

**WESTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OFFICIAL MINUTES
December 20, 2016**

The meeting of the Weston County Board of Commissioners was called to order by Chairman Bill Lambert at 9:00 a.m. at the Weston County Courthouse Annex. Commissioners Bill Lambert, Tracy Hunt, Marty Ertman, and Tony Barton, and Commissioner-Elect Ed Wagoner, and County Clerk Jill Sellers and County Administrator Dan Blakeman were present. Commissioner Barton opened the meeting with prayer, and Commissioner Hunt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Lambert discussed moving the County Administrator's report to 10:00 a.m., and Commissioner Ertman added WCCA meeting under New Business. Commissioner Barton moved to approve the agenda as modified; seconded by Commissioner Hunt. Carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Ertman requested that Fran Lehman's correct title of GIS Mapping position be added to paragraph three under Administrator. Commissioner Hunt moved to approve the minutes as corrected; seconded by Commissioner Ertman. Carried.

ADMINISTRATOR

Administrator Blakeman reported on an emergency grant application to State Land and Investment Board (SLIB). Resolution 2016-19 authorizes the submission of the grant application for emergency repairs to the courthouse, due to the plumbing leak of November 22, 2016. Corrections to the grant application included adding Commissioner Ertman's donation of \$2,899.00. Administrator Blakeman also requested that one or two Commissioners attend meetings with the SLIB members on January 17-19, 2017.

Commissioner Barton moved to approve and authorize the Chairman's signature on Resolution 2016-19, requesting emergency funding for courthouse repairs; seconded by Commissioner Ertman. Carried.

Commissioner Barton moved to authorize Chairman's signature on the emergency funding grant application; seconded by Commissioner Ertman. Carried.

Administrator Blakeman discussed the Courthouse Annex building, including the parking lot. He has discussed with Pinnacle Bank President Justin Tystad about snow removal in the parking lot, including maintaining access to their drive-through teller machine. Administrator Blakeman also requested guidance for maintenance on the annex building, as Steve Price is currently overtasked, and he believes he should not be tasked with the cleaning and maintenance responsibilities of the annex building in addition to the courthouse. For snow removal, Road and Bridge could provide assistance, but a contractor is needed for days when those options are not viable. Administrator Blakeman and Attorney William Curley will enter into discussion with Justin Tystad, to determine an equitable plan.

Administrator Blakeman will be moving his office to the annex building after the holidays. Discussion included use of both the best use of courthouse and the annex building. A subcommittee of Commissioners will meet with the Assessor, Clerk and Treasurer, and other stakeholders to figure out options for a final decision to be brought to the Commissioners.

Break was called at 9:58 a.m.; reconvened at 10:06 a.m.

OLD BUSINESS

County Clerk Sellers addressed the Board possibly submitting feedback to the US Fish and Wildlife Strategy. It was agreed that the strategy is confusing and ambiguous. Commissioner Ertman reported on a conference call on Thursday, December 22, 2016 at 1:00 p.m., hosted by the Thunder Basin Grasslands Prairie Ecosystem Association (TBGPEA), to discuss background and nuts and bolts of the proposed conservation agreement between TBGPEA and the Fish and Wildlife Service. Commissioner Ertman recommended that the Commissioners call in, if not to participate, just to listen to the issues and perspectives of the participants. Commissioner Barton stated that the best statement at this point from Weston County would be none, but to ask to be kept informed as it progresses; it was agreed that the Chairman will possibly send that statement after the conference call, but make no commitment to a position, due to the lack of clarity in the strategy as presented.

Clerk presented audit costs from other County Clerks, in order to gauge our costs. Clerk indicated that our costs for Porter, Muirhead, Cornia and Howard (PMCH) are within reason, and that our annual cost is justified by our solid relationship with PMCH.

NEW BUSINESS

On behalf of County Assessor Tina Conklin, Clerk presented Tax Roll Corrections for approval and signature. Commissioner Barton moved to approve tax roll corrections (affidavits #1180, 1181, 1182, 1183, and 1184); seconded by Commissioner Ertman. Carried.

On behalf of Lucille Dumbrill of Weston County Historic Preservation Board, Clerk presented their annual report. Commissioner Barton moved to approve the report and authorize the Chairman's signature; seconded by Commissioner Ertman. Carried.

Clerk presented the Golden West quote to upgrade the courthouse data storage to 2 TB. Clerk will ask about other storage options, or storage options at state level.

Clerk presented the option to take credit cards for payment in the Clerk's Office, which was met with many questions and concerns. The Clerk will gather more information on credit cards, especially fees that may be passed on to the county. It will be presented at the January 3, 2017 meeting.

Clerk presented the American Lands Council invoice for \$1000 for membership, for the Board to consider payment and continued membership. Board agreed to take no action on this.

George Bondora sent a letter stating his interest in serving on the Weston County Solid Waste District. There will be a vacancy starting in January 2017, so it will be added to the January 3, 2017.

Commissioner Ertman presented information from the WCCA Winter meeting. WCCA is researching options to negotiate worker's compensation rates based on creating a large group. State Treasurer Gordon spoke about Amendment A and state investment policy. The University of Wyoming Dean of Agriculture discussed the Wyoming Extension Office program, specifically addressing their task to cut costs; they are potentially considering cutting benefits for the 4-H Educator position, and passing those funding requirements to county government (between \$9,000-\$15,000). Title 25 was discussed, asking what is the definition of a "resident" is. Tourism promotion will also include images from the eastern side of the state. New Yellowstone license plate will be available, and the fees will support Yellowstone

National Park. WyoLink will be rebuilt, and Weston County will receive a faux bill to help us budget our costs going forward. WyoLink will be moved from Homeland Security to Department of Transportation. Wyoming has never borrowed from its infrastructure funds. County road funds will be audited, to ensure compliance; concerns about how funding will be managed and allocated.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

Break was called at 11:36 a.m.; reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

LAW ENFORCEMENT DISPATCH

Deputy Attorney Lynda Black presented issues with law enforcement dispatch. Weston County pays the City of Newcastle to handle dispatch. The Attorney's Office was alerted, primarily due to concerns over safety for the deputies, liability for the County, etc. Status checks are not routine; dispatch is not in continuous contact with deputies; dispatch not following up on radio requests; concerns over prioritization of calls, etc. Mayor-Elect Deb Piana attended at the request of the Attorney's Office, because of the relationship between the County and the City. Mayor-Elect Piana requested that Deputy Attorney Black and Sheriff Bryan Colvard address the Newcastle City Council, as well as a meeting involving both agencies and the both governing bodies. A meeting between Newcastle Police Chief Jim Owens and Sheriff Colvard was conducted in July; the Commissioners recommended further follow up by the two entities, so they can settle the issues at their level. Training can possibly answer some of the issues; review of the dispatch contract; and closer supervision by both the Police Chief and the Sheriff. It was agreed that there is no reason for involvement by the Board of Commissioners.

Lynda Black provided notice of her resignation, effective December 31, 2016. Attorney Assistant Pam Brackett reported that an advertisement for a legal assistant or paralegal has been submitted for publication in both newspapers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joe Wood reported that the Central Weston County Solid Waste District (CWCSWD) has added transport station operations, which can be utilized to alleviate Upton's solid waste disposal, and possibly Newcastle's as well. The Commissioners asked him to discuss the options with Mayor of Upton, Dustin Upton.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:44 p.m.

Bill Lambert
Chairman

Attest:

Jill Sellers
County Clerk