

March 27, 2023

The Mitchell County Commissioners met in formal session at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, March 27, 2023. 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 March 20, 2023 meeting were approved as written on motion by Tom Claussen and seconded by Mike Cooper. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Mitchell County Communications Director Becky Snook met with the commissioners to discuss renewing the Quality Assurance Program used to grade calls and evaluate dispatchers. The program has been used for about 5 years and also serves as a training tool. The cost for renewal increased from \$750 to \$1,000. The commissioners agreed that the program was useful and approved the renewal. The storm spotter meeting put on by the National Weather Service was very informative. Dust and fire storms are the most dangerous. There was a discussion about what the acronym W.A.R stood for. It is Wildfire Automatic Response which means that if there is a fire call all departments must respond.

Eric Hamel, Ambulance Director, presented the commissioners with reports from DeLisa's Medical Billing along with his excel spreadsheets. The numbers are still not jiving. The commissioners suggested he visit with DeLisa's for more clarification. Claussen stated we want to make sure we are collecting all that is due to the taxpayers of Mitchell County. The current rate for an ambulance run is \$650 per run plus \$13.75 per mile. The commissioners questioned if the county was leaving money on the table at that rate. Hamel then stated that the office in Cawker City will be closed for approximately 16 days next month. There will be a sign on the door to call 911 if no one is there and you need assistance.

Janelle Kircher, MCHHS Administrator, along with Stephanie Simmons, came to introduce herself. The commissioners welcomed Kircher and noted she has been out and about in the community, even personally handing out Valentine's candy to hospital employees. A nurse by trade and originally from Midland, Tx, Kircher has worked in Nebraska and Colorado in both large and small hospitals. The county now levies 2 mils for the hospital and with all of the COVID money gone the budget will be a challenge this year. All three commissioners were invited to attend the hospital board meetings and she will plan on visiting each quarter with the commissioners for hospital updates.

Tony Miller, an Advocate Supervisor, with NCK CASA presented a proclamation to make April Child Abuse Awareness Month. The proclamation was signed on motion by Tom Claussen and seconded by Mike Cooper. Motion carried by unanimous vote. Miller said they are always looking for volunteers, it is a 30-hour curriculum and an extensive background check to qualify.

Blue Cross Blue Shield Representative Jeremy McGuire came to give the commissioners a 6-month utilization update. Currently the county employees are at an 84% rate which is down from last year. If we stay on the same track, he said the county is looking at an inflationary type renewal of 7%-10%.

A neighborhood revitalization for Creighton Remus for \$62,500 for a 40' x 75' ag building was approved on motion by Tom Claussen and seconded by Mike Cooper. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

The new LEPG contract was received and the renewal cost is \$1500. There will be a Tourism meeting April 12th at 4:00 p.m. at the museum about Milford Lake to Waconda Lake becoming a Kansas Byway.

The commissioners took a 10-minute recess.

The quarterly department head meeting was held. All department heads and Emily Benedick were in attendance with updates.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m. on motion by Mike Cooper and seconded by Tom Claussen. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Jim Marshall, Chairman

ATTEST: Heather Weston, Mitchell County Clerk