

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

Tuesday, September 29, 2015
5:30 p.m.
Washington County Quorum Court Room

FILED
2015 DEC 19 AM 9:57
CLERK OF THE COURT
WASHINGTON COUNTY

- 508.1 The Washington County Quorum Court met for a special meeting on Tuesday, September 29, 2015. The meeting was called to order by County Judge Marilyn Edwards who stated the purpose of this meeting was to consider a resolution for grant application and to continue working on matters pertaining to the 2016 budget process.
- 508.2 T. Lundstrum led the Quorum Court in a prayer and in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 508.3 MEMBERS PRESENT: Daniel Balls, Harvey Bowman, Rick Cochran, Robert Dennis, Lisa Ecke, Ann Harbison, Sharon Lloyd, Tom Lundstrum, Eva Madison, Sue Madison, Joel Maxwell, Gary McHenry, and Butch Pond.
- 508.4 MEMBERS ABSENT: Joe Patterson and Bill Ussery.
- 508.5 OTHERS PRESENT: County Judge Marilyn Edwards, County Chief of Staff George Butler, County Comptroller Cheryl Bolinger; Interested Citizens; and Members of the Press.
- 508.6 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA: Judge Edwards asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda.
- 508.7 **R. Cochran made a motion to amend the agenda with the addition of an amended resolution to apply for rural development grant. A. Harbison seconded. The motion passed unanimously by those present by voice vote.**
- 508.8 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. A. Harbison seconded. The motion passed unanimously by those present by voice vote.**
- 508.9 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY JUDGE TO APPLY FOR AN ARKANSAS RURAL DEVELOPEMENT COMMISSION GRANT: R. Cochran introduced **A Resolution Authorizing The County Judge To Apply For An Arkansas Rural Development Commission Grant**, and County Attorney Steve Zega read the resolution.
- 508.10 R. Cochran explained that this is an amended resolution for the County Judge to apply for a Rural Development Grant in the amount of \$55,000 that will be used, if awarded, to add a bay to the Urban Search and Rescue Building.

509.1 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the resolution as amended. B. Pond seconded.**

509.2 Citizen Comments: There were no citizen comments made.

509.3 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the motion to adopt the resolution.**

509.4 VOTING FOR: H. Bowman, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, E. Madison, S. Madison, J. Maxwell, G. McHenry, B. Pond, and D. Balls. **The motion passed unanimously by those present. The resolution was adopted.**

RESOLUTION NO. 2015-24, BOOK NO. 3, PAGE NO. 120

509.5 REVIEW OF THE LINE ITEM TRANSFER SECTION OF THE 2016 BUDGET CONTROLS: The Quorum Court voted on September 22 to table further review this section until this meeting.

509.6 County Attorney Steve Zega noted that he sent the Quorum Court members an e-mail last week after they discussed the Attorney General's Opinion that he saw from the Year 2005 about, amongst other things, line item transfers in the budget and then the Attorney General's Opinion from the Year 2001 that seemed to not concur with the 2005 AG Opinion, together with Washington County Code Section 2-222 specifically codifying line item transfers with an ordinance passed by the Quorum Court in 1978 or 1979. He stated what is before them tonight is the decision on what to do with line item transfers as it relates to the Budget Controls and if it is the Court's pleasure to do anything other than Washington County Code Section 2-222, he would suggest that they need to make appropriate amendments to the Washington County Code as well.

509.7 E. Madison stated that she would like to table this issue as she did not receive the AG Opinion last week, and found herself scrambling to try to read everything sent this afternoon and has not had a chance to digest all the information and does not feel ready to decide this issue tonight. She stated she also feels the newspaper's editorial has muddied the issue on this because she thinks there is confusion about what this actually involves. She believes when T. Lundstrum was speaking about no departmental transfers, one to another, he meant without the Quorum Court's knowledge and approval, and did not mean that it could not be done.

509.8 **E. Madison made a motion to table this matter until their next meeting. R. Cochran seconded.**

