

Logan County Commissioners Work Session
October 7, 2025

Present: Mike Brownell, Jim Santomaso, Jim Yahn, Alan Samber, Mike Burri, Rick Cullip, Josilyn Lutze, Marilee Johnson, Debbie Unrein, Trae Miller, Andrew Fritzler, Callie Jones, and Jennifer Crow.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS SESSION - Commissioner Yahn moved to approve the minutes of the September 30, 2025 Work Session. Commissioner Santomaso seconded, and the motion carried 3-0.

REVISIONS TO THE WORK SESSION AGENDA – There were none.

REVIEW OF BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA – There were none.

Commissioner Brownell noted that the Board has several budget meetings scheduled today to begin at 10:30 a.m.

WEST MAIN STREET STERLING URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY PLAN – Andrew Fritzler of the Sterling Urban Renewal Authority and Trae Miller of the Logan County Economic Development Authority met with the Board.

Trae Miller explained that he and Andrew Fritzler are here to talk about the Sterling Urban Renewal Authority's (SURA) new plan area that is being proposed. There are currently three existing plan areas within the Urban Renewal Area district. They are looking at creating a new plan area that would go out West Main Street and address some blighted conditions in that part of the community. They hope to help catalyze some development opportunities and possibly clean up some properties. With that process, there's multiple factors that can accompany that including infrastructure drainage issues and a lot of different things. A lot of times people hear blighted, and they think ugly and dilapidated properties. That is just one component of it.

Part of the process included changes through the State Legislature in 2015 through the adoption of House Bill 1348, a restructuring bill that had to occur with URAs for board composition, which is why the Commissioners appointed Trae Miller on the Sterling Urban Renewal Authority Board representing the County. Working on new plan areas, there is a negotiation component, a requirement to work with each of the taxing entities to ensure that everyone is on the same page. They met with the RE-1 School Board last night and discussed the proposal with them as well.

SURA recently emailed several documents to the Board, one of which was a blight study that was completed last spring. Another was an impact report that discusses what the plan area could do. It's all theoretical projections, for example based on if developments were to occur, what it would look like. There is a 120-day time clock to get through the process that is initiated once the letters go out. It is a very formal process to get through. Miller asked if the Board had any questions about the process or about what SURA intends to do.

Commissioner Brownell asked how far west the plan area extends on West Main Street. Miller answered that the City of Sterling softball fields were included because over the years there have been conversations about potential needs at the site. The Walmart area was not included because there was not any reason to include it. The good thing about this is it opens up access to funding the URA currently has that can be deployed in that corridor. The plan area goes about a block north and a block south of West Main Street.

Miller stated that there's a lot of conversation about not starting the TIF clock too soon, because the tax increment component can run for 25 years. Sometimes they will not want to start now, because if there's no development for three or four years, entities will miss out on tax revenue. SURA is looking at it as getting this plan area and deploying funds into it. It's not about getting funding back.

Mr. Fritzler said that the main part of the process is that they have to enter into a TIF agreement with the County, the City, the School District, and two water districts. He submitted a sample agreement from the SURA lawyers. Alan Samber can look it over and make any changes necessary for the Country. Mr. Miller explained how the TIF agreement works. The property tax will be locked in as it is for 25 years. The plan areas can go up for 25 years. They continue to step up in their base; the base valuation steps up every two years with the reassessment years. If a development comes in that increment piece would be what funds back into the URA and continues that activity.

There are three plan areas right now. One is referred to as Gateway, which includes the Walgreens, Bank of Colorado and the grocery store area. They had done some things with the lighted intersection and some of those developments led into development of the S curve. Starbucks is part of the Downtown area. Those three plans will all expire in the next five years. There's the Xcel District which is where the ethanol plant is and Trinidad Benham. The Downtown area is where they've been able to do a lot of work with some of the small property owners and small businesses and get some improvements done on those buildings which is extremely costly in the older structures and infrastructure.

This plan will be important to attract retail development. Primary industry is important, but retail is also really important for the City and for the County as is the sales tax. The 120-day clock went to mid or late December when it technically hits the mark. If they can get this done by the end of the year to start working on the plan it will be a good timeline.

SESQUISEMIQUINCENTENNIAL CELEBRATION – Marilee Johnson met with the Board and reported that there was a meeting of the committee that is planning the local Sesquisequicentennial. The group has agreed to host a drone show during the Logan County Fair during the Friday night rodeo on July 31st next year. One of the things that the committee talked about doing to commemorate the dual anniversary for the next generation was having a mural painted on the west side of the grandstands. The theme of the mural has not been decided yet, but it might be a commemoration of 4-H or something depicting the fair. The group will be working on getting donations for the mural. The Commissioners will have final approval of the artwork. The Board agreed to the mural based on those conditions. Marilee said that the committee will still have to get the cost of the mural, but she wanted to get the Board's approval to make sure that it is a possibility.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.