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(Neb.)-Sheridan County Commissioner Meeting Happenings



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 02/26/2013 08:47 AM

(SHERIDAN COUNTY)-Present at the Sheridan County commissioners meeting on Monday were chair Dan Kling, commissioners Jack Andersen and James Krotz, and county clerk Sindy Coburn.

Kling called on those present to observe a moment silence and prayerful concern for the Jeff and Melissa Jagers family.

The commissioners audited and approved claims and signed checks.

Kris Ferguson and Trish Loosvelt presented an update on pending legislation (LB 493) that would enable the transfer of the Cowboy Trail right-of-way to a local entity. The bill came out of committee without opposition, so the prospects of approval look good. If the bill is approved, funds for construction won't be available until at least 2015 or 2016. Local supporters might be able to fund the early construction of a small segment in the more immediate future.

Road superintendent Tom Kuester presented the board with a list of nine items to be declared "surplus." The list included two pickup trucks, two semis, one five-yard dump truck, two ten-yard dump trucks, one live-bottom trailer, and a 5,000-gallon tank trailer. The board voted to declare the items surplus so they might be sold at Otte's April consignment auction. For more information on any of these items, please contact the county road department.

In other road news, the department will purchase a new Ford pickup from Sides and Milburn under the provisions of the State of Nebraska fleet-bid program.

The commissioners also voted to approve a correction in the legal description of the Terrell subdivision.

County assessor Trudy Winter shared with the board that her budget is extremely tight. She says much depends on the cost of state-required appraisal updates of rural properties, a project now entering a more costly phase.

Winter and the commissioners agreed to consult with one another again as project costs become more defined.

Acting as the Board of Equalization, the commissioners approved five correction sheets presented by Winter.

The first was to correct the value of a machine shed built by Myron Paul, based on new information that the building was constructed using salvaged materials. The other items included accelerating the taxes on a mobile home sold by Sean Ash and moved from the county, reclassifying two parcels of land owned by Neal Green from "dry-crop" to "grass," and accelerating the taxes on a mobile home owned by Jerry Halverson that has been

moved to South Dakota.

Brek Brixius of Northwest Community Action Partnership (NCAP) appeared before the board to request continued support for the Sheridan County Public Transportation project. An expression of support is necessary for NCAP to submit the request for a federal/state grant. The county handi-bus program is administered by NCAP and is funded 50% through a federal grant, 25% through a state grant, and 25% by the county. The county share of the program is \$229/month. The commissioners voted to continue county support as funds are available.

As the county representative to the Solid Waste Agency of Northwest Nebraska (SWANN), Kling presented a request that the county approve the refinancing of a certain bond. The current rate SWANN must pay on that debt is 4.25%. The new rate will be approximately 2.04%. That change will save SWANN more than \$145,000 of interest over the life of the bond. The commissioners voted to approve the re-financing.

At 11:00 a.m., a public hearing was held to review the proposed "Black Tailed Prairie Dog Management Plan." County weed superintendent Kristi Paul, who served as chair of the plan's working group, presented the plan. Seven members of the public, including three from BoxButteCounty, were present. There was no objection to the plan voiced by anyone present. The board thanked Paul and all the members of the working group for their work on the project.

After the hearing was adjourned, the commissioners voted to approve and implement the plan, which is believed to be the first in the state. Copies of the plan are available from the office of the county clerk or online at http://www.sheridancountynebraska.com/archives/prairie_dog_plan2013.php.

Sheriff Terry Robbins and county budget consultant Pete Petersen (by telephone) met with the commissioners to discuss how funds from the wireless E-911 program may be spent. In 2012-13, the county will receive more than \$50,000, of which up to 75% may be set aside for up to 10 years to offset the cost of updating required equipment. The balance may be used for maintenance, ongoing costs, and wages directly attributable to the wireless portion of the E-911 program.

The commissioners conducted an inspection of the new courthouse entry, which revealed a few minor items that require attention before final payment will be approved.

The commissioners also discussed legislation pending before the Unicameral, especially proposed changes to the inheritance tax law and a proposal to change the taxing authority of local fire districts (LB-62). Citizens with Internet access can following any pending legislation at the Unicameral website, <http://nebraskalegislature.gov/>. The commissioners will meet next on Monday, March 11th, at 9:00 a.m. All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcome.

--Submitted by James Krotz

The minutes of this and all meetings of the board of commissioners are available to the public at the office of the Sheridan county clerk. All meetings are held in compliance with Nebraska Open Meetings Law.