

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Dodge County Board of Commissioners
January 19, 2021 at 6:00 pm**

Present: Dan McCranie, Chairman
Sharon Cobb Flanagan, District 1 Commissioner
Terry L. Niblett, Vice-Chairman, District 2 Commissioner
Brian Watkins, District 3 Commissioner

Also Present: Conner Bearden, County Manager
Kimberly Smith-Parkerson, County Clerk

Virtual Attendance: John Harrington, County Attorney
Karen Cheek, District 4 Commissioner

The Dodge County Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting at the Dodge County Pearl Bates Courthouse Annex at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 19, 2021. (Monday was a holiday.) Chairman McCranie led the Pledge of Allegiance. Next, Commissioner Cheek gave the invocation entitled *Life with Purpose* from Jeremiah 9:24 and prayed.

Elected Officials/Department Heads

A. Shannon Weston – EMS Update

The department averaged \$602 per call in December and received about a hundred and ten thousand in payments. Two hundred covid vaccines were administered by the hospital and 350 by the health department.

B. Randy Spivey – Recreation Department Board Appointments

Mr. Spivey recommended Ms. Kori Peterson for reappointment and Coach Matt Herrin for appointment on the Recreation Board. (Jesse Mincey’s appointment was expiring, and he wanted to step down.) The Board agreed to table the appointments until the next meeting.

C. Casey Owens, Rhine Fire Department – SPLOST Funds Request

Casey Owens requested funds for turnout gear for the Rhine Fire Department. The current gear had expired in 2016. Total cost per set was \$2619.96, and six sets were needed. The total expense request was for \$15,719.76. Per Manager Bearden, RFD had a balance of \$15,638.53 in the 2013 SPLOST. Commissioner Watkins made a motion to grant the SPLOST funds balance for the request. Commissioner Niblett seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed. (RFD agreed to pay the \$81.23 shortcoming for the turnout gear.)

Approval of Minutes

A. January 4, 2021

Commissioner Niblett made a motion to approve the minutes as present. Commissioner Flanagan seconded. All voted agreeably, and the motion passed.

Old Business

A. Virtual Meeting Guidelines

For review and approval, Manager Bearden had incorporated the Virtual Observation Guidelines with the Public Participation in Board Meetings Policy. Commissioner Flanagan asked for a distinction between *observer* and *attendee*. Manager Bearden defined virtual attenders as *observers* and physical attenders as *attendees*. Also, Manager Bearden updated the Board on House Bill 98 which has not yet been approved, but establishes guidelines for virtual attendance which will supersede any local policies when (and if) passed.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the addition of the Virtual Observation Guidelines. Commissioner Flanagan seconded, and all voted in favor. The motion passed.

B. Chauncey Fire Department Invoice Payment Request

Manager Bearden updated the Board that the City of Chauncey had paid the outstanding invoice of \$700 and was seeking reimbursement. The Chauncey RFD had over \$10,000 in SPLOST funds, and the rural fire departments had been reminded to approach the Board for approval before expending SPLOST funds.

Commissioner Niblett made a motion to approve the payment. Commissioner Flanagan seconded and all voted in favor. The motion passed.

New Business

A. Approval of Accounts Payable - \$123,955.21

Commissioner Niblett made a motion to approve the Accounts Payable list totaling \$123,955.21 with Commissioner Watkins seconding. All agreed and the motion passed.

B. Ruby Lee Harrell – Community Safety

Ruby Lee Harrell addressed the Board with concern for residents on Zion Hill Church Road due to fireworks on December 31, 2020. The fireworks began after midnight and alarmed her elderly sisters who reside in the neighborhood. Also, the debris landed on her sisters' property. The incident was reported to the Sheriff's Department, but they were informed nothing could be done. Ms. Harrell asked the Board if they could prevent this from happening again.

Chairman McCranie asked for the street addresses of Ms. Harrell's sisters, which were 1976, 1986, 1996, and 2008, and agreed to look into the matter.

C. Farmer's Market Board Appointments

Three board terms were expiring – Jon Butler, Jesse Bearden, and Sharon Cobb Flanagan. Of the three, only Jon Butler had asked not to be reappointed. The Board agreed to table the appointments to the next meeting.

Commissioner Reports

Chairman McCranie asked the Board for a decision to use the Regional Commission for the Comprehensive Plan and Service Delivery Strategy.

Commissioner Niblett made the motion to engage the Regional Commission for the Comprehensive Plan and the Service Delivery Strategy. Commission Watkins seconded and all agreed. The motion passed.

County Manager Report: Conner Bearden

A. Codification of Ordinances

Manager Bearden brought to the Board's attention to three ordinances. The Timber Ordinance needs a bond amount established and a strategy for collecting the bond. The Litter Ordinance needs a defined fine amount. And the Picketing Ordinance needs the amendments in place from July's meeting. Also, the *Sole Commissioner* terminology needs to be updated with *Board of Commissioners* on many of the Ordinances.

B. Utilities and Road Specs

Manager Bearden suggested the addition of a Utility Ordinance to protect the County from fines from utility companies when lines are damaged during routine road maintenance.

C. County Appointees on Boards

County Manager Bearden had received information from nine boards and was compiling a spreadsheet of appointments and terms. This information would be uploaded to the website when complete.

D. Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

FFCRA, which outlined compensation for employees who contracted COVID, had expired December 31. Commissioner Flanagan made a motion to extend COVID compensation for employees until March 31. Commissioners Watkins and Cheek seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

E. Telecommunications Audit

Manager Bearden was interested in engaging a company to audit our telecommunications expenses. He had information which would be uploaded to the drive for review.

Public Comments

Mrs. Coffee updated the Board on the Area Agency on Aging.

Executive Session

Commissioner Niblett made a motion to enter an Executive Session at 6:46 pm to discuss legal and personnel matters. Commissioner Watkins seconded, and all voted in agreement. The motion passed.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to end the Executive Session at 7:10 pm, and Commissioner Flanagan seconded. The vote was unanimous, and the motion passed.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Niblett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 pm with Commissioner Flanagan bringing in a second. The vote passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned.

Signed:

Kimberly Smith-Parkerson, County Clerk

Approved:

Dan McCranie, Chairman