

**JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS
CARROLL COUNTY QUORUM COURT
MARCH 16, 2020**

The March meeting of the Quorum Court was held in the Eastern District Courthouse in Berryville at 5:00pm in the Courtroom. Members of 4H were not available so JP Larry Swofford led the group in the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by everyone. Judge Sam Barr called the meeting to order at 5:03pm. County Clerk Connie Doss took roll call. All members were present except JP Marty Johnson. The Journal was approved with changes requested by JP Harrie Farrow. JP Craig Hicks asked to add Item “d” for a library resolution and JP Jack Deaton to add Item “e” for an ordinance concerning COVID-19 and employee policies during a health-emergency. All Justices approved the additions to the agenda.

There were no public comments. Under Miscellaneous, Olivia Foster with the Carroll County Extension offered an update and to thank the Quorum Court for their support. She said that 2019 was a big agriculture year and offered statistics concerning educational contacts and field/farm visits. Ms. Foster highlighted the 19,416 educational contacts and felt that the feedback made this program a “great, worthwhile” project. Tamara Allen, County Extension Agent, also told everyone that there are currently 462 4H members and that the clubs were growing with several splitting off to form new groups.

Road Foreman, Jim Kelley, brought the Quorum Court up to date on the County Road 705 (Clearwater) bridge that is now complete and open. He reported that the county cost for the bridge was \$114,398 with in-kind contributions of \$74,296 making out of pocket cost of the bridge \$40,102. Bridge inspectors visited the site last week and said it had been well-built. Mr. Kelley also spoke about the road-grader situation. He reported the leases on the current 10 pieces of equipment would be up in September with a couple of the machines due to be set aside sooner because the maximum number of use hours would be realized before September. He reported that there had been two bids for new leases with one from CAT being thrown out because it didn’t follow the request for bid specifications and the other was well out of the price range that the county could afford. He and County Judge, Sam Barr, had to make the decision to go with the option of looking for quality used graders and start to make purchases. Mr. Kelley said that the overseas market for previously leased equipment had dried up because the United States uses low sulfur diesel and overseas does not which causes injectors to plug up with in a few short machine hours. Mr. Kelly found five graders for varying prices that will be purchased through John Deere. Two will come from Benton County, 1 is in Springfield, and two were purchased at auction. JP Jack Deaton said that the budget committee had to have an emergency meeting and apologized for the short notice (approximately 2 ½ hours), but that it had been necessary because the auction was the following morning. CAT had originally had 5 graders, but had suspended purchase after the two bought by Deere on behalf of the County. JP John Howerton reiterated that the county currently has 10 leased graders, but had spoken with Jim Kelley who thought he could work with eight. JP Jack Deaton said that at the time the County started leasing graders, it was economically feasible, but not any longer as the cost keeps increasing. JP Larry Swofford echoed the sentiment. JP Harrie Farrow inquired about the life span of the machines and was told that with good maintenance, the road department had a 2005 model grader with 14,000 hours. JP Chuck Olson asked if the road department had the equipment to keep purchased machines going and was told with the exception of the computerized parts, they could adequately take care of the graders. JP Deaton said that the

budget committee had agreed to the five graders and an ordinance would likely appear next month to move funds to new line items with the possibility of a small amount being appropriated should there be a need.

In New Business, a motion by JP Jack Deaton and seconded by JP Matt Phillips was made to appropriate monies to their appropriate line items to reimburse for expenditures made on an insurance claim. The ordinance passed with all members present voting to approve.

Another ordinance was approved with a motion made by JP Matt Phillips and seconded by JP Larry Swofford to appropriate funds received in 2019 for a grant to take care of court security. The total funds was not expended in 2019, so the remaining balance that appears in 2020 had to be re-appropriated to the correct year to pay the bill.

The last of the ordinances to appropriate received funds for a department concerned the South Carroll County Volunteer Fire Department. Funds were received at the end of 2019 and needed to be appropriated to the department in order for the associated bill to be paid. JP Jack Deaton made the motion with JP Roger Hall making it a second. The roll call vote approved the measure.

