

Logan County Commissioners Work Session
August 12, 2025

Present: Mike Brownell, Jim Yahn, Jim Santomaso, Alan Samber, Rob Kasper, Mike Burri, Dave Appelhans, Brett Powell, Dennis Aulston, Marilee Johnson, Callie Jones, and Jennifer Crow.

Chairman Brownell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS SESSION - Commissioner Yahn moved to approve the minutes of the July 22, and the August 5, 2025 Work Sessions. Commissioner Santomaso seconded, and the motion carried 3-0.

REVISIONS TO THE WORK SESSION AGENDA – There were no changes.

ROAD AND BRIDGE DEPARTMENT – Rob Kasper and Mike Burri met with the Board. Commissioner Brownell asked about the seven Wagner Caterpillar leased motorgraders and if the department was keeping up with the hours. Burri reported that the department returned one leased motorgrader last month. It was short on hours. It only had 6,100 hours on it when it was returned. They are allowed 7,500 hours. He suggested that the department purchase a couple of machines each year until they are done with the leases then maybe buy out the last two. Burri and Kasper agreed that this would be a better option than leasing motorgraders.

Sometimes they don't put a lot of hours on the motorgraders. When they are turned in, they have to have 70% tread wear on the tires, so they had to put new tires on them. If they go over on hours, they are charged \$130 an hour. Burri said that they are keeping a good eye on the hours. If there is a leased machine getting more hours, they will give the operator another machine to run for a little while and let that machine sit for a little while.

They department owns two graders that have about 16,000 hours each on them and they've never been touched. They're going to have to start putting some money into those for repairs. They will have nine machines to turn over in the next five years. Kasper explained that it is a good number for Caterpillar as opposed to John Deere machines, which would be around 7,000 hours. They start having problems with transmissions and differentials, etc. Caterpillar motorgraders are usually more durable.

Burri is working on budget to reflect the purchase of two motorgraders next year. The mastic budget this year was helpful to have as a backup and allowed the replacement of the third box culvert. He probably will not budget that much for mastic next year. He was way under budget for the snow plows for the three trucks. The budget was \$155,000 and there is \$70,000 remaining in the Road and Bridge capital outlay budget. This could be carried over to next year or used this year if something comes up. The Board asked if there is something that the department needs right now.

The biggest need right now is Jack Roys' pickup, which needs a new motor. The cost estimate is \$15,000. He is the sign person. He puts a lot of miles on it. He has the PTO with the auger in the back. This does need to be taken care of. The pickup is a 2018 model. The auger could be put on another pickup if they could find a pickup that's got the PTO provision, if not, they can run it off the belt drive on the motor. The Board agreed that Burri and Kasper should start researching a newer pickup. They will try to fix it the best they can and then give it to the welder to replace his 1990s Chevy that has problems starting. The Chevy key has to be cycled 10-15 times before it starts the truck, but the truck does run well once it is started. The welder does not put a lot of miles on the pickup.

Commissioner Yahn had a question on a road near Hwy 63 and I-76. CR 310, is a paved road to Smarts

Feedlot. Carson Smart said that there is a 30-foot stretch that the State is supposed to fix. Smarts have hauled some material and tried to fix it. Burri said that was CDOT's material that was used to do it. Burri has talked to CDOT about this and will reach out to them again. They said they will fix it, but did not know when.

Martin Marietta will mobilize next week to start CR 79 south of Fleming. The contract is scheduled for the agenda next Tuesday. Commissioner Brownell mentioned that Keith Beck, Fleming Town Superintendent, had told him that the Fleming Town Council was wanting to pave Main Street in Fleming. Burri will let the Martin Marietta representative know so that he can get in touch with Keith Beck.

Burri also stated that towards the end of the week or next week they will get up on CR 93 north of CR 66. They are also going to get CR 17 from Hwy 16 going over the hill, the trucks beat that road up pretty good hauling all of the missile road material. The County can haul the same material, all of it that they want. It is very good material and it's much closer to haul. If the Board decides to use this material instead of the dust control product, the department can start getting material hauled and haul it straight to the road. They would not even have to stockpile it.

Commissioner Brownell asked if it would be a good idea for a public meeting for residents on CR 26 to talk about the process and why the Commissioners are thinking about doing what they are doing. The Board agreed that it would be a good idea.

Burri stated that he and Commissioner Santomaso had talked last week about Atwood. He will look at it again, but they might be able to just mill it and leave it milled for a short amount of time until they can come up with the money to lay new asphalt. It might be a little bit rougher but different than a gravel road. They use a chop saw and cut the hole and get the backhoe and break it up, jackhammer and tear it out. They could also ask for that in the overlay budget next year.

