

COMMISSION MINUTES, October 13, 2014
Special Meeting regarding Health Department Project

The Board of County Commission (BOCC) for Washington County met in special session on Monday, October 13th, 2014 in the Commission room at the Washington County Courthouse at 6:30 p.m. Members present: Alison Mueller, 1st District Commissioner, Chairman; Roger Otott, Vice Chairman, 2nd District Commissioner; and Gary Ouellette, 3rd District Commissioner. Denae Jueneman, County Clerk, was present to record meeting minutes.

Chairman Mueller called the meeting to order and turned the floor over the Janice Kearn, County Health Administrator. Kearn gave a history of the Health Department. She stated that the Health Department was created in 1966. Kearn joined the department in 1988 when there were 3 staff members and the department was housed in the current building. In 2000, the BOCC established capital improvement funds for several County departments. The fund for the Health Department was started with \$175,000. It has grown to \$391,869.43 since 2000. In 2005, land was purchased from Dick Powell and the Church of the Brethren as a future site to build a health department. In 2009, bids were let to local contractors for a new building and fitness center. Bids at that time totaled \$465,000. In 2010, Hutton Construction bid the project at a cost of \$1.3 million. Recently, a building was purchased as the new site for the Health Department and Kearn expressed her frustration with this purchase rather than the new building she had been promised.

The floor was then opened to public comment. There were approximately 30 people in attendance.

Q: What is the estimated cost of this project?

A: Chairman Mueller said the cost would be around \$400,000 plus the cost of the building which was \$75,256.

Q: Did the Commissioners say that local contractors don't get anything done?

A: Commissioner Ouellette said that they did not say that. What they BOCC said was that when the project gets started, the contractor needs to stay with the project until it is finished.

Q: Is the 5% rule still in place for In-County bids?

A: Yes, In-County bids still get a 5% bid advantage.

Q: Why wasn't this project done in conjunction with the hospital project?

A: Chairman Mueller commented that it was the decision of Kearn to not have the Health Department as a part of the hospital.

Q: Why did the County get a construction manager from Wichita for the hospital project?

A: Chairman Mueller said that medical facilities are too intricate and a construction manager with previous medical facilities was needed. However, local contractors were used for electrical and plumbing work in the hospital project.

Q: Will the County be hiring an architect or engineer for the Health Department project?

A: Legally, the County does not have to hire an architect or engineer but it is strongly recommended.

Q: What type of roof is on the building that was purchased?

A: It is a flat roof and has a life expectancy of 5 years.

Q: What is the square footage of the current building?

A: 2800 to 3000 sq. ft.

Q: With curbing and parking needing work at the new building, wouldn't the County spend about the same money on building a new building rather than remodeling and fixing curbs and parking for ADA regulations?

A: Chairman Mueller said that dirt work alone on a brand new facility would be very costly and didn't agree that remodeling an existing building would exceed the cost of a brand new building.

Q: What will happen to the land that was purchased to build a new facility on?

A: It will be sold and the money will go toward the remodel project.

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Q: Who owns the Washington Clinic and what will happen to the building if the physicians move?

A: The County owns the building but no one has any idea of what will happen to the building if the physician moves out of the building.

Q: Did the BOCC violate public meeting rules when they met with Hutton Construction a couple of months ago but did not take the Clerk along to record minutes?

A: Jueneman confirmed she was not at the meeting. Chairman Mueller said she did not believe there was a violation but would check into it.

Q: Is the County using its own resources for demolition or will it be hired out?

A: Demolition will go out to bid. Construction and demolition products will be hauled to the Landfill and cement will be hauled to Public Works.

Chairman Mueller pointed out that the drawing handed out prior to the meeting included a conference room. Chairman Mueller expressed "heartburn" with the conference room and said that money needs to be spent on patient services. The highest priority is patient care.

Commissioner Ouellette expressed disappointment with the meeting because he thought the meeting was scheduled to allow the public to comment on features they would like to see in their County Health Department rather than disputing a decision that has already been made to remodel an existing facility versus building a new facility. Commissioner Ouellette said his priority has always been to complete the project with the funds that have already been set aside. He does not want to look at options for additional funding for the project and then run the risk of raising taxes later.

Chairman Mueller said the goal is to give the Health Department a much better place with more space. It was suggested that the BOCC have night meetings quarterly to keep the public informed. Chairman Mueller said she thought that was a good idea.

Kearn thanked everyone for coming.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

BOARD OF WASHINGTON COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS

(SEAL)

Alison Mueller, Chairman, 1st District Commissioner

Roger Otott, Vice Chairman, 2nd District Commissioner

Attest:

Dena Jueneman, County Clerk

Gary Ouellette, 3rd District Commissioner