

December 29, 2025
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

The Muskogee Board of County Commissioners met in session at 8:15 a.m. Members present were: Chairman, Ken Doke; Vice-Chairman, Keith Hyslop; Member Kenny Payne; and Muskogee County Clerk, Polly Irving.

1: Motion

Commissioner Hyslop made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Payne, approved to Open the meeting at 8:31 a.m. The motion was unanimous.

2: Motion

Commissioner Hyslop made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Payne, approved the Purchase Orders. The motion was unanimous.

3: Motion

Commissioner Hyslop made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Payne, approved the Monthly reports. The motion was unanimous.

4: Motion

Commissioner Payne made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Hyslop, approved Regular meeting minutes for December 22, 2025. The motion was unanimous.

5: No Action

No action was taken after a presentation from Air MedCare Network.

6: Motion

Commissioner Payne made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Hyslop, approved an Updated Officer List for the Election Board. The motion was unanimous.

7: Motion

Commissioner Payne made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Hyslop, approved a Funds Transfer to the Muskogee County Economic Authority in the amount of \$100,000 utilizing the Use Tax Fund. **Commissioner Doke:** *"So, the Muskogee County Economic Authority is an economic development trust for Muskogee County. That's sort of the county's version of economic development, I guess. And so, we're involved in, I guess, sort of recruiting, negotiating deals, and a lot of the companies that come to town or whatever is handled through that. A lot of the incentives or whatever that are going to be created will be done through the economic authority. There's a 20 million bond authority that the economic authority has access to. It's already been approved by the voters. So, the economic authority would have the ability to issue bonds to companies if they needed long-term fixed financing and things like that. So, just another tool in Muskogee County for helping to recruit or sustain local businesses. But the problem is it's pretty new, and it doesn't have a dedicated funding source. So, the reality is, right now, any funding that it gets comes from the county primarily. At some point, once there's some bonds out and some of those things, that entity could be stood up and become sort of self-sustaining. But it's not there yet. It's still pretty new. So, it's pretty dependent on the county for operations."* **Commissioner Payne:** *"Do we have any idea what the balance in that account is right now? Approximate? The Economic Authority."* **Commissioner Hyslop:** *"\$230 bucks."* **Commissioner Payne:** *"So, okay. I wanted to know that first. Secondly, I would say that I'm not an expert on this, but usually when opportunities come, they're looking for site-ready type projects. What they're not looking for is someone to say, well, let me get my stuff together and then we'll call you back and let you know something. So, I guess one of the reasons that we talked about putting this on today is because we need to have money ready if an opportunity comes our way and not have Checotah or Fort Gibson, frankly, have that money sitting there and be able to get the jump on us there. So, I think there does need to be some money in here. We do have, it's not really related, but in our deal that we've struck on our Energy Down Council Hill's way, one of the things with the data center is there's \$200,000 per year that goes into an*

economic development type fund. Now, there are strings attached to it because everybody that sits on that board, that trust that this money goes to has to vote for the project that we sell it for so it wouldn't be the commissioners only, which is, I don't know if that's a bad thing, but the other entities, ICTC, the school, the library, the health department, all would vote on that too. Long story short, we are making strides to kind of start our own economic development fund where we will have monies to do these things eventually, and this is a long way in the future so don't anybody read these tea leaves wrong, but maybe have someone hired by the county dedicated to things like that that could go recruit businesses for us, things of that nature. All that said, it's just to kind of bring you up to what I believe is speed on the need to have monies in this account, and I think I'm not sure the best place to move the monies from right now. We have a few options, but I think it would probably be smart for us to put about \$100,000 in that account. We haven't found the greatest source for that yet, but it is something that we're looking at and looking for, and that's what I would like to see. It's on paper black and white every month, this much went in there, this much went in there, and that kind of thing. Anyway, that's the impetus of all this, and that's my recommendation. And the floor is open for any conversation that needs to take place.” **Commissioner Doke:** “So one of the things we would have to do if we're going to put money over there is determine where it's going to come out of. Possibilities include CARES, RDHO. If you're looking for budget funds or if you're looking for cash funds, it could be sales tax.” **Commissioner Payne:** “I personally, and I'm not going to arm wrestle you over this, I don't think, the CARES money is unrestricted. We can spend it where we want to spend it. I feel better personally, and there's no legal precedent or anything else about what I'm about to say. I like to think of spending that money on things we can reach out and touch, cognitive type things, and not putting it over here where we might spend it someday. That's just me. But I like to be able to, if we're going to spend the CARES money, and we are, it's our money to spend. But I would rather spend it on things that we spend that money and the next day you can look out there and see what we spend it on, not what we might spend it on. And again, I don't have any legal precedent or anything for saying that. It's just the way I feel about it.” **Commissioner Doke:** “I have no preference whatsoever. I do think that RDHO is not a good place to go for that because it is literally what's left of our budget funds to get us through the end of the fiscal year. So I do think that RDHO is a bad one. And between CARES and use tax, I really have no preference. Whatever it is, if you have qualms about that, then maybe use tax might be a better option. We've got a bunch of projects operating off use tax right now. So it's going to be money out, money in, money out, money in. It's going to be sort of a moving target for a bit.” **Commissioner Payne:** “We actually have two or three different entities that owe back into use tax. So you're exactly right with what you say. And that needs to happen sooner rather than later. Use tax, I think, sounds like the right one. So I'll move, at this point, to \$100,000 from use tax into Muskogee County Economic Authority.” **Commissioner Doke:** “And, again, that's an authority, so it's not tied to the county. It'll have to be a payment made to them or whatever, I guess, right? They'll be able to transfer it.” **John Tyler Hammons:** “It'll be an actual check.” There was no paperwork given to the County Clerk to support this motion. The motion was unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

ADJOURN:

Motion was made by Commissioner Hyslop and seconded by Commissioner Payne, approved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimous.