

MINUTES

SEVIER COUNTY QUORUM COURT MEETING

2:00 P.M., MONDAY AUGUST 9, 2021

The Sevier County Quorum Court met at 2:00 P.M., Monday, August 9, 2021, in the Sevier County Courthouse Courtroom 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: Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. Absent: None. 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 – Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Absent – 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. Ms. House stated that sales tax figures this past month are the second highest since the hospital tax passed. On construction update, Lori stated that the sheet rock contractor has defaulted on his awarded bid. The next bid up is \$800,000 more than the first. She stated that the attorneys will be taking necessary steps to hold the original bidder accountable. Lori informed the court that the hospital would be using a virtual CFO through the Horn Group. There have been 17 applicants for the CNO position. She has narrowed that down to nine that she will interview by phone. Three are from Arkansas, three from Texas, one from Oklahoma, one from Louisiana, and one from Tennessee. After virtual interviews she will narrow down to the ones that will come here for an interview in person. She mentioned that they are making decisions on equipment that normally would be done later. With Covid the delivery time is much longer than before. The Foundation had a wonderful dinner and Lori stated that she appreciated all who attended, and especially Judge Ray and Steve Cole for cooking the fish. A Virtual Chief Information officer has been hired. He works with Edfafio and will work out of North Little Rock. He is contracted for 16 hours per week and will work on site here in De Queen as necessary.

Old Business – There is no Old Business.

New Business –

1. The first agenda item is a proposed ordinance approving a revised Sevier County Employment Policy Handbook. The ordinance was read by County Clerk Akin. She explained that this is the policy that was sent out to the Quorum Court over a month ago. County Attorney Kaylen Lewis has already looked over the policy and given her approval. A motion was made by David Wright to suspend the rule and place the ordinance on the 2nd reading by title only. Angie Walker seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Absent – None. The motion passed. Clerk Akin read the ordinance by title only for the second reading. A motion was made by David Wright to suspend the rule and place the ordinance on the 3rd reading by title only. Angie Walker seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Absent – None. The motion passed. Clerk Akin read the ordinance by title only for the third reading. A motion was made by Earl Battiest and seconded by David Wright to approve the ordinance. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Absent – None. The Ordinance passed.
2. Second on the agenda is a proposed budget for the Sevier County Medical Center for 2021. Budget was presented. Clerk Akin explained that these figures are a composition of what has been spent to date and what is expected to be spent the rest of this year. A motion was made by Roxy Stephens and seconded by Earl Battiest to approve the budget. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Absent – None. The motion passed.
3. Next on the agenda is a request to transfer within the Solid Waste budget; \$30,000 from line 3100 Other misc. Services to line 3004 Engineering and Architectural Services; and \$400 from line 3100 to line 3073 Lease Machinery & Equip. Judge Ray explained that this is for permitting required to expand the Solid Waste area. A motion was made by David Wright and seconded by Roger Whitmore to approve the transfer. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Absent – None. The motion passed.
4. The fourth agenda item is a request for an additional appropriation of \$20,000 to the Airport Fund, line 9999 Transfers Out. This is to reimburse County General Reserve for a loan in 2020. Angie Walker made a motion to approve the request. Greg Wright seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Absent – None. The motion passed.
5. Fifth on the agenda is a request for an additional appropriation to the Airport budget for state and federal grant expenditures; \$10,465 to line 4003 improvements other than buildings; \$36,695 to line 3004 architecture and engineering, \$95,588 to line 2023 parts and repairs; \$342 to line 3040 advertising. This is all for Taxiway and Apron Rehab Project. A motion was made by Angie Walker and seconded by David Wright to approve the appropriation. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Absent – None. The motion passed.

6. Next is a request to give County Employees a one-time Covid payment of \$600 for full time employees with at least one year's service; \$300 for part time employees and employees with at least 6 months' service; \$125 for employees with less than 6 months service but more than 90 days. A motion was made by Roxy Stephens to approve the pay. David Wright seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Absent – None. The motion passed.

There were no further agenda items. Clerk Akin asked if the court would entertain a motion to hear 3 non-agenda items; Report of Hot Checks from Prosecuting Attorney's office, A transfer and additional appropriation to cover Covid leave paid out, and a Budget amendment ordinance. Angie Walker made a motion to approve. David Wright seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Absent – None. The motion passed.

The first non-agenda item is the Report of Hot Check Fees. This was sent by Erin Hunter, Prosecuting Attorney. There was an error in the calculation pointed out. Clerk Akin stated that she would send it back and present a corrected report next month.

The second non-agenda item is a request for a transfer from the Covid Relief Fund 1005 of \$45,676.20 to the various funds and departments that have paid out Covid leave pay. A spreadsheet was presented with the exact amounts. These additional appropriations will need to be approved. A motion was made by David Wright and seconded by Angie Walker to approve the transfer and appropriation. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Absent – None. The motion passed.

The last non-agenda item is a proposed Budget Amendment Ordinance for the 2021 budget. Clerk Akin read the ordinance. Clerk Akin explained that all items in the amendment are with prior approval of Quorum Court. Greg Wright made a motion to approve. Angie Walker seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Yes – Earl Battiest, Kenneth Currence, Evelyn Keels, Roxy Stephens, Angie Walker, Roger Whitmore, David Wright, and Greg Wright. No – None. Absent – None. The motion passed.

Announcements - Judge Ray announced that Marilyn Archer has agreed to apply to be appointed to complete the term of her husband Mike Archer, District 7. Assessor Sheila Ridley announced that she will be needing to hire a deputy assessor. This will be to replace one who will not return after maternity leave.

Adjournment -

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

Respectfully Submitted,



Debbie Akin
County Clerk