

Regular Meeting Minutes
Dodge County Board of Commissioners
April 05, 2021

Present: Dan McCranie, Chairman
Sharon Cobb Flanagan, District 1 Commissioner
Terry L. Niblett, Vice-Chairman, District 2 Commissioner
Brian Watkins, District 3 Commissioner
Karen Cheek, District 4 Commissioner

Also Present: John P. Harrington, County Attorney
Conner Bearden, County Manager
Kimberly Smith-Parkerson, County Clerk

The Dodge County Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting at the Dodge County Pearl Bates Courthouse Annex at 6:00 p.m. on **Monday, April 5, 2021**. Chairman McCranie led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a devotion from Commissioner Cheek entitled “God Loves Us by Dying” from Romans 5:6-10. Afterward, she led the invocation.

Elected Officials/Department Heads

A. Director Shannon Weston – EMS Update

- Approximately 269 calls in March
- Transports decreased with no covid transports
- Currently hosting an EMT class with approximately 25 participants
- New ambulance expected at the end of May
- May 20 is National Stop the Bleed Campaign

B. Randy Spivey – Recreation Department SPLOST Request

On behalf of the Recreation Department, Director Randy Spivey submitted bids from KorKat (totaling \$28,311.30) and Miracle Recreation Equipment (totaling \$30,078.00) for new playground equipment. His preference was KorKat, which is a family-owned business from Carrollton, GA. He requested \$24,753.14 from the 2013 SPLOST and indicated the balance would be paid by fund raising by the Recreation Department.

Commissioner Niblett made a motion to approve the request for the remainder of the Recreation Department’s 2013 SPLOST to purchase playground equipment from KorKat. Commissioner Flanagan seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Dodge County Fire Association SPLOST Request

On behalf of the Fire Association, Manager Bearden reported some of the Rural Fire Departments (RFD) were having communication issues. Rhine had a repeater installed which solved the issue. Chester and Chauncey requested \$12,913 for the purchase and installation of repeaters by Georgia Two-Way. Available in the 2013 SPLOST is \$23,978.90, and in the 2019 SPLOST is \$1847.10. Commissioner Flanagan made a motion to approve the purchase of the repeaters with

the 2013 and 2019 SPLOST funds. Commissioner Niblett seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

A. March 15, 2021 – Regular Meeting

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Niblett seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Old Business

A. Tire Abatement

County Manager Bearden reported the Tire Abatement is scheduled May 19 through June 1, and the draw-down grant amount is \$49,438. Only one event is planned this year. No tires from tire businesses will be accepted.

New Business

A. Approval of Account Payable - \$166,330.90

Commissioner Niblett made a motion to approve the Accounts Payable list totaling \$166,330.90 with Commissioner Watkins seconding. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

B. Raymond Mullis - Fireworks

On behalf of the City of Eastman, City Council Vice-Chair Raymond Mullis requested \$5,000 to purchase fireworks for the Independence Day Celebration in July. The City will match the County's donation.

C. Road Abandonment – Fall Drive, Cadwell Lane

Fall Drive – Petition made to abandon Fall Drive at the intersection of Indigo Lane down to Golf Course Road. Per Road Supervisor Richard Harrell, the road has been closed 10 years.

Cadwell Lane – Petition made to abandon Cadwell Lane, which intersects at Cadwell Road and Highway 117.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to begin the process of abandoning Fall Drive and Cadwell Lane as petitioned. Commissioner Niblett seconded. Commissioner Cheek voted in favor, with Commissioner Flanagan abstaining. The motion passed.

D. LMIG Bids

LMIG bids were opened April 1, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. at the Pearl Bates Annex. Everett Dykes and East Coast Asphalt were the two bidders. The apparent low bid was from East Coast; however, Manager Bearden will review and present at the next meeting.

- Everett Dykes - \$1,220,936.77
- East Coast Asphalt - \$1,093,023.48

E. Transit Van Purchase Proposal

Dodge County acquired a new Transit van from DOT on March 31 to replace a 2014 Transit van. The van taken out of circulation by the DOT was made available to purchase for \$5,500. Manager

Bearden asked the Board to approve the van purchase with SPLOST funds for transporting the Road Department employees to work sites, as well as other County needs.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the purchase. Commissioner Cheek seconded, and all voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

F. County Employee Retirement Plan

Manager Bearden updated the Board in regard to the County employee retirement.

- Only 20 of approximately 185 employees are actively involved in the current County retirement plan. The plan has a contribution option of 5% post-tax and has a 1% multiplier on payout. (Thirty years equates to 30% of salary at retirement.) This plan will freeze at the onset of a new option, and no more contributions will be made.
- The proposed plan is a 401-style plan with an employer match. Employees with state retirement are not eligible. Employees will be able to contribute as little as one percent.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to proceed with the new county retirement benefit plan. Commissioner Flanagan seconded the motion, and all voted in favor. The motion passed.

G. Line of Credit Bids

Manager Bearden discussed receiving Line of Credit bids from Great Oaks Bank, Colony Bank, and the Bank of Eastman, as follows:

- Great Oaks – Fixed Rate of 1.99% with \$1,000 documentation fee
- Colony Bank – Fixed Rate of 2.89% with \$395 administrative fee
- Bank of Eastman (Magnolia State Bank) – Fixed Rate of 2.10% with \$295 origination fee

Commissioner Niblett made a motion to accept the bid from Great Oaks Bank with the timing of the close at the discretion of the County Manager. Commissioner Watkins seconded the motion. All voted agreeably and the motion passed.

Commissioner Reports

None reported.

County Manager Report: Conner Bearden

A. Legislative Update

- House Bill 271 passed which allows EMS providers to justify higher reimbursement rates.
- House Bill 635 passed which allows judges to perform duties via video conferencing.
- Senate Bill 145 passed which allows county and city voters to authorize package liquor sales without having to obtain petition signatures of at least 35% of registered voters.
- Senate Bill 202 passed which updates election legislation.

B. Ordinance Committee Update

- A work session was held March 31. All ordinances were reviewed and changes addressed. Also, the committee requested a new ordinance for alcohol consumption on public property. Expected date for sending ordinances to Municode is April 30.

C. Courthouse Committee Update

- Hussey Gay Bell has withdrawn from the Courthouse project, leaving only Jericho and Spriggs Group.
- The Courthouse Committee completed tours of the courthouse with each of the architects.
- The next meeting for presentations by the architects is April 16 at 10:00 a.m. and will be open to the public. (Virtual attendance will be available.)

D. Telecommunication Audit Results

- \$57,675 in cost savings was discovered by the telecommunications audit by Spyglass. The largest cost savings came from changing the long distance plan at E911. Also, the Sheriffs’ department had \$14,400 savings on unused cell phones. Sales tax was removed from the bills, and some of those funds were able to be reimbursed.

Public Comments

None presented.

Executive Session

Commissioner Niblett made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 6:43 p.m. to discuss legal matters. Commissioner Watkins seconded and all voted unanimously. The motion passed.

Commissioner Niblett made a motion to end the Executive Session at 7:04 p.m. and Commissioner Watkins seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion passed.

Once in the public meeting, the Chairman opened the floor for any further business. Commissioner Watkins made a motion to terminate the contract with EMS Pro Billing. Commissioner Niblett seconded and all voted in favor. The motion passed.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the EMS contract with Elevos. Commissioner Flanagan seconded the motion. All voted unanimously, and the motion passed.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Niblett made a motion to adjourn, and Commissioner Flanagan seconded. The vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

Attested:

Kimberly Smith-Parkerson, County Clerk

Approved:

Dan McCranie, Chairman