

Logan County Commissioners Work Session

March 30, 2021

Present: Byron Pelton, Jane Bauder, Joe McBride, Alan Samber, Marilee Johnson, Jerry Casebolt, Greg Etl, Ken Meis, Dorothy Unrein, Morgan Lulf, Dave Appelhans, Chance Wright, 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 McBride moved to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2021 Work Session as written. Commissioner Bauder seconded and the motion carried. Commissioner McBride moved to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2021 Work Session as written. Chairman Pelton seconded and the motion carried.

REVISIONS TO WORK SESSION AGENDA - Commissioner Pelton added discussion of Fair Ticket Sales on the Work Session agenda. Jennifer Crow added discussion on bids for an indigent burial.

INDIGENT BURIAL BIDS – The Board agreed to send letters to both local funeral homes for bids to provide services for burial of an indigent individual.

REVIEW AND APPROVE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES SCHEDULE OF BILLS – Valarie Richards met with the Board to review and approve the Logan County Department of Human Services schedule of bills dated March 30, 2021. The Board approved all bills as presented.

REVIEW BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA – The Board reviewed the March 30, 2021 Business Meeting Agenda. Dave Appelhans was asked if the low bidder will be able to meet the timeline for removal of the asbestos. The company is anxious to get started and will not have a problem getting the job done by the deadline. Jeff Reeves plans to break up the concrete slabs for riprap.

Resolution 2021-12 Opposing Ballot Initiative 16 was modeled after the Elbert County letter to Governor Polis with additional language urging Logan County citizens to decline to sign any petitions to place Initiative 16 on the November 2021 ballot and to educate urban cousins about the importance of agriculture to the State of Colorado.

Resolution 2021-13 will be postponed definitely to April 6, 2021 as the mylar is not ready yet.

DOLA BROADBAND – Greg Etl of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) met with the Board concerning broadband. DOLA has grant funds available. A regional broadband study was done in 2010-2012 through NECALG. Yuma County did a project to bring middle mile infrastructure to the county which then allowed any ISP to connect to the fiber to provide service to residents.

Cell phone coverage depends on the “middle mile fiber” to connect to the cell phone towers. Last year when everything closed down because of COVID, people had to work remotely and couldn’t do so without adequate broadband.

Mr. Etl noted that the government stimulus funds do mention broadband, although no guidelines are available yet. It could be an opportunity for Logan County to do something for broadband infrastructure

through a DOLA broadband grant. Since the last study was done, part of the PUC telephone charges are now directed to broadband funding. Energy Impact Assistance grant funds

Impact on private businesses was questioned. KCI and Viaero have built their own fiber networks in the community and have broadband at their towers without any help from the middle mile. Mr. Etl responded that this would be a partnership with them, and would not hurt them. In many areas in the county Viaero, Verizon, and KCI services do not work well or at all. He noted that these three do not work at his own home and he is also outside of the PCTelcom (Peetz) service area. PCTelcom was able to provide service to a few select homes in his area in the last two years.

The west slope has built out broadband with the bulk of the DOLA money going there because they have asked for it. DOLA will not fund the “last mile” or allow individual ISP’s to apply for funding for broadband but they will fund local governments to build the “middle mile” of broadband. DOLA cannot fund private businesses, only governmental entities.

KCI has provided a lot of broadband fiber service on its own to the smaller communities. Mr. Etl stressed that the “middle mile” is open access and is not hurting local ISP’s but helping them bring better access to everyone.

If the county were to apply for a DOLA grant using the Relief money coming down, a meeting between the DOLA Broadband Specialist and local ISP’s would be planned to update the fiber map that was done with the last study. The needs of the area would be determined - what do the ISP’s need to provide better broadband to everyone?

Maintenance on the middle mile would be the county’s responsibility with the local ISP’s maintaining and owning the last mile. The Federal stimulus money is coming to the county but the guidelines have not been released yet. The guidance should come out soon. In 40 days the county will receive half of the money and in 12 months the other half will be issued. Small communities that have been impacted with water and sewer problems might be eligible. Bridges and behavior health may also be eligible.

EXHIBIT CENTER UPGRADES DONOR - Commissioner Bauder discussed a phone call she received from a potential donor of an amount of \$400,000 - \$500,000 for upgrades to be made to the Exhibit Center if the county would be willing to put the donor’s name on it. A contracted time period for the naming was suggested, possibly 5-10 years. The upgrades the donor suggested were heating upgrades for the Exhibit Center and a dance floor. It was also suggested that an addition to the Exhibit Center or DeSoto Building would be good because NJC arena classes get bumped for wedding receptions in the arena due to the procedure to pack the dirt. This would allow the appropriate sand mixture for the arena that would produce less dust. A separate community center with a concrete floor for dances could be a possibility so that the arena does not have to be packed.

CSU has shown interest in putting up a building at the fairgrounds for equine education. A meeting with the potential donor will be arranged.

LETTER TO GOVERNOR POLIS OPPOSING BALLOT INITIATIVE 16 – The Board agreed to sign a letter to Governor Polis in opposition to Ballot Initiative 16.

