

MINUTES
SEVIER COUNTY QUORUM COURT MEETING
2:00 P.M., MONDAY JANUARY 10, 2022

The Sevier County Quorum Court met at 2:00 P.M., Monday, January 10, 2022, in the Sevier County Courthouse Courtroom with County Judge Greg Ray presiding. The meeting was opened with prayer by Judge Ray followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called with the following Justices present: Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, and David Wright. Absent – Greg Wright. (Greg came in at 2:03) Upon a motion by Roxy Stephens and second by Roger Whitmore, the Quorum Court voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting and to approve the minutes as emailed. A roll call vote was taken. Yes –Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright and Greg Wright. Absent – None. No – None. The motion passed.

Committee and Other Reports –

Lori House, CEO of Sever County Medical Center was present to report on the progress of the new hospital construction and Financial report for same. Ms. House reported that the expected completion date is August 5 and opening date for the hospital is now September 12 due to supply chain issues. She indicated that the sewer system is going in and looks good. Lori informed the court that the hospital has opened their own bank account with the amount approved for their budget. They will begin doing their own payroll as well as accounts payable. She indicated that the process for the hospital to withhold from payroll and pay, both APERS and BCBS, is in the works now. David Wright asked if the sewer pipe was going to be double-walled. Lori told him yes, it is. She said she was learning much more about sewer than she ever thought that she would. Lori with the help of the Judge stated that there is a station where the sewage is ground up, a pump station to carry it. David asked if there was only one pump. She stated that there is only one pump and it will handle the load.

Judge Ray thanked Representative Deann Vaught for being in the meeting today. She took the opportunity to announce her intent to run for re-election to the Arkansas House of Representative, this time in District 87.

Old Business – There is no old business.

New Business –

1. The first agenda item is a proposed ordinance setting the time and date for the 2022 Quorum Court. Clerk Akin read the ordinance that re-establishes the time and dates already in place with the exception on the November meeting which will be held on the third Monday of November at 2:00 P.M. Angie Walker stated that she would like to see the time set for 12:00 Noon. A motion was made by David Wright and seconded by Roxy Stephens to suspend the rule and place the ordinance on the second reading by title only. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Roger Whitmore, David Wright and Greg Wright. No – Angie Walker. The motion passed. Clerk Akin read the ordinance for the second reading by title. A motion was made by David Wright to suspend the rule and place the ordinance on the third reading by title only. Roxy Stephens seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Yes –Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Roger Whitmore, David Wright and Greg Wright. No – Angie Walker. The motion passed. Clerk Akin read the ordinance for the third time by title. David Wright made a motion to approve the ordinance. Roxy Stephens seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Yes –Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, and David Wright. No – Angie Walker and Greg Wright. The motion passed.
2. Second on the agenda is the appointment of a delegate to serve on the Arkansas Quorum Court Association for 2022. Judge Ray asked if Earl Battiest was the 2021 delegate? Earl stated that he was and that he enjoyed doing it. He indicated that he was willing to continue in that position if appointed. Angie Walker made a motion to re-appoint him as delegate. Kenneth Currence seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Marilyn Archer, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Abstain – Earl Battiest. The motion passed.
3. The next agenda item is a request to appropriate an additional \$180,893. To the 2021 budget for the Sevier County Hospital Fund. This will be to Fund 3047 and will be used to finish 2021 expenditures. David Wright brought up the sales tax money that was fraudulently taken. Treasurer Barnes informed the court that this money had been received by the county last week. David asked if safety measures had been taken to keep it from happening again. The Judge stated that measures have been taken to the extent possible knowing that there are hackers trying daily to find a way to get into every system. Clerk Akin explained that whatever is left in this fund after all 2021 expenditures, will be expended to the Hospital. Angie Walker made a motion to approve, seconded by Roxy Stephens. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. The motion passed.
4. Item four on the agenda is a proposed ordinance allowing the transfer of election equipment purchased by the State of Arkansas for Sevier County. Clerk Akin explained that this equipment could not be sold to other counties because Sevier County had not purchased it. It will therefore be transferred to other counties that can use it. Clerk Akin read the ordinance. Angie Walker made a motion to suspend the rule and place the ordinance on the second reading by title only. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. The motion passed. David Wright asked if the purchase of the new equipment had been approved. Clerk Akin said that it had. Clerk Akin read the ordinance for the second reading by title. A motion was made by Angie Walker and seconded by Greg Wright to suspend the rule and place the ordinance on the third reading by title only. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. The motion passed. Clerk Akin read the ordinance for the third reading by title. A motion was made by Greg Wright and seconded by Angie Walker to approve the ordinance allowing for the transfer of

