

Logan County Commissioners Work Session

May 16, 2023

Present: Jerry Sonnenberg, Joe McBride, Mike Brownell, Alan Samber, Marilee Johnson, Jerry Casebolt, Kristan Lange, Rob Quint, Les Archuleta, Kevin Blankenship, Brett Powell, Debbie Unrein, Trae Miller, J.R. Harsh, Kay Rich, Trisha Herman, Jeff Rice and Jennifer Crow.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS SESSION – Commissioner Brownell moved to approve the minutes of May 2, 2023. Commissioner McBride seconded, and the motion carried, 3-0.

REVISIONS TO WORK SESSION AGENDA – Commissioner Brownell added a discussion on clarification of computer IT questions with Jerry Casebolt and Debbie Unrein.

REVIEW AND APPROVE SCHEDULE OF COUNTY BILLS – Kristan Lange met with the Board to review the Logan County schedule of bills dated May 16, 2023. Due to the computer IT issues, there were only three handwritten checks approved. The Board approved all three bills as presented.

REVIEW BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA – There were no questions on the Business Meeting agenda.

HERITAGE FESTIVAL – Kay Rich, curator of the Overland Trail Museum met with the Board to request funds for the 2023 Heritage Festival. It is the first Heritage Festival to be held on July 4th at the museum since 2019. She described some of the featured activities as being a live music Johnny Cash tribute band, a western history author, blacksmith demonstrations, and period craft demonstrations. Several nonprofits will be doing lunches that day. The City of Sterling also contributes to funding as well as the Logan County Lodging Tax Board. Logan County has budgeted \$1,500. The Board agreed to continue funding the Heritage Festival in this amount.

Ms. Rich asked about the County Express shuttle to carry people across Highway 6 from the Visitor's Center parking area to the museum. Commissioner McBride provided contact information for Charles Bunnell, Transportation Director for County Express.

CITY OF STERLING IT IGA - Kevin Blankenship, Sterling City Manager and Les Archuleta of Platinum Technology met with the Board to discuss an intergovernmental agreement for the public safety server platform. In order to equitably allocate the costs related to the operation and maintenance of the server platform, the City of Sterling has suggested that an IGA be adopted.

It is hard to determine how much data on the server is county data. It is more than just the data that's physically stored on the platform, it's the security, the firewall system and the maintenance and the IT infrastructure itself. The server contains the data for the NWS system for the E911 system.

The E911 Authority Board contributed \$100,000 in 2022 towards the purchase of the new server platform bringing the cost of the project from \$402,000 down to \$302,000. The City of Sterling is paying 2/3 of the cost of the project and is asking the County to pay the remaining 1/3 of the cost of the project.

Commissioner Brownell asked about the capacity of the server and if there would be room to bring more computer services to the server. Mr. Archuleta said there is more room on the server for storage and software applications. It would go back to the maintenance and backup of the information and costs associated with doing that and making sure the information is secure and that there is connectivity to that information. It is not a static system; it is something that can be grown up on as time goes on.

Mr. Blankenship noted that up to this point, the City has borne all the costs of the server platform to this day. This is the first time the City has asked for an IGA for a maintenance agreement and for services to be shared.

Commissioner Sonnenberg suggested that this be added to the discussions of the IGA renewals that are discussed every five years coming up this summer rather than separate this out individually. Mr. Blankenship noted that this would push the project out further and the costs will keep going up. The City would like to get started on this project soon as they have an October deadline with some maintenance issues on the servers coming up. They need to get started ordering equipment.

This agreement will be for a one-year term and shall be renewed automatically, moving forward. Either party may terminate the agreement by providing the other party with written notice not less than 90 days prior to the expiration of the current term. The Board discussed whether a one-year contract with automatic renewal would be appropriate. Mr. Archuleta explained that if the County is interested in switching over to the server, they need to look ahead three to six months in advance before the move.

The group agreed that there will be a June 1, 2023 effective date for the IGA. The Commissioners' next meeting is June 6, 2023. The automatic renewal will be taken out of this first-year agreement. It was explained that this server is completely separate from the server the City uses for public utilities, etc. This server is strictly for the NWS infrastructure and police/public safety. The Board authorized Alan Samber to negotiate any blanks that needed to be filled in on the IGA with Kevin Blankenship and date the document June 1, 2023. The Board will ratify the IGA on June 6, 2023. Mr. Blankenship will be happy to come back for further discussion if necessary.