- 510.1 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the motion to table the matter.**
- 510.2 **VOTING FOR:** H. Bowman, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, E. Madison, S. Madison, J. Maxwell, G. McHenry, B. Pond, and D. Balls. **The motion passed unanimously by those present. The matter was tabled until their next meeting.**
- 510.3 S. Zega stated that he and Chief of Staff George Butler had spent the last couple of days producing the AG Opinion from 2001 that he sent today. He had read County Code Section 2-222 weeks ago and when he sent him the AG Opinion today, it reminded him of that. He apologized if his action caused them not to be prepared tonight and would make sure that it did not happen again.
- 510.4 **REVIEW BUDGET REQUESTS FOR CAPITAL AND PERSONNEL AND/OR CHANGES FOR 2016:** County Attorney Steve Zega stated that everyone has received the capital and personal services requests from departments for 2016. This includes capital for large purchases and personnel additions, as well as the Sheriff's request dated today that he has distributed.
- 510.5 E. Madison asked what criteria was used for placing this on tonight's agenda because there are obviously some budgets that had increases that are not on the agenda tonight, and there was even a reduction in one budget; to which Comptroller Cheryl Bolinger responded stating that the information before them tonight represent unique requests or adjustments or those requesting changes in personnel and large capital requests. She explained the reason the Road Budget shows a reduction is that they are asking that a couple of positions be reclassified and this was included to make the Quorum Court aware. She stated also that were a couple of unique requests for a larger amount that did not qualify as capital. These two budgets would be the Election Commission who is asking for voting equipment and the Ambulance Service of which the Quorum Court has already approved the contract.
- 510.6 C. Bolinger stated the reason the Comptroller's budget is included is because they are combining two department budgets into one. The combining of the departments ends up being in a reduction overall.
- 510.7 After discussion regarding the order of presentations and requests, Judge Edwards stated that she had put Ron Woods with Buildings & Grounds first on the agenda as he had another meeting to attend that night and then the

Extension Office could be second as there were many in the audience who were there for that discussion.

- 511.1 **A motion was made and seconded to proceed with the meeting as outlined by Judge Edwards in the agenda packet with the Extension Service presentation following Buildings and Grounds. The motion passed unanimously by those present by voice vote.**
- 511.2 Buildings and Grounds Director Ron Wood addressed the Quorum Court stating on the capital request for 2016. He has planned carpet replacement for the first and second floor in the Courthouse at \$73,000; the Road Department roof at \$149,000; for a total request of \$222,000 in capital outlay.
- 511.3 A. Harbison noted that last year they slashed Mr. Wood's budget pretty good and she would like to see them approve the \$222,000 at this time. She pointed out that he has kept within his budget and done a really good job for the county keeping up with the buildings. She stated if they put off the roof, it could cost them more later on.
- 511.4 **A. Harbison made a motion to approve Buildings & Ground's capital budget request as presented. B. Pond seconded.**
- 511.5 T. Lundstrum stated that he will support the roof for the Road Department, but he is concerned in this budget year how badly we need \$73,000 worth of carpet: to which Mr. Wood responded that they can get by another year without carpet. However, there are 18 facilities with carpet and if they let the need build up, the cost could be a lot more in the future.
- 511.6 L. Ecke asked if they can replace square sections of the carpet or is it rolled carpet; to which R. Wood responded that they currently have rolled carpet, but the replacement price is for carpet squares.
- 511.7 L. Ecke asked about the age of the Road Department roof; to which R. Wood responded that it is 19 years old and the replacement he has priced is a better roof. He noted that when it was a fairly new roof, the wrong type of material was used to seal some holes and those have now rusted out causing bigger holes in the roof. Further, he noted it is a metal roof and the building gets quite hot during the summer. He explained that the plan was to put insulation on top of the existing metal roof and then add the new roof on top of the insulation.
- 511.8 **T. Lundstrum made a motion to amend R. Wood's request, striking carpet for \$73,000 from the request. S. Lloyd seconded.**

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- 512.1 R. Cochran stated that Ron Wood had mentioned that there was an energy cost to the current roof not being insulated and asked what time of the year has the heaviest usage; to which R. Wood responded that wintertime had the heavier energy use because they have the doors open to cool their shop.
- 512.2 R. Cochran further asked about urgency and whether he would want to try to replace the roof this year or wait till next year and R. Wood stated next year was fine. R. Cochran stated if there was some energy savings by doing it in advance, he would like to take advantage of that; otherwise, next year was fine.
- 512.3 L. Ecke asked how many buildings were slated for carpet replacement; to which Ron Wood responded three buildings were in need, but the \$73,000 request is just for the Courthouse carpet which is many years old.
- 512.4 L. Ecke stated perhaps Mr. Wood could budget for one building in this budget and then budget carpet for another building next year; to which Ron Wood responded that is basically what he has been trying to doing.
- 512.5 R. Dennis stated he recalls the Quorum Court telling Ron Wood if he needed money in his budget to come back and talk to them and they would give him the money. He stated that he will vote against the amendment striking the carpet because he does not believe Mr. Wood would have asked for carpet if it was not needed. He will vote against the full request.
- 512.6 S. Madison stated that she would support T. Lundstrum's motion to amend the request partly because she wants them to give serious thought to whether or not they want carpet. She noted that she is moving away from carpet in her buildings because it is nasty, hard to clean, and does wear out. She stated she would like to see other flooring alternatives considered.
- 512.7 R. Cochran asked if changing the carpet to a hard surface material would that be a detriment to the area as far as noise and echo problems; to which R. Wood responded that he would think that they would rather have carpet.
- 512.8 J. Maxwell asked Mr. Wood how he would rate the current carpet to be replaced in the Courthouse on a scale of 1 to 10; to which Mr. Wood responded that it looks bad and is getting hard to clean, so he would scale it at 6 and the aesthetics looks bad with holes and worn.
- 512.9 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the amendment to strike carpet for \$73,000 from the request.**

