

MINUTES

SEVIER COUNTY QUORUM COURT MEETING

2:00 P.M., MONDAY JULY 11, 2022

The Sevier County Quorum Court met at 2:00 P.M., Monday, July 11, 2022, in the Sevier County Courthouse Courtroom with County Judge Greg Ray presiding. The meeting was opened with prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance lead by Judge Ray. The roll was called with the following Justices present: Marilyn Archer, Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright and Greg Wright. Upon a motion by Roxy Stephens and second by Greg 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, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright and Greg Wright. No – None. The motion passed.

Committee and Other Reports –

Lori House, CEO of Sevier 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 has been pushed back by 60 days to December 5th or 6th due to lack of qualified workers. Ms. House said those dates are not set in stone at this time. Ms. House stated that due to the set back Nabholz is going to pay for storage of furniture and equipment that is scheduled to come in. Angie Walker asked Ms. House what the time frame looked like now as far as hiring the remaining staff. Ms. House said that everything has been delayed by the set back of opening the hospital. They have over 300 applications for the 100 jobs that are available. They are going to continue to bring people on, and let them know they cannot come on board until x date. David Wright brought up Agenda item 7, and Mrs. Sandra Jackson stated there was plenty money to cover the baby box. Treasurer Heather Barnes let Mr. Wright know this was just appropriating monies to the correct fund. Earl Battiest ask Ms. House items that have been completed so far. Ms. House stated that the majority of the sheet rock is up, and there are some parts of the hospital such as Radiology & some of the patient rooms that have their walls painted. The mammogram room has the ceiling in. There is still a lot of work needed in front of the hospital ex: the main lobby area. Ms. House stated that she felt part of the delay was due to AirEvac. The hospital is having to move around the oxygen farm, propane farm, and other items that have been laid out that is having to be moved around. Lori also stated more trees would need to be cut down for the AirEvac pad. Earl Battiest addressed Ms. House about the budget figures on the hospital. Ms. House stated that they were working on the budget right now. Lori stated they are over budget by the amount of the sewer cost. The sewer project was to be paid out of the ARPA monies, but because of laws the sewer project would not be covered by the ARPA monies. Lori went on to say they are working with the Horne Group and the ARHP to find additional grants to cover the cost. Angie Walker asked if Ms. House knew what the current cost of the hospital is. Ms. House stated not at this time because it's a moving target and they are actually waiting to get figures back. Ms. House said that she figures that the hospital will be really close to the 23 or 24 million marks. Lori said that one thing that was not accounted for in the cost of the building was the technology cost of 1.3 million dollars. Earl Battiest asked Ms. House that if the county was able to give the hospital some of the ARPA monies if it would keep the bond below 24 million? Ms. House said it would still be pretty close to the 24 million mark. Earl Battiest then asked if county was not able to give any of the ARPA monies would the bond pushing 26 million and Ms. House said she didn't think it would be 26 million but more around 25 million. Roxy Stephens addressed the issue of the bond going over 24 million because that is not what the voters had voted on. Ms. House stated this was not an uncommon issue and that the hospital will take out a line of credit from a bank, and will just make an additional payment every month. Ms. House stated she does not believe the hospital will cost 26 million dollars. After more discussions on the future cost of the hospital Lori went on to introduced two new employees: Maria Lipsey-Reparatory Therapy and Cole McRae-Pharmacist.

Sandra Jackson with SCMC Foundation announced that the foundation has already sold several rooms that will help with some of the expenses at the hospital. Mrs. Jackson went on to

say the foundation has raised quite a bit of money that'll be going directly to the hospital. Mrs. Jackson stated of the rooms that have been sold the minimum amount is \$15,000.00 up to \$30,000.00 per room. She said that the foundation is out there working, and trying to bring in money to help with county with the hospital.

