

**Logan County Commissioners Work Session
January 28, 2025**

Present: Mike Brownell, Jerry Sonnenberg, Jim Yahn, Debbie Unrein, Marilee Johnson, Rick Cullip, Rob Quint, Scott Prestidge, Craig Shriver, Larry Hafer, Peggy Michaels 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 the January 21, 2025 Work Session as written. Commissioner Yahn seconded, and the motion carried, 3-0.

REVISIONS TO THE WORK SESSION AGENDA – Commissioner Sonnenberg added Craig Shriver to the Work Session Agenda.

FLOODPLAIN DEVELOPMENT PERMIT/APPLICATION – TRAILBLAZER PIPELINE – Rob Quint and Scott Prestidge met with the Board to discuss the Floodplain Development Permit/Application submitted by Trailblazer Pipeline. Rob Quint stated that this is a formality for Trailblazer Pipeline. One of the valve sites falls barely within the floodplain near Peetz. They’ve had their engineering team go through the process. There is no life-safety involved in this project obviously, as it is a valve site. Commissioner Sonnenberg moved to approve the FEMA Floodplain Process Waiver for the Trailblazer Pipeline Valve Station. Commissioner Yahn seconded and the motion carried 3-0.

CRAIG SHRIVER MOBILE HOMES REQUESTS WAIVER OF TAXES – Craig Shriver met with the Board concerning some mobile homes he owns which he keeps at a storage facility near McAtee Paving. There are over 100 old mobile homes stored on the property that are not livable and are just junk. He says he is trying to clean up the property. He has found a company that’s going to turn a bunch of them into storage units, so they don’t go into the landfill. There are tax liens on some of these mobile homes that are sitting in storage. Some of the mobile homes may be exempt.

Shriver talked to County Treasurer Patty Bartlett, who suggested he talk to the Commissioners about getting the taxes exempted or reduced. He wants to get them out of there and has to get a moving permit to move them. He has to show there are no taxes owed on them to get the moving permit. He has moved one mobile home out already.

He does not know how many of the mobile homes have tax liens on them. Shriver explained that the mobile homes are from all over the state. They all have a different scenario; some are repossessions but they’re all being taxed. In order to get a permit to move them and get them to the company that will turn them into storage units in Otero County, he needs to clean up the back taxes. Then he must get demolition permits through the State.

Alan Samber asked if there are any mobile homes that have certificate holders. Mr. Shriver answered that if they do have a certificate, they also have storage owed against them for \$100 per day for between two to ten years. Most of the mobile homes are not usable. Alan Samber will discuss this with Patty Bartlett. If the taxes are reduced or forgiven, it will need to be done by resolution. Mr. Shriver will have to identify the mobile homes that he wants to move. If the mobile home is not on the tax roll, then it may possibly be exempt.

LARRY HAFER – Larry Hafer came to inform the Board of various complaints he has about a number of business and government entities in the community. The Board told Mr. Hafer that it has no jurisdiction to address the complaints.

PEGGY MICHAELS RE: SHRIVER - Peggy Michaels met with the Board concerning Mr. Shriver's mobile homes. One mobile home that was purchased in 2015, Mr. Shriver had requested a title for. When owners title them, the Assessor's Office puts them on the tax roll. He just didn't pay taxes on this one for many years, therefore it has a tax lien on it. Shriver has other mobile homes out there that the Assessor's Office does not know how or when they were moved in, or where they all came from. He was worried about the \$1,400 in back taxes on the mobile home that he put on the tax roll in 2015. However, that mobile home is now exempt. The back taxes were still owed though. The tax bills for all of his properties are all sent to his Front Street property address in Sterling.

Shriver paid the \$1,400 yesterday because he wanted Peggy to go to the Treasurer's Office yesterday about getting his money back. This was all for back taxes before it went exempt. Anything valued under \$28,000 became exempt in 2022 and there are no taxes due. If the mobile home is \$28,001 it's taxable. Peggy said there is no way to track what goes on out there. It is locked up. You can't get in there even if you wanted to. Nobody's living in them. The mobile homes are all junk, they are stacked up. There's no reason for her to go put them on the tax roll.