election equipment to Drew County and Franklin County. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. The motion passed.

5. The fifth agenda item is a proposed amendment to the 2022 Juvenile Intake budget. This budget was expected to be administered in the county that the new Juvenile Intake Officer resides in. Judge Chesshir asked that Sevier County carry this budget due to a lack of office space in Pike County and lack of experience with this budget in Howard County. It is expected to be for this year only. At the end of this year, the other three counties will be billed for their portion of this budget. The proposed budget is attached. A motion was made by Angie Walker and seconded by Earl Battiest to approve this amendment to the 2022 budget. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. The motion passed.
6. The last agenda item is to discuss purchase of a replacement for the 2013 Dodge Durango that was totaled. Sheriff Gentry stated that the insurance company will be issuing a check to the county for \$15,600. He has priced two used vehicles. One is a 2019 for \$35,460. The other is a Dodge Ram for \$ 34,650. The total amount will be appropriated to the Sheriff's budget. The insurance reimbursement will cover a portion of the cost. After some discussion of how much difference he would need, it was decided that he would need approximately \$22,000 in addition to the insurance amount. This will allow the Sheriff to purchase whichever vehicle is available or the one he chooses. A motion was made by Angie Walker to approve the request. Earl Battiest seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. The motion passed.

The Sheriff gave details of the incident in which the 2013 Durango was totaled. Arkansas Highway Patrol was in pursuit of a stolen DOT pick-up between Saline River and Green's Chapel Road. The suspect went down a dead-end road and abandoned the pick-up. Investigator Jeff Wahls turned down a dirt road in the area and drove up on the suspect. He asked the suspect what was wrong. The suspect told him his car was broke down. Jeff told him he would have to secure him with handcuffs. When he tried to put the cuffs on, the suspect turned on him, got him on the ground, put his knee in Jeff's chest. He took his gun, fired a shot in the air, pointed the gun at Jeff, then got off him. They scuffled. Jeff was able to get service on his portable radio and began yelling for help. The suspect got in Jeff's vehicle and left. While attempting to avoid officers, the suspect went down a dead-end road going off a bluff and ended up about 50 to 60 yards from the lake. In the midst of this chase, a hunter's dog was run over by the suspect. The owner of the dog asked the Sheriff to pay for the veterinary bills due to injuries sustained. Since the request was denied the owner of the dog is threatening to bring formal charges against the Sheriff.

Roxy Stephens asked the Sheriff if there was a difference in his opinion of which used vehicle would be better. He stated that he did not, but he had spoken with Little River and they have a similar Ford truck that they said has about 300,000 miles and has had no major work done.

Announcements –

The following announced their intent to run for re-election: County Judge Greg Ray, Assessor Sheila Ridley, Treasurer Heather Barnes, Circuit Clerk Kathy Smith, J.P.'s Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. Sheriff Robert Gentry. Deputy County Clerk Renea Bailey was present and announced her intention to run for County Clerk.

Judge Ray informed the court that next month after the meeting there will be a dedication ceremony to dedicate benches to previous Justices Mike Archer and Charles Keels.

Kenneth Currence announced a benefit for Wanell Bradshaw in Provo on January 29. Wanell has been very active in Sevier County and is battling cancer for the fourth time.

Adjournment –

With no further business to discuss, Greg Wright made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Roxy Stephens. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,



Debbie Akin
County Clerk