

WESTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OFFICIAL MINUTES
January 19, 2021

The regular meeting of the Weston County Board of Commissioners was called to order by Chairwoman Marty Ertman at 9:00 a.m. at the Weston County Courthouse. Commissioners Marty Ertman, Nathan Todd, Ed Wagoner, Tony Barton and Don Taylor, and Clerk Becky Hadlock were present. Weston County Attorney Alex Berger joined via hub. Commissioner Wagoner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Barton requested to have Chairman's Signature on Engagement Letter for Federal Audit moved under New Business for discussion. Vice-Chairman Todd moved to approve the agenda with changes; seconded by Commissioner Barton. Carried.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Barton moved to approve the consent agenda, which included the Minutes of January 5, 2021, Chairman's Signature on Grant Agreement Between the State of Wyoming, Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office & Weston County Historic Preservation Board, Chairman's Signature on 2020-2021 Rural Development Grant Application, Tax Roll Correction #1430-1431; seconded by Commissioner Taylor. Vice-Chairman Todd did not vote because he was not at the last meeting. Carried.

TBNG & WESTON COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCE PLAN

Dru Palmer phoned in to give the Board an update on the Natural Resource Plan. Ms. Palmer thanked Commissioner Barton for sending her contact information, with this they were able to come up with a draft to be reviewed in March or April. The Board asked that Ms. Palmer send the full document for review. Ms. Palmer needs to apply for the \$15,000 in additional FNRPA funds from the State and will send the documents for the Chairman's signature. Commissioner Wagoner made a motion to approve the Chairman's Signature on FNRPA letter for additional funds; seconded by Commissioner Barton. Carried. Vice-Chairman Todd asked what Mr. Harshbarger's thoughts are with the changes and Ms. Palmer stated that she had not visited with Mr. Harshbarger yet.

Ms. Palmer stated that the original Tri-County agreement will be closing out soon. Campbell County and Converse County both would like to continue services with Dru-Consulting and Ms. Palmer asked what the Board would like to do. The Board would like to continue with the contract through Dru-Consulting. Ms. Palmer will draft an agreement to move forward with cost-sharing for a two year time frame.

Commissioner Wagoner moved to go into Executive Session per W.S. 16-4-405(a)(iii); seconded by Vice-Chairman Todd. Carried. Executive Session began at 9:40 a.m.; regular meeting reconvened at 9:52 a.m. Matters concerning possible litigation were discussed in Executive Session; no action was taken.

OLD BUSINESS

VARIANCES

Chairwoman Ertman reported that the mask mandate had not been sent to the State as there was not a variance to go off of. Chairwoman Ertman added that she had left a message for Dr. Jording on Tuesday. Dr. Jording returned her call the following Friday, during their conversation, he advised her that the Board's variances were full of junk and only a sentence or two was needed. Commissioner Wagoner

made a motion to move forward with the letter that was drafted to the Governor and the State Health Officer; seconded by Commissioner Taylor. Carried.

NEW BUSINESS

CHAIRMAN'S SIGNATURE ON ENGAGEMENT LETTER FOR FEDERAL AUDIT

Tabled until the next meeting as the Board would like to visit with Paul Stiles about the Engagement Letter.

FINAL RECONNAISSANCE REPORT BRIDGE OVER BNSF RAILROAD

John Leahy, Resource Engineer with Wyoming Department of Transportation, came before the Board to go over the Bridge Replacement Final Reconnaissance Report for the Bridge over the BNSF Railroad on Old Hwy 85. Mr. Leahy reported that with the results from the survey and the input from the Commission, it was decided that WYDOT was going to replace the bridge. The B.R.O.S. program that will be used for replacing the bridge is a 90/10 match with an estimated cost of 4 million dollars, which will cost the County \$400,000 and will be taken out of the County Road Fund Account. Vice-Chairman Todd asked if there had been a traffic study done on the Bridge. Mr. Leahy stated the last one that had been done there was an average of 191 cars a day that used the bridge. Commissioner Taylor asked if these funds could be transferred to another bridge in the County. Mr. Leahy stated he could find out. Commissioner Barton made a motion to move forward with the B.R.O.S. project to remove the bridge; seconded by Vice-Chairman Todd. Ayes: Todd, Wagoner, Barton, Taylor. Carried.

