

Barton County Commission Agenda Meeting Minutes

Recorded audio is available on compact disk upon KORA request to the Barton County Clerk's Office, 1400 Main – Room 202, Great Bend, Kansas 67530.

Phone (620) 793-1835 \ Fax (620) 793-1990 \ Email clerk@bartoncounty.org

Meetings Live Streamed through **Microsoft Teams** at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3aCoRVE>

August 2, 2021

The Board of Barton County Commissioners convened this 2nd day of August 2021, at the Barton County Courthouse.

Members present:

Kirby Krier, Commissioner, 1st District
Barb Esfeld, Commissioner, 2nd District
Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner, 3rd District (*Chairman Pro-Tem*)
James R. Daily, Commissioner, 4th District, Chairman
Jennifer Schartz, Commissioner, 5th District
Bev Schmeidler, Assistant Deputy County Clerk
Phil Hathcock, County Administrator
Patrick Hoffman, County Counselor

I. OPENING BUSINESS:

Commissioner Daily called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

Commissioner Schartz moved to approve the agenda.
Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.
All voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Krier moved to approve the minutes of the July 26, 2021, Regular Meeting.
Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.
All voted aye. Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF APPROPRIATIONS:

Accounts Payable Register will be submitted to the Commission for the period of July 19, 2021, and ending August 2, 2021.

Commissioner Esfeld moved to approve appropriations for the period of July 19, 2021, to August 2, 2021 and authorize the Chairman to sign on behalf of the Commission.
Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.
All voted aye. Motion passed.

III. OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A. 2020 AUDIT REPORT:

-Melissa Ille, Senior Manager, Adams, Brown, will present the 2020 Audit Report to the Commission. The report will cover the financial condition of Barton County from January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020.

Melissa Ille, Senior Manager, Adams, Brown, said they issued an unmodified or clean opinion and noted the county began with an unencumbered cash balance of \$18,022,417 and ended with an unencumbered cash balance of \$20,420,689. Ille said there was a new footnote as a result of the CARES funding due to COVID. The county was subject to a single audit due to federal grant expenditures exceeding \$750,000 and said the SPARKS Program was chosen for the audit. Ille reported that one issue found which is a significant deficiency, regarding how some transactions were pulled for payroll and what was allocated to the program. Ille said payroll that was incurred prior to the beginning timeline was included in error and that there was plenty of other payroll that could have been included.

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Commissioner Schartz commented that Barton County was not the only county with this issue. Ille said that was correct.

Ille said typically there are additional recommendations in the governance letter, but over the past several years, the county has taken those recommendations and implemented corrective procedures. Ille said she had no recommendations this year.

Commissioner Schartz said the administrative team has had done a really good job and noted the receipt of SPARKS funding was a moving target and the information frequently changed. Ille said the SPARKS program was new with limited information that came out in stair steps.

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to accept the 2020 Audit Report as submitted by Adams, Brown. Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

B. COUNTY ENGINEER: Intersection Safety Improvements – Project 5 C-4965-01:

-The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) opened bids on July 21, 2021, for a project that includes widening a concrete drainage box on NW 50 Road 0.1 mile east of NW 10 Avenue and making intersection safety improvements at the intersection of North Washington Avenue and North 30 Road. L & M Contractors, Inc., Great Bend, submitted the low bid of \$603,844.00. KDOT finds the bid to be satisfactory and requests the County approve the Authority to Award Contract, Commitment of County Funds. Barton County is responsible for 10% of the construction costs, and KDOT asks for a remittance from the County in the amount of \$61,000.00 on or before September 9, 2021.

Barry McManaman, County Engineer, said the project on NW 50 RD is just west of the cemeteries. The project on N Washington began a few years ago when a young lady lost her life in a terrible accident at intersection. McManaman said the county's share would be 10% or \$61,000 due on or before September 9th.

Commissioner Daily asked what the time frame is for construction. McManaman requested the project begin as soon as possible with the latest start date being in February 2022. McManaman said Curt Mauler of L&M Contractors, Inc. is checking on the availability of the signal system to be installed as part of the advanced warning system.

Commissioner Daily asked if it were possible to have the road closed during construction. McManaman said not at the N Washington and Juco Road intersection. The NW 50 RD location will have to be closed and traffic detoured to NW 30 RD.

Commissioner Krier asked if it is possible to choose cement or asphalt or does the state decide. McManaman said the box extension will have a 4-foot asphalt widening on each side and said they chose to go with asphalt because the existing road is asphalt.

Commissioner Krier asked for discussion on material options on future projects. McManaman said OK.

Commissioner Schartz said she asked that this project be called the Shealee Stover project to keep it in the forefront of everyone's minds and noted Shealee was the young woman killed in the accident. Her accident is what brought this to the attention of the commission and put it on KDOT's radar. Schartz said it is important for parents who have lost children to know they are not forgotten.

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Commissioner Krier moved to approve the Authority to Award Contract, Commitment of County Funds for KDOT Project 5 C-4965-01. Direct the Finance Officer to encumber \$25,530.90 from the Capital Improvement Fund, Federal Funds Exchange Line, 071-00-6336. The remainder of the project cost, \$35,469.10, was encumbered in August, 2019, using Federal Funds Exchange monies.

