

Barton County Commission Agenda Meeting Minutes

Recorded audio is available on compact disk upon KORA request to the Barton County Clerk's Office, 1400 Main – Room 202, Great Bend, Kansas 67530.

Phone (620) 793-1835 \ Fax (620) 793-1990 \ Email clerk@bartoncounty.org

Meetings Live Streamed through **Microsoft Teams** at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3CARxea>

September 21, 2021

The Board of Barton County Commissioners convened this 21st day of September 2021, at the Barton County Courthouse.

Members present:

Kirby Krier, Commissioner, 1st District
Barb Esfeld, Commissioner, 2nd District
Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner, 3rd District (Chairman Pro-Tem)
James R. Daily, Commissioner, 4th District, Chairman
Jennifer Schartz, Commissioner, 5th District
Donna Zimmerman, County Clerk
Barry McManaman, Interim County Administrator
Patrick Hoffman, County Counselor

I. OPENING BUSINESS:

Commissioner Daily called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

Commissioner Schartz moved to approve the agenda.
Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.
All voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Krier moved to approve the minutes of the September 7, 2021, Regular Meeting.
Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.
All voted aye. Motion passed.

Minutes of September 14, 2021, Regular Meeting were not available.

II. OLD BUSINESS:

A. COMMISSION: Façade Improvement Grant: Review Applications

-The Façade Improvement Grant program has available funding. The Commissioners will review multiple applications to determine award amounts up to 75% of eligible project costs, with a maximum award of \$20,000.

Awards will be given based on the project's size and visual impact. The program prioritizes retailers and restaurants and project applications that commit more than the minimum required match amount. Sue Cooper, Grant Coordinator, will provide details. This item was tabled on September 14, 2021.

Sue Cooper, Grant Coordinator, said there is \$224,175 remaining in the program.

Brittney Bailey said she is one of the owners of Two Chicks & Some Old Bird and said it is located at 106 N. Main in Ellinwood. Bailey said this is an antique and vintage boutique that is known for their baked goods, muffins, scones, smoothies, and hot coffee. The 2nd floor used to be apartments and the plan is to eventually turn that back into some sort of downtown living. Bailey said they are focused on the first floor for now. The second floor is a future project with an estimate of \$100,000.

Commissioner Krier moved to approve the Façade Improvement Grant for **Two Chicks & Some Old Bird** for an award of \$20,000 and direct the Finance Officer to encumber this award amount from the Capital Improvement Fund, Building and Fixed Equipment - General Line, 071-00-6305.

Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.
All voted aye. Motion passed.

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Sue Cooper said \$204,175 is now remaining. AJN Investments total renovation cost is \$35,725 and their request is for \$20,000 (44% match). Cooper said Mpire Real Estate that will be moving to this location on Main Street.

Commissioner Esfeld moved to approve the Façade Improvement Grant for **AJN Investments, LLC** for an award of \$20,000 and direct the Finance Officer to encumber this award amount from the Capital Improvement Fund, Building and Fixed Equipment - General Line, 071-00-6305. Commissioner Krier seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

Sue Cooper said the next project is Barnard Tire & Automotive, located at 202 N. Main, Hoisington. Their total project cost is \$9,650.74 and are requesting \$7,238.05 (25% match). Cooper said they will be doing some siding and façade improvements.

Commissioner Hutchison moved to approve the Façade Improvement Grant for **Barnard Tire and Automotive** for an award amount of \$7,238.05 and direct the Finance Officer to encumber this award amount from the Capital Improvement Fund, Building and Fixed Equipment - General Line, 071-00-6305. Commissioner Schartz seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

Sue Cooper said the third project is for Jerad & Adeline Chansler, 1604 Main Street in Great Bend. This property is zoned as both commercial and residential. Total project cost is \$10,351.16 and requesting \$7,763.37. The improvements are to include a post with a sign, paint, awning, stabilizing the porch, landscaping, and a fence with an arbor.

Commissioner Schartz moved to approve the Façade Improvement Grant for **Jerad & Adeline Chansler** for an award of \$7,763.37 and direct the Finance Officer to encumber this award amount from the Capital Improvement Fund, Building and Fixed Equipment - General Line, 071-00-6305. Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

Sue Cooper said the next project is split into 4A and 4B. The properties are owned by Loretta Miller, located next door to each other at 2019 & 2021 Forest Avenue. Miller requested funding for paint, awnings, doors, glass, and structural repair. The two buildings combined have a total project cost of \$31,160.44 and requesting a total of \$23,370.33.

Commissioner Hutchinson said they should be broken out in the two different parcels because they are separate, taxable properties.

