

September 3, 2024

Unofficial Minutes

Russell County Commission Meeting

At 9:00 am Duke Strobel made the motion to open the meeting. Steve Reinhardt seconded; Daron Woelk approved. Others present for the meeting were: Administrator Stephanie Grisham and County Clerk Kristi Whitman.

Duke Strobel made the motion to approve the minutes of the August 19, 2024, meeting. Steve Reinhardt seconded; Daron Woelk approved.

The Commissioners had their review.

Duke Strobel made the motion to add Michael Moeder to the Paradise Waldo Natoma Fire #3 Department pending payroll paperwork being turned in. Daron Woelk seconded; Steve Reinhardt approved.

Duke Strobel made the motion to approve the CMB application for Charlotte Pierson-David/ A Fairport Knight. Daron Wolek seconded; Steve Reinhardt approved.

Duke Strobel made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-14 submitting, at the next county-wide general election, the question of whether to continue to impose a county-wide retailers' sales tax at the rate of 0.5% for a period of five (5) years commencing October 1, 2025, and pledging the revenue received therefrom for the purpose of financing the provisions of health care services through the operation and maintenance of the Russell County Hospital." Steve Reinhardt seconded; Daron Woelk approved.

Andrew Dempewolf sent a letter of interest to be appointed to the Fair Board. Steve Reinhardt made a motion to appoint Andrew Dempewolf to the Fair Board. Daron Woelk seconded; Duke Strobel approved.

Duke Strobel stated there will be a tri-county meeting hosted by Barton County with Russell and Pawnee Counties regarding the National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor. Both Duke and Daron stated they could attend.

Alan Kuntzsch, Public Works Director, presented a resolution to approve the functional classification of streets. Change of classification of 1.6 miles of NE 230th Road starting at the intersection NE 140 Avenue to 285th Street from local to minor collector. Duke Strobel made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-15 changing the classification of 1.6 miles of NE 230th Road starting at the intersection of NE 140 Avenue to 285th Street from local to minor collector. Steve Reinhardt seconded; Daron Woelk approved. Duke Strobel made a motion to approve an agreement for FAS Bridge 470 with Penco Engineering for \$85,000.00 to be paid in monthly increments. Steve Reinhardt seconded; Daron Woelk approved. Alan gave an update on the machinery. The scraper will need the engine replaced, not rebuilt. It was agreed to go with the remanufactured engine. Alan read KSA 61-124 concerning township roads being maintained. Duke Strobel stated Dorrance had raised money for half of the flashing speed limit sign they wanted to be put up. This discussion was tabled until the next meeting to discuss with the Mayor of Dorrance.

At 9:55 am Steve Reinhardt made the motion to enter into a 5-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with Alan Kuntzsch, Public Works Director, and Administrator Stephanie Grisham in attendance. Duke Strobel seconded; Daron Woelk approved. At 10:00 am the meeting resumed with no action taken.

Watershed Specialist agent Stacie Minson with Midway Extension District discussed water quality in Russell County and possibly getting private water wells tested. She is wanting to update water quality information packets for Russell County. She will work with Administrator Stephanie Grisham on getting county information to put in the packet.

Register of Deeds Elizabeth Gilmore gave an update on her office. She described the use of the scanner that was purchased with the Register of Deeds Tech Fund. This fund, which comes at no cost to taxpayers, is supported by recording fees and can be used for the preservation and maintenance of documents, technology upgrades, annual fees, and other office technology-related expenses. The recording fees are divided among the County General, Register of Deeds Tech Fund, Treasurer Tech Fund, County Clerk Tech Fund, and the Heritage Fund (Historical Society). She has digitized 90% of documents kept in the Register of Deeds Office and since 2017, records dating back to 1960 have been brought online.

At 10:45 am Duke Strobel made the motion to enter into a 5-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with Chris Brown, GIS Director and Zoning Coordinator and Administrator Stephanie Grisham in attendance. Daron Woelk seconded; Steve Reinhardt approved. At 10:50 am the meeting resumed with no action taken.

Chris Brown, GIS Director and Zoning Coordinator, gave an update on his department. They will be having three public hearings on Wednesday for cell towers and seasonal housing. He will present a temporary conditional use permit next meeting.