Alan Samber will check with Patty Bartlett to see if there are other mobile homes on the tax roll that could be removed or exempted.

COURTHOUSE SECURITY – Rick Cullip reported that he contacted a representative of the State Historical Society concerning the courthouse security project. The County will have to formally propose the project to the Historical Society for approval before anything can be done inside or outside. He asked if the Homeland Security photos could be used in the proposal to the Historical Society as they are labeled "for official use only." Every page is stamped "for official use only." Commissioner Sonnenberg suggested that Cullip contact Homeland Security and request permission to share the photos with the Historical Society. Cullip said that Pam Bacon has been the contact with Homeland Security. He will ask her to get permission from them to share the photos.

Commissioner Sonnenberg is working on a drawing to reconfigure the parking lot, but it is not to scale. Homeland Security has recommended installing bollards to protect the building. There was a question whether the Historical Society would need to be involved in the reconfiguration of the parking lot and the grass area and installation of the bollards. The Historical Society does want to be included in this process.

Cullip said that the power boxes cannot be locked inside the gated area in the event the Fire Department needs access to them. The gas meter and equipment is outside and cannot be locked up.

PADRONI PROPERTY CLEANUP – Rob Quint provided pictures to the Board of the Padroni property he inspected recently owned by Lisa Young. There is still a considerable amount of junk and abandoned vehicles on the property. Commissioner Yahn discussed the landfill vouchers that are sent out to property owners every year and asked if it would be helpful in this situation to incentivize them to clean up their property to give them extra vouchers. The landfill always gets some of the vouchers returned in the mail and there are many vouchers that go unused. Rob asked the property owner if it would help if she had a couple of extra vouchers to use to get the property cleaned up and she did say it would help.

The abandoned, burned, vehicles will be a problem. She was told to call the junk yards or salvage collection companies to see if they would be willing to haul them off. She was given until January of 2025 to mitigate the problem when she met with the Board last year.

Commissioner Brownell stated that the landfill staff will occasionally give out an undeliverable voucher to a

senior citizen within the town of Sterling or Fleming, Merino, etc., where they don't get them. The landfill keeps track of the vouchers sent out, whether they are used or not. He suggested that Rob Quint talk to Josh Klein about other junk situations in the county to work with these people and offer vouchers to them to assist with their cleanups as well. The landfill distributed over 3,000 letters with two vouchers each last year, and only 1,200 were used.

Commissioner Yahn will ask Rob Quint to let Lisa Young know that she can have an additional six months' time to clean up her Padroni property. Commissioner Brownell will let Josh Klein know that Rob may be contacting him for the extra vouchers.

ROGER HOSEA LANDFILL ACCIDENT CLAIM – Alan Samber asked if there was settlement made with Roger Hosea on the accident with the Landfill machine. Commissioner Brownell reported that a panel had been located to put on his truck for \$500 and Colt Trailer Service will install it for \$2,500. Jennifer called Roger Hosea yesterday. He will get the panel ordered. Alan said that maybe we should determine what the repairs are and cut Roger a check and also noted that some counties only pay the property owner what their insurance deductible is. Alan explained Governmental Immunity and why the insurance company did not pay the claim.

EMERGENCY MANAGER USE OF COUNTY CAR – Commissioner Brownell reported that Josilyn Lutze has been using one of the County cars as the Emergency Manager car has been in for repairs. There was a car in the fleet that had not been run for a while, so Peggy had them take it to one of the shops and they were getting it tuned up. It had some kind of tick in the engine. The report is not in on what is wrong with it. Commissioner Yahn will check with Undersheriff Ken Kimsey to determine when they might have a pickup coming available that Josilyn could use, as long as it would be drivable for a while.

Josilyn Lutze had asked if the Commissioners needed ID badges. Commissioner Sonnenberg and Brownell each have a badge. Commissioner Yahn does not have a badge. He will talk to Josilyn about getting a badge.

