

Logan County Commissioners Work Session

January 30, 2024

Present: Joe McBride, Jerry Sonnenberg, Alan Samber, Kristan Lange, Debbie Unrein, Marilee Johnson, Jerry Casebolt, Rick Cullip, Jeff Rice and Jennifer Crow.

Vice-Chairman McBride called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Brownell is in Washington DC attending the Farm Credit Bureau meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS SESSION – Commissioner Sonnenberg moved to approve the minutes of January 23, 2024 as written. Commissioner McBride seconded, and the motion carried, 2-0.

REVISIONS TO WORK SESSION AGENDA – There were no revisions to the Work Session Agenda.

REVIEW AND APPROVE SCHEDULE OF COUNTY BILLS – The Board met with Kristan Lange to review the Logan County schedule of bills dated January 23, 2024. All bills were approved as presented.

STORAGE OF TABLES IN THE MEETING ROOM - Jennifer asked the Board if there was any objection to storing one or both rolling racks of the 8-foot folding tables in the back of the meeting room instead of in the hallway. The two racks of tables clutter the hallway. Previously the tables were stored in the emergency exit stairwell. There may be room for one rack of tables there now, however there is now a heater in the stairwell. It was suggested that a cover could be purchased to disguise the tables so they would be less visible. The Board agreed to order one cover to see what it will look like.

REVIEW BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA – The Board will add the renewal of the PJ Marina retail liquor license to the Consent Agenda as it expires on February 6, 2024. The renewal application was submitted yesterday.

Resolution 2024-5 will be replaced with a revised resolution. The revision has been corrected to note that the land is being leased from Becky Dick. The wording “State Land Board lease” will be lease struck from the agenda and replaced with “Becky Dick lease”.

CONGRESSMAN KEN BUCK UPDATE - Darlene Carpio, aide to Congressman Ken Buck met with the Board with an update from Congressman Ken Buck’s Office. Ms. Carpio reported that it is old news by now, but the Congressman is not running for re-election. At December staff meetings they were told that he still serves on a committee, he still has votes, and he still needs information. Ms. Carpio will be holding remote office hours today in the Courthouse meeting room from 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., giving the public an opportunity to come in if they have issues for the Congressman.

Congressman Buck will continue to make the budget a priority topic. The deadlines have been pushed out to March 1st and March 8th. The last time they were talking about it, they were separating budget talks from foreign aid and financial aid. There is concern about what that does to the Farm Bill. It’s pretty clear that they are not going to talk about it until they can do appropriations. They are hoping that the House can bring it to the floor around May. But by that

time, it goes to the Senate, and will be closer to the election where it's going to be difficult to make a decision on a large spending package.

This Farm Bill, even if nothing is changed, no programs are added and no funding is added, for the first time, will hit the trillion-dollar mark, just because of inflation.

Congressman Buck introduced two new pieces of legislation yesterday. The first one is the National AI Commission Act. It is to create a national commission to focus on regulating artificial intelligence. This is not something that they want to cap, it has potential to be a huge tool for all of us. But without putting some boundaries on that, it is a little scary as well. There is a place for AI, we must figure out that place, that's pretty much what this act is speaking to.

The other bill that was introduced is called the False Claims Act, to penalize actors who charge misleading fees to collect money they claim is owed to the federal government. This talks about aluminum in Colorado and the beer industry. Users of aluminum in Colorado are being deceptively overcharged by producers under the guise of government fees. This is a statement by Ken Buck. "The False Claims Enhancement Act would put an end to this dishonest practice and ensure that production companies are penalized for lying about the necessity and use of fees. As inflation continues to climb, the American public cannot afford to pay higher prices for canned goods, due to unnecessary and misrepresented fees charged by manufacturers."

In its current form, this act protects the government from being defrauded by a private party who has made a false claim. Constituents of Colorado's fourth district express that the False Claims Act needs to be expanded to protect consumers from misleading fees, private customers need regulations in place that protect them from private suppliers who charge customers fees on the basis of fictional federal regulatory costs.

LEASE OF SHARES OF STERLING IRRIGATION DISTRICT – The Board discussed the lease of shares of the Sterling Irrigation District. The County owns six shares of the Sterling Irrigation District. Four shares are owned at the fairgrounds and possibly two are shares from Sunset Memorial Gardens. Jennifer Crow stated that she found that the county is also paying for six Springdale Ditch assessments each year. The Board would like to go ahead and lease the Sterling Irrigation District shares. Later the Board decided to get a better handle on what ditch shares county actually owns before advertising them for lease.

LOWER SOUTH PLATTE ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS MEETING PROXY – Commissioner Sonnenberg questioned whether a decision was made about the proxy. Commissioner McBride is OK making Gene Manuello the proxy as he is the chairman. The Board had discussed that it was not aware of the issues they would be discussing and how many shares would be an adequate number of shares to be beneficial member. The Board agreed not to issue the proxy.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.