

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/47VSHPY>

July 23, 2024

The Board of Barton County Commissioners convened this 23rd day of July 2024, at the Barton County Courthouse

Members present:

Duane Reif, Commissioner, 1st District

Barb Esfeld, Commissioner, 2nd District, Chairman

Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner, 3rd District

Tricia Schlessiger, Commissioner, 4th District, (Chairman Pro-Tem)

Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk

Matt Patzner, County Administrator

Patrick Hoffman, County Counselor

Members absent:

Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner, 5th District

I. OPENING BUSINESS:

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

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Reif seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

Minutes of the July 16, 2024, Regular Meeting were not available.

OLD BUSINESS:

-There was no Old Business.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

A. COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE: Request for Approval – Added / Abated / Escaped / Refunded

Taxes:

-Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk, will present a listing of Added / Abated / Escaped / Refunded Taxes.

Orders for these actions are kept on file in the County Clerk's Office. These are used to correct assessments and are requested by the County Appraiser's Office or the County Clerk's Office.

Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk, presented details and asked for approval.

BATCH #11	VALUES	ESCAPED TAXES	ADDED / ABATED	REFUNDS
Gas				
Oil	2,345			
Personal Property	83,452			
Real Estate	(5,672)		(\$948.00)	\$948.00
16/20 M Trucks	(2,907)			
State Assessed Utilities				
Special Assessments				
Grand Totals	77,218	\$0.00	(\$948.00)	\$948.00
Total Taxes	(\$948.00)			
Total Records Selected	73			

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Commissioner Schlessiger moved to approve the Listing of Added / Abated / Escaped / Refunded Taxes as reviewed by the County Appraiser and presented by the County Clerk's Office. Direct the Chairman to sign on behalf of the Commission.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

B. COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE: RFP – Bulk Mailer for Revenue Neutral Rate Notices:

-Ms. Schmeidler will provide details. The "revenue neutral rate" is the property tax rate in mills that would generate the same property tax revenue in dollars as levied during the previous tax year using the current tax year's total assessed valuation. All Kansas counties are required to mail every property owner an estimated tax notice with information relative to each specific property's taxes and the revenue neutral rate (RNR) compared to the proposed rate for each taxing subdivision. The Clerk's Office solicited proposals for the bulk mailing of the notices as prepared in cooperation with area taxing entities. The approximately 15,000 – 16,000 notices, as prepared through the CIC program, must be mailed by August 10, 2024.

Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk, said three bids were received from: Postalocity, Data Integrators and Direct Mail Strategies. Postalocity was the only complete bid received. Barton County had worked with Postalocity the previous two years on RNR Notices, and they had always been easy to work with and had done a great job. Schmeidler asked for approval of the bid from Postalocity.

Commissioner Esfeld asked Schmeidler if the county paid for them last year. Schmeidler said the state reimbursed for the cost of the mailers last year. Clerks were notified last week that the state would also reimburse counties this year and it would be decided year to year in the future.

Commissioner Hutchinson said one of the things the commissioners had tried to do was to educate the public as to where their tax dollars went. A pie chart had been sent with tax statements showing the amounts different taxing entities were responsible for. Barton County acts as a fiscal agent for all taxing entities in Barton County, collecting and distributing the taxes. If any entities intend to exceed the Revenue Neutral Rate, notices get sent to taxpayers. If an entity were county wide, such as Barton County or Barton Community College, they get sent to every taxpayer in Barton County. Commissioner Hutchinson said even though the Barton County government did not intend to exceed the RNR, the County was still on the hook to send out notices. It was interesting and not fair; he wished the state would get people involved in county business so they could understand how it worked a little better.

Commissioner Esfeld said the state would be reimbursing the counties, but it was still tax dollars. Commissioner Esfeld said Barton County was not a big county, could you imagine the bill for the entire state. She said she worked with Senate Taxation in the past and this rolled out differently than it was intended. It was intended to give the taxpayer a heads up of what taxes could be when tax statements came out.

