

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/3o0kXzD>.

June 21, 2023

The Board of Barton County Commissioners convened this 21st day of June 2023, at the Barton County Courthouse.

Members present:

Duane Reif, Commissioner, 1st District
Barb Esfeld, Commissioner, 2nd District, (Chairman Pro-Tem)
Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner, 3rd District, Chairman
Tricia Schlessiger, Commissioner, 4th District
Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk
Matt Patzner, County Administrator
Patrick Hoffman, County Counselor

Members attending via Teams®:

Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner, 5th District

I. OPENING BUSINESS:

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

Commissioner Esfeld moved to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Reif seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

Minutes of the June 14, 2023, Regular Meeting were not available.

II. APPROVAL OF APPROPRIATIONS:

-Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk, will present details. An Accounts Payable Register will be submitted to the Commission for the period of June 7, 2023, and ending June 21, 2023.

Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk, presented details.

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to approve the appropriations for the period of June 7, 2023, to June 21, 2023. Authorize the Chairman to sign on behalf of the Commission.

Commissioner Zimmerman seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

III. OLD BUSINESS:

-There was no Old Business.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A. PROCLAMATION 2023-11: Great Bend Bat Cats Day ~ June 21, 2023:

-Commissioner Barb Esfeld will provide details. The Great Bend Bat Cats began playing in June, 2017, at Al Burns Memorial Field in Great Bend, Kansas. Managed by Roger Ward, President, and Coach Jonathan Mariani, the Bat Cats play from May until August, with 24 home and 24 away games. The Commission will be asked to adopt a Proclamation recognizing the players, staff and sponsors for their dedication to the game and their commitment to health, leadership and community.

Barb Esfeld, County Commissioner, said she wanted to recognize the group of young men who coach and play on Great Bend Bat Cats. As of today, their record was 11-2. Players have come to our community from 22 different states and 5 countries with 2 from Australia this year. There were 3 players who graduated from Great Bend High School who were able to play this season. Over 40 players who

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played at Barton Community College had played for the Bat Cats. In 2017, the team placed 9th in the NBC World Series, placed 8th place in 2019 and 5th place in 2021. Bat Cats have had 4 NBC World Series All Americans, 3 of those were former Barton Community College players and 8 former Bat Cats had signed professional contracts. Commissioner Esfeld said the team was made up of great young men, the team was caught in a recent storm while on the road and helped a stranded motorist.

Roger Ward, Bat Cats Manager, said he grew up here and this meant a lot to him. They try to do good things in the community when time allows. There had been about 220 players come through so far. The athletes are chasing their dreams and he hoped they reached them. Ward was glad this group chose Great Bend, and they were making the most of their time together. The guys had been good community members while they were here. Ward thanked the commissioners for the honor. Ward said that Great Bend would be hosting the Jayhawk League Home Run Derby and All-Star Game, Sunday, July 2nd. It had always been held at Wichita State University but with local facility upgrades, they were hosting this year.

Commissioner Esfeld read the proclamation.

Commissioner Reif moved to adopt Proclamation 2023-11, Great Bend Bat Cats Day ~ June 21, 2023.

Commissioner Schlessiger seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

B. CENTRAL KANSAS COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS: Council of State Governments Justice Center SCA Substance Use Disorder Symposium Overview:

-Tyler Lehmkuhl, Central Kansas Community Corrections, and Charity Muth, Stepping Stones to Recovery, will present details. A component of receiving the Bureau of Justice Assistance Second Chance Act Improving Reentry for Adults with Substance Use Disorders grant was attendance at their grantee symposium in Washington DC. This event, held in early June, 2023, included partnerships for responsive reentry programming, building community support, equity with trauma informed care and treatment stigma. The Second Chance Act grant covered all training expenses.

Tyler Lehmkuhl, Central Kansas Community Corrections, said he was one of the two supervising officers who oversee the Solidarity Program. Thank you for allowing me to speak here this morning. I am here to update you on a recent conference I attended with Charity Muth in Washington, DC, from June 8-9, 2023, for all grant award recipients. Charity is a counselor at Stepping Stones to Recovery in Great Bend and one of our partners in the grant who provides services for our population with Substance Use Disorders. We attended the conference as a requirement of a federal grant written in 2020, with the help of the Barton County grant writer, Sue Cooper.