Kasper mentioned that the County blades the Merino road from Hwy 6 to the school when they are coming through. Burri asked if this was to be paved, would the County pay to pave it or the Town of Merino? Kasper said that technically it was never maintained before. It was basically an alley, but then the school started using it. The county tries to help the smaller towns when they can. It does washboard very bad coming right off Hwy 6 and it is very low; the maintainer tries to blade it at a slope towards the ball field. The only street that the County does have in Merino is Logan Street. The oiled road from CR 25 to Hwy 6. The County is not responsible for it.

The Board discussed possibly talking to the town council and see what they would like to do. It would be better for them to do something at the same time as the County is working on the Atwood project and possibly get a better price.

The Board expressed appreciation for the Road and Bridge Department's help at the Fair.

PEST DISTRICT/LCSSC/SUNSET MEMORIAL GARDENS – Dave Appelhans updated the Board on the departments that he takes care of. He handed out a map of the areas that he has sprayed this year for the Pest Control District. The Palmer weed has not made its way throughout the County, but it produces seed and grows very fast. Spraying it can reduce the seed viability but that's about all that can be done. He hopes to keep it from coming up in the spring until other harder pre-emergents can be sprayed. He uses 26 ounces of Tordon and 24 ounces of 24D and a good surfactant. This does not kill the grass. If you go to a higher rate, it will sterilize the ground.

Appelhans discussed Prairie Dogs on property down by New Haven. The property has been over-grazed which they like because they can see for miles. Hawks will move in to kill the Prairie Dogs. Hopefully, with

the moisture that we've been getting, the plague will move in soon in the prairie dog population because the fleas carry the plague; however, it has not been around the area for 5-6 years.

He is spraying County building parking lots and keeping up with the cracks in the parking lots. The pre-emergents are washing out with all the moisture we've been getting. Appelhans explained the grid process that he uses across the County to spray. He does that because the population of the Canada Thistle is so high, and he wanted to hit it early. It was almost a waste of time because it came back with a vengeance. It's almost too late in the season to get anymore Canada Thistle.

Next year, he will spray the Merino area and south of Merino and up by Iliff and Crook. Then they will work their way back over towards Peetz. He used to spray north and south roads, and then east and west roads, but he would spray a north/south road and then have a guy that lived on an east/west road, who saw him spraying, and he would be mad because I didn't spray his road. It's easier to do a whole section to keep moving around out there. It is really challenging, because that soil out there does not put up well with moisture.

Appelhans explained about the battery on his truck. If the battery goes dead on it, you have to haul the truck up to Transwest in Brighton to have them reset the codes on it, because nobody has a reader that'll work on it around here. It's a proprietary device they have to plug in to it to reset the codes. They charge \$350 to clear the code because it had a low battery. Then it can be driven home, if you can get there before it goes into limp mode, because it starts going down in miles per hour after you drive it so many miles. It starts at 98 miles and will let you go 65 mph. Once you get over that 65 mph at 98 miles, then it goes down to like, 45 mph. If you're on the interstate, it cuts you down to 45 mph and you're stuck at that. It will actually get down to 10 mph.

Commissioner Brownell brought up the indigent burials at Sunset Memorial Gardens and asked Appelhans if he had any suggestions where those could be placed. Appelhans stated that he has started working that into the budget for next year so that a surveyor could be brought in so that it can be plotted. A surveyor will be able to plat it so that we know where the burials can go. There are some spots out there on a corner that look a little nicer that were sprayed and are mostly grass, it's not buffalo grass, but not a bunch of weeds. It is a requirement of the State that the County provides a place for indigent burials.

Appelhans also discussed a big monument that fell over. The pins rusted off and it's fallen over. Sterling Monument was going to set it up for no charge. They came out but their truck was not big enough to lift it. Appelhans talked to Morgan Monument. They're going to go out and look at it and give him a quote to do it. They are going to see if they can get the owners to donate the labor to do it.

At the gun range, Appelhans is working on another grant to build a pole barn to put the tractor in. It will have a concrete floor. It will be west of the trap fields. There is donated money that will match the in-kind portion. There will be no money out of the county's pocket. There are over 120 members right now. There is right at \$13,000 collected from daily use at \$10 a carload which averages two to three people a car.

The trap club pays \$1,500 a year. None of the trap club members pay a membership fee. They all have use of the clubhouse and the concession stand and the machines. It's good to have that group out there because they understand the trap machines better than he does. They repair the machines and give him the invoice, and the County pays the bill for it. There are four \$10,000 trap machines and two \$15,000 trap machines that they are using out there on top of the clubhouse and a lot of other stuff. Those are the guys that initiated the building of the gun range. They were the guys that were out there providing the labor digging holes and moving stuff around and they got the place going.

