

**MINUTES for January 29, 2024**  
**BOARD of CHEROKEE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS'**  
**CHEROKEE COUNTY, KANSAS**

**CONVENE**

Chairman Cory Moates called the regular session of the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners (the Board), to order at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, January 29, 2024, in the Commission Room, #109 of the Cherokee County Courthouse located at 110 W Maple St., Columbus, Kansas. County Commissioner Cory Moates opened the meeting with prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioners Cory Moates, Lorie Johnson, Myra Frazier, County Clerk Rebecca Brassart, Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook, County Counselor Jake Conard, SEK-CAP employees Casey Brown, Jamey Whitney, Scott Christianson, and News Report Owner Larry Hiatt were present.

**APPROVAL of MINUTES**

Commissioner Frazier made a motion to approve the minutes as presented from the January 8, 2024, meeting. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Moates made a motion to approve the minutes as presented from the January 22, 2024, meeting. Commissioner Fraizer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Moates made a motion to approve the minutes as presented from the January 25, 2024, meeting. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**ROAD and BRIDGE NON-ELECT EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Moates made a motion for a 30-minute non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, County Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook, and County Counselor Jake Conard to return at 9:35 am. Commissioner Frazier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Moates made a motion to extend the current non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, County Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook, and County Counselor Jake Conard for an additional 10 minutes to return at 9:45 am. Commissioner Frazier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken.

**SPRING RIVER MENTAL HEALTH**

Stacy Manbeck Director of Spring River Mental Health came before the Board to give an update on the happenings for 2024. Stacy presented the Board with the yearly agreement between the county and Spring River. Commissioner Moates made a motion to approve the agreement between the County Board of Commissioners and Spring River Mental Health. Stacy stated she would be back in June with an end of year report and a full financial report.

**SEK-CAP CARE VAN**

CEO Jamey Whitney, Director of Transportation Scott Christianson, and Community Engagement Coordinator Casey Brown came before the Board to give a presentation on the SEK-CAP Care Van and the future funding that will be needed.

**A-LERT ROOFING**

Justin Wall came before the Board to introduce himself. Commissioner Moates directed him to speak to maintenance coordinator Mike Thomas.

**TOURISM GRANT**

Jean Pritchett with the Columbus Chamber of Commerce came before the Board to present the Grant request from Gearhead Curios and the Kansas Historic Route 66 Association. centennial ad. Tourism Grant for the Route 66 ad. Commissioner Frazier made a motion to approve the request by Gearhead Curios in the amount of \$500 and the request by Kansas Historic Route 66 Association in the amount of \$1000 to be paid out of Tourism Grant.

Jean presented the Board with the guest tax tourism agreement for January to December 2024. Commissioner Moates made a motion to allow the chair of the Board to sign the agreement. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed

unanimously.

### **JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION**

County Clerk Rebecca Brassart presented the Board with a letter from the Kansas Supreme Court regarding the non-lawyer member of the 11<sup>th</sup> District Judicial Nominating Commission expiring term of Angela M. Rippel on the first Monday of March 2024. The letter requested that a member of the Board appoint someone to fill the vacancy. Commissioner Moates made a motion to reappoint Angela M. Rippel to the non-lawyer member of the 11<sup>th</sup> District Judicial Nominating Commission. Commissioner Frazier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **EXTENSION UPDATE**

Scott Williams and Kim Scott representing the Cherokee County Extension Board notified the Commission Board that the Extension Board hired Lorrie Scott temporarily to assist in re-establishing order to the office. They also informed the Board that retired agent Keith Martin has begun working as a program director as well. Martin will be in the office on Mondays and Thursdays and has been working from home answering and returning calls. Both Scott and Martin begun working in the office on January 8, 2024.

Scott updated the Board on the extension agent opening dates. Listed below are the dates for when the position will open for applications and when interviews will be held.

FACS: open 2/12; interviews 3/25

4H and AG: open 2/27; interviews 4/9

Williams discussed with the Board the 2023 end of year financials and reserves, along with the proposed building maintenance and renovations based on a committee evaluation.

### **FEMA LEASE APPROVALS**

FEMA Leases were presented to the Board for approval were:

4928 SW 130<sup>th</sup> ST, Chetopa

7626 SE Watermelon Ln, Galena

8254 SE Cherry Ln, Galena

8260/8264 SE Cherry Ln, Galena

8408 Cherry Ln, Galena

6464 SE 50<sup>th</sup>, Riverton

7404 SE PawPaw Ln, Galena

6829 SE Center Rd, Baxter Springs

SE Watermelon Ln, Galena

Commissioner Moates made a motion to approve the 9, Hazard Mitigation 3yr FEMA Leases. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion surrounding the FEMA Leases which have yet to be renewed, the Board will try to reach out to those who have not yet renewed. Those who have yet to renew are named below:

Matt and Mandy Kinsley

Bob Kirby

Sharon Coats

Jeff Scott

Jim Adams

### **HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Health Department Director Peyton Kessler came before the Board to present the contract for the Senior Farmer Market Voucher program. Commissioner Frazier made a motion to approve the contract and to allow Peyton Kessler, Health Department Director to sign on behalf of Cherokee County. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Peyton presented the Board with an agreement to allow for a different type of TB testing and more labs as needed. Commissioner Frazier made a motion to authorize the testing and to allow Peyton Kessler, Health Department Director to sign the agreement on behalf of Cherokee County. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Kessler discussed with the Board lead testing and the need for different equipment to up the testing abilities to test for lead in the



blood. Commissioner Moates made a motion to allow Peyton Kessler Health Department Director to purchase the needed lead testing equipment up to \$3200 from the equipment reserve fund. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion.

#### **SEWER DISTRICT #1**

Commissioner Moates apprised the Board of the issues which took place over the weekend with the lift pumps at the Spring River location. The lift pumps had to be pulled, and the necessary needed repairs made to get both pumps back in working order. Commissioner Moates stated part of the issue was an aluminum can and a hot wheel which were found in one of the pumps.

#### **CONTRACT ATTORNEY**

County Counselor Jake Conard stated that of the four contract attorneys that Barbara Wright was the only one who has yet to send him her desire to continue in the position which she held in 2023. Commissioner Frazier stated she would try to reach out to Barbara Wright.

#### **WEST MINERAL MAYOR**

Michael Knowlen, Mayor of the City of West Mineral came before the Board to discuss the moving of the polling location from the City of West Mineral to the City of Scammon. Commissioner Moates informed Mr. Knowlen that the Board has no control over the issue and that he would need to speak to the County Clerk. Mr. Knowlen stated that he had already discussed the issue with her. County Clerk Rebecca Brassart stated that as she had told Mr. Knowlen previously the move was due to trying to cut the budget. 2024 is a prime example of the need to cut the budget as the Clerk's office will be holding 3 elections. The amount of savings was substantial, and she stated that as she had told Mr. Knowlen before that those that can not make it to polls can request a permanent advance ballot if they are disabled or they can request a regular advance by mail ballot. If they feel they don't want to mail it, then they can designate a person to bring it in for them.

Mr. Knowlen asked Commissioner Johnson if she had heard anything regarding the 50<sup>th</sup> ST grant, Commissioner Johnson stated she had not. He stated he continues to receive complaints on the road. Johnson acknowledged that the road needs repaired, however she is only allotted so much money a year and it is hard to fix all the roads.

Michael informed the commission that the city would like to purchase a vehicle from the county should we have one that we would be putting up for sale with Purple Wave. He stated that the city needs a vehicle for city business when it is required. Knowlen went on to state that he had been in a wreck in his own personal vehicle while tending to city business.

#### **ATTORNEY CLIENT PRIVILEGE EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Moates made a motion for a 15-minute attorney client privilege executive session with the Board, and County Counselor Jake Conard to return at 11:40 am. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Moates made a motion to extend the current attorney client privilege executive session with the Board, and County Counselor Jake Conard for an additional 10 minutes to return at 11:50 am. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Moates made a motion to extend the current attorney client privilege executive session with the Board, and County Counselor Jake Conard for an additional 10 minutes to return at 12:00 pm. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Moates made a motion to extend the current attorney client privilege executive session with the Board, and County Counselor Jake Conard for an additional 5 minutes to return at 12:05 pm. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken.

#### **ROAD and BRIDGE NON-ELECT EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Moates made a motion for a 30-minute non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, County Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook, and County Counselor Jake Conard to return at 12:50 pm. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Moates made a motion to extend the current non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, County Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook, and County Counselor Jake Conard for an additional 30 minutes to return at 1:20 pm.

Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Moates made a motion to extend the current non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, County Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook, and County Counselor Jake Conard for an additional 5 minutes to return at 1:25 pm. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken.

**NON-ELECT EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Moates made a motion for a 10-minute non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, and County Counselor Jake Conard to return at 1:40 pm. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Moates made a motion to extend the current non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, and County Counselor Jake Conard for an additional 5 minutes to return at 1:45 pm. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Moates made a motion to extend the current non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, and County Counselor Jake Conard for an additional 5 minutes to return at 1:50 pm. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken.

**ROAD and BRIDGE NON-ELECT EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Frazier made a motion for a 5-minute non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, County Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook, and County Counselor Jake Conard to return at 2:00 pm. Commissioner Moates seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Frazier made a motion to extend the current non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, County Road and Bridge Supervisor Cody Zook, and County Counselor Jake Conard for an additional 15 minutes to return at 2:15 pm. Commissioner Moates seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken.

**ROAD and BRIDGE NON-ELECT EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Moates made a motion for a 15-minute non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, County Road and Bridge employee Bryan Williams, and County Counselor Jake Conard to return at 2:50 pm. Commissioner Frazier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken.

**ROAD and BRIDGE NON-ELECT EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Moates made a motion for a 15-minute non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, County Road and Bridge employee James Reeves, and County Counselor Jake Conard to return at 3:05 pm. Commissioner Frazier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken.

**ROAD and BRIDGE NON-ELECT EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Moates made a motion for a 10-minute non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, County Road and Bridge employees Bryan Williams and James Reeves, and County Counselor Jake Conard to return at 3:20 pm. Commissioner Frazier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken.

**ATTORNEY CLIENT PRIVILEGE EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Moates made a motion for a 5-minute attorney client privilege executive session with the Board, and County



Counselor Jake Conard to return at 3:30 pm. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken.

**HUMAN RESOURCE NON-ELECT EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Moates made a motion for a 10-minute non-elect personnel executive session with the Board, County Human Resource Director Deana Randall, and County Counselor Jake Conard to return at 3:45 pm. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken.

**RESULT OF MULTIPLE EXECUTIVE SESSIONS**

As the result of multiple executive sessions, disciplinary action has been taken regarding non-elect personnel.

**ADJOURNMENT**

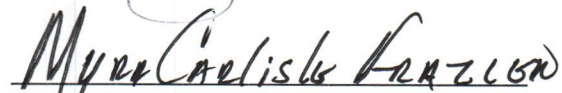
Commissioner Johnson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Frazier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**ATTEST: Resolved and ordered this 5th day of February 2024.**

  
County Clerk – Rebecca Brassart

  
Commissioner Chairman – Cory Moates

  
Commissioner – Lorie Johnson

  
Commissioner – Myra Carlisle Frazier