**Logan County Commissioners Work Session**

**June 15, 2021**

Present: Byron Pelton, Jane Bauder, Joe McBride, Alan Samber, Marilee Johnson, Shannon Graves, Jerry Casebolt, Shila Adolf, Dave Long, Mark Phillips, Jeff Rice, and Jennifer Crow.

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS SESSION** – Commissioner Bauder moved to approve the minutes from June 8, 2021 as written. Commissioner McBride seconded and the motion carried

**REVISIONS TO WORK SESSION AGENDA** - Chairman Pelton added discussion on the request for annexation from the City of Sterling and the USDA County FSA Committee elections. Jennifer Crow added an approval of Logan County Ambulance collections assignments.

**REVIEW AND APPROVE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES SCHEDULE OF BILLS** – Shannon Graves met with the Board for review and approval of the Logan County Department of Human Services schedule of bills dated June 15, 2021. The Board approved all bills as presented. The Board also reviewed and approved the DHS payroll for the period May 22, 2021 through June 4, 2021.

**REVIEW BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA** – The Board reviewed the June 15, 2021 business meeting agenda. The date on the PBR contract will need to be amended to change the date from May to June.

**LOGAN COUNTY AMBULANCE COLLECTION ASSIGNMENTS** - Commissioner Bauder moved to approve assignment of Logan County Ambulance debt collections accounts to Wakefield and Associates, the account numbers ending in 9001 in the amount of $981.90 and 9004 amount of $988.20 and allow the Chair to sign. Commissioner McBride seconded and the motion carried 3-0.

**COMMISSIONERS PROCEEDINGS APRIL AND MAY 2021** – Commissioner McBride moved to approve the Commissioners proceedings for April and May 2021, Commissioner Bauder seconded and the motion carried 3-0.

**CDOT EASTERN TPR REPORT** – Chairman Pelton reported on the Eastern TPR meeting he attended yesterday. Beginning next April, Highway 138 will be re-paving from the Co-Op all the way past Iliff and CR 55. The project is out for design and/or bid currently. They discussed putting more shoulders on the roads.

**ROAD CLOSURE: CR 22 AT HWY 61** is currently closed due to construction traffic. Apparently there has been 71 concrete trucks a day running the wind tower construction. Chairman Pelton will meet with Jennifer Herron of Niyol, the Project Supervisor for Niyol, Logan County Road and Bridge Manager, Jeff Reeves and CDOT representatives Thursday at 8 a.m. to discuss what can be done to fix it. Part of the Road Use Agreement with Niyol Wind was that the company must keep the road in good repair. CDOT will be involved because of the apron to County Road 22.

Commissioner Pelton discussed a senate bill that deals with the new fees for roads that has strings attached to climate change. Commissioner Pelton brought up at the Eastern TPR meeting that if Eastern TPR has to deal with that (and it was discussed that it may not have to), then Eastern TPR should be exempt from the carbon credits, because they do not put windmills in Denver and in Boulder or any of the front range corridor, but they are putting them out in rural areas. Rural areas should not have to deal with the requirements of the new bill.

**SHILA ADOLF RE-1 VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT –** Shila Adolf, RE-1 Valley School District Superintendent, Pastor Mark Phillips of First Baptist Church and Dave Long, Director of Logan County Human Services Department met with the Board. Chairman Pelton explained he has been meeting with the group discussing behavior health. The group has developed a new program involving building relationships with youth and their families in order to ensure all learners have a connection to the school system. The dynamics of where mental health support is available need to change. In rural America, there are a limited number of mental health care providers. Smaller towns have a hard time attracting and retaining services of providers, which is a barrier to schools. Once a family agrees to some mental health support services for their at-risk child, there may be a six-week waiting list, and then an appointment may need to be rescheduled for various reasons. By then, you are back to the starting gate of trying to get the family to re-engage.

The committee wants to shift the thinking to using the schools for as many support services as possible by bringing the community partners together. It is really boiled down to connections. Do the students and families feel connected with their teachers and programs? Can they help kids and families feel connected? There are big city problems here (drugs) with the small-town resources. The group looked at what the school system can do at this level to circumvent needing to access a higher level of services. New York City took the high-risk youth programs and athletic coaches came in to support the youth during the day. Coaches tend to build better relationships with students and tend to know them better. In order that this not to be a sports-driven program, they are calling them Student Achievement Coaches. They want to catch kids “upstream” or before one of the other mental health care systems is needed or to follow-up support after some sort of trauma or crisis.

