

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS  
Carroll County Quorum Court  
October 18, 2021

The regular meeting of the Carroll County Quorum Court was held at Southern Heights Baptist Church, Berryville, and was called to order by Judge Sam Barr at 5:00pm. Notice was sent to the press prior to the meeting with one member of the press present. The meeting was audio recorded and made available to KTHS and Carroll County News upon their request. Also present were the Assessor, Treasurer, Green Forest and Berryville Library, Suellyn Fry with CERT, 4-H, and representative from the Sheriff's department (Blake Ringberg). The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were done and roll call was taken with all members of the Quorum Court present along with County Clerk Connie Doss and County Judge Sam Barr. The Journal of Proceedings from the September 20<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved with a motion to accept by JP Harrie Farrow and seconded by JP Roger Hall.

JP Chuck Olson during Committee Reports reported that the Detention Center roof had four leaks making one of the pods unavailable for inmates. He said that Harness Roofing would be coming to assess the roof on Thursday. In Personnel, JP Olson, said the Committee would meet to see about alleviating the staffing shortage at Central Dispatch. JP Jack Deaton reported that the operations section of the 2022 Budget was complete and that the Budget Committee would discuss possible salary increases at their meeting which was to be held after the Quorum Court meeting. He also noted that the Premium Pay Ordinance was on the agenda that the Committee had been working on for the past couple of weeks.

There were no changes to the Agenda and no Public Comments made at the time specified on the Agenda. Officer Blake Ringberg with the Sheriff's Department was asked by JP Deaton during JP Comments to update the Justices on the work that had been done with the storage building that would house evidence. VonDa Moore with Mercy Hospital spoke to the group updating everyone about happenings at the Hospital. She reiterated that the Hospital had a \$16.8M budget with \$1.2M Net Income. They are a 25 bed Critical Care hospital that had recently been reaccredited for 36 months. This accreditation included among other areas the Sleep and Heart Centers. Justices asked several questions concerning receipt of any Federal funding for Covid-19 and while an exact amount was not given Ms. Moore thought it to be over \$750,000. She also reported that volunteer numbers were down due to retirees and the pandemic. JP Kellie Matt asked if the Hospital was mandating vaccinations for all employees and the response was that it did but offered religious or medical exemptions. JP Larry Swofford asked if volunteers also had to be vaccinated and the answer was yes as well. Ms. Catherine Baker with NWAEDD was unable to attend who was to speak to the Court about their services and how ARP (American Rescue Plan Act) funds could be used. She will reschedule. There was no old business.

In New Business, the Court had several items under consideration. The first was a resolution submitted by JP John Howerton, read by title only, to set up a temporary committee to look at the feasibility of building an Eastern District Court Complex at or near the Detention Center on County owned property. A motion by JP Deaton and seconded by JP Matt Phillips was made. JP Duane Coatney said during discussion that he felt this was selfish to consider only the Eastern side and consideration should be made for the Western District as well. JP Deaton said that the committee would discuss both with JP Olson saying that a new courthouse was the way to move forward. JP Howerton said that the intent was to build for both and it was pointed

out by JP Craig Hicks that to combine Eastern and Western would require legislative action. The roll call vote approved the temporary committee to be called the Eastern District Judicial Building Steering Committee who would report back to the Quorum Court on its findings in 180 days.

Item “b” on the agenda was a resolution to authorize the County Judge to apply for a grant for internet through the AR Rural Connect Grant for the Northern part of the County. It was also read by title only. It was explained during comments that there had been a grant resolution done earlier in the year for the Southern part of the County so this one will cover the remaining half. JP Howerton asked which department this would go under which was answered that the funds would be used by a private internet provider company. JP Harrie Farrow asked if there would be any cost to the County. JP Deaton said there would be no cost to the county. The Resolution passed.

The County needed to adopt a Federal Award Administration Policy because it had received funds from CARES and now from the US Treasury (ARP). JP Deaton explained that Craighead County had adopted a similar policy which uses the Federal Policy and it was simpler to use it since the other would require setting up a Grant Committee like bigger counties sometimes did. There was a motion to approve by JP Deaton and seconded by JP Olson. The measure passed.

JP Matt Phillips said of the next ordinance that it had been brought up at the last meeting and was needed. He also made the motion to accept with JP Howerton seconding the motion. The ordinance would appropriate funds to replace a plaster wall that was deteriorating at the Western District Courthouse on the County floor’s hallway. The roll call vote was unanimous.

Next on the agenda was an ordinance to reimburse payroll line items for funds received through the STEP Grant. JP Deaton explained that this grant helped with officers’ salaries when they worked certain high traffic periods (holidays). JP Deaton made the motion to accept and JP Matt Phillips seconded the motion. It passed.

An ordinance allowing the services of Dustin Griffith, Ozark CNC, who is the spouse to April Griffith, Eureka Springs Library Director, was passed with a motion by JP Harrie Farrow and seconded by JP Chuck Olson. The unusual circumstance under 14-14-1202 was due to the Green Forest’s Library inability to locate someone to build the specialized shelving needed for the space requirements at the Library. JP Farrow continued that this ordinance would make it legal for the Green Forest Library to use Mr. Griffith and the amount was under the State bid requirement amount.

Lastly, an ordinance was introduced to provide Premium Pay under ARP (American Rescue Plan Act) to County employees. JP Deaton explained that the Budget committee had spent “lots of hours” and followed the Federal interim rules regarding the amounts that could be paid out. Time worked from home was deducted to the best of the ability of the County Clerk’s office and that this money was well-deserved for a job well-done by County employees. JP Craig Hicks said that he was “excited and proud” to have been part of the committee and JP Deaton said the committee had lots of help to get the ordinance completed. JP Kellie Matt asked if the funds would go out before the holidays and according to the ordinance, the funds would go out the first payroll in November. JP John Howerton said the amount of premium would be \$2.40 an hour. JP Harrie Farrow wanted to make sure that everyone knew that the Quorum Court members would also receive funds as there had been risk involved in gathering for their regular meetings. JP Kellie Matt made the motion to accept. JP Matt Phillips seconded the motion with all Justices approving the measure passing it by the 2/3<sup>rd</sup> vote requirement.

As stated above, JP Jack Deaton asked for Blake Ringberg to come forward to address the Quorum Court about the completion of the storage unit that would house evidence. Officer Ringberg thanked the Court for their support and said that the unit had its shelving, was painted, wired, humidifier in place, and was locked in a secure area of the Detention Center. He also offered a tour to any Justice who wanted it.

Judge Barr entertained a motion to adjourn which was given by JP Jack Deaton and seconded by JP Duane Coatney. The meeting was adjourned at 5:35pm.