

# 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](mailto:clerk@bartoncounty.org)

Meetings Live Streamed through **Microsoft Teams**® at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3ZuyQ9M>.

November 19, 2024

The Board of Barton County Commissioners convened this 19th day of November, 2024, at the Barton County Courthouse.

*Members present:*

Duane Reif, Commissioner, 1<sup>st</sup> District  
Barb Esfeld, Commissioner, 2<sup>nd</sup> District, Chairman  
Shawn Hutchinson, Commissioner, 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
Tricia Schlessiger, Commissioner, 4<sup>th</sup> District, (Chairman Pro-Tem)  
Donna Zimmerman, Commissioner, 5<sup>th</sup> District  
Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk  
Matt Patzner, County Administrator  
Patrick Hoffman, County Counselor

## **I. OPENING BUSINESS:**

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

Commissioner Zimmerman moved to approve the agenda.  
Commissioner Schlessiger seconded the motion.  
All voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Reif moved to approve the minutes of the October 29, 2024, and the November 5, 2024, Regular Meetings. Minutes of the November 12, 2024, Regular Meeting were not available.  
Commissioner Schlessiger seconded the motion.  
All voted aye. Motion passed.

## **II. APPROVAL OF APPROPRIATIONS:**

-Bev Schmeidler, County Clerk, will present details. An Accounts Payable Register will be submitted to the Commission for the period of November 5, 2024, and ending November 19, 2024.

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

Commissioner Hutchinson moved to approve appropriations for the period of November 5, 2024, to November 19, 2024. Authorize the Chairman to sign on behalf of the Commission.  
Commissioner Zimmerman seconded the motion.  
All voted aye. Motion passed.

## **III. OLD BUSINESS:**

-There was no Old Business.

## **IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

### **A. COMMUNITY RECOGNITION: James Bingaman, Mow-N:**

-Chris Schartz, County Works Director, will provide details. Earlier this year, the County awarded the bid for mowing at Golden Belt and Hillcrest to James Bingaman, Mow-N. Since that time, Mr. Bingaman has actively contributed beautification and operational ideas to both County staff and the Memorial Parks Advisory Committee. The Commission will publicly thank Mr. Bingaman for his contribution.

Chris Schartz, County Works Director, said James Bingaman had actively contributed to the beautification of the cemeteries and had great ideas for improvements. Schartz said Bingaman checks in with him frequently to make sure he was doing a good job. Schartz said he wanted to publicly thank Bingaman and

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...d it was a tough job, but he did a great job caring for the cemeteries. Schartz said he looked forward to working with Bingaman for many years to come.

Commissioner Esfeld said the cemeteries looked beautiful when she attended the Veteran's Day Ceremony. She said the thing that impressed her when visiting with Bingaman was his passion for the cemeteries.

Commissioner Zimmerman said Bingaman had great ideas to not only recognize more people but how it could be done cost efficiently. She was impressed that Bingaman took the time to design a plan that the commission could explore.

Bingaman thanked the commissioners and said he did not feel he deserved recognition; he was doing his job. Bingaman continued by saying that he was passionate about it and took ownership in everything he did. Bingaman said he is a veteran and there were many veterans buried in Hillcrest and Golden Belt who deserved the utmost respect. He did take great pride in his work and did not want people visiting graves to have to walk through tall grass and weeds. Bingaman added that if loved ones left things on graves, if they did not impede his mowing, he did not mind if they were left there. Bingaman thanked Schartz and the entire Road & Bridge crew for their support and communication.

Commissioner Esfeld said Bingaman's son, Kyle worked for Road & Bridge. Schartz said he was the mechanic.

Commissioner Hutchinson said if everyone had the same passion and dedication as Bingaman, our county would be a better place.

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to award Mr. Bingaman a Certificate of Appreciation for his efforts at Golden Belt and Hillcrest.

Commissioner Hutchinson seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

## **B. FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PLAN: Round III – City Partnerships:**

-Commissioner Shawn Hutchinson will provide details. Barton County initiated the Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) program in 2021. At that time, grants were provided in the Cities of Claflin, Ellinwood, Great Bend and Hoisington. A second round was released in 2023 and the prescribed corridor was increased to include both Main Street and the area within eye shot of the same. In exploring the 2025 FIG program options, it is suggested that Claflin, Ellinwood, Great Bend and Hoisington match the County's \$120,000.00 with a \$10,000.00 project pledge for up to 12 total projects.