New Business –

1. Agenda item 1 was a proposed Resolution authorizing Contracts of Obligation between Sevier County and the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment, Division of Environmental Quality. The purpose of these contracts is to ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet costs of closure or post closure of the county landfill and county transfer station. Judge Ray read the Resolution. A motion was made by David Wright and seconded by Earl Battiest to approve the Resolution. 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. The motion passed.
2. Agenda item 2 is a request for confirmation of the appointment of Beth Tody to the Sevier County Housing Authority. A motion was made by Roxy Stephens and seconded by Angie Walker to approve the Resolution. 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. The motion passed.
3. Agenda item 3 is a proposed Ordinance rescinding Ordinance 2021-02 which allows for paid leave for employees with Covid related absence. The ordinance was read by Treasurer Heather Barnes. A motion was made by Greg Wright and seconded by Angie Walker to suspend the rule and place the ordinance on the 2nd 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. No – None. The motion passed. Treasurer Heather Barnes read the ordinance for the 2nd reading. A motion was made by Greg Wright and seconded by Angie Walker to suspend the rule and place the ordinance on the 3rd 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. No – None. The motion passed. Treasurer Heather Barnes read the ordinance for the 3rd reading by title only. A motion was made by Earl Battiest and seconded Greg Wright to approve the ordinance. 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. The motion passed.
4. Agenda item 4 is a request for an amendment to the 2022 Road Fund Budget to move \$130,000 from Capital Outlay – Improvements other than buildings (2000.0200.4003) to Fuels, Oil, and Lubricants (2000.0200.2007). The judge explained that he has spent \$140,000 so far this year on Fuel, Oil and Lubricants and isn't for sure if the requested amount would be enough to sustain the road with the rising prices. A motion was made by Roxy Stephens and seconded by David Wright to approve the transfer. 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. The motion passed.
5. Agenda item 5 is a request for an amendment of the 2022 Office of Emergency Management budget to transfer \$700 from Building Material and Supplies (1000.0500.2020) and \$700 from Internet Connection (1000.0500.3023) to General Supplies (1000.0500.2001) to cover the fees associated with a new FCC license for Sevier County fire radio frequencies. The judge explained this is an expense that happens every 5 years and we would be reimbursement by Provo, Greens Chapel, Cossatot, Gillham, Central and Horatio. A motion was made by David Wright and seconded by Angie Walker to approve the transfer. 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. The motion passed.
6. Agenda Item 6 is a request for an additional appropriation to pay out Vacation and comp-time for retiring OEM Director, Walter Smith. This was not in the 2022 Budget, and will be appropriately divided between County General Fund, Road Fund, E 9-1-1 Fund, and Solid Waste Fund, for a total of \$2,956.42. The judge explained at the time of the budget we did not know the current OEM was going to retire and the monies was not allocated into the funds. A motion was made by David Wright and seconded by Greg Wright to approve the appropriation. 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. The motion passed.
7. Agenda item 7 is to request additional appropriation of \$22,840 to Hospital Construction Fund 4001. This is to cover cost of completed detail plans related to AirEvac, \$12,840 and cost of Safe Haven Baby Box, \$10,000. A motion was made by Angie Walker and seconded by David Wright to approve

the appropriation. 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. The motion passed.

