvened at 12:00 noon, taking no action.

With all agenda items completed, Commissioner Jeardoe made a motion and Commissioner Splichal seconded to adjourn at 12:25 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

The next regular meeting will be on Monday, July 18, 2022, beginning at 8:30 a.m. at the Republic County Courthouse.

ATTEST: _____
Kathleen L. Marsicek, County Clerk

APPROVED: _____
Doug Garman, Chairperson

Melvin Jeardoe, Member

Edwin Splichal, Member