Commissioner Schartz seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

C. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Attorney-Client Privilege:

-The Commission will enter into Executive Session. The Commission may invite such parties as needed into said Session. It is anticipated that this Session will last 20 minutes.

At 9:19 A.M. Commissioner Esfeld moved that the Commission enter into Executive Session until 9:40 A.M. The subject to be discussed will be consultation with counsel on matters protected by attorney/client privilege. The reason this needs to be discussed in Executive Session is to provide that attorney/client privilege and the County's position on the matter on which this legal advice is being sought. Invited to the Session would be Patrick, our County Counselor, the Sheriff, and the County Administrator. Esfeld ask if Bev be joining. Bev said no. Esfeld said they are OK with those individuals.

Commissioner Krier seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

(NOTE: No motion to go back into regular session.)

D. ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION: Attorney-Client Privilege:

-The Commission will make any necessary announcements as a result of the Executive Session. If necessary, further discussion or a decision may be made at this time.

9:41 A.M. Commissioner Daily said there was no action taken.

Commissioner Krier said he would like to make two motions, one that there was no action taken in the Executive Session previously.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

Commissioner Schartz said he's going on.

Commissioner Daily said keep going.

E. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Personnel matters of non-elected personnel:

-The Commission will enter into Executive Session. The Commission may invite such parties as needed into said Session. It is anticipated that this Session will last 10 minutes.

(Motion continued) Commissioner Krier moved that the Commission enter into Executive Session until 9:55 am. The subject to be discussed with personnel matters relative to non-elected personnel. The reason this needs to be discussed in Executive Session is relative to non-elected personnel. Invited to the Executive Session are the County Counselor, the County Clerk and the County Administrator.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded both of the motions.

Commissioner Esfeld said with the exception of the County Clerk.

Commissioners Schartz and Krier both said she was not here.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

F. ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION: Personnel matters of non-elected personnel:

-The Commission will make any necessary announcements as a result of the Executive Session. If necessary, further discussion or a decision may be made at this time.

9:55 A.M. Commissioner Esfeld asked that we end our Executive Session and go back into regular session.

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Commissioner Schartz seconded the motion.
All voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Daily announced no action was taken.

V. ENDING BUSINESS:

1. Announcements
2. Appointments

VI. OTHER BUSINESS:

- Comm Krier: All Commissioners will be at meetings in Hoisington and Ellinwood
- Comm Esfeld: Will not be able to attend the Hoisington meeting
- Karen Winkelman, Health Director: Approximately 41 in COVID isolation. Quarantine numbers are very fluid. People are less forthcoming about contacts. 11 positive cases reported in June. 101 positive cases reported in July. Death number remains at 51 according to KDHE website. Total number of positive cases for Barton County is 2,634. KDHE publicized an outbreak at Riverbend last week. Over 11,520 vaccines given. Administered 145 vaccinations last week, 122 the week before and 93 the week prior to that. Continue to have all preparations available. 34.9% of Barton County has been vaccinated with 42.2% statewide. 41.3% of the eligible population ages 12 years and older have been vaccinated. Continue to test. Tested approximately 30 last week. Tests are submitted to KDHE, and they had been told that they were testing every specimen for the variant. KDHE said due to the overwhelming response of specimens coming in they will prioritize variant testing.
- Comm Schartz: Are Delta and Alpha different variants? Winkelman said they are two different variants.
- Winkelman: Last Friday, 83 counties were reporting variants. Of the 41 specimens sequenced for Barton County, 24 were positive with 12 being Delta and 3 Alpha. Criteria for KDHE to check for variant are those who were vaccinated, hospitalized COVID patients, fatalities caused by COVID, counties that have insufficient or no sequencing done at all and counties with increasing case rates and low vaccination rates. Going to the College Student Union to provide vaccination on August 17th from 2:00 – 5:00 P.M. Hosting a teen event on August 5th from 7:30 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. COVID vaccines as well as other age-appropriate vaccines will be available. Began communication with the schools. Waiting for guidance from KDHE and CDC. The guidance is to support safe in-person instruction for the upcoming school year. The different facets they are looking at are vaccines for those 12 years and older; robust testing strategy; CDC and KDHE recommends universal indoor mask usage for all teachers, staff, students and visitors and 3-foot social distancing. They have an obligation to report any positive cases in their schools and to also identify any close contacts.
- Comm Krier: Have you received any requests for \$100 that President Joe Biden offered for everyone taking the vaccination. Winkelman said she had not. Krier asked if she looked for that to happen since she was going to the college. Krier asked how that would be paid. Winkelman said she did not know.
- Comm Hutchinson: Believes the President asked for the states to pay for that so unless our illustrious governor decides she wants to pay for it....
- Comm Krier: Would that be from ARP money.
- Comm Hutchinson: I hope not.
- Comm Hutchinson: How many of the 101 active cases from July had been vaccinated? Winkelman said the problem with that is incomplete records in the state database.
- Comm Hutchinson: Do you have an approximate number? Winkelman said she could go back and get numbers.
- Comm Hutchinson: I think you are trying to say that you do not know how many got the vaccine elsewhere, but you would know who got them from the county. Active cases compared to those vaccinated at the Health Department. Winkelman said that was correct.
- Comm Schartz: Do those vaccinated at Walgreens, Wal-Mart and other places go into the database? Winkelman said they do and each one varies on their interface into the system and how quickly and how accurate. Some people went to get the vaccine but left prior to receiving it due to having to wait too long.