- 513.1 **VOTING FOR:** H. Bowman, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, E. Madison, S. Madison, J. Maxwell, G. McHenry, and B. Pond. **VOTING AGAINST:** R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, and D. Balls. **The motion passed with eight members voting in favor and five members voting against the motion. The request will be amended striking \$73,000 for carpet.**
- 513.2 H. Bowman suggested that they discuss flooring types with Ron Wood on a future agenda because S. Madison's comments were pertinent to the situation.
- 513.3 S. Madison stated since the Road Department has a very large budget, the new roof expense would not put too big of a dent in their budget and asked if it had been discussed for the Road Department to pay for their own roof; to which Ron Wood responded that this is the responsibility of the Buildings & Grounds Department.
- 513.4 S. Madison stated that Buildings and Grounds Budget has taken some hits this year. They are looking at some extreme times currently with the reserves as low as they are and increases departments are contemplating. She noted at their last meeting, the Road Department was more than half way through the year and just barely over half expended funds.
- 513.5 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the main motion to approve the Buildings & Ground's 2016 capital budget request, as amended.**
- 513.6 **VOTING FOR:** H. Bowman, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, E. Madison, S. Madison, J. Maxwell, G. McHenry, B. Pond, and D. Balls. **The motion passed unanimously by those present and the request was approved.**
- 513.7 Ron Wood presented the capital request for the Buildings & Grounds Budget in the Jail Fund. This only includes the replacement of a service truck. The Department currently has a 2001 Dodge truck with 165,000 miles. He is requesting \$23,000 in 2016 to replace that truck.
- 513.8 E. Madison asked whether this was considered a pool vehicle or if it is assigned to an employee; to which Ron Wood responded that the vehicle is assigned and driven home each day.
- 513.9 E. Madison asked Ron Wood if he had any sense of where the mileage on the vehicle is coming from; to which Mr. Wood stated that they may do some switching on this truck from where it is now, but if they just replace it

with the driver who is driving the old truck now, they are probably looking at 30 miles a day for one round trip to work and home.

- 514.1 E. Madison stated that this figures to almost 8,000 miles a year just with commuting and a 2001 truck with 165,000 miles is getting close to needing replacement. She stated that they need to start being mindful of where the mileage is coming from if they are putting on a lot of miles from commuting.
- 514.2 E. Madison asked how many vehicles are assigned for the Buildings & Grounds Department in the Jail Fund and what county purpose are they used for; to which R. Wood responded they have two vehicles that are both assigned to employees. He noted the other vehicle is a 2010 truck that has a shorter commuting trip. These are service trucks used to pick up parts and for call-backs noting that they carry the service tools in the tool box.
- 514.3 R. Cochran asked and Ron Wood verified that the trade-in value for this truck is a request for net of what he expects to receive for the trade-in. R. Cochran further asked at what county locations this service truck was used; to which R. Wood responded that this would be the Jail and the Juvenile Detention Center, however, they travel to Lowe's, parts store, etc.
- 514.4 R. Cochran asked what the need was to take this vehicle home and if it could be stored in a secured area at the Jail; to which R. Wood responded that it helps when they are called back to the Jail in the middle of the night. R. Cochran stated that he is just looking at the cost to the county for fuel, repairs and maintenance, and if it is not given as a perk as with an elected official, he would like to see them scale back to where they are using vehicles for county business and not for commuting. He stated that he will support replacing the 2001 Dodge truck, but would like something back in return as suggested above.
- 514.5 In response to a question from S. Madison, Ron Wood stated that he has four service trucks assigned to employees within his Buildings & Grounds Departments; two at the Jail, one for the Electrician, and one for himself. He further explained that when he started with the County, he had the 2001 Dodge truck and there have been three other employees who have driven the truck, including commuting to work. His personal commuting mileage is 7 miles, one employee lives near Arvest Ball Park, one lives on the other side of Farmington, and one lives 15 miles from work. Ron Wood explained that they do not always just have one round trip a day as this is a service truck and they have call backs to come back into work.