So. Why did we apply for the grant?

State and agency data shows that higher-risk probationers are more likely to have their supervision revoked. Additionally, the State of Kansas was in the process of ending prison sanctions for probationers who have violated their supervision. Previously, probationers who violated their supervision typically served 120 KDOC / 180 KDOC sanctions as a last chance before probation was revoked. The agency began looking for alternatives to get positive behaviors from people in our program to support our vision of "Public Safety Through Probationer Success." Additionally, the Department of Corrections, which is the funder for Central Kansas Community Corrections, had failed to provide the funding to adjust the need for high caseloads – therefore, the agency sought funding to bring in another Intensive Supervision Officer.

The agency applied for and was awarded a federal grant through the Bureau of Justice Authority called the FY20 Second Chance Act for Improving Reentry for Adults with Substance Use Disorders Program. The total amount awarded was \$460,693 for services until September 2024 for a specialized program called the Solidarity Program. The mission of the Solidarity Program is to improve the treatment of

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probationers with substance use disorder by deploying intervention services offered through various functions and technology methods to reduce recidivism, enhance collaboration, and promote positive social behaviors to reduce the number of probations from our district entering the Kansas Prison System. Evidence-Based Practices for Community Supervision teach us that our higher-risk population needs more intense and increased supervision. Sometimes regular supervision is not enough to meet the high needs of high-risk individuals on supervision. It becomes a revolving door in and out of jail and prison. The Solidarity Program was created for those whose next stop was in the Kansas Prison System.

A screening process determines a CKCC probationer's eligibility for the Solidarity Program. They must have the following:

Have had at least one prior revocation hearing,

Score high-risk on the state risk/needs assessment,

Identified having an Alcohol/Drug Problem on the risk/needs tool,

Subsequently, scores have a high probability on the SASSI screener as well as the Addiction Severity Index (ASI), and

Must be approved to return to community supervision by the Court.

Once the probationer is Court-Ordered into the program, the Solidarity Program comprises two phases. In the initial phase, probationers must report twice per week, submit to increased drug testing, begin SUD and MH services, make referrals to housing and employment services, obtain employment or GED, achieve sobriety, and comply with reporting requirements. Once those milestones are achieved, probationers are moved to Phase 2 in the Solidarity program, which has less intensive standards for the participant to meet for 45 days.

Participants in the Solidarity Program are required to download a phone application to their phone called Corisoft Air. There are multiple features of the app. For instance, the app has a calendar that Solidarity Officers help to upload obligations on their phones. Participants submit a photo "check-in" at required treatment or mental health appointments, employment services, office visits, support group meetings, and employment.

This "check-in" with the app and submits GPS coordinates as proof of attendance. Solidarity Officers can confirm daily that participants have attended all the necessary appointments and immediately address non-compliance. The data tells us that higher-risk probationers who attend 6-9 hours per week of services that include SUD, MH, BIP, AA/NA have a greater chance of being successful and not being sent to prison than those that do not. So that is what we focus on in the Solidarity Program – spending time on what will help them succeed and provide them with the services they need.

As officers, we ask the probationers what life would look like if they showed up, worked on your program, and attended services for 90 days. Almost all of them say the same thing. Life would be better. It would be better for themselves, their families, and our community.

A perk of the Corisoft Air phone application is that it allows Solidarity Officers to conduct video appointments, send text messages and emails, and enhance communication to increase compliance. The Solidarity Program incentivizes probationers in the program for compliance, and we utilize Evidence-Based Principles of a 4:1 positive/negative reinforcement ratio because it provides the best opportunity for success and changing behaviors.

After completing the requirements of that phase, they will ultimately return to regular supervision with Community Corrections. Failure to comply with the program results in increased treatment modalities and interventions, jail sanctions, or returning to Court to answer the violations.