Commissioner Hutchinson said he felt they all agreed the spirit was good.

Commissioner Schlessiger said the spirit was to be more transparent, but she was not sure the notices helped, they were confusing.

Commissioner Reif wanted to express that just because a taxpayer wrote the check to Barton County Treasurer, did not mean it went to the county. Barton County had to distribute the funds to the entities. Commissioner Reif said people may wonder why the mailings were not done in house. He went on to say that a company could do it much cheaper than paying the staff overtime and the supplies.

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Commissioner Esfeld said she knew from her time as Appraiser, that doing mailings in house cost the county much more for ink and paper than the company as they were able to buy in bulk.

Schmeidler said the timing of the notices was not ideal. The Clerk's Office was conducting a primary election and would already have overtime. If the staff had to also handle this mailing, it would be a tremendous amount of overtime.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked Schmeidler if all County Clerks were also Election Officers. Schmeidler said no, there were some Election Commissioners in large counties that only do elections and not County Clerk duties. Schmeidler said the RNR form changed again this year.

Commissioner Esfeld said she had to research property records in Oklahoma and in doing so discovered that they had a plethora of information attached to property records. She plans to present the information to the state and it may be an update for our own website.

Commissioner Schlessiger said sometimes rural areas of the county were still underserved on internet access. She thought a lot of people were unable to access things online.

Commissioner Esfeld said she would still like to mail the pie chart information with tax statements.

Commissioner Hutchinson said that was adding a sheet of paper to something already being mailed and not an additional expense.

Commissioner Schlessiger noted that her home internet service was down for three days last weekend.

Commissioner Hutchinson said over the last three years, they levied less money. If the county took their entire levied dollars to zero, it would only lower property taxes by approximately 25%.

Commissioner Schlessiger said it could be seen in the pie chart.

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to approve the estimated bid of \$17,488.90 from Postalocity for the Bulk Mailer for Revenue Neutral Rate Notices. Authorize the Administrator to encumber up to \$18,500.00 for the mailing from the Clerk's Account of the General Fund, Professional Services Line, 001-04-5475. Commissioner Hutchinson said only because of the eloquence of that motion, I will second it. All voted aye. Motion passed.

C. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

-Chairman Barb Esfeld will present. Any Commissioner may make a motion for the board to recess to executive session at this time as allowed by K.S.A. 75-4319. Any motion must contain the justification for the executive session, the subject matter to be discussed, any individuals in addition to the board who will attend the executive session and the time at which the regular session shall resume.

Patrick Hoffman, County Counselor, said staff was requesting an Executive Session with the commissioners, the County Administrator and the County Counselor. The subject matter to be discussed would be legal obligations of the county and the justification would be attorney client privilege. Hoffman said he did not know how much time was needed.

Commissioner Hutchinson said probably 20 minutes. Hoffman said until 9:35 or 9:40.

At 9:16 A.M., Commissioner Hutchinson said so moved.

Commissioner Schlessiger seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

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At 9:40 A.M., Commissioner Hutchinson moved to come out of Executive Session with no action taken. Commissioner Schlessiger seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion passed.

IV. ENDING BUSINESS:

1. Announcements
2. Appointments

V. OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Esfeld – Oxford Houses volunteered last Sunday and did some clean up of the landscaping around the courthouse.

Commissioner Schlessiger – thanked Chief Haulmark and Sheriff Bellendir for sending officers to Ellinwood for the After Harvest Festival, the extra security was appreciated.

VI. ADJOURN:

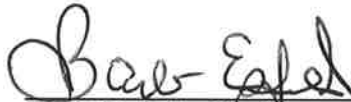
Commissioner Hutchinson moved to adjourn at 9:44 A.M.

Commissioner Reif seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

ATTEST:


Bev Schmeidler
Barton County Clerk


Barb Esfeld, Chairman