

Committee of Thirteen Report

October 12, 2010

The Committee of Thirteen of the Benton County Quorum Court met Tuesday, October 12, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. in the Quorum Court Room, Third Floor, County Administration Building, 215 East Central, Bentonville, Arkansas.

12 Present: Wozniak, Millager, Sandlin, Lewis, Hubbard, Moore, Allen,
Douglas, Blaty, Winscott, Harrison, Stephenson

1 Absent: Brown

Others Present: Comptroller Richard McComas, Rural Fire Association President Jimmie Thompson

Media: Tom Sissom – Daily Record

JP Stephenson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dawn Harpell of Bella Vista commented on Benton County road conditions. She stated that McMillan road was in need of improvements and that those improvements would benefit citizens in the county.

Sue Elverson of Pea Ridge commented on the changes made to the county web site and how much she liked them.

JP Allen made motion to amend the agenda to include a resolution request to allow Sam's West, Inc. to participate in the tax back program, seconded by JP Moore.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

1. Resolution Request: Appointment of Dan Douglas to the NWA Regional Airport Board of Directors

JP Winscott made motion to approve and forward the resolution request to the October 28, 2010 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Harrison. JP Douglas stated for the record that he would abstain from voting.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Appropriation Ordinance Request: \$7,500 for the Sulphur Springs Fire Department

JP Stephenson stated that this item has not been approved by the committee process via the Finance Committee, but this is a semi-emergency situation involving a tanker fire truck at the City of Sulphur Springs Fire Department.

Rural Fire Association President Jimmie Thompson stated that the City of Sulphur Springs Fire Department Fire Chief notified the Rural Fire Association that when their tanker truck was taken in for service, a broken gear in the transmission was discovered. He stated that neither the Sulphur Springs Fire Department nor the Rural Fire Association has the money for the repairs, so he is coming before the court to ask for help. He stated that the cost for a new transmission is

around \$16,000, but they have received a quote to rebuild the transmission for \$7,449.63, with a 1-year warranty. He stated that fire season is approaching, because people will be using their fireplaces for heat, which causes an increase in the number of fires. He added because of Sulphur Springs' location, it would take 20 to 25 minutes to get any support with water.

JP Moore asked if the funds would be coming from County General.

Comptroller Richard McComas replied that was correct.

JP Douglas stated that he felt that this is something that the court needed to approve. He added that due to the location of Sulphur Springs, it is imperative that they have a tanker there for support, and that he supports the request.

Further discussion was held on having the tanker truck transmission repaired.

JP Sandlin made motion to approve and forward the ordinance request to the October 28, 2010 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Hubbard.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Resolution Request: Authorize and endorse Sam's West, Inc. to participate in the Tax Back Program.

Ed Clifford, President/CEO of the Bentonville-Bella Vista Chamber of Commerce stated that this resolution request is fairly common. He stated that the City of Bentonville is also being asked to endorse the Sam's West, Inc. participation in the Tax Back Program, and that Sam's West, Inc. would have firm numbers for the Quorum Court to consider by the October 28, 2010 meeting. He stated that the Tax Back Program allows the state and local governments to approve the rebate of sales and use taxes on materials used in construction, and that it would make it easier for Wal-Mart and Sam's Club to modernize the Sam's Club headquarters at 805 Moberly Lane in Bentonville.

JP Allen stated that he was in full support of the Tax Back Program. He stated that they should not look at this as refunding a few thousand dollars in sales tax, but as a huge investment of millions of dollars from Wal-Mart and Sam's West, Inc. that the county might not otherwise have received.

Discussion was held on the benefits that the Tax Back Program provides to the cities and counties.

JP Allen made motion to approve and forward the resolution request to the October 28, 2010 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Sandlin.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

JP Stephenson recognized William "Bill" Millager, and stated that Governor Mike Beebe has appointed William "Bill" Millager to fill the vacancy in JP District 6 due to the resignation of JP Marge Wolf, and welcomed him to the Quorum Court.

JP Douglas stated that the State Legislature convenes in January, and that through the past years the Quorum Court has had some issues that need to be addressed. He stated that unless we do something, nothing is going to change. He added that one of the issues was that last year the

Quorum Court had to pay for a public defender position which had previously been paid for by the cities before the Municipal Courts were changed to District Courts.

Several other recommendations were presented by the members, including the rate of reimbursement that the state pays the county for the housing of state inmates; limiting the number of elections held each year; assessing and collecting taxes one year in arrears; and the increase in the county's mandatory contribution to the Arkansas Public Employee Retirement System.

Further discussion was held on several issues to be addressed and presented to the Legislature and working with other counties with shared concerns.

JP Stephenson suggested that JP Douglas prepare a list of items that had been presented at the Committee of Thirteen meeting and contact Washington County officials to determine their interest in working with Benton County and others, and suggested holding a joint Committee of Thirteen meeting, subject to the courts approval.

JP Stephenson requested that a vote be taken for JP Douglas to move forward with contacting the other counties and preparing a list of items to be discussed.

The Committee approved by unanimous consent.

JP Winscott reported on the Juvenile Justice Center Facility schedule and stated that a meeting will be held with the State Detention Facilities Review Committee on Monday, October 18, 2010 for final approval of the plans. He added that the pre-bid meeting will be held at the County Administration Building, Room 324, on Monday, October 25, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. and that the bid information received for consideration by the Long Range Planning/Real Estate & Buildings Committee will to be sent to the Finance Committee.

JP Winscott added that a Special Finance Committee meeting will be held Tuesday, November 09, 2010 at 5:00 p.m., prior to the regularly scheduled Committee of Thirteen meeting at 6:00 p.m., to consider the recommendations from the Long Range Planning/Real Estate & Buildings on the Juvenile Justice Center.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

JP Allen stated that a Personnel meeting will be held on Friday, October 29, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

JP Wozniak stated that he would be having back surgery on November 4, 2010, and did not know how long he would be off.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion and second the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.