PLANNING & ZONING

Rick Dunford, Planning & Zoning Chairman, wanted to introduce himself to the new Board member. Mr. Dunford reported that he is averaging a call a day with items pertaining to Planning & Zoning. Mr. Dunford added that there is a situation right now being done in the public eye where a split has been advertised but has not been filed in the Clerk's Office. Commissioner Barton asked Mr. Dunford if this was due to lack of knowledge of the landowner. Mr. Dunford explained that Doug Hudson knows better as he has tried to do this type of split before. The Board stated that County Attorney Berger may have to write Mr. Hudson a letter. Mr. Dunford reported that he has contacted him but will write him a letter and will get a copy to Clerk Hadlock. Vice-Chairman Todd would like to see the letter addressed to both Mr. Hudson and the Board of County Commissioners.

Mr. Dunford asked the Board what was going on with the COVID shots. Mr. Dunford stated he had been to the Public Health Office several times and could not get an answer. Mr. Dunford added that the Secretary was really nice, but couldn't tell him why there was not a list for the vaccine and to listen to the radio or read the newspaper. The Board let Mr. Dunford know that the Public Health Nurse would be available to answer his question later.

CONCERNED CITIZENS WITH THE UTILIZATION OF THE FAIRGROUNDS FACILITES/FAIRGROUNDS LAND

Nancy Darnell & Linda Hunt, members of the Friends of Fair, updated the Board on the projects they are working on. The Friends of Fair will be putting planters on each end of the Fairground with sandstone from the old jail and signs above. These planters will go on the outside of the fence instead of at the gate.

Ms. Darnell and Ms. Hunt are concerned about the Search & Rescue renting the Youth Building for a length of 15 years. While they were in attendance at the Fair Board meeting, their concerns were not answered so they brought them to the Board of Commissioners. By Search & Rescue using the building it

takes away storage from the Fairgrounds. The length of the contract is also a concern, Ms. Darnell and Ms. Hunt would like it to be 5 years instead of 15 years without any checks in between. The presenter from Search & Rescue was intimidating to the ladies when it was to be intended for a public building. Chairman Ertman stated that the Board was under the impression that Search & Rescue was going to share the building with the Fairgrounds. Vice-Chairman Todd added there should be an exit in the contract for the Fairgrounds. Fair Board member Justin Mills let the Board know there is an addendum that lists out all the projects that Search & Rescue are to do within a timeframe. There are \$100,000 worth of projects to be done and that is why the contract is for 15 years. Mr. Mills added the contract will be revisited in 5 years. Attorney Berger let the Board know that he had reviewed the contract with Sheriff Colvard and it is very vague and that is why there is now an addendum.

Vice-Chairman Todd asked Attorney Berger if this was not obligating future Boards under a contract. Attorney Berger answered that this was a Principle of Governance with it being two County entities. Attorney Berger added this was a good thing as it is a space sharing agreement.

Ms. Hunt added that the Fairgrounds was intended for community entertainment. Ms. Hunt wondered why the Friends of Fair was not asked to fix the building and is still against the decision. The Board thanked Ms. Hunt, Ms. Darnell and Mr. Mills for coming.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Public Health Director Lori Bickford let the Board know that there was a new grant to provide testing for individuals that are uninsured. Director Bickford explained to the Board that the antigen testing or “rapid” testing picks up current infections. Commissioner Barton made a motion to approve the Chairman’s signature on Memorandum of Understanding Between Wyoming Department of Health, Public Health Division and Weston County pending approval of the County Attorney; seconded by Commissioner Ertman. Carried.

Director Bickford has reached out to both Pharmacies and they will be able to administer the vaccines once more are available. Mr. Dunford addressed Director Bickford about his concern with how the vaccines are being distributed. Mr. Dunford stated there needs to be a basic list being maintained of higher priority members in the community needing the vaccine. Director Bickford commented that the Public Health Office is overloaded and the vaccines are gone now but were given to those who called for appointments. Director Bickford added that they do not have time to do a list however, they are purchasing a program to help with this. Director Bickford hopes that going forward things will get better with the added points of distribution. Commissioner Wagoner asked how many vaccines were received. Director Bickford reported 180 and there should be another 100 coming.

COUNTY ATTORNEY OFFICE HOURS

Attorney Berger requested to have the Attorney office hours changed from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. due to shift change of the officers. Commissioner Wagoner made a motion to change the County Attorney office hours to 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday; seconded by Vice-Chairman Todd. Carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

District 1 State Representative Chip Neiman updated the Board on what was happening with the Legislature.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Marty Ertman
Chairwoman

Attest: Becky Hadlock
Weston County Clerk