Commissioner Krier moved to approve the Façade Improvement Grant for **Loretta K. Miller at 2019 Forest Avenue** for an award of \$17,449.62 and direct the Finance Officer to encumber this award amount from the Capital Improvement Fund, Building and Fixed Equipment - General Line, 071-00-6305. Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Krier moved to approve the Façade Improvement Grant for **Loretta K. Miller located at 2021 Forest Avenue**, Great Bend, Kansas for an award of \$5,920.71 and direct the Finance Officer to encumber this award amount from the Capital Improvement Fund, Building and Fixed Equipment - General Line, 071-00-6305. Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

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Sue Cooper said the fifth project is for Kent Roth's law firm in Ellinwood. Total project cost of \$8,884.32 and requesting \$6,663.24. Commissioner Krier said this shows historical renderings.

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to approve the Façade Improvement Grant for **Kent A. Roth** for an award amount of \$6,663.24 and direct the Finance Officer to encumber this award amount from the Capital Improvement Fund, Building and Fixed Equipment - General Line, 071-00-6305. Commissioner Schartz seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Daily said we have already done #6. Cooper said that is correct and noted there is \$139,140.01 remaining.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked how much has been applied for. Cooper said she will provide that in the update.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

A. COMMISSION: Façade Improvement Grant: Review Applications:

-The Façade Improvement Grant program still has available funding. The Commissioners will review multiple applications to determine award amounts up to 75% of eligible project costs, with a maximum award of \$20,000.

Awards will be given based on the project's size, match, and visual impact.

Sue Cooper said the first project is for B&H Development, LLC and said Matt Hiss is available to answer questions. The total project cost is \$45,295 and are requesting \$20,000 (55.8% match). The project is located at 2015 Lakin and is occupied by Yours Truly and Great Bend Coffee. They will improve and repair stained glass windows, regrout and add an awning.

Commissioner Hutchinson thanked Andrea Bauer and Matt Hiss for taking their suggesting to upgrade/add awning.

Commissioner Schartz said they granted two separate grants to Loretta Miller, and this is now being considered as one property. Matt Hiss said Great Bend Coffee is located at 2015 Lakin Avenue, and Yours Truly is located at 2017 Lakin Avenue, but they are one taxed parcel.

Commissioner Esfeld said this is a well-kept building and explained the property owners must pay for the improvements up front. Esfeld said it is almost like a rebate.

Matt Hiss said they are trying to restore the second and third floors to operational use such as an event venue as it had been used for previously. Hiss said there were gatherings and balls held up there years ago and noted there is a lot of artwork in the stained glass. Earl Moses was one of the founders.

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to approve the Façade Improvement Grant for **B&H Development, LLC** for an award amount of \$20,000 and direct the Finance Officer to encumber this award amount from the Capital Improvement Fund, Building and Fixed Equipment - General Line, 071-00-6305. Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

Sue Cooper said the next project is for Lumpy's Home Field, LLC located at 2017 Forest Avenue. Total project cost of \$25,085.85 and requesting \$18,814.39. Cooper said the project will include glass, an awning, and some structural work around the windows.

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Commissioner Hutchinson said their hearts are with the Lumpy's crew after the loss of Annette Burton. Lumpy's went back to the drawing board and added an awning.

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to approve the Façade Improvement Grant for **Lumpy's Home Field, LLC** for an award amount of \$18,814.39 and direct the Finance Officer to encumber this award amount from the Capital Improvement Fund, Building and Fixed Equipment - General Line, 071-00-6305. Commissioner Schartz seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

B. STATE HEALTH INSURANCE: Contract Renewal Options:

-Barton County contracts with the Kansas State Employee Health Plan (SEHP) for health care benefits which include medical, dental, vision and other ancillary employee benefits. This contract ends December 31, 2021. The SEHP requires notification by October 1, 2021, that Barton County is opting out of the plan or entering into the next contract period.

Matt Patzner, Human Resources / Finance Director, said the current contract covered years 2019-2021.

Commissioner Esfeld said she called on two counties who have opted out and was told it had saved them a lot of money.

Commissioner Schartz said in the past it has been so difficult to find insurance and compare the products. Hates to be held to a three-year contract. Commissioner Schartz said the state has not been very forthcoming with information about our employees.

Commissioner Esfeld moved to direct the Human Resources / Finance Director to notify the SEHP that Barton County will opt out of the plan for 2022.

Commissioner Krier seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

C. EMPLOYEE BENEFIT BROKERAGE: Request for Qualifications:

-Barton County accepted responses to a Request for Qualifications for Employee Benefit Brokerage Consulting Services beginning July 30, 2021. Out of the responses received, two firms were selected for interviews by the Barton County Commissioners. Both Freedom Claims Management and IMA provided presentations. If necessary, the Commission will now consider selection of a firm to engage in employee brokerage consulting services.

Matt Patzner, Human Resources / Finance Director, said Freedom Claims Management and IMA provided presentations to the commission.

Commissioner Krier said he was very impressed with both firms but would lean towards Freedom Claims as they are the local group.

