

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS
Carroll County Quorum Court
May 17, 2021

The regular meeting of the Carroll County Quorum Court was held at the Eastern District Courthouse, Berryville, at 5:00 pm. Notice to the press was made and the meeting was audio as well as video recorded. Press was present as were several elected officials, and the County attorneys Tony Rogers and Thomas Allgood. County Judge Sam Barr was absent and JP Larry Swofford presided over the meeting. JP Matt Phillips led the assembled in a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll Call was conducted. There were two Journals of Proceedings that needed to be approved. JP Jack Deaton made a motion and it was seconded by JP Roger Hall to accept the Journal of April 19, 2021, and JP Hall and JP Phillips made the motion and second for the Journal of the May 11, 2021 Emergency meeting. Both were passed with no changes to be made. There were no Committee Reports, Public Comments, Miscellaneous, or Old Business. JP Craig Hicks asked to have an item “g” added to the agenda of which was approved.

In New Business, the Airport has received a grant for coronavirus relief. A motion to accept the Resolution was made by JP John Howerton and seconded by JP Harrie Farrow. A roll call vote passed the Resolution.

As explained by JP Deaton, the County is set to receive funds through the American Rescue Plan Act and the Ordinance was set up the fund numbers for the money to be deposited to in the future. Treasurer Makita Williams noted that the funds were coming directly from the US Department of Treasury and that there would be guidelines to let the county know how the funds could be spent. A motion had been made before the discussion by JP Deaton and seconded by JP Phillips. The Ordinance to set up the fund numbers was approved.

Next on the agenda was a similar Ordinance setting up fund accounts for the grant that the Health Department received for remodeling and appliances. A motion by JP Phillips was made and seconded by JP Deaton. The measure passed.

A motion by JP Craig Hicks and seconded by JP John Howerton were made to accept an appropriation of funds for new Dell computers for the Public Defender’s office. JP Deaton offered that their old systems were going down and he pointed out that by ordinance the County was responsible for this needed expenditure. The Ordinance passed.

A motion by JP Chuck Olson and seconded by JP Phillips brought with it discussion from JP Olson explaining that it would be a storage container to be located in a secured area at the Detention Center/Sheriff’s office to be used to sort and store evidence. JP Duane Coatney asked why long-term storage was not being considered and that it would be far better to build something permanent than “kicking the can down the road”. JPs said that this was an immediate need due to the emergency of taking care of the evidence properly and as JP Don McNeely pointed out, lumber prices had increased 280% in the last four months. JP Larry Swofford acknowledged County Clerk Connie Doss who asked County Attorney Tony Rogers whether building would be considered an expansion that would need to be brought to the voter. Mr. Rogers was unsure as it could maybe be considered maintenance or capital improvements. Discussion ensued further with JP Swofford finally asking for the vote. All voted to accept the appropriation for the storage container and necessary supplies except JP Coatney.

An Ordinance was introduced regulating vicious dogs. A motion to accept was made by JP McNeely and seconded by JP Olson. JP McNeely said that the information was compiled by County Attorney Thomas Allgood and would take care of an attack by a vicious dog to a person or pet. JP Farrow asked why it concerned just dogs and Mr. Allgood replied that it was a

combination of Benton County's and the City of Eureka Springs' ordinances that they have on file. JP Swofford pointed out in the discussion that this was not a nuisance ordinance. It pertained to vicious dogs. Discussion continued with wanting to make the ordinance "vicious animals" with a motion from JP Coatney and seconded by JP Farrow to change the word "dog" to "animals". Further discussion ensued with Mr. Allgood responding that this would likely not work because of the definitions of what a vicious dog is. JP Swofford reminded the Justices that a motion and second to change the language was on the table and called for a roll call vote. All voted against changing the ordinance except for JPs Coatney and Farrow. The motion also still on the table by JPs McNeely and Olson to accept the ordinance as it was presented was passed in a roll call vote with no one giving a "Nay".

The last agenda item had been added by JP Craig Hicks. JP Hicks pointed out that at the emergency meeting on May 11th there was an oversight and miscommunication as to the number of employees that would be covered for the \$2.00 hour raise. JP Farrow also noted that there was "plenty of room for confusion" and offered that in the future clear communication on a motion would be welcomed. JP Deaton was told originally that this ordinance was for only three employees, but it was actually for the remaining seven supervisory positions that hadn't been covered previously. JP Hicks let the Justices know that the matter of pay raises did not come from the employees of the jail as had been reported and that the raises may or may not help the current understaffing. The Sheriff did say that he had received two applications since the May 11th ordinance. JP McNeely said that he had spoken to someone on the Prison Board and that understaffing at detention centers was a problem all over the state. JP Deaton suggested that he felt there were too many "brother-in-law positions" and that the Quorum Court controls the number of positions and the pay. He also reminded everyone that the Detention Center employees were the only ones who received a raise at the beginning of the year and that the budget committee would be looking at Central Dispatch and the Libraries at budget time. JP Farrow said that she feels better about the \$2.00 hour rate because with the other county paid benefits the \$12.75 plus the raise and bonus helped considerably. She offered a story about an experience with supply and demand and how salary amounts sometimes not about skill or lack thereof. JP McNeely pointed out that in the conversation that he had with the person from the Prison Board that the Detention Center can't be shut down and there would have to be a suit brought up to do so. Sheriff Jim Ross said that there still always had to be transport and four people on the floor. JP Swofford agreed that everyone was "hunting" employees right now. With that a roll call vote approved the measure.

In JP Comments, JP Olson said that the project to do some remodeling on the Eastern District Courthouse was moving ahead and hopefully costs would be forthcoming. JP Matt Phillips said that the "guard-shack" at the Health Department was ready for use to conduct clinics, etc., and that the remodeling project had begun.

County Clerk Connie Doss read two court orders from Judge Barr concerning the disposal of laptops in Elections and the Eureka Springs Library during the Judge's Comments. JP Larry Swofford entertained a motion to adjourn which JP Phillips gave and JP Hall seconded. The meeting ended at 5:40 pm.