

Ottawa County Board of Commissioner's Minutes

September 9, 2024

The Board of County Commissioners met in regular session in Suite 201 at the Ottawa County Courthouse.

Those present were:

First District Commissioner Dawn Wolf

Second District Commissioner Scott Mortimer

Third District Commissioner D. D. Malmberg

JoDee Cople, Treasurer

Brandon Cople

Jerry Ayers

Heather Maddox, County Clerk

Stephanie Watkins, Deputy Clerk

Commissioner Wolf called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and led the group in opening prayer, followed by the flag salute.

County Departments:

Commissioners

Commission discussed the budget. Commission decreased the fire department budgets and the County Attorney's budget.

Sheriff

Prisoner count Ottawa County 5.

Public Comment:

Brandon Cople talked with the commission about a wind project. Cople told the commission he has talked to an investor and would like to have the commission meet with them in a month. Mortimer said he would like to get Choose Ottawa County on board, helping with grants to pursue a project. Cople said he will talk with Katie Vanderhoff and let Mortimer know what she says.

Commissioner Malmberg asked if he had considered what wind generators would do to Ottawa County's natural resources.

Commissioner Wolf called the RNR hearing to order at 9:00 a.m.

There were 27 taxpayers that were present for the budget and the RNR hearing.

Lee Ann Sparks voiced her concerns with the commissioners. Sharon Bacon addressed her property values with the commissioners. A few taxpayers discussed that they have protested their home's valuation, and it went down a few hundred dollars but it goes back up the next year. Taxpayers discussed there is no revenue in the county, and the commissioners need to look into this. Taxpayers discussed raising sales tax in the county.

On motion by Commissioner Malmberg, seconded by Commissioner Mortimer, by unanimous vote the Board approved Resolution 24-16 to levy a property tax rate exceeding the revenue neutral rate at 83.999 mils.

Roll call for the RNR was unanimously approved.

Malmberg Yes

Mortimer Yes

Wolf Yes

On motion by Commissioner Mortimer, seconded by Commissioner Malmberg, by unanimous vote the Board approved to adopt the 2025 Budget.

On motion by Commissioner Malmberg, seconded by Commissioner Mortimer, by unanimous vote the Board approved to close the RNR and budget hearing for Ottawa County.

Appraiser

Truette McQueen came into the meeting and asked the commissioners for an executive session.

On a motion by Commissioner Malmberg seconded by Commissioner Malmberg, by unanimous vote the Board approved a 15-minute executive session for personnel exemption to discuss non-elected including Wolf, Mortimer, Malmberg, McQueen and Maddox. To return at 10:32 a.m.

On motion by Commissioner Malmberg, seconded by Commissioner Mortimer, by unanimous vote the Board approved overtime for the appraiser's office for an error.

Human Resources

Michelle Campbell gave the commission the payroll calendar to look over. Malmberg brought up bi-weekly pay to the other commissioners and how it would benefit employees and future employees. Malmberg would

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like to discuss bi-weekly pay moving forward. Mortimer said he doesn't want to proceed with anything until the majority of the employees want this change. Commission did not approve the calendar, they will wait.

Commissioner Wolf called the Fire Department RNR hearing to order at 11:00 a.m. Randy Gruber asked the commission about funding for Bennington Fire Department. Commission discussed that they would like to see all financials of the fire departments that have their own bank accounts outside of the Treasurer's office.

On motion by Commissioner Mortimer, seconded by Commissioner Malmberg, by unanimous vote the Board approved Resolution 24-17 to levy a property tax rate exceeding the revenue neutral rate at 22.674 for Fire Departments. Mortimer motioned to amend Resolution 24-17 from saying 22.674 mills and change it to say 20.424 mills after changes.

Roll Call Vote for the RNR was unanimously approved.

Malmberg -Yes

Mortimer -Yes

Wolf -Yes

On motion by Commissioner Malmberg seconded by Commissioner Mortimer, by unanimous vote the Board approved to adopt the fire budget for 2025.

On motion by Commissioner Wolf, seconded by Commissioner Mortimer, by unanimous vote the Board approved to close out the fire district budget and RNR hearing.

Claims for Approval: Totaling \$53,115.26

County General	\$22,926.88
Covid Relief	\$3000.00
Road & Bridge	\$3,344.52
Ottawa County 911 Fund	\$357.40
Noxious Weed	\$20.57
Bennington Twp Road	\$2,194.20
Diversion	\$714.67
Historical	\$779.24
FD Minneapolis #2	\$19,441.41
Law Enforcement Center	\$336.37

On a motion by Commissioner Malmberg, seconded by Commissioner Mortimer, by unanimous vote the Board approved the claims as presented.

On a motion by Commissioner Malmberg, seconded by Commissioner Mortimer, by unanimous vote the Board approved the September 3, 2024 minutes as corrected.

Upcoming Meetings Commission will attend:

All three commissioners attended the Solid Waste meeting at 6:00 pm in the courthouse basement meeting room. Commissioner Mortimer is attending a meeting with Minneapolis Mayor, North Central Regional Planning and Katie Vanderhoff with Choose Ottawa County.

Clerk Maddox said she sent in the request for a credit limit to be added to Malmberg's credit card. The current limit is \$0.00. Malmberg has requested this multiple times.

Sheriff Thornton came in to discuss why a contract he signed needs to go to the county attorney's office then to the commission and stay in the Clerk's Office. Thornton will distribute the old UHF Radios to the schools. Three to

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Tescott and three to Bennington. Thorton said he will hire a part time employee that will work no more than 999 hours annually. This employee will also not be eligible for benefits, and will be hired at \$17.00/Hr. to relieve overtime for the deputies.

With no further business before the commission the meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m. on motion by Malmberg and seconded by Mortimer. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

ADOPTED this 16th day of September 2024.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS

Dawn Wolf, Chairman

D.D. Malmberg, Member

Scott Mortimer, Member

ATTEST:

Heather Maddox, County Clerk