

MINUTES
SEVIER COUNTY QUORUM COURT MEETING
2:00 P.M., MONDAY February 10, 2020

The Sevier County Quorum Court met at 2:00 p.m., Monday, February 10, 2020, in the Courthouse Conference Room with County Judge Greg Ray presiding. The meeting was opened with prayer by Sheriff Robert Gentry followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called with the following Justices present: Michael Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Charles Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. Absent: None. Upon a motion by Roxy Stephens and second by David Wright, 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 – Michael Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Charles Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright and Greg Wright. No- None. Absent – None. The motion passed.

Committee and Other Reports

Update from Hospital Board of Governors – There was no one in attendance to give an update. Judge Ray informed the court that the Board is meeting often and working diligently to get things done. He said that they met last week and discussed some of the equipment needed. There were questions regarding funding that cannot be answered till the tax starts coming in. The land acquisition is still in process.

Kaylen Lewis of Jason Owens Law Firm to address Quorum Court issues – Kaylen was introduced as the County Attorney. She informed the Justices that she works closely with the AAC and in the past worked with Mike Rainwater. She stated that she would be happy to answer any questions or issues in regard to the Quorum Court. Business cards were given out with Ms. Lewis' contact information.

Mike Archer asked about nepotism laws. Ms. Lewis stated the Quorum Court could make policy regarding nepotism. He mentioned that a department head had changed the hours their employees work. He also questioned whether they should be taking a lunch break. She explained that if the employee was on call during that time it is best to pay for that lunch break. She also explained that the individual department may have a different need than the rest of the county and could potentially make a separate policy for their particular need.

David Wright stated that in regard to the recent discussions about policy for the county, he had thought the Quorum Court did not have authority to make policy. In light of the information handed out today, he knows that is not correct. The Quorum Court is very much responsible for that. Ms. Lewis read some of the law regarding that in particular. She emphasized that the Quorum Court cannot do anything to affect the hiring or firing of employees. David Wright asked if the Quorum Court could pass an ordinance implementing time clocks. Kaylen did not give a definite answer about timeclocks, she only addressed the way it was worded in the ordinance presented at this meeting that stated a time keeping system. She stated that there is no case law to refer to in regard to time clocks. Kaylen also stated that the County policy may be general and then each department may have a policy for their department specifically. Earl Battiest stated that the Quorum Court is the legislative body of the County and thus should be able to make policy that best suits the county. He said he felt if a policy was made it should go for the entire county and different departments should not be able to choose whether or not they want to follow it. Attorney Lewis would only specifically address "a timekeeping system" as that was the wording in the most recent proposed ordinance. Since there were several different versions of the policy and ordinance, a motion was made by Mike Archer to table this till March so that everyone could review these recent changes. The motion was seconded by Roxy Stephens. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Michael Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Charles Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright and Greg Wright. No- None. Absent – None. The motion passed.

Old Business

Use of Timeclocks - Becky Boyett of Financial Intelligence was on hand to make a presentation in regard to the Timeclock System that was purchased in 2019. Ms. Boyett represents Financial Intelligence which is the company that provides the county Payroll, Accounts Payable, and Treasury software. She gave information indicating how the Timeclocks could benefit the County as well as the different ways that could be used to clock in and out by every department in the county. She demonstrated how the time clocks could be used by the employees as well as the ease of use for the supervisor or department heads. The system would allow the

employees to see present and past time worked as well as allowing the employee to request scheduled time off. The supervisor or department head could easily see employees who are currently clocked in and out as well as simplify the approval of employee time off requests and will provide a readily available schedule to assist in the scheduling to avoid situations where too many employees are off work leaving areas not covered as necessary. A timeclock system is also a benefit to the County if there should ever be litigation. This was confirmed by Attorney Kaylen Lewis. Examples were given of handwritten timesheets from our County that could easily cause litigation due to inconsistencies and possible misinterpretation. The presentation also included a visual example of clocking in with a card reader, on the computer, a fingerprint reader, and a telephone app. Ms. Boyett stressed the accuracy of a time clock system. A system like this would give the department head total control in scheduling and approving time.