COURTHOUSE SQUARE BUMPOUTS – Commissioner McBride discussed the bump outs at Third Street and Main Street and Fourth Street and Main Street that CAB was proposing to do. The previous Board of Commissioners had agreed that the Road and Bridge Department would do In-kind work of tearing out the current concrete curb and gutter. He asked if Commissioner Sonnenberg and Commissioner Brownell agree with that arrangement. Both agreed that the project should continue to move forward and that the Road and Bridge Department In-kind work could be counted on.

The meeting recessed at 9:37 a.m. and reconvened at 10:20 a.m.

COLORADO HOUSING AND FINANCE AUTHORITY (CHFA) - Trisha Herman, Colorado Housing and Finance Authority Community Relationship Manager for Eastern Colorado met with the Board to introduce herself. She previously was the Economic Development Director in Phillips County.

Ms. Herman's territory covers the ten counties in northeast, central, Colorado. The largest part of her job is making sure that the community is aware of the programs available through CHFA. CHFA not only has financing for those wanting to purchase homes, but also financing for multi-family housing and business financing. Now there is a fourth opportunity which is community relationship, supporting the capacity of nonprofits, supporting corporate giving, and business development. They have direct effect awards to help nonprofits with some grant opportunities. There is also a technical assistance grant to

help start with some small-scale housing. They also do corporate giving events. CHFA is going to be sponsoring an event that Trae Miller is doing for the pitch for entrepreneurship. Last weekend, they sponsored the Family Resource's event with Yvonne Draxler.

Alan Samber noted that Logan County's private activity bond allocations are committed through this year for a housing rehabilitation project near the High Plains Shopping Center. CHFA has reached out about the private activity bond allocations in the past, as they can collect the allocations of several smaller counties and utilize them for projects that benefit those counties.

CHFA's new Economic Development Director, Mikey Brown, will be holding a Prop. 123 roundtable in Paoli on June 12. Representatives from the Department of Local Affairs, the Department of Housing and the Department of Local Governments will attend as well as Jerry Lamb Francis who is an expert in everything Prop 123, and in the programs that they are distributing underneath OEDIT. If a Logan County representative is interested and wants to attend the roundtable, it is to be held on June 12, from 2-4 p.m. in the new town hall in Paoli, between Haxtun and Holyoke. They should R.S.V.P. to Mikey Brown.

COUNTY IT – Jerry Casebolt and Debbie Unrein met with the Board concerning county IT issues. Commissioner Brownell asked if CIC does penetration testing. Jerry did not know whether they do the penetration testing. CIC is a web-based software program company used by the Treasurer, Finance, HR, and Assessor's Offices. They are completely segregated from county computers and accessed through a VPN (virtual private network) into their CIC site. CIC also hosts county data on their servers. CIC's server farm has been down for almost two weeks now and the county does not have access to our data. The Finance Department and the HR Departments have no ability to write or cut checks or anything like that. This happened once before in 2021 before the Assessor and Treasurers Offices were part of the system.

CIC was able to provide a work around last time. This time they have not provided any access at all. They do plan to create backups but cannot access the information at this time. They say no data was compromised in 2021. They are not telling anyone what the problem is. The county's connection to the server has been interrupted. Debbie asked CIC what would be needed to host the data storage ourselves so that we don't have to go into their server farm. They did send the information and Jerry forwarded it to Herb at Silicon Plains. It will probably take him a couple of days to work something up as to what it would actually take - if our system can handle it. They are not sure our system can handle it because of the Assessor's system needs now. He is waiting to hear back from Herb on what his thoughts are on what it would take and what the challenges might be or the advantages. Silicon Plains will put together a proposal and give the pros and cons for doing it either way, staying with CIC or moving on to our own server. Obviously, the con is moving (data). Being on the CIC server farm, this has happened twice in two years.

It is a major inconvenience to the Finance and HR Departments trying to cut checks and payroll. Now, it includes the Assessor's system and the Treasurer's systems. The Treasurer is not able to distribute money. It's not a breach on the county's side, this is a breach on their (CIC's) side, we are speculating about a ransomware attack. They are not being upfront about what has happened. Looking at the agreements, we do not have any alternatives, we pay them to remove our data and store it. The annual cost to the county is less than \$15,000 for Finance and HR alone. Logan County Finance and Human Resources have been with CIC since 2016. The Treasurer's Office and Assessor's Office conversion this year has been extremely difficult.

The Board asked if there was a desire to continue with CIC. Debbie said there is a desire to move our data to our own servers in-house. However, we are stuck until things are back up and then we can move forward. As far as going back to Tyler, the Assessor would probably say no. Right now, they are stuck, they have five months of information they would have to convert to put back in.