The police departments all use it, the State Patrol, The Sheriff does not use it, but it's a really nice facility. A

lot of other agencies use it as well. There are people that go out and pick up brass and turn it in for money. There is very little vandalism at the gun range. He will be budgeting for a sheet of steel to add to the end of the Conex because there's holes in the end of it. He does not know if it was vandalism, ignorance or someone that just could not shoot. He had the light bulbs for the trap field stored in the Conex which did move.

There is a Canada Thistle enforcement issue, but it is too late to start on it this year. This will be the second enforcement letter that will be sent to them, and they didn't do anything about it. They are way beyond asking for 10 days or arbitration with the Commissioners. Appelhans will send a bill when they are done spraying, via certified mail. If they don't pay by a certain date, it will be attached to their property as a lien. He will go through the County Attorney to have him approve everything before it is sent out.

LOGAN COUNTY SHERIFF – Sheriff Brett Powell and Undersheriff Dennis Aulston met with the Board. The Board discussed a replacement for a car that was damaged in an accident earlier this year. The Board asked if the Sheriff's Office was able to get bids on the vehicle. The Board sometimes gets complaints from other dealers that one dealer is favored. Sheriff Powell said that they have been looking for three or four months, nobody has had any vehicles. Transwest came up with this one that would work for what they were looking for. Commissioner Sonnenberg gave him a budget of \$15,000 so that is what he stuck with. Powell said that the new vehicle will be given to Investigations and the Investigations Jeep will be given to Heather. Aulston provided the purchase requisition to the Board for signatures.

Aulston stated that finding a decent car for \$15,000 is not easy. Transwest initially wanted \$18,000 for the vehicle and came down on their price to \$15,000 for the Sheriff's Office. Transwest has been the most proactive in finding a car for the Sheriff's Office at that price. The purchasing policy was just sent out again. The Board wants to make sure departments are abiding by the policy.

Sheriff Powell said that they met with Sterling Police Chief Tyson Kerr recently. The Sterling PD is redoing their gun range. They wanted the SO to move the Mayflower unit off of the gun range that they use for their range storage. The SO purchased a Conex box for the gun range. Powell contacted the Road and Bridge Department. They are going to take the Mayflower trailer and use it for DEF storage and for storage of their new tires. This will open up more of the shop area to park equipment in. The Conex box was delivered yesterday. At the gun range, they will fence it off and redo the old dog pound and make a classroom. It will be a POST certified range. The City will put an eight-foot fence around it. The City does not want any money from the County for it; the only thing they wanted was the Conex box replaced.

Sheriff Powell told the Board about a complaint concerning Silicon Plains. Every time they touch a computer at the Sheriff's Office, they are supposed to notify them before they do the updates. They are having issues with somebody's computer almost every day, because Silicon Plains is accessing the computers remotely without contacting Sheriff's personnel. Dennis said he got on his computer yesterday to get into some old forms and couldn't get into them. Commissioner Yahn explained that Silicon Plains is upgrading computers from Windows 10 to Windows 11.

Powell stated that every time Tyler does something with the City with the Sheriff and CAD system, then there's two or three computers down. It's like they give and take access away from people that have had access, so they have to go and spend hours on the phone with them figuring out what's wrong. He asked if the rest of the county is having problems that Silicon Plains is having problems and having to remotely fix them.

Commissioner Brownell had not heard of any problems. Dennis Aulston stated that he has icons on his computer where he has saved items on his computer. He couldn't open them because they were saved on the old server. Silicon Plains said that the server was down, or the server was having issues, or they took it off the server. Powell said that Silicon just replaced the Sheriff's server with the old server from the Courthouse

to save some money on a new server for the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Brownell said that the only complaint he has heard about is the landfill because their computer will not talk to the scale sometimes. Aulston said that his voicemail still says Ken on it and he can't get it changed.

Sheriff Powell asked about the status of the website. Jennifer said that CivicPlus is working on the website and will be ready to transfer content soon. Powell said he had received a letter from an attorney concerning online bonds.

Powell felt that it is ridiculous that county personnel cannot even connect a printer without Silicon Plains having to come hook the printer up. When they come hook the printer up, they screw up five other computers in the process. Powell explained their CHP printer should not even have been tied into the network, but Silicon Plains tied it into the network. County Sheriffs of Colorado went with those Zebra printers years ago; this is their second one. It was \$8,500 the last time and all it does is print ID cards. It should not be attached to the network because they just take pictures right when people come in and put them into the computer. Silicon Plains did correct the problem later, but this is what they deal with.