Proposed Ordinance revising Sevier County Employment Policy - Discussion began with questions about wording in the proposed ordinance to make changes in the County Employment Policy. The proposed wording in the policy has "timekeeping system" and it had previously been discussed as "time clock system". Clerk Akin explained that she had asked Atty. Lewis to look over the policy and Ordinance and some changes were made prior to the meeting. Earl Battiest stated that the justices would need to have opportunity to look over these changes before contemplating passage. He also stated that the original Ordinance only addressed Timeclocks and not the changes in the county policy. Clerk Akin stated that she could produce separate ordinances. This item and the Use of Time Clocks have become intertwined. This will be tabled until March as voted during the Old Business discussion.

New Business

The First agenda item is a review of the 2018 Legislative Audit results. All Justices said they had received their copy of the audit. Judge Ray stated that there were no findings in the 2018 audit. No action is required.

Next on the agenda was a request by the Sheriff to allocate money to replace two vehicles that were wrecked and were a total loss. The Sheriff told the details of the two incidents. The Sheriff informed the court of the payoff for the wrecked cars. The sheriff gave the details involving the wrecked vehicles. The amount of insurance pay-off will be \$23,261. He requested an additional amount of \$11,670 to go toward the purchase of a pickup that was located at Gentry Chevrolet. It is a slightly used 2019 model. Greg Wright asked if the officers go through any high-speed chase training. Sheriff Gentry said they do go through training at ALETA. Greg Wright also asked if there were any other bids received. David Wright asked the Sheriff what the pursuit policy is for his department. Sheriff Gentry stated that he could not quote it but stated that they pursue until it is a danger to the officer or others. There was discussion about what that policy is and if it was followed. The Sheriff said that they followed protocol. David stated that he had gone by to see the wrecked Durango. He was not pleased to see that there was a great amount of dirt and trash in the floor of the vehicle. He questioned whether the department kept the vehicles clean. Sheriff Gentry said that Chief Deputy Dowdle does vehicle inspections regularly. David stated that he was not for replacing a vehicle if they were not taking care of it. He also said this was the fault of the supervisor. Justice Stephens stated that this should be a matter of pride to keep vehicles clean. Justice Currence asked about what the speed should be for law enforcement traveling through Lockesburg at a high rate of speed. He indicated that a few days prior there were three sheriff vehicles that were driving very fast through the intersection in Lockesburg. The sheriff said that they could go 20 MPH over the posted limit. Greg Wright questioned if it wasn't 15 MPH. The Sheriff said it was 15 – 20. The Sheriff explained that depending on what type of call they were responding to they might drive fast. Earl Battiest stated that we wouldn't want someone to be hurt or killed from them driving too fast. Mike Archer suggested that the sheriff get a vehicle off state auction site. The sheriff said last year he had to wait 9 months to get vehicles. The sheriff has two vehicles on order that were ordered in December. David Wright asked what the cost would be for a state vehicle. The sheriff told him it would be \$27,000. David asked what they were driving now. Sheriff Gentry said they were driving two spare vehicles. David asked if they could make it with those? Sheriff Gentry said he didn't know. Judge Ray asked if they wanted to table this and let the sheriff check around on prices. Greg Wright made a motion to table it till March. The motion was seconded by David Wright. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Michael Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Charles Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright and Greg Wright. No- None. Absent – None. The motion passed.

The next item on the agenda was the appointment of a delegate to the Association of Quorum Courts. Greg Wright was the delegate last year and was nominated to continue through this year. He was willing to serve. A motion was made to appoint Greg Wright by David Wright and seconded by Roxy Stephens. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Michael Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Charles Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright and Greg Wright. No- None. Absent – None. The motion passed.

The last agenda item was to discuss the dispatcher service fees to the City of Horatio. After some discussion it was decided to raise the rate by 2%, which is what the dispatchers' pay was raised for 2020. A motion was made by David Wright and seconded by Greg Wright to raise the fee by 2%. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Michael Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Charles Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright and Greg Wright. No- None. Absent – None. The motion passed.

Announcements – Judge reminded everyone about the Road tax issue that will be on the ballot in November. This is an extension of a tax that is in place now. If not extended the County will lose a considerable amount of money each year. Bruce Jackson was present in the meeting and encouraged everyone to advocate for this road tax extension.

The Judge asked the newspaper representative to be sure to put in his report that the Road Dept. now has a security system due to the stolen vehicle incident.

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

Respectfully Submitted,



Debbie Akin
County Clerk