Jerry said that we would host the CIC software onsite on our own servers, there would be no web-based servers, build in our own security, and back it up two ways. It is backed up an "easy way" and then backed up a second time on what is called Dado and stored off-site in a completely non-connected to this place location. It pulls once a day, at the end of the day and then they do checks on it to make sure that the data can be restored. If it can't be restored, they go in and find out why and they'll pull another one so that they have a good clean piece of data at the end of every day. Silicon Plains would do these backups after hours and they have the monitoring equipment to do it. Debbie said that it's not just backups, we would have to be responsible for any kind of updates right here. For the Finance Department and HR Department it's probably just once or twice a year.

The Board asked how much data is being stored. CIC sent some specifications, but it is difficult to determine. Silicon Plains will come up with a determination and double it to give expandability. They have done things like that with servers that they have replaced.

Debbie said that if CIC is not back up today, they will start handwriting checks. She has ordered check stock that will run through their printer. The HR Department is planning on duplicating the last payroll without paying any overtime and then correcting the payroll on the next check to catch up. The Board offered to help in any way possible, including hand-writing checks.

Silicon Plains is the county's current IT company. The County's IT company used to be Platinum Technology. Bids were requested in 2019 and awarded to a company out of Ft. Morgan called Paramount Technologies. Things went OK in the beginning then he disappeared. It was put back out to bid, and Platinum Technology did not bid it the second time. He said he was not interested anymore. Jerry and Jane Bauder interviewed the top three bidders, and Silicon Plains stood out over the others for what they were offering. Our IT was around \$126,000 a year with Platinum, and with Paramount ended up being around \$110,000 and now with Silicon Plains is about \$70,000 with more service.

Safety-wise the county network is in good shape. There is a quarterly meeting held every quarter with the owner of Silicon Plains. However there has not been one held yet this year. At the meeting they give stats and information on what computers are at end-of-life, what computers are not covered under warranty anymore, if there are any security risks on the system. etc. The Commissioners are welcome to attend this meeting.

Right now, there are two computers out at Road and Bridge that are Windows Seven machines that need to be replaced. Jerry has been working on a couple of Pam's old computers, refurbishing them to run Windows 10 for the Road and Bridge Department. At the quarterly meeting, Silicon Plains will give diagnostics of what county computers are and how everything is running, how the servers are running and what kind of capacity is running. Everything is in pretty good shape because of the upgrades and modifications to the system that have been done. Then they look at the master plan, what needs to be budgeted for in the future.

The county did a lot of computer upgrades to Windows 10 computers in 2019 and 2020. A lot of PC purchases were made with one-year warranties on them. A lot of these computers now show out-of-

warranty on them. This, however, is not a huge problem. The county does get a cybersecurity ranking and it is a fairly good number, because of everything that has been done. Since we have been with Silicon Plains, we have added multifactor authentication.

Silicon Plains does the dual backups so that one backup is very secure, they don't just overwrite it, they do a new backup every day. They do vulnerability scans to make sure there is nothing running in the background. Threatlocker is a program that keeps things from being installed on our systems. You can request permission to download a program to be installed, but it prevents employees from downloading software onto county computers that could cause problems.

COMMISSIONERS PROCEEDINGS MAY 2023 - Commissioner McBride moved to approve the Commissioners proceedings for May 2023. Commissioner Brownell seconded, and the motion carried.

SOUND SYSTEM AND SPEAKERS – The Board discussed the new microphones for the meeting room sound system that were placed on the meeting room table and asked Debbie if she could hear in the back of the room. She said that she could always hear the Board members because they faced the audience. It is the people that are meeting with the Board that she cannot always hear because they face away from the audience, especially if they are soft spoken. Jerry Casebolt will continue to work with the sound system to get better sound for the audience.

FAIR BID AWARD LETTERS - Jennifer will correct the letter for the Superintendent's BBQ bid award to show the Commissioners chose the brisket at \$12 per plate. The bid award letter for the parking attendants will be completed.

RIVER LEVELS - Jerry Casebolt reported that water levels are down in the South Platte River. At the Atwood bridge, the water level is down to five feet. It has dropped two feet from yesterday to today at the same time of measurement. We may see a little bit of an uptick, but not very much, maybe six inches at the most. He believes that we will stay below action standards. Action stage means that some low meadow flooding could take place in some areas that normally don't get water. The minor flood stage means the river is basically over its banks. The major flood stage is where an audit team comes to town and questions everything. The Pawnee Creek did run pretty good for about a day. It never spread out of the main channel. There has been a lot of mitigation efforts where trees and debris has been cleared out which has helped. CDOT went in and cleaned out a lot of debris. It may need to be done again because it grows back so fast.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:16 a.m.