8. Agenda item 8 is to request additional appropriation of \$6,071.14 to Sevier County Medical Center Fund 3407. This is to cover cost of employee insurance paid by the County prior to Hospital Accounts being set up for payment directly by the hospital. This would need to be transferred from Hospital Sales Tax Fund by Court Order. Deputy Clerk Renea Bailey explained that the monies just needed to be moved around to put into the proper line item. A motion was made by David Wright and seconded by Earl Battiest to approve the appropriation. 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. The motion passed.
9. Agenda item 9 is a proposed ordinance to award a one-time Covid Relief Payment to some Sevier County employees and to amend the operating budget for 2022. Total cost of the award to be transferred from Coronavirus Relief Fund 1005 to the appropriate payroll funds. David Wright wanted to know if the COVID Relief money could be used on the hospital. Deputy Clerk Renea Bailey read the ordinance. After some discussion Roxy Stephens made a motion and seconded by David Wright to approve the Resolution. 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. The motion passed.
10. Agenda item 10 is a proposed ordinance for Mid-year budget amendment. This is proposed to get all budget line items out of the negative in preparation of 2023 budget process. Judge Ray read the ordinance. Judge Ray explained that this was just cleaning up the budget. Deputy Clerk Renea Bailey explained that the clean ups were for appropriations that had been made up until today's meetings. A motion was made by David Wright and seconded by Roxy Stephens to approve the Resolution. 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. The motion passed.
11. Judge Ray asked if someone would entertain a motion to hear a non-agenda item. Angie Walker made a motion to suspend the rule in order to hear non-agenda items. 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. The motion passed. Judge Ray explained this is an ordinance to raise the of the Sevier County Sheriff's Department Deputies. Earl explained that this ordinance will give the current Jail Administrator a \$2.50 raise that was given to all deputies on February 21, 2022. That the current Jail Administrator should receive the raise because he is entitled to law enforcement, received merit pay, and does have an advanced certification. Judge Ray read the ordinance. A motion was made by Angie Walker and seconded by Greg Wright to suspend the rule and place the ordinance on the 2nd 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. No – None. The motion passed. Judge Ray read the ordinance for the 2nd reading. A motion was made by Angie Walker and seconded by Greg Wright to suspend the rule and place the ordinance on the 3rd 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. No – None. The motion passed. Judge Ray read the ordinance for the 3rd reading by title only. A motion was made by Roxy Stephens and seconded David Wright to approve the ordinance. 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. The motion passed.
12. Judge Ray asked if someone would entertain a motion to hear a non-agenda item. David Wright made a motion to suspend the rule in order to hear non-agenda items. 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. The motion passed. Judge Ray explained that the Budget Committee is wanting to take some of the ARPA monies and use it to purchase 3 Sheriff patrol vehicles. These vehicles were appropriated in the 2022 budget but by using the ARP monies the budgeted monies would go back into County Budget. Earl Battiest goes in to explain that they have been talking with Blake Harrell with Southwest Planning on how Sevier County could use the ARPA money. After some discussion a motion was made by David Wright and seconded by Greg Wright to approve the spending of ARPA monies. 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. The motion passed.

13. Judge Ray asked if someone would entertain a motion to hear a non-agenda item. Roxy Stephens made a motion to suspend the rule in order to hear non-agenda items. 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. The motion passed. Angie Walker explained that she is wanting to make a motion as a quorum court to have the County Clerk's office give the information needed for Gallagher Ins. to quote the County on Insurance coverage. Judge Ray explained that the County Clerk's office did send out an authorization form in the last payroll for employees to sign as a release of information. Deputy Clerk Renea Bailey stated that the County did receive back all release forms from the Jail, Sheriff's office and the Road Department. That as of July 11 we still had not received five from the Solid Waste nor any of the Deputy Clerks in the courthouse. Deputy Clerk Renea Bailey also stated that the releases she had received she has already sent the information into Gallagher. Angie Walker wanted to know what she needed to do to be able to get a complete insurance census. Deputy Clerk Renea Bailey stated that she just returned from a County Clerk meeting and giving out the birth date was one of the items on the FOIA that was not to be given out. A representative with Southwest EMS stated that we give out the same information for our employees to be members. Deputy Clerk Renea Bailey stated that the information is only given to Southwest EMS after the employee has signed the enrollment sheet from Southwest EMS. After some discussion a motion was made by Angie Walker and seconded by David Wright to approve the motion to release employee information. 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. The motion passed.

Old Business - Discussion of raises for county employees.

David Wright stated that the raise given to the Sheriff Deputies was well deserved, but he felt like it wasn't a financially sound decision for the Quorum Court to do that. He does not know if the Budget Committee can come up with a scenario where they could do the same raise for other County Employees and still be physically sound and hold with our long-term goals of keeping the County Budget sound. Roxy Stephens stated that is why the County Employees were going to receive the bonus because it would be equivalent. David Wright stated that it maybe equivalent but it is not forever, and whoever said to give the \$2.50 raise needs to figure out what to give the other County Employees. Judge Ray stated hourly pay raises would be a hot topic during budget time this year.

Announcements –

Adjournment –

Deputy Clerk Renea Bailey asked the Quorum Court when they would like the bonuses to be paid, and when they would like retroactive pay to be paid out to the Jail Administrator. With no further business to discuss Greg Wright Made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Roger Whitmore. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Renea Bailey
Deputy County Clerk