



National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor
Tri-County Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 1, 2024
Barton, Pawnee and Russell Counties
Barton Community College, 245 NE 30 Road, F123, Fine Arts Auditorium,
Great Bend, Kansas 67530

The meeting will be live-streamed through Microsoft Teams. Citizens may view the meeting through their own sign in or by signing in "anonymously". Please follow this link:
<https://bit.ly/3Zu3y2L>

**NATIONAL INTEREST ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION CORRIDOR
TRI-COUNTY SPECIAL MEETING
Barton, Pawnee and Russell Counties
6:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 1, 2024**

Barton Community College, 254 NE 30 Road, F123, Fine Arts Auditorium, Great Bend, Kansas, 67530

I. OPENING BUSINESS:

At 6:19 P.M., the Commission Chair from each county called the meeting to order.

Barton County Commissioner Zimmerman moved to approve the agenda.

Russell County Commissioner Strobel seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

II. MEETING ORGANIZATION:

-Barton County Commission Chairman Barb Esfeld will detail this item. As this is a joint meeting, each Commission will be asked to authorize the Barton County Clerk to take minutes of said meeting and remit to each County.

Pawnee County Commissioner Rein moved to approve Bev Schmeidler, Barton County Clerk, to take such minutes as are appropriate for the Tri-County Special NIETC meeting with Barton, Pawnee and Russell Counties.

Pawnee County Commissioner Burdett seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.



Barton - Barb Esfeld, Chairman; Shawn Hutchinson, Duane Reif, Tricia Schlessiger, Donna Zimmerman, Commissioners

Pawnee - Bob Rein, Jr, Chairman; Mike Burdett, Philip Hammeke, Commissioners

Russell - John W Strobel (Duke), Chairman; Steve Reinhardt, Daron Woelk, Commissioners

Organizational officials for Barton County - Matt Patzner, County Administrator; Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk.
Patrick Hoffman, County Counselor; Barton County Courthouse, 1400 Main, Suite 108, Great Bend, Kansas, 67530
620.793.1800 mpatzner@bartoncounty.org www.bartoncounty.org

Barton County Commissioner Esfeld asked Pawnee County if they also approved the agenda for the evening. They acknowledged they did.

Russell County Commissioner Strobel moved to allow Barton County Clerk to take such minutes as are appropriate for the Tri-County Special NIETC meeting with Barton, Pawnee and Russell Counties and approved the agenda.

Russell County Commissioner Woelk seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

III. INTRODUCTIONS:

-Chairman Esfeld will introduce the Pawnee and Russell County Commissioners as well as federal, state and other dignitaries.

Russell County Commissioners: John W. Strobel, Daron Woelk and Steve Reinhardt
Pawnee County Attorney Doug McNett

Pawnee County Commissioners: Bob Rein, Jr., Mike Burdett and Philip Hammeke
Barton County Administrator Matt Patzner

Senator Caryn Tyson

Representative Tory Blew

Senator Alicia Straub

Representative Troy Waymaster

Reid Petty from Senator Moran's Office

Abbi Rankin from Senator Roger Marshall's Office

Jeff McClanahan, KCC Director of Utilities

Dawson Marring from Representative Tracey Mann's Office

Barton County Commissioners: Barb Esfeld, Donna Zimmerman, Tricia Schlessiger, Shawn Hutchinson and Duane Reif

Barton County Counselor Patrick Hoffman

Justin Grady, KCC Deputy Director of Utilities

Peter Barstad, Legislative Liaison

Bruce Chladney, Director of Kansas Association of Counties

Tracey Barton, KNRC Executive Director

Sherri Brantley, candidate State Representative 112th District

Commissioner Esfeld said questions received were sent to those present. The questions and answers were posted on the Barton County website.