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- Comm Hutchinson: Hopefully those who were vaccinated were not as sick. Asked if Winkelman believed conflicting rules, incompetent leadership and flip-flopping guidance had led to vaccine hesitancy. He said he was talking about the masks. Winkelman asked Hutchinson what he was referring to as incompetent leadership. Hutchinson said he was not referring to Winkelman. She has done a great job. Meant our governor and Dr. Fauci.
- Winkelman: It is really hard to maintain consistency. Is a technical person and likes things laid out and predictable and this has been anything but. Anytime more adaptive things happen, it is human nature, and you are going to lose credibility. Winkelman said she had informed the commission there would be a better handle on variants because they send all tests to KDHE and a week later she now must report it is not that way. KDHE is only testing certain ones.
 - Comm Hutchinson: All of the back and forth makes people less trusting of the system.
 - Winkelman: Variants play a part; they were not figured in the first vaccines. Continuity across medical providers is also important. Inconsistency across the state has brought along a lot of struggles.
 - Comm Hutchinson: You believe that someone can think that masks are inappropriate, but vaccines are appropriate and still be a logical thinking person. Winkelman said right.
 - Comm Daily: That does not negate the fact that we, as a governing body, still get requests from both sides of the issue. Some want masks to be required. The Governor has required masks in certain areas, state buildings and so forth.
 - Winkelman: A lot of questions about booster doses. Right now, there is no indication on booster doses. There are some countries moving forward with it. We are bound by our agreement with KDHE. Our agreement says we will follow KDHE and ACIP and CDC guidance. Our hands are tied and that brings another issue as far as immunocompromised persons.
 - Comm Hutchinson: The side effects of the vaccine scare people. He tells people that the Health Department has administered 11,520 doses since December and asked Winkelman how many negative reactions or adverse side effects she had been notified of. Winkelman said none reported to her that had to be reported to VARES. They received calls about the usual effects such as sore arms, temperature that subsides and just feeling under the weather for a day or two. Hutchinson said those symptoms are expected with any vaccine.
 - Comm Krier: Different counties have different issues. Asked Winkelman to explain how it works when the Claflin school district is in a different county. Which guidelines do they follow? Winkelman said that is one of the issues where there is not consistency across the state. Quarantine has been 14-days, incubation is 14-days. Shortened quarantines have been an option.
 - Comm Hutchinson: Who makes the decision for shortened quarantine.
 - Winkelman: These are recommendations from KDHE for shortened options. When the guidance was released, they went to 10-day quarantine. If asymptomatic, a person could be released from quarantine but continue to monitor yourself for 4 additional days for a total of 14-days. Guidance says if you were in contact with the Delta variant, you must quarantine for 14-days. Sometimes it can be day 3 or day 10 before they know that it was the Delta variant. Then they must call the person and tell them they must quarantine for 14-days. This causes distrust in the Health Department. One update said as the local Health Officer, you can set the quarantine recommendation for your county. We are doing 14-days across the board because it is incubation and that is what science says.
 - Comm Krier: Barton County and Ellsworth County worked well together. Ellsworth County came over and vaccinated the teachers at Claflin. At that time, Barton County had a very limited supply of doses.
 - Comm Hutchinson: Asked Winkelman if she had a message for the unvaccinated in Barton County, what would that be. Winkelman said she would encourage them to get vaccinated. Those who have been vaccinated that have contracted COVID have had very mild symptoms.
 - Winkelman: Last November, we had a nursing home facility that lost several residents. Across the country there were deaths every day to COVID before vaccine was available. In this last particular outbreak, there was only 1 hospitalized and no deaths at this time.
 - Comm Krier: The vaccine is not a cure. Winkelman said that is correct.
 - Comm Krier: The people who have had COVID but were not vaccinated, still carry the antibodies. Winkelman said they should, but they are finding 6 months at the max.
 - Comm Daily: Winkelman provided an outstanding report as always.

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ADJOURN.

Commissioner Schartz moved to adjourn at 10:16 A.M.

Commissioner Krier seconded the motion.

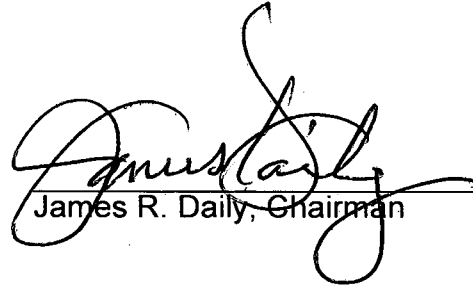
All voted aye. Motion passed.

ATTEST:



Bev Schmeidler

Barton County Assistant Deputy Clerk



James R. Daily, Chairman