

**MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
WASHINGTON COUNTY QUORUM COURT**

Monday, August 25, 2014
5:00 p.m.
Washington County Quorum Court Room

DEBAY C. WALKER
CO. & PROBATE CLERK
WASHINGTON CO. AR

2014 SEP 22 PM 3:49

FILED

- 120.1 The Washington County Quorum Court met in special session on Monday, August 25, 2014.
- 120.2 County Attorney George Butler explained that in the absence of County Judge, Marilyn Edwards, the Quorum Court shall elect a Chairman and under Robert's Rules, because they are considered a large assembly, the Chairman cannot vote unless it affects the outcome. He stated that they could either immediately by acclamation elect a temporary chairman just to conduct the election or they could do it by signed written ballot and then if no one gets a majority vote, they would take the top two and do another round of voting and then the majority vote becomes chairman.
- 120.3 **A motion was made and seconded for Eva Madison serve as Chairman of this meeting in the absence of Judge Edwards. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote by those present.**
- 120.4 The meeting was called to order by Chairman Eva Madison.
- 120.5 MEMBERS PRESENT: Ron Aman, Rex Bailey, Harvey Bowman, Diane Bryant, Candy Clark, Rick Cochran, John Firmin, Barbara Fitzpatrick, Ann Harbison, Tom Lundstrum, Eva Madison, Jimmy Mardis, Joe Patterson, and Bill Ussery.
- 120.6 MEMBERS ABSENT: Butch Pond.
- 120.7 OTHERS PRESENT: County Chief of Staff Dan Short, County Comptroller Cheryl Bolinger; Interested Citizens; and Members of the Press.
- 120.8 J. Firmin led the Quorum Court in a prayer and in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 120.9 County Attorney George Butler noted that as Chairman since E. Madison is a member of the body, while she does not have the power to veto, she does the power to vote if it affects the outcome.
- 120.10 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA: Chairman Eva Madison asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda.

- 121.1 **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.**
- 121.2 AN ORDINANCE ANTICIPATING ADDITIONAL REVENUES OF \$9,000 IN THE GENERAL FUND; AND APPROPRIATING \$28,587 FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE ELECTION COMMISSION BUDGET FOR 2014:
C. Clark introduced **An Ordinance Anticipating Additional Revenues Of \$9,000 In The General Fund; And Appropriating \$28,587 From The General Fund To The Election Commission Budget For 2014.** This ordinance is on second reading.
- 121.3 **C. Clark made a motion to suspend the rules and place the ordinance on second reading by title only. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote by those present.**
- 121.4 County Attorney George Butler read **An Ordinance Anticipating Additional Revenues Of \$9,000 In The General Fund; And Appropriating \$28,587 From The General Fund To The Election Commission Budget For 2014** by title only.
- 121.5 J. Firmin tried to make a motion to adjourn and take citizen comments, but County Attorney George Butler rules him out of order since R. Bailey had the floor.
- 121.6 R. Bailey stated that he has talked with Adam Wright with Arvest Ball Park, and they are willing to have the early voting site at their facility. He stated that he will also support all of the early voting sites referred to in the ordinance and believes that they should give them a chance. He reiterated that he simply wants to have both east and west Springdale covered. He stated that Jennifer Price will be working with Arvest on the hours they can be open.
- 121.7 R. Cochran stated that he has done a lot of research on the internet about increasing these early voting locations and the majority of what he has read says that the early voting myth does not increase voter turnout and despite the idea that they give more opportunity to vote, it basically goes the other way. He reported that the analysis that the University of Wisconsin came to the conclusion in the 2004-2008 Presidential Elections that they studied, they claimed that early voting created negative unanticipated consequences by

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reducing the civic significance of elections for individuals in altering the incentives for political campaign to invest in mobilization, and the researchers concede that this result is counterintuitive and certainly runs against the grain of conventional wisdom, but facts are facts. He continued stating that the 2013 study of which the American Journal of Political Science funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts found early voting as effectively dissipating the energy of Election Day which historically has focused social and political activity in a single day a buzz with discussion, media coverage, last minute contacts from parties and candidates, and factors that exert a mobilizing impact on a wider group of potential voters. The number of pre-election day voters in Maryland's 2012 November voting jumped to 11.6%, and the overall turnout that year was 73.5%, the lowest percentage turnout in a Presidential Election since 1996, and they state clearly that early voting does not, as commonly believed, boost participation in the election process.

- 122.1 R. Cochran stated that he believes they are wasting taxpayer's money by passing this ordinance. He stated that he has only heard one comment about a problem with voting on a regular basis, and that was in the Prairie Grove area, and he will support an early voting site in that location only. The location at the Boys/Girls Club is just five miles away from the Courthouse, and it is not as far to go across Fayetteville east to west as it is in Springdale east to west. Further, he stated that the early voting locations should be open at least one of the two Saturdays, if not both, and open until 6:00 p.m. because the 4:30 cutoffs do not make any sense at all.
- 122.2 **J. Firmin made a motion that they adjourn and take citizen comments. D. Bryant seconded.**
- 122.3 County Attorney George Butler stated that at the end of each Quorum Court meeting there should be a 15 minute period to allow citizen comments and so J. Firmin's motion to adjourn would be subject to that, otherwise it is non-debatable.
- 122.4 Citizen Comments: There were no citizen comments made.
- 122.5 **With no further discussion, Chairman Eva Madison called for a vote on the motion to adjourn and take citizen comments.**

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- 123.1 VOTING FOR: A. Harbison, T. Lundstrum, J. Mardis, R. Bailey, D. Bryant, C. Clark, J. Firmin, and B. Fitzpatrick. VOTING AGAINST: J. Patterson, B. Ussery, R. Aman, H. Bowman, and R. Cochran. **The motion passed with eight members voting in favor and five members voting against the motion.**
- 123.2 CITIZEN COMMENTS: There were no citizen comments made.
- 123.3 ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jessica Ims
Quorum Court Coordinator/Reporter