

**JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS
CARROLL COUNTY QUORUM COURT
December 21, 2020**

The Quorum Court held their regular meeting at Southern Heights Baptist Church located at 279 Hwy 221 South, Berryville. The Press was notified and several members of the Press were present. Also present were Treasurer Makita Williams, Circuit Clerk Ramona Wilson, and Administrative Assistant to the County Judge, Ronda Griffiin as well as County Clerk Connie Doss and County Attorney Thomas Allgood. The meeting was audio recorded with interruption at the beginning due to battery issue and distributed by request. Social distancing and mask wearing was asked to be observed. No one attended via Zoom or other electronic format. The Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by JP John Howerton. The meeting was called to order by JP Larry Swofford who presided over the meeting in the absence of Judge Barr who was still recuperating from surgery. Voice roll call was taken by the County Clerk with all present except JP Marty Johnson. JP Jack Deaton made a motion to accept the Journal from the previous meeting and JP Matt Phillips seconded the motion. All were in favor of accepting the Journal as presented. Under Changes to the Agenda, JP Craig Hicks added item "j", an ordinance requested by the Treasurer and County Clerk to add a fund for Cares Act funds and approved by everyone.

In committee reports, JP Don McNeely said that there were two resolutions on the table for the vacancies for the Circuit Clerk as well as JP Marty Johnson's position in District 4. In Public Comments, Suellyn Frye spoke briefly about the problems that are happening with dispatching fire services in certain areas. She said that it was not the fault of the dispatchers but of the equipment and that it was the responsibility of the installers to be sure that the reach of the radios was adequate in all corners of the county. JP Harrie Farrow asked if the situation had recently gotten worse and the response was that areas of Oak Grove, Alpena, and South Carroll County was where the problems were. JP Jack Deaton brought up that there was an ordinance on the agenda to address some of the problems with radio equipment and JP Craig Hicks thought that Drew Wood has taken care of South Carroll County with the trade in antennae at the Sheriff's Department.

JP Matt Phillips sponsored Mrs. Amy Leivan of the Eastern District Ambulance Service. She also mentioned that one of the towers had been down for 18 months and it ended up being a simple connector. Mrs. Amy reviewed financial information with the JPs saying that the Ambulance District holds 25% of income in reserve. Because of this the Ambulance District had about \$100,000 in which they were going to assist first responders with some equipment purchases. She also reported that the Ambulance District was working on forming an alliance with South Carroll County, Alpena, Mennonites, Berryville, etc. to see what was needed. The hope was that the fire departments would get back to the table in 2021 and the hope was to see progress. Covid 19 had stopped all progress on that front. She also discussed the need for dispatchers to be trained in rollover calls and that the system had the capability to do that but dispatchers were not trained. She also said that CPR can now be taught over the phone by doing compression only, but, again, training was required. She reported, too, that there were an excessive number of transfers from the Berryville Hospital which was not part of the original contract. She said that this acted just like a 911 call and took that truck out of the system during the time of transfer. She admitted when questioned by JPs as to whether the bid would have been different and she said that it would have. She has also emailed Dispatch Department Head Ryan Hand as well as the Sheriff to ask them to attend their meetings, but they have not attended.

In Old Business, the second reading of the 2021 Budget Ordinance was done. JP Deaton made the motion and JP Chuck Olson seconded the motion. A Roll Call vote was taken with no one being in opposition. JP Deaton made a motion for the third reading and JP Farrow seconded the motion. There was no discussion for either the second or third reading. JP Matt Phillips made the motion to accept and JP Kellie Matt seconded. The third roll call vote was taken. The 2021 Budget ordinance was passed.

In a flurry of end of year resolutions, a motion was made by JP John Howerton to read the Resolutions by title only. JP Phillips seconded the motion and a voice vote was taken with all in agreement. The first resolution was to appoint Jennifer Roney to the Eastern Carroll County Ambulance District. JP Matt Phillips said this would be a three-year term after he made a motion to accept. Seconding the motion was JP Howerton. The resolution passed. Ann Waits was approved as a member of the Inspiration Point Rural Fire Protection District commission. JP Chuck Olson made the motion to accept and JP Phillips seconded. There was no discussion and the resolution passed. A resolution for the appointments of five commissioners to the Sylvan Shores SSD was approved with a motion by JP Olson; seconded by JP Phillips. A resolution was passed to add Sheri Bickel to the Carroll County Library Department Board of Trustees to finish the term of Christina Courtwright. JP Hicks made the motion and JP Olson seconded.

