

February 21, 2023

The Mitchell County Commissioners met in formal session on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, Monday was a federal holiday. Chairman Jim Marshall and members Tom Claussen and Mike Cooper were in attendance.

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The minutes of the February 13, 2023 meeting were approved as written on motion by Tom Claussen and seconded by Mike Cooper. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

A Neighborhood Revitalization for Rex & Marian Sibley for a \$95,300 ag building was approved on motion by Mike Cooper and seconded by Tom Claussen. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Melinda Latham, Mitchell County Appraiser, Jeff Travis, USD 273 Superintendent, and Jason Rabe, Beloit City Manager, met with the commissioners to discuss the 2023 value notices mailed out by the Appraiser's Office. The public needs to be educated on the process of how an appraised value is converted into taxable dollars in December. Tax dollars cannot be figured until the mill levy is set. Mill levies cannot be set until budgets are figured. It all depends on the amount of tax dollars a government entity needs to operate. Since the appraised values went up the mill levy should go down to collect the same amount of tax dollars. The county runs into the issue that dry crop and irrigated ag land both decreased. Ag values are set by the state and they use an 8-year rolling average, with the two most current years not included. Ag land is taxed on a use value. With that decrease it is hard to know how much the levy will change. Market values for residential and commercial properties in Mitchell County have increased tremendously. The appraiser must follow the Kansas constitution to set the market values of properties as of January 1st each year. Latham uses information collected about properties to do this, that is why it is important to have the correct information. Three years of sales are used to determine market value.

Jeff Travis said that he was concerned about how much the values had increased because the school board is looking at putting forth a school bond issue for HVAC, building roofs, eroding pipes and an Ag Center for the rapidly increasing ag program. He is concerned about the possibility of it passing. Travis said that he has employees questioning if they are going to be able to keep working at the school with taxes going up. There are four counties included in USD 273.

The commissioners wanted to make sure to inform people that if they have a problem with their values, they need to set up an appointment with the county appraiser before March 15th. An informal hearing is the easiest way to adjust your value and the best for the government entities also because the values can be changed before the budgets are set. If you are in the Neighborhood Revitalization program you will be kicked out if you protest at tax time so people need to be aware and address it with the appraiser now. There will most likely be an increase in taxes, but as long as everyone stays within the same budget it shouldn't be too drastic.

Emily Benedick, Community Development Director, told the commissioners that she had received all of the matching funds for the seed grant. When the contract arrives, she will need Jim Marshall to sign it. Jim Marshall then asked about the Foundation Grant and Benedick said it would be closer to March 1st before things were finalized.

Yvonne Melton, Mitchell County Treasurer, was present and Jim Marshall told her that he had heard from the Health Department and things were running smoothly making the needed changes on their accounts. Melton mentioned to the commissioners that other counties use a company for their delinquent tax sales. She would recommend maybe doing something of the sort so that the tax rolls are kept current and this would require people to be more diligent tax payers. Many tax payers bring their taxes up to date and then let them sit until threat of another tax sale.

Maintenance Supervisor Brian Streit then requested a 15-minute executive session for non-elected personnel with the three commissioners and county clerk Heather Weston per KSA 75-4318. The session was granted on motion by Mike Cooper and seconded by Tom Claussen. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Session began at 9:51 and ended at 10:06 when it was extended for another 10 minutes on motion by Mike Cooper and seconded by Tom Claussen. Motion carried by unanimous vote. Session began at 10:06 and ended at 10:16 with no decisions being made in executive session.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20am on motion by Mike Cooper and seconded by Tom Claussen. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

_____ Jim Marshall, Chairman

_____ ATTEST: Heather Weston, Mitchell County Clerk