

**Board Meeting Minutes
Dodge County Board of Commissioners
Monday, May 15, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**



Commissioners Present:

Chairman Dan McCranie
Sharon Cobb Flanagan, District 1
Kelly Belflower, District 2
Brian Watkins, District 3

Also Present:

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

Absent:

Vice-Chair Karen Cheek, District 4

The Dodge County Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting at the Dodge County Pearl Bates Courthouse Annex Monday, May 15, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. with Chairman McCranie presiding. He called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Afterward, Commissioner Flanagan gave the invocation.

Elected Officials/Department Heads

A. Fire Chief Jamey Wilkinson

Fire Chief Wilkinson reported 56 calls in April, as follows: 35 medical, 5 motor vehicle collisions, 3 brush fires, 4 downed trees, 2 structure fires, and 7 miscellaneous.

B. EMS Director Michael Johnson

Director Johnson reported claims for April of \$80,478, and 1,387 calls for the year thus far.

Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes – May 01, 2023 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Belflower made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes with no amendments. Commissioners Watkins and Flanagan seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Old Business

A. Dodge County Hospital Authority Appointees

Chairman McCranie asked for a motion to table the Dodge County Hospital Authority appointments until all commissioners could be present. A motion was made by Commissioner Watkins and seconded by Commissioner Flanagan to table. All voted in favor, and the appointments were tabled.

B. City of Eastman Fireworks Request

Manager Bearden reported \$4,000 was donated to the City of Eastman last year for the July 4th celebration. City Councilman Raymond Mullis requested the same amount for this year's celebration.

C. County Board Application Process

A motion was made by Commissioner Watkins and seconded by Commissioner Flanagan to table this item until all commissioners could be present. All voted in favor, and this item was tabled.

D. Hobbs Road

Manager Bearden stated the abandonment of Hobbs Road was on hold at the present time due to a property owner's request.

New Business

A. Approval of Accounts Payable

A motion was made by Commissioner Flanagan and seconded by Commissioner Belflower to approve the accounts payable report totaling \$237,273.68. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

B. Central Georgia Region 5 EMS Council Appointment

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to reappoint EMS Director Michael Johnson to the Central Georgia Region 5 EMS Council. Commissioner Belflower seconded the motion for reappointment. All voted favorably, and the motion passed.

C. Mt. Ararat Fire Station Proposal

Manager Bearden requested the board review bids for the Mt. Ararat Fire Station in preparation for the next meeting.

D. USDA Grant/Loan for Sheriff's Office

Manager Bearden reported a \$25,000 USDA grant had been received to purchase new vehicles for the Sheriff's Office, which left a balance of \$216,785.00 on the four requested vehicles. The USDA offered to fund the balance with a loan. Manager Bearden requested permission to provide documentation to the USDA to find out more about the terms of a loan. Commissioner Watkins made a motion to proceed with providing documentation to the USDA. Commissioners Flanagan and Belflower seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

E. Dodge County Transfer Station

Manager Bearden stated the EPD had served notice of violation for open burning/dumping of solid waste in reference to limb and leaf debris at the landfill. Manager Bearden stated three options for a corrective action were in consideration – 1) no longer accept limb/leaf debris, 2) mulch debris, 3) bury debris. The board's recommendation was to proceed with bids for outsourcing the mulching or either buying equipment for the county to mulch.

F. Zion Hill Church Road – Ruby Harrell

Ruby Hill addressed the board with concerns about a rough spot on Zion Hill Church Road which had been repaired, but the repair was not sustainable. She asked for a more durable repair. Manager Bearden reminded the board that Zion Hill Church Road was on the 2023 LMIG but had gotten bumped due to a road in worse condition. The road was still scheduled for an LMIG project, just not one in 2023. Also, he stated the road had been cold patched, but he could proceed with a bid from Graham and Studstill to hot patch. The board agreed.



G. Road Name Change Petition

John Battle and Annette Barden petitioned the board to change the name of Old Dodge High Road to Barden Battle Road and provided a list of 24 individuals who signed in agreement. Manager Bearden stated 35 addresses would be affected by the change.

Commissioner Belflower made a motion to begin the name change of Old Dodge High Road. Commissioner Flanagan seconded. Commissioner Watkins suggested the next two regular board meetings be used as public hearings for the road name change. Both commissioners amended their motions to reflect Commissioner Watkin’s suggestion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Commissioner Reports

- Commissioner Belflower updated the board regarding the Airport Authority’s meeting. A new maintenance facility is in the design stage with a \$1.2 million dollar grant from the university. Student enrollment is around 1,700, and 800 are flight students.
- Commissioner Flanagan reported Conexon would be available to some residents who weren’t on OEMC.

County Manager Report: Conner Bearden

- Manager Bearden gave a legislative update:
 - House Bill 121 – legalizes utility terrain vehicle (UTV) use on county roadways.
 - House Bill 453 – repeals ambulance licenses fees.
 - Senate Bill 215 – allows law enforcement to request removal of address information from Q-Public without appearing before the Board of Tax Assessors.
- Manager Bearden thanked everyone involved who gave assistance during the high school incident.

Public Comments

Fire Chief Jamey Wilkinson thanked the board for their support of the fire department and its continuing education.

Adjournment

With no further business to address, a motion was made by Commissioner Watkins and seconded by Commissioner Belflower to adjourn at 6:53 p.m. All voted in favor, and the meeting adjourned.

Attested:

Kimberly Smith-Parkerson, County Clerk

Approved:

Dan McCranie, Chairman