Barton - Barb Esfeld, Chairman; Shawn Hutchinson, Duane Reif, Tricia Schlessiger, Donna Zimmerman, Commissioners
Pawnee - Bob Rein, Jr, Chairman; Mike Burdett, Philip Hammeke, Commissioners
Russell - John W Strobel (Duke), Chairman; Steve Reinhardt, Daron Woelk, Commissioners

Organizational officials for Barton County - Matt Patzner, County Administrator; Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk;
Patrick Hoffman, County Counselor; Barton County Courthouse, 1400 Main, Suite 108 Great Bend, Kansas, 67530
620.793.1800 mpatzner@bartoncounty.org www.bartoncounty.org

IV. LOCAL EFFORTS:

-Pawnee County Commissioner Bob Rein, Jr. will detail local efforts relative to the National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor.

Rein, Jr. thanked everyone for submitting answers on short notice. He said a lot of questions regarded whether the Grain Belt Express was part of the NIETC project as it was not initially. The proposed NIETC corridor being placed over the top of the Grain Belt Express had created a lot of confusion.

Justin Grady, KCC Deputy Director, said he was more closely involved in the Grain Belt Express project but was researching the NIETC project and had appeared before the legislature. He hoped to be able to provide some information tonight.

Rein, Jr. said they were trying to draw distinction between GBE and NIETC, determining if there was overlap.

Representative Troy Waymaster said they had a presentation in the legislature earlier in September. He said there had been great concerns of the citizens. A bill could not be introduced at this time as they were not in session but he wanted to prefile in December so it could be immediately filed in January when they were back in session.

Senator Alicia Straub said she wanted Representative Waymaster and others across the state to call for a special session to stop the gross overreach.

Reid Petty said Senator Moran and Senator Marshall worked closely together and co-sponsored legislation regarding eminent domain. Those offices were also in close contact with the Department of Energy. Petty said there had been more comments from Kansas about the issue than any other project.

Abbi Rankin said Senator Marshall was supporting legislation about eminent domain, calling for the Department of Energy to have field hearings in Kansas, not make the decisions in Washington, D.C. He was opposed to this and would continue to fight federal overreach.

V. STATE AND FEDERAL STATEMENTS:

-State and federal officials may provide statements at this time.

VI. COUNTY OFFICIAL QUESTIONS:

-Chairman Rein will facilitate this process. Barton, Pawnee and Russell County Commissioners have developed an expansive list of questions for federal and state officials. That list has been submitted to the Department of Energy, the Kansas Corporation Commission, other state and federal agencies as well as elected officials. Questions and answers will be addressed as this time.

Pawnee County Commissioner Mike Burdett said his biggest concern was it seemed that energy sources were being consolidated and may not be the best plan.

Russell County Commissioner Duke Strobel said people need to contact the Department of Energy and Federal legislators with concerns.

Barton County Commissioner Shawn Hutchinson said he would do anything in his power to help the local community.



Barton - Barb Esfeld, Chairman; Shawn Hutchinson, Duane Reif, Tricia Schlessiger, Donna Zimmerman, Commissioners
Pawnee - Bob Rein, Jr, Chairman; Mike Burdett, Philip Hammek, Commissioners
Russell - John W Strobel (Duke), Chairman; Steve Reinhardt, Daron Woelk, Commissioners

Organizational officials for Barton County - Matt Patzner, County Administrator; Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk; Patrick Hoffman, County Counselor; Barton County Courthouse, 1400 Main, Suite 108 Great Bend, Kansas, 67530
620.793.1800 mpatzner@bartoncounty.org www.bartoncounty.org

VII. PUBLIC QUESTIONS:

-Chairman Esfeld will facilitate this process. The floor will be opened to questions from the public. Members of the public will be limited to three minutes. As a reminder, this time should not be used for statements reference the project, corridor or energy consumption.

Michael Dawes, Rosewood Services, Rosewood Ranch and Winery, invited the KCC to come tour Rosewood and learn their concerns and issues with GBE and NIETC. Grady said they would come on a tour.

Beth Salmans, Marysville, Kansas, expressed her concerns about KCC saying GBE and NIETC being combined. Salmans had called KCC and was told they were not investigating NIETC. Grady said she may have gotten the wrong department. They had known about NIETC since early May, the same as everyone else.