COVID RESTRICTIONS DIAL 3.0 – Commissioner Pelton discussed the new Covid-19 Restriction Dial 3.0. By April 16 all restrictions on outdoor gatherings will be removed and the fair will be able to sell tickets for all fair events and majority is outdoor. On Friday, April 2 everyone ages 16 and over will be eligible to receive the vaccination if they want it.

Jerry Casebolt, Logan County Emergency Manager and member of the Logan County Fair Board noted that they will keep the backup plan in the event that things with the virus get worse. Hand sanitizer stations will be used. It was the feeling of the Board that with the vaccine availability, if a person does not feel comfortable being with people at the fair, they can choose to stay home. Counties will be able to set their own restrictions soon.

HAYSTACK FIRE UPDATE – Jerry Casebolt reported on the haystack fire at the Tim Sellers feedlot at Highway 14 and CR 29. In excess of 20 haystacks containing 50,000 - 60,000 bales on were on fire starting at 4 p.m. The cause of the fire is unknown. The wind was blowing from the west to coming from the north and the temperature dropped about 30 degrees in five minutes time. Firefighters went into defensive mode at that time. Pre-evacuations were started in Sunny Knowles Subdivision and residents south of Highway 14 and west of County Road 29.

Fire Departments from all over the county assisted Sterling Rural Fire. New Raymer, Stoneham and both state engines were helping, Aero Applicators, numerous farmers were hauling water in and using their disks to cut fire lines. Logan County Road and Bridge had a grader operator and a loader working with area farmers to cut fire lines. Evacuations were lifted at 11 p.m.

The wind died down earlier than expected and Highway 14 was opened about 9:45 p.m. One fire was started in a wood pile at a home and was put out right away by fire trucks that had been watching over the homes. The Board commended everyone for the amazing job. The wind was blowing the right direction and the cattle were not subjected to all of the smoke. They did have the heat from the fire.

CHARGE POINTS – Commissioner Bauder discussed an e-mail she received concerning electric vehicle charging. ChargePoint is looking for a location in Sterling to provide two – four locations to charge electric vehicles. Commissioner Bauder suggested downtown Sterling would be perfect. The Electric Vehicle drivers could come here off the interstate to town square to charge their vehicles while enjoying some time in Sterling. The map does not show any charging stations along I-76 in the northeast corner of the state. It was brought up that NJC does have a charging station but it does not show up on the map. All costs will be paid for by ChargePoint including charging equipment, installation, operations, customer support and all utility costs, including power on a separate, new meter. This will be the only DC fast charging station in Sterling. Jane will reach out to Don Saling to inquire where they would like the charging station located.

Several locations were discussed. Four parking spots near the Courthouse Annex where the bus stop and dumpsters are located might be good because the bus stop is being relocated. The City's public parking lot near the movie theater was also suggested. The charging stations will take parking spots away from businesses, but the car owners would be shopping or eating in restaurants while their cars are charging. There is no cost to the city or county and the entity could charge \$20 per hour to charge a vehicle.

The meeting recessed at 9:40 a.m. and reconvened at 10:25 a.m.

During the break, Commissioner McBride discussed the car charging stations with Dave Appelhans, Mayor of the City of Sterling. The City had been approached about this and they were discussing locating the charging spot in the municipal lot near the movie theater as well. However, he thought that the company wanted the charging station to be within one mile of the interstate. The Visitor's Center was another location suggested.

SECURITY CAMERA INSTALLATION – Jerry Casebolt discussed the temporary fix planned for the security cameras in the Courthouse. Pam Bacon agreed to put more cameras on her system temporarily

until the Homeland Security grant awarded monies are available. The placement of the cameras to get the best view of as much area as possible was discussed. The cameras are motion activated and will notify whoever is chosen to receive notifications from them with video. The drawback is that the cleaning people will be setting the cameras off on the weekends. The cameras are hard-wired and are powered over ethernet. Care will be taken to hide the wiring. Paramount Technologies' bid is \$3,039.10 for installation of five cameras on the network.

The Board approved the installation of the cameras by Paramount Technologies. The long-term goal will be to use grant funds to purchase more cameras that will be able to show all the entrances and the entrances to every office.

DELINQUENT LANDFILL BILLING - Alan Samber has sent a demand letter to Handy Andy's Improvements who has not paid an account at the Logan County Landfill with an outstanding balance of \$3,200. He is recommending filing in county court. Andrew Gonzales is the owner. This person used the landfill a lot and had paid bills in full previously. However the account was not paid last September and October. Matt Chrisp shut off the company's credit at landfill.

BARKLEY GRAVEL PIT – The Barkley Gravel Pit Conditional Use Permit will be on the Agenda for the April Planning Commission meeting and the Commissioners' May meeting. Alan will draft a lease for the Board's signature to be signed at the same meeting.

UTILITY BILL – The Board discussed a large natural gas bill that was received after a storm last month. The natural gas contracts purchase gas for the lowest contracted price but some have ended up with a huge bill. Alan would like to look at the contract.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.