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- 515.1 S. Madison stated she is questioning the need to have four people perhaps making multiple trips to take care of emergencies when she does not know if this is something the county can continue to afford when taking into account the mileage and wear and tear. She pointed out that this issue has been being discussed for some time, so she thinks it is logical to come up during budget hearings.
- 515.2 R. Wood stated that he is proposing to replace the truck with another Dodge 4x4 fleet truck which is about the cheapest he can find off of state bid.
- 515.3 S. Madison asked why they always seem to buy double cab trucks when they hardly ever transport multiple people; to which Ron Wood stated the he did not know the answer.
- 515.4 In response to a question from A. Harbison whether his department takes calls for things like stopped up toilets; to which Ron Wood replied that they do and they probably average 8 call back service calls a week, many after hours and at the Jail. A. Harbison stated that the situation that Buildings & Grounds is in with the overcrowding at the Jail that they have more problems than normal and in this situation whether it is 1 or 2 people on call, they probably need to take that vehicle home.
- 515.5 S. Lloyd asked if there were any mechanical issues with the 2001 Dodge truck; to which Ron Wood stated not at the current time and he has probably put \$300-\$400 in the truck this year that is the oldest truck they own with the most mileage. He further explained that he hates to let the vehicles get older and older because at some point in time they will have to replace them and it could hit them all at one time.
- 515.6 R. Dennis asked whether these Buildings and Grounds employees that are called in after-hours would have to be paid for mileage if they had to drive their own vehicles rather than taking the service trucks home; to which Ron Wood responded that it is not set up that way. He further explained if one of the other maintenance guys has to be called back into work that is not normally on call, they are paid overtime as hourly employees.
- 515.7 R. Dennis pointed out that utility companies have service trucks that they drive home.
- 515.8 R. Cochran addressed S. Madison's previous question about the need for 4-door trucks stating that truck manufacturers have determined it is in their best interest to produce a 4-door truck to avoid certain EPA charges in their fleet.

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- 516.1 R. Wood stated that Buildings & Grounds only has one 4-door truck, but their extended cab trucks that have the seats without the doors, those seats are folded down and hold tool boxes to provide more secure storage.
- 516.2 R. Cochran stated that utility fleets that take their work trucks home are different because they have very broad service areas compared to the county's service area which is very confined and if called into work, their truck is on location with tools. He reiterated that they really are using the company vehicle as a perk and it does not really serve a business use. Those employees would be entitled to mileage from their home on an after hour call whether salaried or hourly.
- 516.3 In response to a question from B. Pond, R. Wood stated that these service trucks will keep tools both in the back of the truck in a toolbox as well as in the backseat. B. Pond pointed out that very often the things that they have to carry with them are very important to be kept dry and will be in the backseat area with the less critical things kept in the back of the truck. R. Wood further stated that all of their trucks are 4-wheel drive and that other than Emergency Services, his department are the first people at work when it snows and ices; and B. Pond concurred that 4-wheel drive vehicles are critical in this part of the country.
- 516.4 E. Madison stated that it is important to note that Ron Wood happens to be the unfortunate one that they address first about vehicles as she does not believe that this issue is limited to Buildings & Grounds. She noted a lot of people that have jobs just like what they are talking about, when they get a call to work after hours; they drive their personal vehicle to home base for work, get their tools, and go do their job without having a paid vehicle that drives them home every day. They are paid for the actual call and are not paid for the commuting mileage. She stated when they are facing serious funding shortages in numerous areas, how can they look at a fleet of over 100 plus vehicles that go home all over the county every night. E. Madison concurred with R. Cochran about utility workers adding that they work totally out of their vehicles traveling from job location to job location while the county has a very confined area of buildings. She stated that she did some rough math and it appears that 100,000 miles on this truck are commuting miles and this is a significant expenditure that the county is going to have to look at.
- 516.5 A. Harbison stated that they can no longer "kick the can down the road" to next year because it is just building up the amount of money they will have to spend next year.