Earlier this month, Charity Muth and I attended the Second Chance Act Substance Use Disorder and Co-Occurring Substance Abuse and Mental Illness Programs Grantee Symposium in Washington, DC, on

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June 8th and 9th. Forty-five grantees attended, and the total grant funds exceeded 25 million dollars. We were able to learn about the different barriers that regional areas had encountered and how the grant dollars were working to lower the number of incarcerations.

One area that I found interesting included the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Through the Second Chance Act grant funds, they established the Flathead Reservation Reentry Program, targeting members of the tribe who are incarcerated and returning to the community and focusing on the needs of these individuals to reduce recidivism. At the beginning of the process, they realized they needed to build partnerships with relevant stakeholders, develop leaders in the community, incorporate voices of lived experiences, and increase engagement through culturally responsive care. A "one size fits all" approach was not working for the tribe members involved in the criminal justice system, and the focus was more on how to meet the system's needs versus the needs of the individuals. Pre and Post-Release case management services were provided to the tribe members; one common issue was homelessness.

They developed a 14-bed re-entry supportive housing project called Morning Star to ensure safe housing for these tribe members so that when they were released, they could focus on substance abuse and mental health services and not on where they would sleep that night. A cognitive behavior therapy group curriculum was developed and implemented, focusing on anger, depression, and anxiety. The success of this program was because of the relationships built with the incarcerated tribe members. They could identify and connect to those barriers while treating them like humans with dignity and respect, providing self-worth, and not seeing them as offenders.

Another dynamic takeaway was from Kevin Warwick, who is the president of Alternative Solutions. Their solutions to reducing incarceration included facility assessments, reentry programming, staff training, grant writing for ways to address jail overcrowding, and implementing offender programs. One statement I took from Mr. Warwick was that jails and prisons were created to deter people, but that is not what is happening in the United States.

Rather than being viewed as correctional officers, we must be redirective officers. Mr. Warnick has worked in 48 states developing reentry programs. He recently assisted with developing re-entry facilities from regular houses rather than concrete and cinder blocks. Participants in the re-entry facilities have personal space, share common living quarters, and can leave for work and treatment. Before developing his re-entry facility, the recidivism rate was around 43%, but it has dropped below 20%.

Mr. Warwick was also influential in helping open the first in-house medicated assisted treatment facility in Rhode Island. Incarcerated inmates within 24 hours are assessed and, if needed, provided MAT inmates to assist with detoxing. The inmates are also provided with substance abuse and mental health services. In a break-out session, Mr. Warwick also discussed evidence-based practices in the case of management, following the risk-need-responsivity model, and ensuring the success of any program is the participant's ability to access and stay connected with services.

The common theme throughout the training was the importance of building effective relationships with our service providers, stakeholders, and criminal justice system partners and how to better engage in partnerships that benefit our communities and the populations we serve. We must redefine the people we serve because of the long-term effects on families and our community.

Mr. Warwick asked if we believed people could change. Those individuals we serve know that if you don't believe in them then they won't change. If we think people can change, they have a better chance of making it. As a society, we need to use inclusive language and refer to people as men and women. We all must be embedded in the same mission. We focus too much on recidivism, and instead, we need to put our efforts into finding and securing job placements, reducing the use of drugs and alcohol, increasing housing stability, and ensuring people are attending and engaging in substance abuse and mental health services.

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If those incarcerated do not become involved in services right away when they are released, they will be back. If those same individuals attend intervention services immediately upon returning to the community, they have a greater chance of success. The key to making this theory work is providing services to those incarcerated individuals, building those key relationships, whether it is with a service provider, a criminal justice system partner, or a person with lived experience, and empowering them to believe in themselves that they can change, but also following that same narrative when those people are released and ensuring they follow through with those same services they received when they were incarcerated in the community.

The positive feedback we received about our program included the phone app, specifically with the direct contact and messaging we provide paired and the reminders of their obligations. We have learned that the people who qualify for the Solidarity Program have longevity in their high-risk behaviors. Daily – and sometimes minute-to-minute reminders are necessary to do the right thing: get to your appointments, check in with your counselor, sponsor, or other prosocial supports. Most did not get to this point in their criminal history by themselves; they equally need the support of many to find their way out.

