

MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
WASHINGTON COUNTY QUORUM COURT

Thursday, September 1, 2016
5:30 p.m.
Washington County Quorum Court Room

2016 OCT 24 PM 12:06
BEERY L ENALLER
CO. & PROSTATE CLERK
WASHINGTON CO. AR

FILED

- 298.1 The Washington County Quorum Court met in special session on Thursday, September 1, 2016. The meeting was called to order by Judge Marilyn Edwards. The purpose of this meeting was to consider a resolution for a grant application for a storm shelter in Evansville, and an appropriation ordinance to complete the infusion for 2016 from the General Fund into the Employee Health Insurance Fund.
- 298.2 J. Patterson led the Quorum Court in a prayer and in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 298.3 MEMBERS PRESENT: Daniel Balls, Rick Cochran, Robert Dennis, Lisa Ecke, Ann Harbison, Sharon Lloyd, Eva Madison, Sue Madison, Joel Maxwell, Gary McHenry, Joe Patterson, Butch Pond, and Bill Ussery.
- 298.4 MEMBERS ABSENT: H. Bowman, and T. Lundstrum.
- 298.5 OTHERS PRESENT: Chief of Staff George Butler, County Comptroller Ashley Farber, County Attorney Steve Zega, Human Resources Director Lindsi Huffaker, Grants Administrator Renee Biby, Sheriff Tim Helder, Interested Citizens; and Members of the Press.
- 298.6 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA: Judge Edwards asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda.
- 298.7 **A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously by those present by voice vote. The agenda was adopted as presented.**
- 298.8 CITIZEN COMMENTS: Louise Mann, resident at 12931 Green Road, West Fork, AR, stated that she wanted to encourage the media as well as the appropriate departments in Washington County to do some educating and outreach regarding good logging practices that don't harm the natural and human habitat surrounding the cut area. She hopes that she doesn't have to worry about boundary issues and timber theft with her land but she is a bit concerned. Unfortunately her neighbor is an out-of-state land owner and was not present when the cut happened on his property. As development pressure increases, so does the need for education about good timber practices that enhance areas rather than destroy them. We all know an ounce of prevention is worth millions of tax payer dollars in clean-up. Our plant and animal habitats in the Ozarks as well as the watershed is so precious, that hopefully we can show our love and

appreciation for these resources by protecting them and being respectful of our neighbors as we do timber cutting on our properties.

299.1 L. Ecke stated that S. Lloyd let her know that she is being held up by traffic but is on her way to the meeting.

299.2 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SUBMITTAL OF A HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT TO ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: R. Cochran introduced **A Resolution Authorizing The Submittal Of A Hazard Mitigation Grant To Arkansas Department Of Emergency Management**, and County Attorney Steve Zega read the resolution.

299.3 R. Cochran explained that this resolution will give a really nice shelter to be managed by the Evansville volunteer fire department in circumstances where they would have an emergency that would require the shelter.

299.4 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the resolution. A. Harbison seconded.**

299.5 R. Biby stated that in reading the resolution, she realized that the number needed to be changed to \$8,250 instead of \$7,500. She asked that the court amend the resolution to reflect this change.

299.6 In response to a question from R. Cochran regarding whether the match amount increased because we are asking for more than \$30,000; to which R. Biby confirmed. R. Cochran further questioned whether the amount that we are asking for also needs to change; to which R. Biby stated that she did not have that quote. However, she knows that the match according to the grant that she was offered was \$8,250.

299.7 **R. Cochran made a motion to amend #6.1 to be a total of \$33,000 with a \$8,250 match. A. Harbison seconded.**

299.8 VOTING FOR: D. Balls, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, E. Madison, S. Madison, J. Maxwell, G. McHenry, J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery **The motion passed unanimously by those present. The resolution was adopted.**

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-19, BOOK NO. 3, PAGE NO. 150

299.9 Judge Edwards stated that she believes that this was a good move, especially after some of the terrible weather that they have had in that part of the County since she has been county judge. She thinks that this is

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something that can save a lot of lives and she is honored that the Court saw fit to do something like this.