Commissioner Shawn Hutchinson said thinking back to when this first started, he thought there had to be something we could do to improve our downtown areas. Sue Cooper was the grant writer at that time and brought the Façade Improvement Plan program to their attention. It also helped improve community spirit, downtown shopping, sales tax collections, property taxes among other things. It went to the local business owners and helped support local taxpayers. In 2023, this commission approved \$250,000 for Round II. Commissioner Hutchinson said the commission thought that with Round III, the cities should contribute as well. Barton County had allocated \$120,000 to the program so it would average one per month, a business in the county could get a facelift. Commissioner Hutchinson said the commission was asking Claflin, Ellinwood and Hoisington to each allocate \$20,000 for the projects and Great Bend to allocate \$60,000.

Commissioner Esfeld said this was rewarding and she felt these really paid for themselves in increased contributions and taxes.

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Commissioner Hutchinson said we all want bigger companies to come to our area. When a company was interested, they drive down Main Street to check out the community. This was one step in a much larger plan to help grow our communities.

Commissioner Schlessiger said she had seen the impact the Façade Improvement Grants made in Ellinwood. She said it can be seen in Great Bend as well. It was just a longer corridor, so it took more projects to make an impact.

Commissioner Reif said it had been a real improvement in both Hoisington and Claflin as well. When one business improved, it seemed the ones beside it also wanted to improve.

Commissioner Esfeld said most times if they improved the outside, they also made improvements inside the business.

Commissioner Zimmerman said there had been positive feedback about the projects. She added when you drive through a community, you can see the community pride.

Commissioner Hutchinson said downtowns were like a barometer for the economic health of a community. He said 9 total projects had been awarded in Claflin, 7 in Ellinwood, 37 in Great Bend and 10 in Hoisington. There were still some outstanding projects, 1 in Ellinwood, 1 in Hoisington and 8 in Great Bend.

Commissioner Schlessiger moved to direct the County Administrator's Office to release a letter to the Cities of Claflin, Ellinwood, Great Bend and Hoisington reference the partnership opportunity for the 2025 Façade Improvement program.

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

## **C. PROPOSALS: Request for Proposal for Audit Services for Calendar Years 2024, 2025 and 2026:**

-Matt Patzner, County Administrator, will provide details. Barton County accepted proposals for audit services for Calendar Years 2024, 2025 and 2026. All County funds, including grants and state pass-through funds, are to be audited each period.

Matt Patzner, County Administrator, said only one bid was received from AdamsBrown. Patzner asked the commission to consider approval.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked what the threshold was for a single audit. Patzner said it had been \$750,000 but had been bumped up to \$1 Million.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked what we were currently paying AdamsBrown. Patzner said the previous proposal for 2021 was \$35,360.00, 2022 was \$35,710.00 and 2023 was \$36,067.00 with an increase of only \$3 for 2024.

Commissioner Zimmerman to approve the AdamsBrown bid of:

2024	\$36,070.00
2025	\$37,150.00
2026	\$38,265.00
Major Program Audit	\$ 5,000.00

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The base bid is to be paid from the Courthouse General Account of the General Fund, Professional Services line, 001-18-5475, in the year services are rendered.

Commissioner Schlessiger seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

## **D. LEGISLATIVE ISSUES: KAC Legislative Policy Statement:**

-Mr. Patzner will present details. On December 3, 2024, County officials will meet at the Kansas Association of Counties (KAC) Annual Conference. An important item that will be discussed is the KAC Legislative Policy Statement. Member Counties will be called to review the issues and determine the platform's final form. It will then be utilized during the upcoming Legislative Session to promote issues related to County Government. Each year, Barton County reviews and considers the KAC Platform and other initiatives that may have local interest.

Matt Patzner, County Administrator, presented details and asked that the commission consider approving the 2025 KAC Legislative Policy Statement.

Commissioner Esfeld said they had made some changes and also had legislators working on the eminent domain powers of private companies. A committee that she served on already had about 20 items they want legislators to address regarding property taxes.

Commissioner Zimmerman asked Commissioner Esfeld if she had additional information on Item 4, Property Tax Procedures. Commissioner Esfeld said she did not.

Commissioner Hutchinson said at the very least, the deadline to submit budgets to the County Clerk should be moved back to August 25<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Zimmerman agreed or at least closer to that date.

Commissioner Hutchinson to approve the 2025 KAC Legislative Policy Statement and support for the document at the KAC Annual Conference.

Commissioner Reif seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

## ***No Executive Session Held***

## **E. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

-Chairman 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.

## **V. ENDING BUSINESS:**

1. Announcements
2. Appointments

## **VI. OTHER BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Esfeld – she attended the JAG classes at Great Bend High School yesterday to share information about local government.

## **VII. ADJOURN:**

Commissioner Reif moved to adjourn at 9:35 A.M.

Commissioner Schlessiger seconded the motion.

All voted aye. Motion passed.

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ATTEST:



Bev Schmeidler  
Barton County Clerk



Barb Esfeld, Chairman