The definition of “at-risk youth” tends to focus academically on not graduating. The definition needs to be shifted to more of “the potential to not matriculate into an adult appropriately. When looking at academic success, job readiness, financial literacy, etc., can they be independent from parents and from “systems” and work to provide for themselves after graduation.

Ms. Adolf presented a chart showing that one-fourth of your life is controlled (at home and in school), and three-fourths of your life you get to do what you want to do as far as a career. Can youth be helped to make positive decisions for the remaining three-fourths of their lives vs. negative decisions i.e. drug abuse, pregnancy, friend selection, criminal records, those things that carry a shadow over them for the rest of their life. A healthy school system is a healthy community.

Motivating facts for the school district as of May 17, 2021 are: 127 suicide risk assessments were completed in the district; 171 youth were placed in out of home placement; 77% graduation rate; 39% of youth missed 20 days of school or more; caseworkers are serving servicing over 85 students each. RE-1 Valley School District has committed to having a social or emotional caseworker in each building. It’s hard to intervene for kids when you can only see them for 20 minutes. Forty percent of youth need multiple systems, i.e. Human Services, welfare, churches, etc. Kids don’t choose to be in their circumstances, it is their environment that changes that places them there. There have been four regional deaths by suicide, the number would be much higher if you counted other rural communities.

The motivating facts are going to shift to building relationships in the form of advocacy. They are going to dig deep and figure out how to help kids. They are going to identify the child’s specific needs, recommend and secure services (educational and psychological), identify community partners, identify and remediate physical risks, address past and current traumas, develop a behavior support plan and implement and monitor support plans.

Pastor Mark Phillips, noted that the emphasis on what is missing in school systems is the majority of students are in schools and contained for a certain amount of time. The rest of the resources, i.e. Human Services, religious services, etc. are “inflicted” on the kids or on families. This project will be part of the school system and no longer an infliction but a support system so kids can see what services are available. The connections can change the dynamic from being “I have to go…” to looking at it as, “Wow, these are my friends! Look, they want to help!”

Ms. Adolf mentioned Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs which asks how can kids access learning if their other needs are not met first. Community partners will be pulled together and make sure those kids’ needs are safely met in the school setting. The program is motivated to put as many services into the school as possible. For example, if the kids get in trouble for missing their meeting with their probation officer, the probation officer can come meet with them at school. Mental health therapy can also be scheduled to take place at school, by scheduling it no differently than special education would be scheduled. Schools are not providing the therapy, but making a mechanism for accountability.

Schools have kids for the longest duration of time, enabling the greatest opportunity for impact. Kids can do their community service at school which can be part of their corrective development plan to make it through probation. Many of the families struggle with daycare for the fifth day which is Monday - there is no school that day. Family Resources already has an enrichment program that can be utilized for that day, making sure that kids have transportation, possibly use school facilities, etc. They can offer access to the diverse groups without the barriers that sometimes limit the access to those groups. The community resources will be asked to verify if increased participation in their programs can be linked to effective change in behavior or a change of outcome of some kind.

Goals of the new program include: Improve daily attendance; Increase participation in community services and programs; Higher graduation rates; Decreased number of disciplinary referrals; Increased number of students matriculating to a meaningful “adult” opportunity, not necessarily college, but whatever their journey may be.

Commissioner Bauder told the group about a program for teens in Nebraska called TeamMates operated by Tom Osborne. A volunteer from the community goes to the school and has lunch at the school one day a week with the same student all the way from grade school through high school. It gives the student a different view of what life can be like. Shila Adolf noted that Pastor Mark Phillips has a group of 30 volunteers waiting for background checks that will do that same thing - this helps the kids and is a safe place for the kids as it is done in school setting.

Osborne’s program has shown that it has slowed down suicide attempts and changed several other behaviors because that individual becomes enough of a confidant, that they will share something early enough that there can be intervention before it gets to the place of being a necessity. The school is providing the venue and doing the background check, and the finger printing. Adolf noted that they are calling them “Trusted Adults”

Commissioner Pelton noted that the county’s share of ARPA money could be spent on this, as it is behavioral health. Another thing that could help is Senate Bill 237, that came out with ten-million dollars that goes to counties, which counties have to match, but counties can match with their ARPA funds.

Commissioner Pelton asked what is the dollar amount of the need. Ms. Adolf wants FTE to try to hire four coaches. The school has used their own emergency relief funds to hire two of the coaches already. It is hoped the program can be run as a regionalized pilot and then track and show the measurable outcomes for changes in the system.