- 517.1 **A. Harbison made a motion that they approve the purchase of this vehicle for Buildings & Grounds for \$23,000 and approve this budget request for 2016. B. Pond seconded.**
- 517.2 G. McHenry asked about the other vehicles in Buildings & Grounds fleet; to which R. Wood stated that he has an identical Dodge truck that is a 2010 with approximately 60,000 miles which the maintenance guys use during the day and custodial employees use at night. There is also a 2013 Dodge Ram which is the same as the vehicle that is being requested.
- 517.3 **Judge Edwards called for a vote on the motion to approve the purchase of a truck in accordance with the request from Buildings & Grounds for 2016.**
- 517.4 VOTING FOR: H. Bowman, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, T. Lundstrum, G. McHenry, B. Pond, and D. Balls. VOTING AGAINST: S. Lloyd, E. Madison, S. Madison, and J. Maxwell. **The motion passed with nine members voting in favor and four members voting against the motion. The request was adopted.**
- 517.5 Washington County Extension Staff Chair Berni Kurz addressed the Quorum Court in regard to the Extension Budget for 2016. He is proud to head this award-winning staff and on behalf of those present to support him tonight made up of 4-H families, Master Gardeners, Extension Homemakers Clubs, farming community, members from Farm Bureau, and he thanked the County for their support of their programs for over 100 years. He noted that it has been about eight years since he has come before the Quorum Court with a significant funding request, but they believe that it is probably overdue in order to continue to be the partner in reaching out with the programs that their agents deliver to the county. His request eight years ago was for an additional agent and at that time the thought was to initiate a percentage every year, but that did not come to fruition and there has really not been a base program increase since 2001.
- 517.6 B. Kurz distributed additional information to the Quorum Court. He stated that there are 75 county agents throughout the State of Arkansas that are addressing their quorum courts just like he is to introduce their 2016 County Funding Plan from the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service, which is the outcome from meetings with representatives of the Arkansas Association of Counties and an advisory group of county judges. He stated that they look at this as a staff investment to the community of Washington County, and their agricultural community and agricultural income to the county is the second

largest in the state with over 2000 producers. He noted that this funding request is to be full-staffed to provide services to those producers.

- 518.1 B. Kurz stated that they are very proud of their 4-H youth who are among the top in the State with their accomplishments, noting that 4-H focuses on positive and sustained relationships between youth and adults, activities that build important life skills, and opportunities for youth to use these skills as participants and leaders in valued community activities. B. Kurz announced that in attendance were some of these 4-H youth that he has talked about and who wish to address the Quorum Court.
- 518.2 Autumn Gregg addressed the Quorum Court stating that she was a shy 5-year-old thirteen years ago, and 4-H started her public speaking career and 4-H has improved it. She stated that 4-H has given her the opportunity and direction to explore career options and she has decided to pursue Veterinary Medicine. She stated that 4-H is about meeting people and making friends, impacting the community around you and influencing others, about learning new things and improving life skills.
- 518.3 Blake Rogers addressed the Quorum Court stating she has been in 4-H for 10 years and currently serves as the Greenland 4-H President, the Washington County 4-H President, Washington County 4-H Ambassador and Arkansas State Ambassador. She stated that you do not have to live on a farm and own animals to be part of 4-H noting that her main project has not had anything to do with animals. Though she does participate in the livestock events, her main projects have either been selling arts and humanities, or consumer education. Many 4-Hers have been able to turn their interests into scholarships that help them far into the future.
- 518.4 Lilly Davis addressed the Quorum Court stating that she is 10-years-old and lives on a dairy farm in Prairie Grove. The County Extension Service is important to her because she has been involved in 4-H for five years. She stated she has learned leadership skills and responsibilities for her fair animals and projects. She has learned that hard work pays off, and these qualities have made her a better person. She asked the Quorum Court to think of them when they are considering funding for the Extension Office.
- 518.5 Judge Edwards stated that she has been very fortunate over the last five years to hand out awards to these 4-H youth and it has been a real pleasure for her to be a part of this.
- 518.6 S. Madison asked Berni Kurz how much the University Of Arkansas Division of Agriculture cut the Washington County Extension Service budget; to which he responded that the budget has not been cut. The

Division of Agriculture which funds the Experiment Station within the University of Arkansas system as well as the Cooperative Extension Service has had level funding for the past eight years. While they really have not cut their budget, it is unfortunate that they have three vacant positions which was a cost saving measure so the whole field can still continue at the level they can. Because of the expenditures incurred to maintain employees, largely the cost of health insurance, with level funding they are in a position now where they cannot fill all positions.