Jeremy Leisure installs the new computers that the Sheriff's Office got with CAD for the trucks and he was having issues with them every time he was trying to program the computer. Silicon Plains wouldn't let him in. He has access but they kept blocking him out. He had to call every time he needed to install the CAD programming on the computer.

The Board agreed to send out an email to departments and ask everybody to respond with any issues that they've had with Silicon Plains.

Powell stated that Silicon Plains is supposed to contact Kris or Tabby before they remote on to any computers in the Sheriff's Department. Sheriff Powell said that Tyler is pretty good about notifying the department about any upgrade or work being done on the site. Danielle with the City will send out an email saying that they are going to be doing something and the site will be down. Maybe Silicon could do this for the County, the week before the upgrade on Wednesday next week or whatever day, at least people could prepare for it. The main part of it is communication.

Alan Samber will review the IT contract with Silicon Plains to see if they have designated a certain person to be their customer service representative. After a list of problems has been compiled it can be sent to that representative.

VISITORS CENTER PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER – Marilee Johnson met with the Board. She suggested that the Board discuss the email from County Clerk Pam Bacon. Pam was asking about the Sales and Use Tax Ballot Issue, if there was a committee being formed to file on Tracer like a candidate does. Alan Samber was not aware of the email. Commissioner Brownell read the email: "I've been seeing posts and whatnot, and I know that Marilee has contacted my office about names to send information in the mail to voters on the sales tax question for the county. Has anyone from the County registered with the Colorado Secretary of State as an issue Committee and will be filing appropriate reports with them on spending regarding the question, in we are spending money or in-kind donations, then should be registered as an issue committee and do the reporting.

Commissioner Brownell asked Pam who should be the person filing the reports. Pam suggested Marilee do this since she is the one doing the mailing and the social media posting. The reporting person would have to get on Tracer and be designated as the filer. Quarterly reports would have to be sent on what has been spent

on the mailings, etc.

Alan Samber will look at the Fair Campaign Practices Act. The County can't spend any money after the ballot is certified. The Board can pass a resolution expressing their position on the question. He will discuss this with Pam Bacon and make sure we don't violate any campaign practices. The committee might have to be someone that is unrelated to the County, probably not a Commissioner. The intent of the mailer was to lay out the facts about the renewal of the Sales and Use Tax. The ballot question language has not been made official.

Marilee worked with Vistaprint to design and send the postcards. She emailed them a spreadsheet of addresses that she got from the Clerk's Office, and they do it all, print it with postage, for less cost than originally thought. She also did a \$100 boosted ad on Facebook. She will not do anything else until she finds out what can be done legally.

VISITOR'S CENTER CDOT REST AREA – Marilee visited with the Board about an ongoing problem at the CDOT rest area. The Visitor's Center has an ongoing problem that seems unsolvable. CDOT seems to always be going through janitors. Turnover is high for those positions. CDOT does not have the money to pay janitors to clean more than twice a day. Complaints about the restroom's cleanliness go to the Visitor's Center volunteers. Marilee said that the volunteers are not expected to clean the restrooms and have no jurisdiction over them. It is unfortunate that the first impression that a visitor gets of the area is from a nice visitor's center and dirty restrooms. The restrooms are cleaned twice a day, but sometimes it is not enough in the summertime.

Marilee mentioned that the Julesburg State Welcome Center contracts with (Sedgwick) County to provide maintenance. Maybe that could be a possibility in the future. The Visitor's Center is at the very bottom of their priority list. There is a number that they call if there is emergency maintenance needed. However, they only work four days per week.

The Board thanked Marilee for her work on the Sales and Use Tax Ballot Issue.

The Board has not determined whether the question should include a date to be sunset. Not opposed to tax and wish that it was not targeted to buildings. Commissioner Brownell has talked about the proposed extension of the tax to many people. Most people are not really opposed to the extension of the sales tax. They do think it should be able to be used for roads and bridges and more than buildings and utilities, etc. Some of the funds can be used as matching grant funds for DOLA grants or things like that.

Alan Samber reminded the Board that one quarter of the 1% sales tax is already designated to Road and Bridge. The first sales tax the County adopted was ½% and half was dedicated to Road and Bridge, and half was dedicated to General Fund. That is a permanent ½% sales tax for the County. The Board discussed that they could add things to the ballot question if necessary. However, voters may not want the question to be too open ended.

SESQUISEMIQUINCENTENNIAL – Marilee reported that there was another meeting Monday of the committee members planning for the Sesquisequicentennial. The committee decided to cancel the event that was planned for November because they could not really fit it into a reason or a plan. She will get ahold of Rick and cancel the reservation for the Exhibit Center. The committee will concentrate on things that are already happening in 2026 like the Heritage Festival at the museum and the fair. They still haven't gotten confirmation about the show.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.