AMBULANCE PLANNING MEETINGS – Commissioner Yahn reported that Josilyn Lutze went to the Rural Fire Chiefs meeting. The fire chiefs would rather have the ambulance planning meetings at 6 p.m. on Mondays because some of them have day jobs as well. The Board agreed that the meeting time at 6 p.m. is fine. The next meeting will be February 10th.

PLANNING AND ZONING LAND USE NOTICES – Commissioner Yahn brought up an issue that Rob Quint discussed with him. The Planning and Zoning Department is required to publish a notice in the newspaper fourteen days before a land-use application is heard in the Commissioners meeting. This was changed from thirty days-notice a few years ago to move applications through more quickly. The shorter time frame is quite burdensome for Quint to get the notice published. He has to advertise and notify adjacent landowners by mail, and this must all be done in a fourteen-day window from the date the application is submitted. The requirement used to be thirty days. The newspaper only publishes once per week now and the advertising deadline is on Friday for next Thursday's newspaper. The larger applications are especially cumbersome to review and get advertised in that time frame. Commissioner Yahn will discuss this with Rob Quint again.

ROAD AND BRIDGE ISSUES - Mike Burri met with the Board concerning the intersection of County Road 37 and Iris Drive. The Board is looking at restructuring the intersection for safety. Traffic traveling north on CR 37 cannot see traffic coming from their right from around the curve on Iris Drive. There has not been an accident there. The property that comes to a point at that location is owned by Old Vine Property LLC. The Board discussed the best way to design the intersection. There is a 4' x 4' in-ground electrical box owned by Xcel that would be expensive to move and also an electrical pole.

Burri said that he has a new blade operator that they are working with. He is doing a good job. He needs more time to learn the machine and feel comfortable. Another employee left for a manager job at Wickham Tractor. They are paying way more than the County could have offered to pay.

Commissioner Sonnenberg asked Mike Burri to call Brian Propst concerning a dead-end road near the interstate by Lindgren coming from the north near Dan and Deb Klindt. They are having trouble getting trucks in and they can't make the entrance any bigger because of a culvert there. They may need to add on to the culvert. They were also wondering about putting in another driveway with the extended culvert. Commissioner Sonnenberg suggested Burri go out and look at it. Burri said that he would call and go out and look at it.

Widening the crossing on CR 26 cannot happen. Union Pacific (UP) doesn't want to do anything. We are already encroaching on the switch. The County would have to buy all of the land and UP would have to redo all of their tracks going all the way down there. Maybe something can be done in the future.

Burri received a phone call from someone concerned that there is no secondary access when CR 32.2 is blocked by trains. The map shows CR 43.5, which runs north and south along the feedlot. However, it has a sign that says it is a private drive. Emergency and ambulance services would like the County to verify that it is actually a County road that can be used in case of emergency. Burri could not find anything showing that it is a County road on the HUTF report. He thinks that the blade goes down it once in a while, but it is not technically a County road for emergency vehicles to go through. The Board suggested that Burri check with the Assessor's Office and see if the County has a right of way on CR 43.5, then the County can determine if the private road sign can be taken down. Commissioner Sonnenberg stated that the railroad technically cannot sit on the crossing for longer than 30 minutes.

COMMISSIONERS PROCEEDINGS DECEMBER, 2024 – Commissioner Yahn moved to approve the Commissioners Proceedings for December, 2024. Commissioner Sonnenberg seconded, and the motion carried, 3-0.

WALLER CONSULTING VOUCHER - Jennifer asked the Board if the Waller Consulting voucher should be approved. The contract expired in December 2024. The Board has a monthly call with the firm. They are lobbyists and keep the Board informed of what is happening with legislation. Waller states that the contract goes month to month after expiration. Alan will take a look at it. Commissioner Sonnenberg suggested letting the contract continue month to month and not renewing the annual contract. The Board approved the voucher.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.