- 519.1 B. Kurz stated with this funding plan and cooperation, they are hoping to be able to move to fill the vacant positions. B. Kurz explained that they have six positions for this current year, three of which are now vacant, the, as well as other counties, are having to come to the table to ask the Quorum Court to meet the base program of whatever level it deems is needed. He explained that he does not have control of those funds and once their employees left, that funding left as well and the positions are being held vacant. He noted that they have had one vacancy over a year, another resigned earlier this year, and the latest vacancy occurred early this summer.
- 519.2 B. Kurz continued to explain that the Extension Service is aware they want to keep a certain number of employees in every office and their promise is to keep every office filled with one subject matter individual, agriculture and family consumer sciences. Currently their office has three agents; one with a family consumer science degree and the other two, including him, have an agricultural degree. The positions that left were one with an agricultural degree, another family consumer science agent and their 4-H program assistant had an agricultural degree as well.
- 519.3 S. Madison stated she remembers when the County built the County Extension Office on land owned by the University of Arkansas as a cooperative agreement and asked what else the County pays for; to which B. Kurz responded that he is unaware of the amount but the County pays all the utilities, including phones, and the building maintenance.
- 519.4 B. Kurz further responded to S. Madison that that Benton County is the only other county in Arkansas that has the number of staff that Washington County has that are on county funding. Benton County is currently full staffed with there being no retirements or vacancies like have occurred here however they will suffer consequences as well if they do not fulfill a cooperative agreement. If the Benton County Quorum Court does not support their need, the Benton County Extension Service will downsize, not by terminating any positions, but by transferring services to another county that can support the staff member.

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- 520.1 S. Madison questioned whether B. Kurz has taken a similar group of people to a Board of Trustees meeting to talk to the University about this issue; to which B. Kurz responded that they do not get funds directly from the University of Arkansas; however, the Division of Agriculture does operate under the Board of Trustees.
- 520.2 B. Kurz addressed the current salary funding for the County Extension Service as \$97,705 or 18% from the County; \$43,114 or 8% federal; \$103,313 or 19% from grants; and \$297,714 or 55% from the State. He stated the federal funds go through the state office in Little Rock.
- 520.3 S. Madison stated that she is very disappointed in the University of Arkansas for the position they have put the Extension Service in noting that she is a lifetime Master Gardener having gone through the first Master Gardener class in Washington County. In some ways this smells like a threat to counties involved in that if they do not take up their slack, they are going to punish them. The University has certainly spent a great deal of money on construction on the campus over the last 4-5 years and the student population has grown considerably with a large number from out of state (51% of the freshman class) creating a lot of extra dollars coming into the University. This is not a good time to ask the County for a lot of money and is a struggle for her.
- 520.4 E. Madison stated it was her understanding that there was a funding request before the Arkansas Legislature for \$3.5 million that would have increased funding for Extension Offices across the state that would have not put them in this position of coming to counties begging for money. While the funding request passed, it was not funded in the revenue stabilization process because of priorities. She shares S. Madison's concerns over why the State is passing the buck to the counties. The State has decided to provide this wonderful service to counties for young and old alike, but then are not funding it and the County is being asked to double their funding because the State is not doing so. She stated that this has left her frustrated at the State for putting them in this position and wondering why someone from Little Rock has not come to talk to them about this request.
- 520.5 B. Kurz stated that he did ask his Supervisor, Sharon Reynolds, if she would be available to attend this meeting and she had a previous appointment that she could not break, but he would provide the Court with her contact information.
- 520.6 E. Madison responded to B. Kurz that she is not sure his direct supervisor can answer the Court's questions because she wants to know why 75

agencies across the State are being threatened with giving them more money, or they will take their agents and ship them to another county, which is awful when funding has been flat. She states it seems that the Legislature has made a decision and has not prioritized Extension Offices.

- 521.1 B. Kurz stated that his 4-H members did spend the day in Little Rock and met with the local Legislators to showcase what they do.
- 521.2 E. Madison asked whether this was a permanent request or a temporary measure because they may be able to swallow it a little better if they had some notion that the State would step in and try to properly fund the Extension Offices and that they were just a temporary stop gap. She noted so often they find themselves in a situation like with the Public Defender's Office being in need of new positions, the State denies their request, so it is up to the County again to fund a State function that becomes their responsibility forever.
- 521.3 B. Kurz responded that to his understanding this is a cooperative agreement for as long as the County wants it to continue; and, whenever they decide this particular agreement is not appropriate, they can decide to change it.
- 521.4 E. Madison stated that she is guessing that the County is being asked to fund five agents at the \$185,000 level plus the balance of their budget request; to which B. Kurz responded that another position that the County has been funding is a 4-H paraprofessional at \$22,500. He stated that the total request for other professional services is \$222,000 with \$14,500 for the half-time secretary position that they had previously discussed. E. Madison stated that the balance of the request is the five agents plus the full-time 4-H paraprofessional.
- 521.5 E. Madison asked what their ideal staffing was before they were not allowed to fill positions; to which B. Kurz stated that they were 13 and if the County fully supports them, this will bring them back to 13. The County currently supports 3 and if they support fully, they will be back to 6 staff.
- 521.6 E. Madison stated she would have liked to hear from the State as to their plan for where this is going as funding the Extension Office in the amount of \$222,000 to fund a State function is not something that the County should be doing.
- 521.7 In response to a question from A. Harbison, B. Kurz stated that currently for professional services the County is supporting them with \$97,705 and for the 2016 budget, they are requesting to bring this up to \$222,000.