A resolution in support of the efforts of the Friends of the Library to raise private funds for the proposed new public library brought discussion concerning what 'support' meant because JP Deaton said the word was in the same paragraph concerning money and needed clarification. JP Harrie Farrow clarified the intent to say that the resolution would show support and that the County was behind their efforts. JP Craig Hicks felt there was not a need to change any wording and that it was good 'as is'. JP Larry Swofford thought the idea was that the new building would be leased back to the county much like the Eureka Springs Library does, however, he did question again ownership of property belonging to the County (ie: shelves, books, etc.) and then of the building itself. JP Harrie Farrow said the building would belong to the Friends of the Library. JP Swofford asked if they were going to maintain the building. JP Don McNeely asked if Mrs. Julie Hall with the Berryville Library would mind speaking to the situation. She explained that the Friends of the Library and the Berryville Library Advisory Board were working on an agreement and that they were looking for a nod of support only from the Quorum Court. The Friends had to show community need and support for the project in an effort to raise private funds from larger donors. They needed to show that the building would be able to accommodate future needs as well. She also mentioned that a county department can be in a non county owned building. JP Deaton said that the library has been doing great things, but does this resolution mean that the Quorum Court is helping to raise funds. Ms. Hall said that the wording can be amended and brought back next month. JP Farrow thought that by adding "at no cost to the county" in the third sentence of the last paragraph, the situation could be resolved. All approved the wording change. JP Harrie Farrow had made a motion to approve. A roll call was taken with all present accepting the resolution.

An emergency ordinance was introduced to provide relief to all county employees during the COVID-19 crisis. A motion by JP Deaton and seconded by JP Chuck Olson then brought discussion from JP Harrie Farrow concerning the implications of a Federal law that might get passed that deals with the same issue. County Clerk Connie Doss read from an email from Chris Villines of the Association of Counties that addressed the issue in that any Federal law would supersede county. JP Olson said that we (the Quorum Court) owed it to the employees and that everyone in some way will be affected by this situation. JP Farrow said that county employees would likely stay home if sick because we would have this in place. With a roll call vote, the Quorum Court approved the ordinance.

JP Comments: JP Jack Deaton said he would bring an ordinance next month concerning Suellyn Frye needing additional funds to send a couple of people to a conference this year for continuing education. JP Matt Phillips said that Vonda with the hospital and Lisa Holt with the Health Department were here to answer any questions or concerns about COVID-19 in Carroll County. JP Harrie Farrow then asked Mrs. Vonda how many ventilators were available at the hospital and the response was that there were two with another ordered. Continued discussion between Ms. Farrow and Mrs. Vonda concerned what steps had been set into motion and those steps were that access was restricted to the ER entrance only, everyone was screened, limited visitors and compressed hours, no volunteers, no students, no public cafeteria available, and cardia rehab and other non essential programs has been cancelled. The hospital was on urgent need only and both the hospital and health department was screening and collecting samples already. Currently, according to Ms. Lisa, the county does not have any active cases and have had 5 negative tests.

JP Chuck Olson said that the facilities committee had met earlier and had several new projects that they would begin work on to include flooring at the prosecuting attorney's office, window replacement at the front of the courthouse, and painting. JP Don McNeely asked if the Sheriff had gotten any bids in for the healthcare outsourcing of the detention center and the Sheriff responded that they had contacted two and were working on bids. JP Kelly Matt asked if the health department had all of the medical supplies it would need and Ms. Lisa said that they were fine. Currently, there were 22 confirmed cases in the state, 132 negative tests statewide, with an additional 14 under investigation statewide. Carroll County had no positive cases. She also stressed that 80% of the cases showed with mild symptoms. Again, washing hands, clean door knobs, and switches were ways to stop the spread.

JP Matt Phillips also mentioned that the phone system at the health department was up and running and Mrs. Lisa confirmed her pleasure with the new system. JP Jack Deaton said that he had spoken to Corey Spain at the Detention Center about the boilers and that they were finished and all was working well.

In Comments by the Judge, he read a statement concerning the 2018 audit and that the one item that had been in the report had been resolved through ordinance 2019-66. Judge Sam Barr then asked County Clerk Connie Doss to read his Executive Proclamation of March 16, 2020 declaring County offices to be closed to the public beginning March 18th and that all avenues of electronic means, mail, and phone would be utilized to see that the public was served as well as possible during the current health emergency in the state. Employees would continue to report to work unless ill.

The Judge entertained a motion to adjourn which JP Kelly Matt gave and the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:00pm.