

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
May 26, 2026

- Agenda: 8:30 – Bills
 8:45 – Ted Heaton – Sheriff
 9:00 – Clint Meyer – Pioneer Electric
 9:15 –
 9:30 – Tony Martin – Public Works
 9:45 –
 10:00 – Michelle Komlofske – Western KS Community Initiative
 10:15 – Angela Eichman – Appraiser

The Board of Stevens County Commissioners met in a regular session with all members present. County Attorney Paul Kitzke, and County Clerk Amy Jo Tharp were also present. Tron called the meeting to order. Shannon moved to approve minutes from the last meeting. Joe seconded. Motion carried. Shannon moved to approve the county vouchers. Joe seconded. Motion carried. The County Clerk was instructed to draw warrants on the Treasurer chargeable to the various funds of the county for the following amounts:

General	\$	59,730.68
Judicial District	\$	857.56
Road & Bridge	\$	42,034.77
Airport	\$	29,267.22
Building	\$	3,027.55
Noxious Weed	\$	7,026.62
EMS	\$	6,841.26
Fire	\$	4,540.88
Fire Bequest	\$	2,901.35
Comm Health	\$	13,926.63
Airport Grants	\$	176,272.11
Sheriff	\$	33,671.65
911 Wireless	\$	117.67
<u>TOTAL:</u>	\$	<u>380,215.95</u>

Pat Hall, Rodney Kelling, Courtney Leslie, Ted Heaton, and Cuylor Miller were in attendance.

Tron asked Rodney if there could be an FM station where information could be relayed about fires so farmers can assist and receive assistance in stopping the spread of the fire. Tron said it would possibly help so there would be information as to where the fires are and if the county needs assistance. Rodney said the current option is a farmer can call dispatch and they will relay the messages between the farmer and Rodney. Rodney said he heard insurance companies are not paying for damage to tractors that farmers own if they help with a fire, unless they have a fire extinguisher

on the tractor. Rodney also relayed the best way to avoid potential tractor damage is to start discing about one hundred (100) yards in front of the fire and make a fire break. Currently, Rodney is using Live 360 to locate the fire fighters but is wanting to look into a paging system that will help locate personnel and be able to use cell phones as a radio in case something happens with the current radios. Another option is to possibly put a tracker on the fire trucks that will help him or other personnel locate and aid a person who is stuck.

Ted was first on the agenda and discussed his issues with Rodney using a tac-2 encrypted radio station to where the sheriff's department cannot hear the information and cannot be of assistance if something is happening. Ted stated the fire department does an amazing job, but it is hard for him to provide assistance if he does not know what is going on. Rodney stated the tac-2 is so the main radio line stays free and there are times when EMS needs to relay encrypted information over the radio for HIPPA reasons and to avoid a HIPPA violation. Courtney expressed to the commissioners if the sheriff would communicate with the emergency services department and local law enforcement it would benefit the county and residents immensely. There was further discussion over the encrypted tac-2 station used by Rodney and stating the local law enforcement has access, but the sheriff's department does not. Same was said about the sheriff department having their own encryption on a radio channel which is used for investigation purposes which is not shared with any other entity. Courtney stated her concern was it needs to be open communication between the emergency service departments and not one way. Joe agreed all communications should be available for all emergency services for aid in large events. The commissioners suggested there be a third (3rd) channel to keep communications open between all three (3) departments for specific events.

Clint Meyer with Pioneer Electric was next on the agenda and stated he spoke with the Hugoton City Council, and they are not interested in annexing a road. Clint said they are wanting an "exit only" onto Optima Road which must be one hundred fifteen (115) feet from the stop sign at the intersection of West 11th Street and Optima Road. The commissioners and Paul discussed what can be done to make sure access on Optima Road is for exiting the property only.

Shannon made a motion to grant access to Pioneer Electric to use Optima Road for "exit only" from their property. Joe seconded. Discussion occurred over how to make sure the "exit only" is enforceable if in the future Pioneer Electric sells the property. Paul said conditional use of driving on the property will need to be executed and recorded with the register of deeds to be used as only an exit and not an entrance, basically filing a notice as a condition of the access road. All were in favor, motion carried.

Jeff and Tony were in. Joe discussed with Jeff and Tony about having someone paint the doors at the road and bridge shop. Tony said it had been discussed and those doors will need to be sandblasted before painting. Tony informed commissioners that there is an appointment with Glenn Kerbs on June 2nd to introduce Jeff to him so current projects involving planning and zoning will not be delayed. Jeff relayed that the heater is running and asphalt will soon begin production. Jeff shared with the commissioners there have been five (5) weeds added to the noxious weed list and one (1) eliminated. Tony stated that during some dirt work at the landfill there was a gas line uncovered, the gas company was called, and everything has been resolved.

Michelle Komlofske with Western Kansas Community Foundation (WKCF) was in attendance and discussed with the commissioners what the foundation does. She stated it helps rural communities with grants and programs which could be beneficial. She handed out a flyer with a QR Code for people to scan and take a small survey which will help with receiving more funding and aid for certain projects within the county. The deadline for the survey is June 15th.

Angela Eichman came in and discussed communications with Seaboard Energy over the valuations and appraisals. At this time, Seaboard Energy has yet to file with the Board of Tax Appeals but will be doing so shortly. There is an approximate thirty-two million value difference between the county appraised value and Seaboard's appraised value. Seaboard is willing to negotiate with the county and allow two (2) years of payments for the 2025 taxes with no interest. Angela is going to speak with Seaboard and see if they will consider three (3) years broken out into payments with no interest. Angela handed the commissioners the McCulley and Associates, LLC contract as the consultant for the county appraiser, stating no changes.

Shannon made a motion to approve McCulley and Associates, LLC, contract for one (1) year as an appraiser consultant. Joe seconded. Motion carried.

Discussion was had over some county leased land, and it was decided not to allow a particular parcel of land to be let out for lease.

Attest: Amy Jo Tharp, County Clerk

Tron Stegman, Chairman