

JOINT CITY/COUNTY MEETING
May 7, 2013

The City Commission of the City of Liberal, Kansas convened in joint session with the Seward County Board of Commissioners in the Mahuron Park Building located at 802 East Eighth Street, at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 7, 2013.

Mayor Harrison called the City Commission meeting to order and presided over the meeting. The following City Commissioners were present: Mayor Dave Harrison, Vice Mayor Janet Willimon, Commissioners Dean Aragon, Joe Denoyer and Ron Warren. Also present were City Manager Mark Hall, Finance Director Chris Ford, Public Works Director Joe Sealey, City Clerk Debbie Giskie, Economic Development Director Jeff Parsons, Housing & Community Development Director Karen LaFreniere and City Attorney Shirla McQueen.

County Chairperson Linenbroker called the Seward County Board of Commissioners meeting to order. The following Seward County Commissioners were present: Chair Ada Linenbroker, Vice Chair Doug LaFreniere, Commissioners Randy Malin and Jim Rice. Absent was C. J. Wettstein. Also present was County Administrator April Warden.

U.S.D. 480 School Board members present were Board President Delvin Kinser, Vice President Steve Helm and Cheryl Louderback. Absent were Nick Hatcher, Chris Jewell and Tammy Sutherland-Abbott. Also present were Deputy Superintendent Paul Larkin, school board member-elect Matt Friederich and several other U.S.D. 480 staff members.

1. HOUSING UPDATE.

Housing & Community Development Director LaFreniere distributed a handout containing a listing of all the programs being implemented by the City's Housing and Community Development Department. She reviewed the handout that included historical data of what has occurred in the past. City Manager Hall noted the City recently implemented the RHID (Rural Housing Incentive District) program and is working on the Neighborhood Revitalization District. *No action was taken.*

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE.

Economic Development Director Parsons distributed two handouts and explained how the City has been working with Retail Attractions out of the Tulsa area to assist in their efforts to recruit retail and noted we are starting to get a little short on industrial space. He referred to the handout listing Liberal's demographic information, which is an effective recruiting tool. *No action was taken.*

3. REPAIRS TO ROAD NORTH OF FAIRGROUND ROCK WALL (ALLEY).

County Commissioner Rice noted the road (alley) behind the fairground is in bad shape and with the annual fair coming up soon, he wondered if the City and County could work together to make repairs to it. *After further discussion, it was the consensus of the group to have Tony Herrman, County Road and Bridge Superintendent and Joe Sealey, City Public Works Director, get together to come up with a solution that would be acceptable to both parties.*

4. HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUILDING PROJECT.

County Commissioner Rice advised the last time this was discussed was at the Coronado Museum a couple years ago, with discussion on constructing an additional building for traveling exhibits and a meeting room. He questioned if the City and County could get together soon to discuss funding of the building.

Mayor Harrison explained when the proposal was received from the Historical Society; the group discussed the cost of the project and funding options, such as sales tax and transient guest tax. The original cost of the building was estimated at \$500,000, but it was increased to \$750,000 or more, with a parking lot and operational costs included. He noted the sales tax option wasn't feasible and the transient guest tax monies were targeted for the two-year Kansas Sampler Festivals in 2012 and 2013. He indicated the Historical Society offered up the \$200,000 insurance proceeds received from a building that blew down and if the County could generate another \$150,000 in donations, the City would consider making grant match funds available in the amount of \$350,000 from transient guest tax funds for a total of \$700,000.

City Manager Hall explained the transient guest tax fund would need to reach an amount that will not impact Convention & Tourism operations and that the City's estimates the \$350,000 grant match funds would be available at the end of 2014 or 2015, subject to the County generating the same amount. *No action was taken.*

5. DAYCARE/CHILDCARE/PRESCHOOL DISCUSSION.

County Commissioner Linenbroker advised she had recently attended a meeting hosted by the Liberal Area Coalition of Families with approximately 150 people in attendance all concerned about the lack of daycare availability since First Baptist Church announced they are closing their daycare facility at the end of the summer.

County Administrator Warden explained a representative from the County's Health Department performs the daycare facilities inspections to enforce the State's regulations. She noted it takes 60 days to become certified by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment as a day care facility. She noted discussion had been made regarding possible funding options that could be taken, such as CDBG and Micro-Loan, but noted the criteria will not meet those programs criteria.

After further discussion, it was the consensus of the group that although we can't solve the issue, we can be informative by educating the public on how the system works.

6. GENERAL ISSUES DISCUSSION.

U.S.D. 480 Board President Kinser advised they are looking at the population needs of the school district and are in the preliminary planning stage of determining what the community desires. He noted there is a meeting on Thursday at the Education Service Center and the entities present have all been invited to attend.

County Commissioner Rice questioned if the City was interested in talking about consolidation of the City street department and the County road and bridge departments sometime. He noted the county shop at the fairgrounds needs to be relocated due to the congestion caused with heavy equipment moving during school activity and away from residential areas. *No action was taken.*

City Commissioner Denoyer questioned if the County had given consideration to improving the acoustics at the Activity Center. He noted he has received complaints about not being able to hear during concerts and the gas compressor institute. County Administrator Warden advised they have discussed this and it has been put on the capital improvement list. Mayor Harrison noted it is a nice facility that isn't being used to its fullest capability. *No action was taken.*

U.S.D. 480 President Kinser congratulated everyone for their participation in the truancy program. He indicated they had a presentation by some of the students and were pleased with the difference it has made to the students and their parents. He reported the program has made an awesome difference in the number of truants from last year to now.

ADJOURNMENT. There being no further business, Vice Mayor Willimon moved to adjourn the City Commission meeting. County Vice Chair LaFreniere moved to adjourn the Seward County Board of Commissioners meeting. U.S.D. 480 adjourned their meeting as well.

Dave Harrison, Mayor

ATTEST:

Debra S. Giskie, CMC, City Clerk