- 300.1 AN ORDINANCE TRANSFERRING THE AMOUNT OF \$821,502 FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE EMPLOYEE INSURANCE FUND FOR 2016: R. Cochran introduced **An Ordinance Transferring The Amount Of \$821,502 From The General Fund To The Employee Insurance Fund For 2016**, and County Attorney Steve Zega read the ordinance.
- 300.2 R. Cochran stated that the Court had the great foresight and recommendation to budget this last year. We had to infuse it for the past several years into our insurance program and that is what this will do. It will bring it up to the amount that we need to be for the insurance company.
- 300.3 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the ordinance. A. Harbison seconded.**
- 300.4 In response to a question from E. Madison about why this is coming out of general it was budgeted; Comptroller A. Farber stated that the Court did budget this last year but it was never processed on the cash side. Unfortunately, this will come out of unappropriated reserves to move on the Treasurer's end the insurance fund. She further stated that the Court budgeted that money from the projection side of things but not from the cash side of things. The money was never set aside for an infusion.
- 300.5 E. Madison stated that this is all the more reason that the Court is going to have to find other creative solutions to deal with the County's healthcare policy.
- 300.6 **A point of order was raised; to which Judge Edwards ruled in favor of E. Madison.**
- 300.7 E. Madison stated that she thinks that the entire Court knows that the County has very serious insurance issues to cover and this is just the beginning. She further stated that the Court is going to have to do something other than putting more money in. She thinks that the Court is going to have to call in some consultants to help them through this so they can do better for the employees' health and for the financial health of the County. E. Madison stated that dealing with the health insurance plan and how it is formulated actually falls to the County Judge not to the Quorum Court and they need some real action in that area.
- 300.8 A. Harbison stated that the reason that she made a point of order is that the Court was discussing whether to infuse the money and not other

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alternatives to the situation. She stated that the all of the court members knew that this was coming because it was discussed at the last Quorum Court meeting.

- 301.1 S. Madison requested clarification on how this was treated in the budget; to which A. Farber stated that the Court acknowledged the funds on the budget side of things. She further stated that when the Court was budgeting the process off of the projections that it was given, it budgeted it into the insurance fund; however, the insurance fund was not treated properly last year and the money was not set aside.
- 301.2 S. Madison questioned if she was anticipating that they could do a line item transfer from elsewhere; to which A. Farber responded that typically Treasurer Bobby Hill needs a court order to move money in addition to an ordinance, but this was not done last year through the budget process. S. Madison questioned how such an error was made; to which A. Farber stated that she thinks that it was an oversight. S. Madison responded questioning whether it was fair to say that the Court was led to believe that it had more unappropriated reserves than it actually did; to which A. Farber stated that the reports that she distributes to the Court reflects what is there on the budget. She further stated that what the Court sees on the cash or Treasurer's side is a different result.
- 301.3 In response to a question from S. Madison about who can make sure that this does not happen again, A. Farber responded that she promises to make sure that it does not happen again.
- 301.4 R. Cochran stated that whether or not the money was right in the budget, it has to be moved in the Insurance Fund to keep the insurance program solvent and allow them to be able to get as good a rate going forward in the next term. He is uncertain of a budget in the entire county that could stand a hit like that so it must come out of the reserves.
- 301.5 **R. Cochran called for the question, which was seconded.**
- 301.6 VOTING FOR: D. Balls, R. Cochran, A. Harbison, J. Maxwell, G. McHenry, B. Pond, B. Ussery. VOTING AGAINST: R. Dennis, L. Ecke, S. Lloyd, E. Madison, S. Madison, J. Patterson. The motion failed with seven members voting in favor of the motion.
- 301.7 L. Ecke requested that Human Resources Director Lindsi Huffaker address the Court.