- 522.1 A. Harbison pointed out that the County just saved \$73,000 by not approving carpet for the Courthouse. She believes the Extension Office needs to be funded, pointing out that every month, according to the County Treasurer, the County receives \$100,000 less in sales taxes for businesses that have Quorum Court has exempted through the Advantage Arkansas Program for expanding business. She agrees with the exemptions but also agrees that the Extension Service is important.
- 522.2 **A. Harbison made a motion that they fund the Extension Service at their total request of \$224,650. B. Pond seconded.**
- 522.3 S. Lloyd asked what has been the biggest issue or detriment to the Extension programs from the three positions that were cut; to which B. Kurz responded that they do not have anyone on staff with a specialty of Animal Science and the expertise that they would bring to the table as we have the largest agricultural community in this county. He noted that he does have support beyond the county with state specialists, the Experimental Station and the University that he has been relying on, but it is the local county agent and day-to-day contact with producers that has been missing.
- 522.4 S. Lloyd asked if the Extension Office could do with just 1-2 additional agents instead of all 3; to which B. Kurz responded that they recently lost a Family Consumer Science Agent. Washington County has the second largest number of families in the State of Arkansas who are SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) eligible and that agent delivered programs targeting those families who really need to know nutrition education for their children. He asked their 4-H agent who has a Family Consumer Science degree to take on that responsibility, so they currently do not have a 4-H agent which is a big demand in this County. He noted he has been a 4-H agent in his career and has taken on some of those responsibilities, along with Katie Teague, who is a Water Quality Agent. They currently have three agents who are taking on the responsibility of six jobs.
- 522.5 T. Lundstrum stated that he spent a lot of his life on a farm and never had a need to call an extension service. He knows the Extension Office does good work, but he believes the County also does a good job of financially supporting them. He stated it really bothers him when the State shifts responsibility to the counties and he would be in favor of denying this request and make the State pay for it. He stated that the State gives a few million dollars to state incumbents each year and the Extension Office should talk to them to get some of that grant money. It does not make any sense why the State cannot support the Extension Service.

- 523.1 T. Lundstrum reported that when he was President of the FFA Club in Missouri, it was all in their school and there was no tax money supporting them. He noted his appreciation for the young lady who spoke about what 4-H has done for her in public speaking, but stated that this is offered in public schools which they are already financing. He stated that he likes the support the County is already giving the Extension Service, but the 2016 request is a big jump that the State should be providing. There are some laws that need to be changed to separate the Road Fund money now based on census. The cities keep getting bigger and the county keeps getting smaller, but they have the same services to support without the money. He added that he does not support talk of raising taxes because Arkansas is one of the highest taxed states in the United States.
- 523.2 H. Bowman stated that he was a 4-H member years ago and his mother was a volunteer. He is really proud of the fantastic job the Extension Office is doing in representing 4-H. He noted how 4-H does a great job of teaching kids how to do a good financial balance sheet with costs and profits and how to sustain an agricultural business. He reported that last year Washington County spent \$4 million more than they took in in revenue and over the past five years, their reserves have been depleted from \$18-\$19 million to next to nothing, and this year their cash flow is such that they are not taking in enough money to pay current costs for current requests this year after cutting last year's budget by \$4 million. He stated that the County is not trying to deny valid requests for funding, but there is a checkbook involved here that is not looking pretty. He stated his hope that they would leave here tonight understanding that the County has to bring costs under control. He stated he would prefer that his tax dollars go toward taking care of tax issues and not go to supporting service clubs. He encouraged people to contact their Legislators in Little Rock about the GIF Program and where that money is being distributed.
- 523.3 R. Cochran stated that the County has supported the Extension Service since 2012 by \$97,705 a year without a raise; to which B. Kurz responded they have not actually had a raise since 2008. R. Cochran noted if they had been given a 5% increase each year, they would now be getting around \$140,000-\$150,000. He stated he sees this funding as an investment and would suggest they fund four agents plus one paraprofessional.
- 523.4 **R. Cochran made an amendment to the motion reduce the amount in Line Item 2009 be reduced by \$65,000, making it \$157,000. S. Lloyd seconded.**
- 523.5 J. Maxwell stated the State has given the Extension Office a very difficult task that is being handed to the County by default. It would be hard