We deployed the program about a year ago; there have been 41 who were referred, 23 who have qualified and so far 4 who have completed, 3 successfully and 1 have been revoked. We are learning about what is working and have had plenty of challenges, but we look forward to finishing the grant with a better understanding of the needs in our community.

Lehmkuhl shared flyers for the program.

Charity Muth, Stepping Stones, said as a behavioral health provider working with a chemical population, to get the alliance of the justice system was something they had been waiting on for years.

C. HEALTH DEPARTMENT: Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Bureau of Family Health, Universal Home Visitation Expansion Project, Supplemental Funding Grant – Ratify Programming Expenditures:

-The Health Department was notified of a \$60,956.87 award from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Bureau of Family Health, Universal Home Visitation Expansion Project, Supplemental Funding Grant in 2022. As the grant ends June 30, 2023, personnel allocations remain unspent as hiring was not possible. KDHE has reallocated funding from personnel to media. As the programming has been purchased, it is suggested that the \$40,620.00 expenditure be ratified.

Karen Winkelman, Health Director, presented details and asked for ratification of \$40,620.00.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked that in the future if there was a large sum for advertising, he would like to see it spread around a little. He recognized that time was of the essence in this case.

Commissioner Schlessiger asked about the remaining funding. Winkelman said that had been spent previously.

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to ratify \$40,620.00 in expenditures to Eagle Radio for advertising. Expenditure was made through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Bureau of Family Health, Universal Home Visitation Expansion Project, Supplemental Funding Grant.

Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

No Executive Session Held

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D. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

-Chairman Shawn Hutchinson will present. Any Commissioner may make a motion for the board to recess to executive session at this time as allowed by K.S.A. 75-4319. Any motion must contain the justification for the executive session, the subject matter to be discussed, any individuals in addition to the board who will attend the executive session and the time at which the regular session shall resume.

V. ENDING BUSINESS:

1. Announcements
2. Appointments

VI. OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Reif – acknowledged Dairy Queen in Hoisington celebrating 70 years in business.

E. D. Coles – Dairy Queen would be having a birthday party on Sunday.

Commissioner Hutchinson – recognized Trent Bauer and Elle Hutchinson for volunteering to help with the move.

VII. ADJOURN.

Commissioner Esfeld moved to adjourn at 9:47 A.M.

Commissioner Schlessiger seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

ATTEST:


Bev Schmeidler
Barton County Clerk


Shawn Hutchinson, Chairman

PROCLAMATION 2023-11

Great Bend Bat Cats Day ~ June 21, 2023

WHEREAS, the Great Bend Bat Cats began playing in June, 2017, at Al Burns Memorial Field in Great Bend, Kansas, and

WHEREAS, managed by Roger Ward, President, and Coach Jonathan Mariani, the Bat Cats have attended the National Baseball Congress (NBC) World Series in 2017, 2019 and 2021, finishing 9th, 8th and 5th respectively; and

WHEREAS, team members are provided room and board through area host families, with players providing for their own personal items and outside expenses; and

WHEREAS, players remain in the Barton County area from May until August, playing 24 home and 24 away games.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the Board of County Commissioners of Barton County, Kansas, name Wednesday, June 21, 2023, as Great Bend Bat Cats Day; and

FURTHER, the Commission recognizes the players, staff and sponsors for their dedication to the game and their commitment to health, leadership and community; and

FURTHER, the Commission encourages our citizens to support the Great Bend Bat Cats by attending the free at home games and following away games on line; and

FURTHER, the Commission thanks those families and businesses that offer assistance to the Bat Cat family through player hosting, facility improvements and community support.

Adopted this 21st day of June, 2023.

BARTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Shawn Hutchinson, Chairman


Barb Esfeld, Commissioner


Duane A Reif, Commissioner


Tricia Schlessiger, Commissioner

via phone
Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner

ATTEST:




Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk