

# ORIGINAL

Minutes of the Woodward County Commissioners Special Meeting Monday, March 17, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at the Woodward County Fair Grounds. Meeting was called to order by Chairman Clint White with members Donny Thorn & Troy White present. Also, present Wendy Dunlap, Bailey Kafka, Ben Smith, Trina Mingus, Tom Lucas, Emily Lintner, Eldon Merklin, Rachel Vanhorn, Ray Bayliff, Billy Riggs, Sheri Rice, Harvey Currier, Margie Smith, Michael Smith, Trey Hutchison, Patrick Coffey, David & Elaine Beckwith, Tommy Roedell, Tim & Michele Polk, Chayton & Madison Dilley, Mike Johnson, Becca Price, Briley Goodwin, Kelly Witchey, Rena Powers, Darci Herber, Kent Parsons, Tess & Mike Loomis, Derck Kendall, Avery Jimenez, Shaylynn Martin, Nora Jones, Vic & Lynette Terbush, Jay Arnold, Matt Roberts, Mike Wickware, Mick & Karen Charmasson, Dan Matthews, John & Jessy Settles, Justin Roberts, Shawna Bergeron, Fred Clark, Jonna Schmidt, Sarah Eckhardt, +Gina White & Jill Lintner. The invocation was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Statement of Compliance was acknowledged, as the agenda was filed & posted March 13, 2025 @ 10:00 a.m. Motion was made by T. White to approve the minutes of the previous meeting seconded by Thorn Voting: all ayes. Witchey reported the strike team was able to go help out at Leedey & Camargo but there was still one available for the Woodward County Area if needed, Witchey also reported there could be damaging weather this week. Lucas reported he reviewed the grants station data base, a list of latest updates on federal actions impacting the non-profit sector. OCCEDB has a solid waste grant program that provides funds to perform solid waste cleanup and/or the purchase of equipment. The state agency OMES is the contact for federal surplus property. Federal grant programs appear to be state of flux as funding changes are occurring daily, The EPA has withdrawn 20 million in grant money for federal surplus property. C. White reported that the sidewalk on the east

# ORIGINAL

side of the courthouse has been fixed. Clark, an ACCO Law Enforcement & Risk Assessment Liaison reported he has been with law enforcement for 35 years & the biggest liability in counties is the jail, noting that risk assessment tours of the sheriff's office & jail to prevent some of these claims. The biggest failure in the jails is to provide proper medical care, sharing that most counties use Turnkey Health. The jail in Woodward County seems to be in great shape as it is not even in the top 60 counties for liabilities. Clark spoke of a 1.2-million-dollar grant that was issued for training starting in Stephens County. Following Clark's presentation, a motion was made by C. White to approve the engagement request letter to Fred Clark for a Risk Assessment Tour of the Sheriff's Office & Jail seconded by Thorn Voting: all ayes. Motion was made by C. White to approve hiring McAfee & Taft to assist Woodward County HR with an employee's complaint & termination process seconded by Thorn Voting: all ayes. Many concerned citizens were present regarding public safety. Ray Bayliff stated "I want to get some answers: for one there has been no pastoral care in the jail since they stopped it for covid. Mitchell has never reinstated pastoral care. Mitchell is also drawing \$1000 per month for travel pay & drives a county vehicle to look at a canine dog & picked up prisoners. He was stopped for speeding on I-35 but let go because of law enforcement. This is against the statue to draw travel pay & drive a county vehicle. Also, the sheriff's office purchased a drug dog for \$9000 plus training of \$2000. The deputy that was handling the dog was fired for what I think is personal reasons. I think Mitchell was not in his right mind & has been making bad decisions. An employee of Turnkey was assisting an inmate when he held a finger up & went bang. There was no jailer around which they should have been. Another incident is the new pickup unit that was at District #3 has moved to the sally port at the jail. This unit has been sitting for 7 months needing lights & sirens need to be installed. This unit & all units need to have working sirens &

# ORIGINAL

lights. One deputy had to use his cell phone because his radio was not working. This is not acceptable. There is money in the sheriff's budget. We need to hire it done instead of Mitchell doing the installation. I am asking for a grand jury investigation as too many different things are popping up." Goodwin stated "The unit should not be in the sally port; it should be in use." T. White informed Goodwin that the sally port is big & can be used for both storing a vehicle as well as delivery & pickup of inmates. Riggs stated he has lived here for 15 years & stated "I know there is a lot of legalities but could you please figure out a way to get some answers by April 7<sup>th</sup>?" T. White stated, "We have not got a legal opinion back yet but should have answers in two weeks." Kent Parsons added, "In 2022 there was a criminal loose & stole some of our items. Holloway informed me on February 3, 2023 that the sheriff's office had recovered some of these items but have not returned them to me yet." Margie Smith asks "Is there any way we can have answers in two weeks?" Sheri Rice reported "I am concerned about the vehicle's equipment. Can we please have a professional put the lights & radio in so everything will work well for the safety of the deputies?" T. White reported "There are companies in OKC that provide this service." Rice continued to say that in Title 19 Section 165 it clearly states that the Sheriff cannot accept travel pay per month and drive a sheriff's vehicle. Harvey Currier reported that several of the units' sirens do not work and added "let's get these fixed for the safety of the deputies." C. White spoke to the citizens in attendance by saying "First, I want to thank all of you for taking the time to come here today & share your concerns. Your voices matter, & we appreciate your willingness to be involved in the leadership & accountability of Woodward County. I want to take a moment to address the concerns that many of you have expressed regarding the extended absences of the services of our sheriff and to share an update. The sheriff has informed us that he will be returning to Woodward on March 24<sup>th</sup> & to be in his office on

# ORIGINAL

March 25<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, we anticipate that the sheriff will be present at our meeting March 31<sup>st</sup> & we encourage the public to attend. I understand that this situation has caused frustration & concern among the citizens of Woodward County. This is not a personal matter—it is about ensuring our county has the leadership & presence it needs from its elected officials. The role of the sheriff is one of immense responsibility, requiring active oversight of law enforcement operations, the jail & public safety. Citizens expect & deserve a sheriff that is present, engaged & available to serve the community firsthand. I recognize that emotions are high, & I encourage everyone to stay focused on the best path forward for the county. The public has spoken loud and clear that they want accountability, and it is our duty to listen and act in the best interests of the people we serve. Additionally, we are still awaiting the written legal opinion from our District Attorney regarding this matter and we expect to have it before our March 31<sup>st</sup> meeting. Once we receive it, we will review it carefully to ensure that we are acting within the law & in the best interest of Woodward County. I have also written down all the questions & concerns that have been raised here today and the past two weeks and will be giving these to the sheriff upon his return so that he can provide answers directly. Again, thank you all for being here and for sharing your thoughts. We hear you, & we appreciate your dedication to this county.” Motion was made by Thorn to approve Alcoholic Beverage Tax Certified thru 3/12/2025, \$18,63.07 seconded by T. White Voting: all ayes. Motion was made by T. White to approve Purchase Orders Batch #83 seconded by C. White Voting: all ayes. Motion was made by Thorn to approve payroll for 3-21-25 seconded by C. White Voting: all ayes. Motion was made by Thorn to approve transfer out of Fair-2 M&O \$173.47 & out of County Wide Fire \$188.30 into District #3 M&O \$361.77 (Fuel Reimbursement) seconded by T. White Voting: all ayes. As there was no other business before the board at this time a motion

**ORIGINAL**

was made by C., White to adjourn seconded by T. White Voting: all  
eyes.

Clint White-Chairman Clint White