

MINUTES
SEVIER COUNTY QUORUM COURT MEETING
2:00 P.M., MONDAY APRIL 11, 2022

The Sevier County Quorum Court met at 2:00 P.M., Monday, April 11, 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, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. Absent – Angie Walker. 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 –Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. Absent – Angie Walker. Angie Arrived at 2:03. 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 presented a Financial statement produced by Horne Group. She reported that the expected completion date may be pushed out due to the recent vandalism at the building site. There are scheduled to meet to discuss when materials will be replaced and if there will be a change in opening date. Lori stated that things are going well with AirEvac and all other areas of the construction. According to Ms. House there have been additional security measures taken at the hospital site since the vandalism.

Southwest EMS provided a Quarterly report. There was no representative available to present it. Clerk Akin explained that there was some additional information on the report this quarter. There is a category of Standbys. This refers to time spent at fire call-outs, etc. The report also gives miles driven for these call-out situations.

Old Business – There is no old business.

New Business –

1. The first agenda item is a request to confirm the appointment of J. D. Miner to fill a vacancy on the Sevier County Airport Board. Judge Ray explained that this vacancy is due to the resignation of Norman Cox. A motion was made by David Wright to confirm the appointment. Greg Wright 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. No – None. Absent – None.
2. Agenda item 2 is a request to approve a payment of \$29,000 to the Sevier County Airport Board from the Airport Fund. This is reimbursement for fuel that is covered by grant money. (\$20,000 Airport CARES Act Grant & \$9,000 Airport Coronavirus Response Grant) David Wright made a motion to approve the payment and Angie Walker 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. No – None. Absent – None.
3. Next on the agenda was a request for an additional appropriation of \$4,000 to the County Clerk 2022 budget line item 1000.0101.3102 Computer software, support, & maintenance. Clerk Akin explained that this is for scanning capability for the Accounts Payable Clerk. She would be able to scan and retain invoices and claims digitally eliminating the need to keep paper copies. She further explained that this will be a monthly cost of \$300.00. It is not a one-time cost. Angie Walker made a motion to approve the appropriation. Roxy Stephens made the second to 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. No – None. Absent – None.
4. The next agenda item is a proposed ordinance amending the 2022 operating budget. These amendments are items previously approved by the Quorum Court in 2022. Clerk Akin read the ordinance. Roxy Stephens made a motion to approve. David Wright 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. No – None. Absent – None.
5. Item five on the agenda is a proposed ordinance making final amendments to the 2021 Sevier County Operating Budget. Clerk Akin read the ordinance. She then went over items that had not previously been approved. These items were: additional appropriation of \$16,420 to Coronavirus Relief Fund-1005; additional appropriation of \$9971 to Criminal Justice Fund-3017; additional appropriation of \$21,181 to Sevier County Medical Center Fund; \$200 to Hospital Construction Fund-4001. There was a proposed transfer of funds from Fund 3404 Jail Operations & Maintenance Fund of \$9971 to Criminal Justice for the additional appropriation and \$39,785.49 to RSAT Fund-3503 to bring that Fund to a zero balance as of 12/31/2021. Earl Battiest asked that the transfer come from County General Reserve rather than Fund 3404. Clerk Akin asked that the ordinance be approved with the requested changes. A motion was made by Roxy Stephens and seconded by David Wright to approve the ordinance with changes. 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. No – None. Absent – None.
6. A discussion of salaries was the next item on the agenda. Sandra Jackson, a Sevier County citizen was present to initiate the discussion. Sandra introduced herself as a long time resident and farmer of Sevier County. She stated that she is very active in the county and talks to a lot of its residents. Mrs. Jackson explained that she is interested in seeing equitable raises for all county employees in light of the approved \$2.50 raise approved at the last Quorum Court meeting for County Deputies. She stated that she agrees that the deputies are a vital

part of the county and their jobs are critical. She further stated that all other departments in the county are just as vital to the county's success. She specifically mentioned Road Department employees, Sanitation workers, Assessment of County properties, Collection of taxes, Treasury duties, Elections, and Building Custodians. Sandra said that there is not a county employee that is not vital and she feels the employees have been slighted by being overlooked for the same type of increase. Sandra mentioned that she has talked with several citizens of the county who feel the same way she does. She states that one business person said they would never vote for another tax increase in the county if this was not addressed. She stated that revenue is up in the county and she asked that the Quorum Court/Budget Committee please consider giving a comparable raise to all. Judge Ray suggested that the Budget Committee address this issue in a special meeting. Angie Walker said the Budget Committee had discussed this subject numerous times, and she feels the entire Quorum Court should take part in this meeting. It was agreed that this discussion would take place immediately following the regular meeting on May 9.

7. The final item on the agenda was a presentation by Andy Jackson of Arthur J. Gallagher Company in regard to self-insurance Insurance for Sevier County. Mr. Jackson explained that the term self-insured is not an accurate term because the insurance is partial self-insurance and re-insurance is required. The question is how can you use collective buying power (county & hospital) to be able to keep good, quality coverage on all the employees while covering them and controlling cost. Re-insurance is the protection if one or more employees become very ill. He suggests appropriate pharmacy contracting. Gallagher will disclose all fees up front. They operate on fees, not commissions. They will look at feasibility of the county going to a plan like this and long-term plan. It is not how much can we save but how can we control the plateau for the long term. Angie Walker stated that they had been looking at this for a couple of months and when the county has a hospital, they would like to direct county employees to that facility and their services, and to contract with the insurance company to that end. Mr. Jackson talked of using collective buying power of hospital and county but having separate plans and buying Re-Insurance, administration services, and pharmacy separately. Mr. Jackson went into quite a bit of detail about wellness, dental, vision, etc. He said that the first step would be to get a census of our employees. He asked for a release to get information from BCBS. While Gallagher Co. is working on a proposal, the next step would be to have a 2-hour information class about the insurance terminology and language. He suggested someone from every department attend this class. This discussion ended with an understanding that the County Clerk's Office would respond to an e-mail with necessary information to make a proposal.

There was a brief discussion about when to have a meeting about pay increases. It was decided that since the budget committee wanted to involve the entire Quorum Court that it would be discussed in conjunction with May Quorum Court Meeting.

Announcements –There were no announcements.

Adjournment –

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