The resolution to declare a vacancy in the Office of Justice of the Peace, District 4 was passed. JP Matt move to accept and JP Don McNeely seconded. JP Deaton said that this is a position that the governor appoints and a letter is sent to the governor within 10 days. It will be a two-year term and the person filling the position will not be able to run after the term is up. The roll call vote was unanimous. The notice of publication of the meeting had been done before the meeting satisfying the requirements of the state statutes. The letter to the Governor was sent on December 23, 2020.

The resolution to declare the vacancy in the office of Circuit Clerk and to fill the vacancy was next. JP McNeely made the motion to accept the resolution and seconded by JP Olson. In discussion, JP Deaton joked that if the Quorum Court did not approve the resolution did that mean that Mrs. Ramona Wilson, Circuit Clerk since 1999 would be staying? JP McNeely said that the Personnel Committee had gone through the Association of AR Counties to be sure of the procedures. He also said that the county was lucky to have Marilyn Ferrier who has worked in the Circuit Clerk's office was willing to step up. JP Matt said that the committee is recommending Mrs. Ferrier because they had spoken with her in an interview that they had conducted and along with JP McNeely and JP Larry Swofford felt that Marilyn would be a good fit because she was already working in the office and that she would not be seeking to run for the office because she would be retiring at that time. Circuit Clerk Ramona Wilson took the opportunity to introduce Mrs. Ferrier to everyone assembled and she felt that she would be leaving Carroll County and the Circuit Clerk's office in good hands. The resolution was passed after a roll call vote and the notice of publication of the meeting time and place had been done prior to the meeting in accord with state statute.

The ordinance approving and levying the county, municipal, and school tax millages was passed after a roll call vote. JP Deaton made the motion to approve; JP Phillips seconded. JP Farrow made an inquiry about what the purpose of the ordinance was and County Clerk Connie Doss gave a brief explanation.

Funds were approved to go to the Central Dispatch Capital Project Fund to do necessary upgrades and work on the equipment at Central Dispatch. JP Deaton said that Drew Wood did a good

job of going through everything and getting the best deals that he could. An option that included a maintenance agreement was approved and Drew was able to learn while the technicians were on site. JP Phillips said that the 50% down that was necessary was because the system had to be built. JP Deaton also reviewed what the position that Drew Wood made and that he was also applying for grants. The motion was made by JP Deaton; seconded by JP Phillips.

JP Deaton presented to the Quorum Court an ordinance to approve funds for laptop computers and software to assist the Justices with their duties. JP Swofford said that he had said at the last meeting that someone needed to present an ordinance and it would either pass or it wouldn't. JP Deaton said that if the vote was to do this then there would be no monthly packets mailed anymore and that everything would be sent via email. It would not save money immediately, but would over the long term. The laptops would be county property and when one JP left the position, the laptop would go to the next Justice. It was suggested that if everyone didn't have a email they used expressly for quorum court then they should get one. JP Farrow asked if there was a county system type of email that could be used and at this time there isn't. JP Deaton made the motion to pass and JP Phillips seconded. The measure did pass.

JP Phillips made a motion to add fund 1005 and revenue code 7112 to the County Clerk and Treasurer's books as recommended by Legislative Audit to receipt Cares Act funds received by the county. JP Hicks seconded the motion and explained briefly what it would do with County Clerk clarifying information. The roll call vote was unanimous.

In JP Comments, JP Kellie Matt said that the Historical Society was working on grants and she had a list of things that County Clerk Connie Doss might be able to help with. JP Chuck Olson said that the work had started on the Annex and was going smoothly. JP Craig Hicks thanked Ramona Wilson for her many years as a true public servant and that she had served most of his entire life. JP Phillips concurred with the sentiment. He also added that the Health Department's building was up and that the state had sent another building that workers could stay warm.

JP Matt Phillips asked retiring Circuit Clerk Ramona Wilson to come forward and be presented with a plaque from the Quorum Court for her years of service. Ramona was asked to speak to everyone assembled and she felt that she was put in the position for a purpose and hopefully had fulfilled that purpose. She received a standing ovation of appreciation.

JP Larry Swofford said that the next meeting was the January 4th meeting to set date and time of meetings for the next two years. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas then entertained a motion to adjourn which was given by JP Matt Phillips and seconded by JP Kellie Matt. The meeting was adjourned at 6:02pm.