

Board of County Commissioners of Lincoln County
Agenda for September 15, 2021

- 9:00 Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance
- 9:30 Andrew Lorensen to present the preliminary 2022 Coroner budget and preliminary 2022 Human Services budget
- 10:00 Kevin Stansbury, Lincoln Community Hospital CEO, to provide a LCH monthly report
- 11:00 Patrick Leonard, Lincoln County Weed Control Coordinator, and Wade Hollowell to discuss the August Weed Board meeting
- 11:30 George Horgan to discuss the Vets Helping Vets program

1. Approve the minutes from the September 8, 2021, meeting
2. Review the August 2021 Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for County General, Public Health, Capital Projects, Conservation Trust, E911, Landfill, Library, Lodging/Tourism, Human Services, Road & Bridge and Individual Road Districts
3. Review the August 2021 reports from the County Assessor, County Clerk & Recorder, County Sheriff and County Treasurer
4. Review the August 2021 reports from the Colorado Counties Casualty and Property Pool and the County Worker's Compensation Pool
5. Review and act upon letters of appreciation for the CVRF Small Business Grant Committee
6. Review and discuss the 2022 rates for the County Health Pool
7. Discuss COVID-19 updates
8. County Commissioner reports
9. County Attorney's report
10. County Administrator's report
11. Old Business
12. New Business

The Board of Lincoln County Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. on September 15, 2021. The following attended: Chairman Steve Burgess, Commissioner Doug Stone, County Administrator Jacob Piper, County Attorney Stan Kimble, and Clerk to the Board Corinne M. Lengel. Commissioner Ed E. Schiffers was absent and excused.

Chairman Burgess called the meeting to order and asked Mr. Stone to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Stone moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on September 8, 2021, as submitted. Mr. Burgess seconded the motion, which carried.

The Board reviewed the August 2021 Statements of Revenues and Expenditures for the General, Public Health, Capital Projects, Conservation Trust, E911, Landfill, Library, Lodging/Tourism, Human Services, and Road & Bridge funds, as well as the individual road districts. The commissioners also reviewed the August 2021 reports from the Assessor, Clerk & Recorder, Sheriff, Treasurer, and the Colorado Counties Casualty and Property and County Workers' Compensation Pools.

Mr. Burgess and Mr. Stone signed letters of appreciation to the CVRF Small Business Grant Committee. Mr. Schiffers would need to sign them at the next meeting.

The Board discussed the 2022 County Health Pool rates, Mr. Piper stating that he and Mr. Stone attended the Zoom meeting the previous week. While the overall plan went up three percent (customarily about four percent), Lincoln County dropped to Band Zero based on low claims and YTD values, resulting in only a one percent increase. Mr. Piper said he could compile a better budget with the HSA account implemented this year, and his preliminary figures showed a projected expenditure in 2022 that was less than what the county spent in 2020 as a whole. He added that the county saved between \$110,000 and \$150,000 by implementing the HSA. At the meeting, Mr. Piper learned that CHP waived telehealth copays for a specific period, so if a county employee got charged, there was a way to have the fee waived through Anthem. Mr. Burgess said they should ask Mr. Stansbury when he met with them later to provide further information if he could. Mr. Piper stated that CHP had looked at changing from VSP to Anthem Vision for the vision benefit but decided against it since there weren't many Anthem Vision providers in rural areas.

Mr. Stone moved to offer both the high deductible and Medical Plan A health insurance plans through the County Health Pool and a county-funded HSA to county employees in 2022. Mr. Burgess seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Burgess said they'd discuss agenda item number seven later and called for commissioner reports.

Mr. Stone reported participating in the Public Health Zoom call on September 9 and attending the Eastern Region meeting on September 10. On September 13, Mr. Stone attended the

Eastern TPR meeting in Akron, and on the Fourteenth, he went to the Colorado East Community Action Agency meeting. The Kit Carson County board member resigned, so they are looking for a replacement and a part-time office person. That evening, Mr. Stone attended the fair board meeting.

Mr. Burgess started his report, but then Andrew Lorensen and Sherri Hansen arrived to present the preliminary 2022 budgets for the Coroner and the Department of Human Services. Mr. Lorensen increased the coroner's support staff from \$5,500 to \$6,000, and the travel and transportation line item from \$3,500 to \$5,500. He tries to make sure that he and five deputies attend at least one conference each year, which is a requirement.

Mrs. Hansen presented the DHS budget, which included two staff promotions. Mr. Burgess asked Mr. Lorensen if he'd checked with Chris Monks at the county shop about tires for his vehicle, but Mr. Lorensen hadn't yet. Mr. Lorensen would like to use Witt's in Limon for parts and Parmer's in Hugo for vehicle service jobs.

At 10:00 a.m., Lincoln Community Hospital CEO Kevin Stansbury met with the Board to provide a monthly report. Mr. Burgess asked about Anthem waiving the copay for telehealth, and Mr. Stansbury said the county should ask if people can use local providers because it's generally not the case. He explained that some insurance companies enter into deals with outsourced providers to improve costs for the carrier, but they are competing with local primary care. The problem is a lack of consistency, and there is no guarantee that a patient would talk to the same provider if they called back again. Mr. Stansbury added that if the county encouraged Anthem to speak to hospital staff, who would give them other options.

Mr. Stansbury updated the Board on the hospital's financials, COVID-19 cases, and vaccinations. Case numbers have been up, and there have been quite a few people coming in for tests, most of which are unvaccinated. The group discussed the President's mandate that employers with over one hundred employees require their workers to get vaccinated or have a weekly test. Mr. Stansbury felt the county wouldn't have to comply since it's government, as the emergency rule the President put into effect is through OSHA. He added that there would have to be some guidance and thought the mandate would fail or become significantly "watered down." However, the hospital would have to comply because it receives Medicaid funding. Mr. Stansbury shared that two of the one hundred six hospital employees decided to quit because of the mandate.

Mr. Kimble asked about booster shots, and Mr. Stansbury said their docs advise a booster six-to-eight months after a person receives both doses of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine. There is no clear guidance at this time for a Johnson & Johnson booster.

Mr. Stansbury also updated the commissioners on the facility replacement, a review of hospital goals, and the Limon property transfer. He had heard nothing further regarding the Lady Bird Park acquisition.

Mr. Stansbury then requested an executive session.

Mr. Stone moved to go into executive session, per 24-6-402 (4) (e), C.R.S., to discuss matters subject to negotiations. Mr. Burgess seconded the motion, which carried. Those remaining for the session were Mr. Burgess, Mr. Stone, Mr. Piper, Mr. Kimble, Mr. Stansbury, and Mrs. Lengel, who recorded the session. The recording will remain on file in the County Clerk's vault for the statutory ninety days.

At 10:32 a.m., Mr. Burgess concluded the executive session, and the Board met with Public Health Director Kelly Meier, Dr. John Fox, and Candace Myers. Mrs. Meier said there were currently thirty-four active COVID-19 cases and that the Limon school was down to four. Dr. Fox said most of the positive cases were people already quarantined.

Mrs. Meier asked if she could hire a part-time person to work twenty hours a week to help them with contact tracing. She reminded the Board that they would receive the ELC grant funding of \$600,000, fully reimbursing the position. The commissioners agreed, and Mr. Burgess told Mrs. Meier if she needed the person to go up to thirty hours per week, that was fine too.

Mrs. Meier also brought up giving money back to the county. She'd learned that using the fairgrounds would qualify if the county would invoice her department when they use the area for COVID-19 vaccination clinics. If they don't use the total grant amount in two years, they will have to return it to the state, and she would prefer to give some of it back to the county.

Dr. Fox commented that masks and contact tracing were all they used last fall before the vaccine was available, and it worked. Mr. Stansbury pointed out they would go anywhere to provide vaccine education if asked, and Dr. Fox said there is an open forum at the Limon school on Tuesday night.

Mr. Kimble wanted to know if the doctor recommended the flu shot and the booster or if it would be better to do one or the other. Dr. Fox suggested getting whatever he could whenever he could. There are no restrictions on the COVID vaccine and no evidence of problems with getting the vaccines simultaneously. He said there's a 3.5 times greater risk of getting the virus, five times greater risk of being in ICU or on a ventilator, and six times greater risk of dying if a person isn't vaccinated.

Before the group left, Mr. Stansbury urged the commissioners to inform residents that COVID-19 vaccinations are safe, effective, and available.

Weed Coordinator Patrick Leonard arrived at 10:45 a.m. However, since Wade Hollowell wasn't there yet, Mr. Piper asked the commissioners if they decided what to do about charging county employees leave time if they had to quarantine with COVID-19. He'd checked with other counties; Yuma went back to their old policy, and Kit Carson gave them time off if employees were quarantined but had no sick or vacation leave. The commissioners agreed to

uphold their earlier decision that employees would have to use sick or vacation time if they contracted the virus and had to quarantine.

Wade Hollowell arrived, and the group discussed the August weed board meeting. They had considered taking Dicamba out of the weed program because Kochia weed was becoming resistant to it, but Mr. Hollowell said the Kochia was too far gone. The bigger concern was controlling the Canada thistle and bindweed, both on the county's weed program. Board member Terry Saffer thought the program would suffer without the Dicamba and that it wasn't the county's responsibility to handle the Kochia weed. Mr. Leonard felt the meeting went well because there were some very knowledgeable people on the weed board. However, it was ultimately the commissioners' decision as to whether they removed Dicamba from the program.

Mr. Hollowell also said they'd discussed having the weed truck and sprayer checked by Norstar in Washington every three years and agreed they should continue the practice. Mr. Leonard said he needed to take it this year.

Mr. Stone asked Mr. Leonard if he was about finished with the spraying season. Mr. Leonard said he was but would still like to treat the surface areas this fall instead of next spring.

The weed board had looked at and approved the county's Weed Management Plan, required every three years, and the members agreed to meet twice a year, March 1 and October 1. Mr. Leonard said they might change it back to annually if they find they have nothing to discuss in March. Mr. Hollowell left, and Mr. Leonard said he would contact Norstar about the truck maintenance.

Mr. Stone asked Mr. Piper if they'd figured out the discrepancy with Mr. Leonard's timesheets. Mr. Piper said the personnel policy identifies the position as exempt, but a previous board had allowed Wayne Shade to get time-and-a-half, a practice that carried over when they hired Mr. Leonard.

At 11:20 a.m., George Horgan met with the Board to discuss the Vets Helping Vets program; an organization started over forty years ago as a way for veterans to help their peers. Mr. Horgan recently moved to Lincoln County and wanted to offer his help to the county's service officer. Mr. Piper asked if he'd spoken with Laurie Rodgers, but Mr. Horgan hadn't. He said their program was self-funded, and they didn't charge for their services, but if a vet came to him, he would work with Ms. Rodgers to help them. The commissioners thanked Mr. Horgan, and he left.

Mr. Burgess reported attending a Centennial Mental Health meeting in Fort Morgan on September 9. Dr. Fox also called encouraging the county to put a mask mandate in place. Mr. Burgess contacted the other two commissioners who agreed they'd strongly recommend mask-wearing if people were so inclined. Mr. Burgess and Mr. Stone went to Akron for the Eastern District meeting on September 10. They talked to Gini Pingnot about the sales tax vendor fee

and went over the bills proposed by several counties. They also listened to a presentation about suicide prevention. All three commissioners attended the Eastern TPR meeting in Akron on September 13. On September 14, one of the District 2 road crewmen had a minor accident, so Mr. Burgess told Bruce Walters to have the employee fill out an accident report and get an estimate for the damage. He informed Mr. Piper of the incident. Mr. Burgess also had a call from Mark McMullen about the airspace at the landfill. If there are over 2.5 million feet, the county will need a permit. The cost in 2022 would be \$7,000, followed by an annual fee for filing the paperwork. Mr. Burgess felt they should proceed because not doing so would cut down the size of future expansion. There was a problem with someone harassing a landfill employee, so the employee called the sheriff. Mr. Burgess asked Mr. Kimble for his advice, and Mr. Kimble said the best course of action would be to continue contacting the sheriff if the harassment continued. Mr. Burgess had a phone call from Tim Brown, who is on the state weed board. He offered his assistance if the county needed anything. Mr. Burgess participated in the Public Health Zoom call and the fair board meeting on September 14. He also attended the Economic Development Corporation meeting earlier this morning.

Mr. Kimble said they'd already discussed two of the items he planned to report on, quarantine orders and the leave policy. Gini Pingenot sent a sample resolution for zeroing out the vendor fee. Mr. Kimble asked Mr. Piper if he knew a dollar amount that would come back into the county if the commissioners adopted the resolution. Mr. Piper had calculated roughly \$7,000 per month. Mrs. Lengel asked if there were a way to see how much it would impact local businesses before the commissioners agreed to zero out the fee. Mr. Burgess said he would go by Stop and Shop and talk with Trey Ford about it.

Mr. Piper reported moving the budget hearings to September 23 and asked the commissioners if they wanted printed copies. Mr. Burgess told him they did. Mr. Burgess asked if he'd found out why the reports looked like District 1 had a charge of \$700,000, creating a negative balance. Mr. Piper said it ended up being around \$400,000, and that part of it was an audit adjustment requested by Ronny Farmer to reconcile the treasurer balance. Another audit adjustment to record a lease purchase and the loss of HUTF funds also contributed to the issue. Mr. Piper had some suggestions, but Mr. Burgess said they'd wait for the budget meeting when Mr. Schiffers could be part of the discussion. Mr. Piper said that the state intended to put their ARP funds into HUTF, which might mean around \$200,000 in additional revenue for the county.

Mr. Piper had information from Mark McMullen regarding the landfill airspace and forming future cells. Mr. McMullen felt the county should get everything permitted now. He'd also requested a review of the Engineering Design and Operations Plan, so Mr. Stone moved to sign the letter to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment requesting a review of Lincoln County's EDOP. Mr. Burgess seconded the motion, which carried.

Mr. Burgess called for old or new business and asked if Mr. Piper obtained a key to the annex for the tourism board. Robin Halley was okay with letting the board have one, but he told Mr. Piper that he just leaves it unlocked when the fair board meets there. If they did the same for

the tourism board, they would have to schedule the building's use through Mr. Halley. Mr. Burgess said that would be fine.

At the EDC meeting earlier this morning, they discussed that the town of Limon was going to use their ARP funds to complete the waterline on the east end of Limon to the airport, approximately \$490,000 toward a \$1.2 million project. Mr. Burgess asked if the county wanted to kick in some of its ARP funds as well, but the group agreed to wait for Mr. Schiffers before discussing it further. Mr. Piper also said they should compile a list of possible uses for the money, as they had already discussed several different options.

Mr. Burgess also said the Republican River Water Conservation District planned to retire 25,000 acres by 2029, and the county had some wells north of Arriba that are in the watershed.

With no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Burgess adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m. The next meeting will be the annual budget hearings at 9:00 a.m. on September 23, 2021.

Corinne M. Lengel, Clerk to the Board

Steve Burgess, Chairman