pressed to find any member of the Quorum Court that is opposed to the good that the Extension Services does and the services it provides, but it is rather the State shifting that responsibility to the County. If this compromise funding at \$157,000 is approved on a temporary basis for next year, he would request that the Extension Service make specific efforts to go back to the State to rejuvenate those funds and make up the difference; to which B. Kurz stated that would be acceptable.

- 524.1 B. Pond stated that a message needs to be sent to the State that the full request made by the Extension Service was needed by Washington County. He stated that he will support the amendment until the State can come through with what they should be funding.
- 524.2 R. Dennis stated that when the Quorum Court reduced taxes year back many citizens of the County were unaware of this including himself. He noted that it would help balance the County's budget if people's taxes were raised by \$20-\$30 a year. He stated he will vote no to the amendment and yes for the full funding.
- 524.3 L. Ecke suggested that they all contact their Legislators and tell them the issue that is before the Quorum Court and the community. The Quorum Court will do whatever they can but they need some help and believe that the State has turned their backs on the Extension Service.
- 524.4 A. Harbison stated there were groups of people who got together and supported the Extension Office across Washington County and made enough contacts with their Legislators that they got it funded at that time. She pointed out that this does not just have to do with agriculture but also has to do with water quality, Beaver Lake, the Illinois River in Oklahoma, and it benefits every citizen in this County.
- 524.5 **A. Harbison called for the question.**
- 524.6 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the amendment for partial funding.**
- 524.7 **VOTING FOR:** H. Bowman, R. Cochran, L. Ecke, S. Lloyd, E. Madison, S. Madison, J. Maxwell, G. McHenry, B. Pond, and D. Balls. **VOTING AGAINST:** R. Dennis, A. Harbison, and T. Lundstrum. **The motion passed with ten members voting in favor and three members voting against the motion to amend for partial funding.**
- 524.8 **Judge Edwards called for a vote on the main motion to fund the entire Cooperative Extension Service 2016 request as amended.**

- 525.1 **VOTING FOR:** H. Bowman, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, E. Madison, S. Madison, J. Maxwell, G. McHenry, B. Pond, and D. Balls. **The motion passed unanimously by those present. The budget request was adopted as amended.**
- 525.2 **A 5-minute recess was taken at this time.**
- 525.3 Judge Edwards noted that they still had 13 budgets to look at tonight.
- 525.4 L. Ecke stated that it is getting late and questioned whether they could move to reconvene at a different time to review the remaining budgets.
- 525.5 **L. Ecke made a motion to adjourn and reconvene at another time. S. Lloyd seconded.**
- 525.6 E. Madison stated that she really thinks they should let the CEMS people go ahead and present their budget because it will be pretty routine and their money has already been approved.
- 525.7 S. Zega stated that the motion to adjourn takes precedence over all other items now on the floor, so he would suggest that L. Ecke temporarily withdraw her motion and make it again after CEMS is addressed.
- 525.8 **L. Ecke withdrew her motion until after the CEMS budget was addressed.**
- 525.9 **L. Ecke made a motion to approve the CEMS 2016 budget as distributed. E. Madison seconded.**
- 525.10 Citizen Comments: There were no citizen comments made.
- 525.11 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the motion to approve the CEMS budget as presented.**
- 525.12 **VOTING FOR:** H. Bowman, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, E. Madison, S. Madison, J. Maxwell, G. McHenry, B. Pond, and D. Balls. **The motion passed unanimously by those present. The budget request was approved as presented.**
- 525.13 Executive Assistant Karen Beeks suggested that they could reconvene this meeting on Monday, October 5, as there are no agenda items for the two committee meetings scheduled that day.

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- 526.1 **L. Ecke made a motion to adjourn and reconvene on Monday, October 5 at 5:30 p.m. T. Lundstrum seconded. The motion passed unanimously by those present by voice vote.**
- 526.2 CITIZENS COMMENTS: It was noted that a citizen was present who wanted to speak to the Quorum Court and S. Zega stated that the motion to adjourn was already on the floor and voted on, so they could not reconvene for citizens comments.
- 526.3 Judge Edwards invited the citizen to return on Monday.
- 526.4 ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Carly Sandidge
Quorum Court Coordinator/Reporter