Virginia Crossland-Macha, Kansas property owner, part of the group, Stand 4 the Land Kansas with approximately 5,000-6,000 members. The website was stand4thelandkansas.com. Crossland-Macha spoke about lithium battery concerns.

Esfeld asked KCC representatives to explain Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3. Grady presented details.

Senator Tyson asked KCC when they would put Kansas first.

Jeff McClanahan, KCC Director of Utilities, responded to Senator Tyson and said they were not policy makers but were the technical folks.

Esfeld asked if legislators could do anything in time to stop what was going on with eminent domain.

Senator Straub gave an example of a bill they heard regarding the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks having the power of eminent domain. She again asked that legislators be called back this year for an executive session. It was not unheard of to be called back to session.

Veronica Coons, Barton County Conservation District Manager, wanted to bring attention to the concern about our soil and how this could affect farming and the soil in the future.

Esfeld said she appreciated the representation from Senator Moran, Senator Marshall and Representative Mann offices being here tonight. She asked that they go back and ask why they did not attend if it was important, they should have been present.

Gabe Wolf, Pawnee County, spoke about eminent domain and what do landowners do if they refuse. He spoke about the New Deal under President Roosevelt administration.

Mark Bitter, Barton County resident, said as legislators, it was time to do something to get this stopped. Kansas did not owe anything to the other states. Concern about health risks and fires due to these power lines.

Grady responded to Bitter's comments.

Rein, Jr. said they would keep working on this but needed citizens to continue showing up.



Barton - Barb Esfeld, Chairman; Shawn Hutchinson, Duane Reif, Tricia Schlessiger, Donna Zimmerman, Commissioners

Pawnee - Bob Rein, Jr, Chairman; Mike Burdett, Philip Hammeke, Commissioners

Russell - John W Strobel (Duke), Chairman; Steve Reinhardt, Daron Woelk, Commissioners

Organizational officials for Barton County - Matt Patzner, County Administrator; Bev Schneider, County Clerk; Patrick Hoffman, County Counselor; Barton County Courthouse, 1400 Main, Suite 108, Great Bend, Kansas, 67530
620.793.1800 mpatzner@bartoncounty.org www.bartoncounty.org

VIII. LETTER OF OBJECTION:

-Doug McNett, Pawnee County Attorney, will present this item. Mr. McNett developed the proposed Letter of Objection. It details the importance of the agricultural and natural resources industries in an area where land has been owned for generations. In addition, the letter details the potential negative impact of the transmission corridor on our public health and economy.

Doug McNett, Pawnee County Attorney, presented details about the Letter of Objection.

Barton County – Commissioner Zimmerman said it is my honor and privilege to make a motion to accept the Letter of Objection as written by Mr. McNett and authorize signature by the Barton County Commissioners.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

Pawnee County – Commissioner Burdett moved to accept the Letter of Objection as written.

Commissioner Hammeke seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

Russell County – Commissioner Strobel moved to accept the Letter of Objection as written by Mr. McNett and authorize signature.

Commissioner Woelk seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

IX. ENDING STATEMENTS:

-Chairman Rein will facilitate this process. Any County, state or federal officials can make a closing statement. Statements will be limited to three minutes.

X. ADJOURN:

Barton County Commissioner Hutchinson moved to adjourn at 8:14 P.M.

Pawnee County Commissioner Hammeke seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

ATTEST: Bev Schmeidler

Bev Schmeidler
Barton County Clerk

Tricia Schlessiger
Barb Esfeld, Barton County Chairman



Barton - Barb Esfeld, Chairman; Shawn Hutchinson, Duane Reif, Tricia Schlessiger, Donna Zimmerman, Commissioners
Pawnee - Bob Rein, Jr, Chairman; Mike Burdett, Philip Hammeke, Commissioners
Russell - John W Strobel (Duke), Chairman; Steve Reinhardt, Daron Woelk, Commissioners

Organizational officials for Barton County - Matt Palzner, County Administrator; Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk; Patrick Hoffman, County Counselor; Barton County Courthouse, 1400 Main, Suite 108, Great Bend, Kansas. 67530
620.793.1800 mpalzner@bartoncounty.org www.bartoncounty.org