Dave Long added if we have this kind of system and community cultural change, or a “climate cultural change”, it would cause kids not to have a “blow out”. Kids would have someone to go to, to rely on, at least a connection. Long said there are three things kids need, kids need control, they need connection and they need meaning. With control, it means they are able to control at least the basic parts of the Maslow’s Hierarchy. Connection is connection to other people that are good for them, there are a lot of gangs, good gangs, and bad gangs. Scouts and church and stuff like that are good gangs. It helps identify more things that are positive in nature to help change the climate of the kid and less need for them to “blow up”.

Ms. Adolf suggested the county fund two FTE and the school district fund two FTE. Dave Long noted that there could be great savings in the future derived from the program in that not as many tax dollars will be spent on out of home placement of children into foster care, etc. Families First is built around prevention services.

The school district has already taken steps and two coaches have been secured. There is a need for at least two more as they are servicing approximately 2,200 students. They would like to eventually have one coach in every building. Ideally, they would like $150,000 which would be two FTE plus programs and covers their health insurance and certified mental health care providers.

The program, if funded half school and half county, will pay back in folds, either through keeping enough kids in schools and being funded through them, or in other ways such as keeping them out of the human services areas. For it to be a sustainable pilot, they have to keep track of the measurables.

The primary focus is ninth grade and below because high school age is difficult to intervene with. The focus is on prevention in the 3rd – 7th grade to give them a mentor or a success coach. Maximum class size is 23 students, there is no reason their teachers can’t know them, their other trusted adult and their service providers to give them more opportunities to succeed. Principles in the schools need to be hands on and get to know the youth and their families.

Commissioner Pelton said that in four or five years the behavior health system will be in a better situation because of the behavior health blueprint. Funding was cut from $10 million to $3 million and the money given to schools was cut from $10 million to $1.3 million for every school district in Colorado.

**USDA COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTIONS** – the Board briefly discussed the USDA County FSA Committee Elections.

The meeting recessed at 9:50 a.m. and reconvened at 10:04 a.m.

**FAIRGROUNDS TICKET OFFICE SECURITY CAMERA SYSTEM** – Jerry Casebolt has been looking in to a new security camera system for the ticket office at the fairgrounds. There was a camera system installed several years ago in the ticket office, however, due to several personnel changes, no one knows the password to the system. Chance Wright is installing a camera system at the Fairgrounds Maintenance Shop due to several recent break-ins. It is a big enough system that they could piggy-back on that system The Fair Board would like the county to purchase the cameras because it is only used during fair - for fair events. The cost is $890 for five cameras for inside and outside. For a very minimal amount of money, decent cameras can be installed in the ticket office and outside the ticket office. The DVR will be located in the ticket office, that way if there is a break-in in the shop, they cannot destroy the DVR. Casebolt ran the lines last week, everything is ready to go. The Board agreed to purchase the cameras with the sales tax fund.

**COURTHOUSE COVID SIGNAGE** – The Board agreed to remove COVID signage and stations. The hand sanitizer stations can stay and the thermometers can be stored

**COURTHOUSE INTERNET** – Jerry Casebolt also discussed the Courthouse internet. The county pays KCI $79/month for 50Mbps up/down. To increase the speed to 100Mbps up/down the cost is $135/month. The county could get 1Gbps up/down for $125/month. One Gbps into the Courthouse would help on bandwidth but will not necessarily help the network speed because of outdated equipment. It will help with on-line meetings and Pam’s state computers. The Board agreed to get the 1Gbps service to the Courthouse. Jerry will contact Dave at KCI and let him know the 1Gbps is approved. Jerry will talk to Debbie Unrein and let her know about the price increase.

**TEMPORARY STORAGE** – Commissioner McBride asked Jerry Casebolt if there is any temporary storage areas for diapers, wipes, etc. at the fairgrounds. There is some room under the grandstands as he is purchasing big shelves to store cots and blankets for OEM. There may be some room in some of those areas. Joe will e-mail Karla and ask how much space is needed. Jerry will talk to Chance, this will be only needed while the childcare center is being constructed.

**CITY PETITION FOR ANNEXATION REQUEST** - The City of Sterling is required to submit a petition for annexation in order to annex property in to the City. This is for the property south of the soft ball park. However, it was determined this particular request a petition is not needed so the petition is withdrawn.

**CSU PROJECT DOCUMENTATION OF STERLING’S HISTORICAL BUILDINGS** -
Marilee Johnson told the Board that CSU Engagement Office is doing a summer project for documentation of Sterling’s historical buildings. There will be a student here on the June 17th to document the Courthouse. The student will take AI/Virtual Reality scans of the building. She would like to see the floor plans or blueprints. Jennifer may have a digital copy of the blueprints on the shared drive of the network.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned 10:23 a.m.