

Committee of the Whole

June 10, 2014

The Committee of the Whole met Tuesday, June 10, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the Quorum Court Room, County Administration Building, Third Floor, 215 East Central, Bentonville, Arkansas.

13 JPs Present: McKenzie, Hernandez, J. Harrison, Allen, K. Harrison,
Jones, Sandlin, Anglin, Chiocco, Curry, Carr, Moore, Meyers
2 Absent: Adams, Moehring

Others Present: County Judge Bob Clinard, County Attorney George Spence,
Administrator of General Services John Sudduth, Director of Information Technologies
Eddie Mahar, Administrator of Public Services Jeff Clark, Accounting Manager Mike
Crandall

Media: Tom Sissom - Daily Record

Chair Kurt Moore called the meeting to order.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

JP J. Harrison made motion to suspend the rules and read all ordinances and resolutions by title only, seconded by JP Carr.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

PRESENTATION: Administrator of Public Services Jeff Clark – 2014 Road Improvement Plan.

Administrator of Public Services Jeff Clark stated that he plans to stick with the road plan adopted for 2014. He stated that because of bad weather some of the projects have been delayed. He stated they still believe that this is a solid plan and that they can still do the work. He stated that it is a work in progress.

Some discussion was held on the work to be completed in the 2014 road plan.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

A. Resolution Request: Confirming the County Judge's Appointment of Nathan Atchison to the Benton County Dive Team Board

JP Allen made motion to approve and forward the proposed resolution to the June 26, 2014 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Carr.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

B. Resolution Request: Confirming the County Judge's Re-appointment of Ron Homeyer to the Benton County Planning Board

JP Carr made motion to approve and forward the proposed resolution to the June 26, 2014 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Jones.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

C. Resolution Request: Authorizing the County Judge of Benton County to Apply for a GIF Fire Protection Grant on Behalf of Pleasure Heights Volunteer Fire Department

JP McKenzie made motion to approve and forward the proposed resolution to the June 26, 2014 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP J. Harrison.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

D. Appropriation Ordinance Request: Dept. 0115, Information Systems, Fund 1000

JP J. Harrison made motion to approve and forward the proposed ordinance to the June 26, 2014 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP K. Harrison.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

E. Appropriation Ordinance Request: Dept. 0109, Election Commission, Fund 1000

JP J. Harrison made motion to approve and forward the proposed appropriation ordinance to the June 26, 2014 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Curry.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

F. Appropriation Ordinance Request: Dept. 0108, Non-Departmental Maintenance, Fund 4000

JP Curry made motion to approve and forward the proposed appropriation ordinance to the June 26, 2014 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Carr.

Motion passed by show of hands vote.

G. Appropriation Ordinance Request: Dept. 0100, County Judge, Fund 1000

JP Allen made motion to approve and forward the proposed appropriation ordinance to the June 26, 2014 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP K. Harrison.

Lengthy discussion was had by several JPs regarding the \$110,000 proposed appropriation ordinance for a settlement to Terry and Cathy Johnson for property damage done to a pond during a search for a missing girl last year.

Motion passed by show of hands vote.

12 Yeas: McKenzie, Hernandez, J. Harrison, Allen, K. Harrison, Jones,
Sandlin, Anglin, Chiocco, Carr, Moore, Meyers
1 Against: Curry
2 Absent: Adams, Moehring

H. Presentation Sheriff's Office

Chief Deputy Rob Holly presented a PowerPoint presentation on the need for privatizing inmate medical care. He stated that the contract for medical care will include; educated medical professionals that will do all recruiting and hiring of qualified individuals, it will lower liability and lawsuits, and comes with a Mental Health component; He stated that currently the medical staff salaries with compensations are \$476,527.20. He said they received (5) five bids for inmate medical care services that ranged from \$1.8 million to \$675,840, and that they accepted the Southern Health Partners bid for \$675,840. He stated that paying out comp time, vacation and other costs for personnel will reduce the initial savings but after that it is estimated that the county could save about \$85,000 a year. He added that the contract would remove the burden of potential medical complaints and lawsuits from the county.

JP Anglin stated that she was glad that they are offering the Mental Health component.

Chief Deputy Holly stated that the Commissary and Maintenance Fine Funds will cover part of the expense and that Southern Health Partners contract start date is September 1, 2014.

After lengthy discussion was held on Southern Health Partners and the medical services that they provide. JP K. Harrison made motion to approve the Southern Health Partners contract and forward to the June 26, 2014 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Allen.

Further discussion was held on the services provided by Southern Health Partners and the advantages of their services.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

DISCUSSION – EMS

County Attorney George Spence stated that state law requires a public hearing as part of establishing an emergency medical services district with the \$40 per household annual fee. He stated that the other proposed ordinance calls for a levy of a 0.2 mill on property tax, and that both plans will be discussed at the Public Hearing.

Lengthy discussion was held on selecting a date to hold a Public Hearing to discuss the two plans being considered for rural ambulance service.

JP Chiocco made motion to hold the Public Hearing, Monday, July 14, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. and forward to the June 26, 2014 Quorum Court agenda, seconded by JP Curry.

Motion passed by unanimous show of hands.

Further discussion was held on the proposed ordinances establishing Emergency Medical Services (EMS.)

JP Anglin stated that she really has some doubts that either of the options being proposed will pass. She stated that at this point she is seriously considering not supporting either of them. She stated that the court needs to have discussion about looking at legislation to form the district and also have the millage for the unincorporated area. She stated that she has not had one person tell her that are will support of either option.

Lengthy discussion was held asking the Legislature to amend the laws regarding ambulance improvement districts.

County Attorney George Spence stated that he did not think that they should wait, if they were going to push change to some statues. He stated that they need to get it in the hands of the Arkansas Association of Counties, and get their objections, and also get the legislative research people to see what their objections are so that we can try and correct them.

JP Hernandez stated that we are making the same mistake that every big government office makes, we are making assumptions. He said it would be an injustice to the voters, if we do not allow the people to vote, that we will never know where we stand with them we are only guessing.

Further discussion was held on sending both proposed ordinances to a vote.

JP K. Harrison stated that he is hearing more support for the millage plan and that he would support it.

JP McKenzie stated that the county needs to proceed with the best of the plans and work to persuade voters to support it. He said the county does not need to reduce the proposed fee or millage to the point other services will have to be cut to pay for ambulance service. He added that it is a tough thing to ask somebody to pay for anything, but that the whole intent was to get enough money so that we do not have to gut other services to pay for it.

Further discussion was held on changing the wording in the current appropriation ordinance stating that the fee could not be increased.

County Attorney George Spence stated that the current language of the proposed ordinance does not include that the fee could not be increased, but it can be changed.

JP Meyers stated that he thought changing the wording to go up not to exceed \$40, was a bad idea

County Attorney George Spence stated that the wording can be changed to say that the fee is \$40 but that the Quorum Court can establish a lesser fee. He stated that the proposed ordinance establishing an Emergency Medical Service District (EMSD) fee can be imposed without a vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mike Clifford of Bentonville thanked the court for their hard work and efforts.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.