Sheriff Andrew Van Der Wege gave an update on the Emergency Management Department, stating he will start to advertise for the position of Emergency Manager. Sheriff Andrew Van Der Wege is the Interim Emergency Manager, until the position is filled. The Homeland Security equipment transfer to Ellsworth County has been presented by Ellsworth County and they are looking further into this. The KDHE air quality grant money was all spent. Approximately \$13,248.00 will have to be sent back to the State. Sheriff Van Der Wege requested to put twelve vehicles on Purple Wave and then purchase a used KHP vehicle with the proceeds. The Commissioners agreed.

Treasurer Trisha Strobel gave an update on the treasurer's office. The quote to send out tax statements will be around \$17,000.00 to \$18,000.00. She discussed 179 delinquent properties that would be eligible for the tax sale. Trisha Strobel requested a \$1.00 per hour raise. Steve Reinhardt made a motion to approve a \$1.00 per hour raise for Treasurer Trisha Strobel. Daron Woelk seconded; Duke Strobel approved.

David Caudill, RRH CEO, asked if the County would purchase a storage building for \$68,000.00 that the hospital is currently renting for storage. Duke Strobel stated he does not want the property to be taken off the tax rolls. The Commissioners will talk with County Attorney Dan Krug before making any decisions.

At 11:42 am Duke Strobel made the motion to enter into a 5-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with Administrator Stephanie Grisham in attendance. Steve Reinhardt seconded; Daron Woelk approved. The executive session was extended an additional 5 minutes. At 11:52 am the meeting resumed with no action taken.

At 11:53 am Duke Strobel made the motion to adjourn the meeting for lunch and will reconvene at 1:00 pm. Daron Woelk seconded; Steve Reinhardt approved.

At 1:00 pm Duke Strobel made the motion to open the Revenue Neutral Rate public hearing for Russell County. Steve Reinhardt seconded, and Daron Woelk approved. The Commission opened the floor for comment. There were several comments from the audience.

The roll call vote was taken to approve Resolution 2024-16 with Duke Strobel voting yes, Steve Reinhardt voting yes, and Daron Woelk voting yes.

Duke Strobel made the motion to approve Resolution 2024-16 which allows Russell County to levy a property tax rate exceeding the Revenue Neutral Rate. Daron Woelk seconded, and Steve Reinhardt approved.

Duke Strobel made the motion to close the Revenue Neutral Rate hearing. Steve Reinhardt seconded, and Daron Woelk approved.

Duke Strobel made a motion to table the Budget Hearing until Monday, September 9, 2024, at 9:00 am in the Commission Chambers, Courthouse, 401 N Main Street, Russell, Kansas 67665.

Steve Reinhardt seconded; Daron Woelk approved.

Tax corrections 2024000081 through 2024000091 were signed with a tax decrease of \$15,229.12.

Checks were approved and signed to be deducted from the following funds:

100	GENERAL	\$ 47,511.06	260	COUNTY HEALTH	\$ 9,146.75
110	ROAD & BRIDGE	\$ 32,495.49	290	GORHAM FIRE #1	\$ 119.85
130	NOXIOUS WEED	\$ 31.84	300	LUCAS FIRE #2	\$ 918.19
140	4-H	\$ 305.07	310	WAL-PAR-NAT FIRE #3	\$ 5,582.10
150	CVB	\$ 4,736.71	328	RUSSELL CO FIRE #5	\$ 576.22
155	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	\$ 36.71	330	APPRAISER	\$ 108.14
180	ELECTION	\$ 305.17	340	SPECIAL R&B	\$ 808.57
190	AMBULANCE	\$ 3,326.01	360	SOLID WASTE	\$ 10,611.74
210	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT	\$ 59,000.00	380	EMER TELEPHONE	\$ 406.55

At 1:53 pm Duke Strobel made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Steve Reinhardt seconded, and Daron Woelk approved. The next special meeting for the Russell County Commissioners Budget Hearing will be Monday, September 9, 2024, beginning at 9:00 am in the Commission Chambers, Courthouse. The next regular meeting for the Russell County Commissioners will be Monday, September 16, 2024, beginning at 9:00 am in the Commission Chambers, Courthouse.