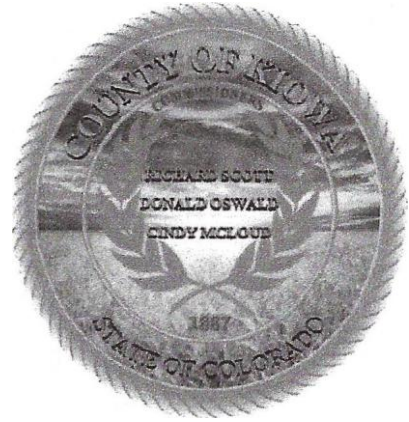


KIOWA COUNTY COLORADO

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September 15, 2017

Debbie Shivers

RE: September 9, 2017 Letter

Dear Debbie,

The Kiowa County Commissioners wish to express their appreciation for your interest and concern for the financial interests and ongoing projects of the County. I will attempt to answer your questions with as much detail as I can and if you have further concerns you are more than welcome to schedule a time to meet with the Commissioners to discuss them.

First, to address your question about our monetary responsibility to Prairie Pines Assisted Living. As you know Prairie Pines was built and began as a County owned facility. In 2009 it was separated from the County and is a separate non-county entity ran by its own governing board. Because of the liabilities that went with the entity, the Board of Commissioners requested a mill levy of 3.85 for the operation of the facility and to help pay down the debt that went with the ownership until such time as they could become fully established. This mill levy was approved by the voters of Kiowa County for a 10 year period which expires in 2019. It is my understanding that, at that time, the County's financial responsibility to Prairie Pines would end, but if the facility cannot run without the additional funding, their board could work towards becoming a special health district in the county and ask for their own mill levy, or the Board of Commissioners could request another mill levy from the taxpayers on their behalf. Of course, any further support from the County for Prairie Pines would be approved only by a vote of the Kiowa County taxpayers.

Your second question regarding the ongoing Murdock Project is quite involved and multi-faceted so it would probably be easier discussed in person, but I will try to give you a short overview. The Murdock project began in 2006, and the goal of the project is to revive our Maine Street buildings and keep their history to Kiowa County. The intended use for the Murdock building is to house a visitor center for the Sand Creek Massacre Site and the Eads Senior Citizens Center. The project has been funded through multiple grants including the State Historical Fund, DOLA, El Pomar, Gates Family Foundation, and the Boettcher Foundation. This ultimately will be a multi-million dollar project, but due to the variety of funding streams the estimated cost to the County is \$300,000.00. We will continue to seek additional grant funding to help offset the County's estimated contribution as the project moves forward. We have the unique opportunity to work with the National Parks Service (NPS), and they will be providing a considerable amount of the funding also. The NPS is committed to leasing historic properties for their sites so our project will fit into their requirements quite nicely. Since they have unique needs for housing the artifacts and information, they will be funding much of the tenant finishes for their portion of the buildings. Besides the funding for the rehabilitation, the NPS will lease the property from the County once they can occupy the space. The guarantee of income that will be generated at that point will pay back the investment that Kiowa County has made in the project and offer an additional funding stream to the County in the future. The Board of Commissioners have found this to be a unique and positive opportunity for the entire county to benefit.

Question three regarding the cost of rodeo buckles is a Fair Board expense. The Kiowa County Fair Board has their own budget and can use it as they determine necessary for the fair. They do obtain sponsorships to offset the costs of the buckles, and the buckles do give the participants a much deserved reward for their efforts. This has been a regular and ongoing part of the fair for many years. ■ would recommend speaking with the Fair Board President, Bart Michael, or the Secretary, Tearle Lessenden regarding questions addressing their use of funds.

Something else to consider, since you seem to be a county citizen with great interest in the county, we are looking for volunteers to serve on the Fair Board and would love to see more interest from the east and west ends of the County.

The County for many years, through Conservation Trust Funds, have given support to the Eads Municipal Swimming Pool. The Conservation Trust funds come mainly from lottery proceeds that the State distributes. These funds have a specific use which is for parks and recreation. Supporting the only public swimming pool in the County is a great use for these funds. The funds also help offset the costs of upkeep and improvements to any recreation areas and parks in Kiowa County. Thus, this does not use taxpayer monies.

To address question four, Southeast Health Group provides for the mental health services in, not only Kiowa County, but also in the entire Southeastern region of Colorado. It is a requirement of Counties to provide certain services to the residents of the County, and it is funded through the State of Colorado by region. Because the services are related to the number of people in the regions, it is more economically feasible for us to share resources. The expenses for these services are provided for by the State and not the County. ■ do believe that the modular building that was discussed will be paid for through grants available to the Southeast Health Group. Kiowa County residents with mental health issues definitely benefit from the services they provide.

Lastly, it is very unfortunate that we have had ongoing issues with the sirens in Towner and Haswell. We have had several different electricians look at the sirens in attempts to resolve these issues. We did think that they were working properly for a time but then failed again this year. The last electrician, from Adams Electric, that inspected the sirens believes the problem lies with the sirens themselves and is not necessarily an electrical issue. Much to our dismay, we have had very little luck getting the company that sold us the sirens, Century Siren, to respond to our requests for warranty work or information. We are waiting for the electrician to present his findings on the siren issue to determine what the best avenue is for us to proceed. We are equally frustrated with the seeming inability to get this issue resolved, but because the sirens were provided through an Emergency Management Grant, we are trying to allow that department to get these issues resolved.

Unfortunately, we don't detail the income for the County like we do the expenses. It is important for taxpayers to understand that there are many different funding streams that the County uses. Not all funds are provided by the taxpayers, and most funds have very specific things that they can be used for.

Again, we appreciate your interest and concern, and hope that your questions have been answered adequately. If you have further questions please call my office at 719-438-5810 and I would be happy to schedule a time for you to visit with the Commissioners.

Sincerely,
Tina Adamson
Administrator