

**Logan County Commissioners Work Session**  
**August 27, 2024**

Present: Mike Brownell, Joe McBride, Jerry Sonnenberg, Alan Samber, Jerry Casebolt, Rick Cullip, Kristan Lange, Debbie Unrein, Marilee Johnson, Peggy Stoltenburg, Tim Stahley, Diana Korbe, and Jennifer Crow.

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS SESSION** – Commissioner Sonnenberg moved to approve the minutes of August 20, 2024 as written. Commissioner McBride seconded, and the motion carried, 3-0.

**REVISIONS TO THE WORK SESSION AGENDA** – Jerry Casebolt will be added to unfinished business to website accessibility. Also, the Milestone Community Wellness event to be held August 31 at the Gazebo would like fees waived.

**REVIEW AND APPROVE SCHEDULE OF COUNTY BILLS** – The Board met with Kristan Lange to review the Logan County schedule of bills dated August 27, 2024. All bills were approved as presented.

**CSU ENGAGEMENT CENTER LATIN INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION** – Peggy Stoltenberg and Tim Stahley met with the Board concerning use of the Courthouse Gazebo and Courthouse Square on September 13, 2024 for a Latin Independence Day Celebration. The event was held last year in conjunction with Sugar Beet Days as the dates lined up well for them. The event consists of a street dance and some folkloric dancing. This year the plan is to do that again, although the dates do not coincide with Sugar Beet Days. It will be more of a cultural arts celebration with their Spanish language engagement that they do at the CSU Engagement Center. The group would like to have the fees waived as they don't really have a budget for the event. They do charge the food trucks that come in and that will serve as their budget to pay the DJ and some of the folkloric dancers.

Commissioner McBride moved to waive the fees for the Latin Independence Day Celebration on Friday, September 13th. Commissioner Sonnenberg seconded, and the motion carried, 3-0. Commissioner McBride suggested that the Courthouse lighting be set to red, white and green in honor of the celebration. Jennifer will communicate that to Blazen Illuminations.

**ADP NEW HIRE SCREENING** – Diana Korbe met with the Board to discuss ADP New Hire Screening. In 2017 before any new employee was hired, the HR Department ran credit checks and criminal background history on them. When new commissioners came on board, they did not think we needed it. Diana would like to reintroduce the screenings. DHS still screens all of their new hires. There have been several cases where screening may have exposed the hiring of persons that would not be good employees. One employee that was hired at the County Clerk's Office had previous embezzlement charges. One employee who was hired at Solid Waste was terminated and then applied at the Road and Bridge Department and was interviewed and was almost hired. The ADP introductory fees were waived as the county had been a previous customer. The Trans Union credit report cost is \$71 per year. There are other standard fees depending on the records requested. For example, driving records are approximately \$11 each. It depends what type of records are wanted.

Alan Samber explained his hesitancy to approve the contract. Colorado law is clear that just because someone has a criminal conviction, it doesn't necessarily foreclose them from being a public employee, even if it's a felony. You have to look at what the offense was and how it relates to the job. For instance, somebody convicted of embezzlement maybe shouldn't be handling money. You need to look at how far back in the past the conviction occurred. The criminal background checks cannot be done until after you've made a conditional offer for

employment. Diana has all of the previously approved background check paperwork that is still in use by DHS. He questioned the reasoning for doing a credit check, because of the Fair Credit Reporting Act laws and it would be easy for us to obtain information that we really don't necessarily need and get dinged for a Fair Credit Reporting Act violation. DHS needs criminal background checks due to employees who deal with dependent children and adult protections cases.

A criminal history related to a driving record for Road and Bridge Department employees would be important. Alan found a lot of things in the contract he did not like such as there is no term of the contract, but there are penalties for early termination of the contract and not giving enough advance notice of termination. Alan also noted that if there's a contract dispute, jurisdiction is in the New York courts.

Commissioner Sonnenberg asked if the county is allowed to ask on the application about the applicant's criminal history. Diana stated that we modified our application recently to comply with regulations and we removed a question about prior wages but not the question about criminal history. Alan Samber commented that the EEOC does frown on asking about criminal history before a job offer is extended. Their theory is it has a disparate impact on certain protected classes.

Diana said there have been a couple of hires that could have been eliminated had the background checks been made in advance. That is the reason that she would like to reintroduce the ADP contract. The Counties disclosures that would be given to new hires would allow the County to terminate any applicant who provides misleading or erroneous, willful, deceptive information.

Social Security numbers are verified through E-Verify. Alan is not necessarily saying he is against background checks, he is just saying that we need to make sure we are careful about it and all disclosures are made. Commissioner McBride commented that for a couple of employees that were hired in other departments, a simple Google search would have exposed a lot. Even checking out their Facebook and other social media profiles to see how they live can determine a lot about the person. Diana mentioned an employee who was terminated at DHS falsifying information because she said she was on military leave and was not, she was on vacation and was posting on social media. Diana will hold off on the ADP contract right now and possibly investigate other companies for background checks and other ways to determine employees' backgrounds.

**MILESTONE COMMUNITY WELLNESS** – There was not a representative from Milestone Community Wellness at the meeting. Jennifer explained that the Board waived fees in 2023 for the same event. Commissioner Sonnenberg moved to waive the fees for the use of the Gazebo and Courthouse Square for Milestone Community Wellness for International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31, 2024. Commissioner McBride seconded and the motion carried, 3-0.

**NEW BUSINESS/RICK CULLIP** – Trae Miller would like to use the Mitchek Event Center for a small economic development event for approximately 20 people. He wants to help promote the Mitchek Event Center and get the word out about the new facility and to help bring more business to the event center, but he did not want to pay \$375 for a five-hour event. Commissioner Sonnenberg moved to waive the fees for the event. Commissioner McBride seconded and the motion carried, 3-0.

**WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE** - Jerry Casebolt met with the Board to discuss proposals for website accessibility compliance that he has obtained. He has reached out to a total of six vendors and out of the six, only two vendors sent proposals back. Most of the vendors are not capable of performing services for all of the different web platforms that the county websites operate on. The main county website operates on one

platform (Drupal) and the Logan County Fair operates on another platform (Wix), ExploreSterling.com operates on Joomla. The Logan County Sheriff's Office website will need to be rebuilt totally.

Both proposals are very close in terms of cost to do the audit and to do the remediation. The proposal from Refactored is very steep. The original Accessible.org proposal was reasonable but went up dramatically and is explained in the email. The proposals are all unfunded state mandates. The fair website went up to \$18,500 to fix it. He is using a different vendor to fix it because the Colorado standards are stricter than the federal standards. The total for all of the websites is roughly around \$50,000. This is just to get it in compliance. Casebolt does not feel comfortable with either of the proposals because they are both outrageous. Commissioner Sonnenberg asked what the requirements are at this time. Alan Samber stated that everything that is in active use must be digitally accessible by people with impairments. Archived materials do not have to be made digitally accessible.

The Assessor's Office and Treasurer's Office are on a separate website operated by a separate vendor that handles their information for them. Our website links to that information. The county records are through <https://property.spatialtest.com/co/logan>. This is old, archived data and should not have to comply with the remediation requirements. Alan Samber offered to reach out to his County Attorney list serve and see what other counties are doing on this.

Chairman Brownell asked if it would be helpful to get all of the county websites on the same platform. Casebolt explained that the county website is hosted on the Colorado.gov web platform which is a Drupal platform and is free for the county to use. Exploresterling.com is hosted on Joomla. The Logan County Fair website is on Wix. Marilee Johnson joined the meeting and told the Board that she is going to be putting in a request to the Lodging Tax Board to do a website update. They want to switch over to a WordPress platform instead of Joomla.

Casebolt added \$15,000 to the IT budget before the proposals came in but obviously that will not be enough. The Explore Sterling website can be removed from the proposal as it will be redesigned, hopefully with accessibility in mind. Commissioner Sonnenberg suggested that in Jerry's conversations with everyone, he should see what it would take to get everyone on the same platform such as WordPress like Explore Sterling is going to use.

Commissioner Brownell added that at the CCI meetings they were told federal government regulations will go into effect in March 2025. Casebolt stated that everything he has seen says Colorado's regulations are stricter than the federal regs. We have until July 1, 2025 to get this done and will need to update quarterly progress until then on the county's front facing page of the website. Penalties for not doing this can be up to \$3,500 per person. Commissioner Sonnenberg will continue to talk to Senator Pelton about this and possibly reach out to David Ortiz about state funding.

**ROAD AND BRIDGE TELEPHONE LINE UPDATE** - Casebolt also updated the Board on an issue with an incoming line at the Road and Bridge Department. There was bad static on the line when the new system was installed. Lumen came out last Thursday and found the issue and repaired it. It is not known when the line static started but sometime between the time the old system was taken out on the weekend and installation of the new system. Paula's phone is still on the old system and will be until the Road and Bridge phone number is ported over.

**PURCHASING POLICY** – Chairman Brownell asked the Board how they wanted to handle raising the dollar amount on the purchasing policy. The Board agreed to discuss the purchasing policy with Debbie Unrein during budget meeting sessions.

**BODY SCANNER FOR THE JAIL** – This was not budgeted last year as the Board had hoped to find some grant funds to help purchase the body scanner. Chairman Brownell has been discussing the purchase of the body scanner with Jared Harty. It is too easy for people to smuggle contraband into the jail without having the body scanner available. They have had issues in the last several months including an employee bringing contraband into the jail. The cost to purchase the scanner will be in the neighborhood of \$140,000 and then there will be installation costs. Electricians will be needed to put in electricity to the area where it will be located. They may need to build a stem wall or alcove for the screen to protect it. Debbie Unrein thought that they could make it work with reserves.

It does not appear that there are grants available for the body camera system or for the server for the camera system. Chairman Brownell has visited with Greg Etl about a 50% cost share grant coming up in October for law enforcement that they could use. Commissioner McBride is in favor of it if other obligations are met including employee raises. He asked about the cost of maintenance on the body scanners and if there are frequent breakdowns. Jared Harty told Chairman Brownell that there are a lot of these scanners in Colorado and in the southeast area of the state.

Chairman Brownell will visit with Debbie and talk to her about getting the purchasing policy done in the near future. Then the Board can visit with Department Heads and let them know about the new procedure.

**TELEPHONE BILLING SEPARATION** – Jerry Casebolt had one more item to discuss about the phones. Debbie requested a separate billing set up for each facility, the Courthouse, DHS and the Sheriff. This means that there is no capability to transfer calls between facilities. It can be fixed by merging the billings together. The bill amounts are very close, within approximately \$50 for the facilities per month. Casebolt asked the Board's thoughts on merging them together and dividing the bill three ways. The advantage of merging the billing is to have the capability to dial calls to the other facilities using the three-digit extension only or transfer calls easily between facilities. The Board agreed to take advantage of this option if necessary. Casebolt said that Silicon is still working on this to see if they can put them together and still bill it out separately, so that still may be an option.

**UPDATE ON LEGISLATIVE SESSION** – Commissioner Sonnenberg updated the Board on the special legislative session on property taxes.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:31a.m.