Commissioner Esfeld said she contacted Russell County who contracts with Freedom Claims Management and said she was told that for the year up to August, they had saved \$270,000 and are extremely happy. Freedom Claims helped the Russell County employees get past the initial hurdles. Esfeld said IMA received glowing reviews as well but would choose Freedom Claims since they are local.

Commissioner Hutchinson said IMA are pros and gave a knockout presentation. Freedom Claims came in almost exactly the same.

Commissioner Krier said he wanted to assure employees they will be looking at BC/BS, Aetna, etc., they know what the employees like. Krier said our employees shouldn't notice much difference.

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Commissioner Daily said we will not see a decrease in benefits.

Commissioner Krier asked if the employees will see a lower deductible. Matt Patzner said that is something we will have a hand in designing.

Commissioner Esfeld said we won't have to jump through all the hoops like we do now. The plan Freedom Claims has is much simpler to get the premium reduction.

Commissioner Krier moved to select Freedom Claims Management as the Employee Benefit Brokerage Consulting Firm for Barton County and engage that firm in further contract discussions.

Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

D. KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES: Voting Delegates:

-The Kansas Association of Counties (KAC) will hold its Annual Conference from October 18 – 20, 2021 in Overland Park. Each year, the Commission designates a voting delegate and first and second voting alternates for the meeting.

Barry McManaman, Interim County Administrator, said the 46th Annual Conference is in October and said KAC is asking the county to designate primary voting delegates as well as first and second alternates.

Commissioner Krier moved to designate Commissioner Shawn Hutchinson as the Kansas Association of Counties Voting Delegate with Commissioner Barb Esfeld named as First Alternate and Commissioner Jennifer Schartz named as Second Alternate and direct the County Clerk to complete the Certification of Voting Delegate and return to the KAC.

Commissioner Schartz seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

E. DISTRICT CORONER: Appointment of Special Deputy Coroners:

-Dr. Patrick Stiles was appointed as District Coroner effective November 1, 2020. Dr. Stiles requests that Chris Venters and Ashley Fowler both be appointed as Special Deputy District Coroners for Russell County.

Barry McManaman, Interim County Administrator, said Russell County's special deputy coroner stepped down recently due to health reasons. Dr. Patrick Stiles recommended the appointments of Chris Venters and Ashley Fowler and noted they are with Russell EMS.

Commissioner Esfeld moved to appoint Chris Venters and Ashley Fowler as Special Deputy Coroners to terms ending December 31, 2021.

Commissioner Krier seconded the motion and said having Dr. Patrick Stiles and along with Dr. Pike, we have tremendous doctors that came into this here county as young doctors. There's nobody better than them two. They are good.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

F. PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Façade Improvement Grant:

-The Barton County Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) program has been extremely successful. Mrs. Cooper will provide overall program highlights.

Sue Cooper, Grant Coordinator, said the commission had received 31 applications to date with project costs of \$447,291.97. The commission has already made \$199,674.38 in awards. These include property values of over \$1.8 million. Cooper said there is \$100,325.62 remaining after the awards today.

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Commissioner Daily said he wanted to reiterate we decided as a commission to do what we can do to improve the economic development standing. We can do this because of the funds that were made available which will make an amazing economic impact.

Commissioner Krier said we are not even including sales tax revenue that will potentially be coming back into this community.

Commissioner Schartz said when we started this, we were talking a 75% match and asked if they needed to talk about the match in this second program. Commissioner Daily said the average match has only been 38% and said he didn't know that going away from 75% would be beneficial.

Commissioner Hutchinson said he knows of at least 6 more applications. The 50% was supposed to take effect after the first of the year and we are only in September. All the rules stay the same. Not going to change the target areas, the match, the amounts.

Commissioner Krier said we have \$447,291.97 in applications and asked if we have added any more past Randall Polzin's application. Cooper said no, that was as of this morning. Commissioner Krier said he agrees with Commissioner Schartz that we need to look at the parameters each time. Commissioner Krier said we need to look at the percentage after the first of the year. Sue Cooper said there are over a dozen different contractors involved in these projects.

Commissioner Schartz moved to approve \$300,000.00 in funding for the Barton County Façade Improvement Grant program. Direct the Finance Director to encumber \$300,000.00 for this project from the Capital Improvement Fund, Building, and Fixed Equipment - General Line, 071-00-6305.

Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

IV. ENDING BUSINESS:

1. Announcements
2. Appointments

V. OTHER BUSINESS:

- Comm Schartz: Attended suicide prevention event last Friday night. College athletes ran the 5K.

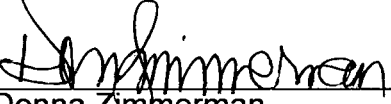
VI. ADJOURN.

Commissioner Schartz moved to adjourn at 10:04 A.M.

Commissioner Esfeld seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

ATTEST:



Donna Zimmerman
Barton County Clerk



James R. Daily, Chairman