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- 302.1 L. Huffaker addressed the Court stating that she wanted to speak to something that has been brought up at the last two meetings. She stated that since 2005, this would be her third proposal for a wellness program at the County. On two different occasions, Insurance Consultant Nelson Driver has told the Court that the County needed a creative method with dealing with the Health Insurance Fund. In 2007, a proposal was brought from Trestle Tree, who did a complete presentation to the Court, which included smoking cessation, diabetes management, etc. Ultimately, the Court voted against the funding of the program. In 2009, Bravo Wellness presented the product that also included smoking cessation. L. Huffaker quoted one of the previous Justices of the Peace, stating that "he felt that there being a penalty for someone smoking was equivalent to discrimination," and the Court voted down the wellness program again. She wanted the Court to realize that a wellness program has been pitched to the Court twice over the last 10 years, and both times it was shot down, because there had to be a funding mechanism in place to make it effective. She stated that there is this idea amongst the Court that any thought or discussion to a creative method or an alternative plan has not been done, when really it has been pitched twice; unfortunately, it has also failed twice.
- 302.2 L. Huffaker stated that she does not want the Court to have this idea that she has not been looking outside of the box. There are a number of elected officials who are big advocates for rewarding employees with good wellness behaviors and making them pay for the insurance that will be utilized if they choose to have higher risk factors. Obviously diabetes may not be a risk factor that someone can control; however, those with this medical disposition can still make healthy lifestyle choices. She noted that that there are options available to help employees try to manage those illnesses and the ones who are doing their best to control behaviors will be rewarded; however, if it is a funding mechanism, then it has to come before the Court to precede forward.
- 302.3 In response to a comment that she heard at a previous meeting, L. Huffaker stated that the County had a flexible spending account for years that offered medical and dependent reimbursement; however, the County was dropped because of the lack of participation. In 2010, there were some laws that changed and the company that the County was working with introduced a monthly fee on employees for participating. Unfortunately, that company was bought out, which decreased utilization, and the company that bought the original out said that if the County could not get a certain level of utilization in the member population, then it will no longer service the plan. The County could not get the utilization despite holding a special enrollment period for the employees. She further stated that a flexible spending account is wonderful to think about when employees are paying \$500 -

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\$1,000 a month for day care, or having it taken out of their check pre-tax. The reality is that a lot of the County's employees are not paid enough that they can pay for it to come out of their check, pay the same fee upfront to their day care, send in receipts, and wait for it to be reimbursed; however, that was the only mechanism in place for both companies that we worked with, so they dropped the plan.

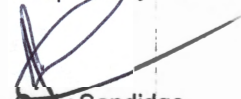
- 303.1 L. Huffaker stated that she does not want this idea that the County is not offering these alternatives to continue on the floor, because we have offered alternatives. We had a flexible spending account and medical reimbursement cards. Unfortunately, we did not see employee utilization of these products, because they simply could not afford to give it away, and wait to get it back. As far as wellness, that is a huge project that her office would love to implement. She further stated that she is hoping that the Court will provide the necessary funding to do it in 2017, because if she can start implementing some of these measures, then she does think that 5 years down the road the county is going to see big savings in the insurance fund. She noted that even though the County Judge controls the health insurance product that is offered, she does not control funding; furthermore, the County needs a universal buy-in that if the Court is going to go create a method, then it needs to have support around the table outside of political sides.
- 303.2 Judge Edwards commended L. Huffaker and the Human Resources department for their hard work on this.
- 303.3 L. Ecke addressed L. Huffaker stating that she would like her to bring this forward again and she will support her.
- 303.4 Judge Edwards addressed R. Dennis questioning if he wanted to be recognized; to which he stated that there was no reason to be recognized, because he just wanted more information on what the County had done in the past. He thinks that it is important that the Court discuss it, and he is in support of the wellness program as well.
- 303.5 Chief of Staff George Butler reminded the Court that a decision needs to be made by September 10, 2016, because the excess carryover is being looked at to quote the rate for the County's excess coverage.
- 303.6 VOTING FOR: D. Balls, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, E. Madison, S. Madison, J. Maxwell, G. McHenry, J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery. **The motion passed unanimously by those present. The ordinance was adopted.**

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ORDINANCE NO. 2016-54, BOOK NO. 10, PAGE NO. 481

304.1 ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Carly Sandidge
Quorum Court Coordinator/Reporter