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

Tuesday, November 10, 2015
5:30 p.m.

Washington County Quorum Court Room

- 732.1 The Washington County Quorum Court met in special session on Tuesday, November 10, 2015. The meeting was called to order by Judge Marilyn Edwards. She stated that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss Washington County financial matters.
- 732.2 S. Lloyd led the Quorum Court in prayer and in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 732.3 **MEMBERS PRESENT:** Daniel Balls, Harvey Bowman, Rick Cochran, Robert Dennis, Lisa Ecke, Ann Harbison, Sharon Lloyd, Tom Lundstrum, Joel Maxwell, Gary McHenry, Joe Patterson, Butch Pond, and Bill Ussery.
- 732.4 **MEMBER ABSENT:** Eva Madison and Sue Madison.
- 732.5 **OTHERS PRESENT:** County Judge Marilyn Edwards, Chief of Staff George Butler, Treasurer Bobby Hill, Comptroller Cheryl Bolinger; Interested Citizens; and Members of the Press.
- 732.6 **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:** Judge Edwards asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda.
- 732.7 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously by those present by voice vote. The agenda was adopted as presented.**
- 732.8 **TREASURER'S REPORT:** Bobby Hill, County Treasurer, addressed the Quorum Court and the monthly financial summary stating in County General the expenditures were \$700,000 over revenues for this month. The County ended the month with \$10,300,000 in the bank in the General Fund and dipped below \$10 million, but received its tax settlement of \$3.7 million in the first of November, so currently it has about \$13.5 million in the General Fund. In October, the County Road Fund started with \$2 million, had revenues and expenditures about the same, and ended the month with \$2 million in the bank. The County Jail Fund started the month with \$1.1 million and ended with \$800,000. He stated that the County is doing well and he does not expect any more infusions to that fund from the General Fund. He reported that it ended the month for all accounts with a grand total of \$33 million.
- 732.9 B. Hill addressed the County share of the 1% sales tax, stating that it was the County's worst month since April, possibly because more people took

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 2

advantage of the tax-free weekend in August, but it is still on the positive side and should easily hit and surpass the 2015 projections for sales tax. With respect to the ¼ cent jail sales tax, collections were \$767,000 this month, a little more than 2% over last year at the same time and for the year, the County is \$475,000 above 2014. He stated that the ½ cent Road tax came in at 9% over October of 2014 and it should hit and surpass the projections for the year. B. Hill stated that the Employee Insurance fund began at \$1.741 million and ended \$1.703 million, down about \$38,000 for the month of October.

- 733.1 COMPTROLLER'S REPORT: Cheryl Bolinger, County Comptroller, addressed the Quorum Court stating the changes were the ordinances that the Court passed last month. She addressed the Summary of Revenues and Expenditures, noting that County General was 83% expended and with encumbrances included was 86% expended.
- 733.2 AN ORDINANCE TRANSFERRING MONIES OF \$11,853 WITHIN THE BUILDINGS & GROUNDS BUDGET IN THE GENERAL FUND FOR 2015: R. Cochran introduced **An Ordinance Transferring Monies Of \$11,853 Within The Buildings & Grounds Budget In The General Fund For 2015, and** County Attorney Steve Zega read the ordinance.
- 733.3 R. Cochran explained that this was for a waste oil furnace at the Road Department.
- 733.4 Buildings and Ground's Accounting Manager Jennifer Hinkle, addressed the Quorum Court stating that this is the heater for the shop at the Road Department that went out and was condemned, so it had to be replaced. She noted that waste oil from the shop is used to run it, instead of natural gas.
- 733.5 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the ordinance. A. Harbison seconded.**
- 733.6 H. Bowman stated that he spoke to Ron Wood about this, who reported looking into the cost of replacing the unit with a new one or buying a remodeled unit and this was the best option, so he is in full support of this ordinance.
- 733.7 Citizen Comments: There were no citizen comments made.
- 733.8 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the motion to adopt the ordinance.**

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 3

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2015-82, BOOK NO. 10, PAGE NO. 271

734.2 AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$23,000 FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE COMPUTER/IS DEPARTMENT BUDGET FOR 2015: R. Cochran introduced **An Ordinance Appropriating \$23,000 From The General Fund To The Computer/IS Department Budget For 2015**, and County Attorney Steve Zega read the ordinance.

734.3 R. Cochran explained that this ordinance will cover the internet bill at the County Health Department and Extension Agency for the remainder of the year.

734.4 John Adams, County IT Director, addressed the Quorum Court stating that this is for the Health Department and Extension Agency for the county's contractual obligation on their phone service additions that they started paying in June for the remainder of the year. He noted that there was a small increase in the internet costs from what was previously discussed.

734.5 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the ordinance. The ordinance was seconded.**

734.6 B. Ussery asked how much Cox internet had increased, to which J. Adams responded that the increase was about 5% and the County can expect another price increase next year. B. Ussery asked if the cables that J. Adams had previously requested funding for and was denied would have any effect on the price, to which he responded that the fiber system between the north and south would have decreased the price approximately \$5,000 to \$6,000 a month according to Cox's estimate. B. Ussery asked J. Adams to obtain the current estimate of savings.

734.7 In response to a question from L. Ecke, J. Adams stated that this was for the internet, which includes the phone service. He stated when he talks about internet service for the county; this includes the phones, fax and internet. He stated that the only exception to that should be lines for fire alarms, which by law have to be by analog, and the elevator lines.

734.8 In response to a question from S. Lloyd, J. Adams stated that the internet bill for the County Health and Extension Agency for 2016 will be paid by

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 4

the IT Department and there should not be a telephone charge on those departments' budgets. He added that by contract he has to provide the utilities, which include phone, electricity, water, internet and some include cell phones as well. He added that the exception is the Collector and Assessor, who have two satellite offices. He further stated that the \$23,000 is for the remainder of the year, but he started picking up the bills for the County Health and Extension Agency departments in June.

735.1 L. Ecke addressed the handout that the Court received on the departments paying internet and data, noting that the Health and Extension Services are not on this list. J. Adams responded stating that his department just picked those departments up with the voice over IP system. In the past, the County had analog voice systems and the Health Department was getting its internet service from the State; so the Health Department has to be on its own system so it can get its voice over IP. He added that the Cooperative Extension Agency is a part of the University of Arkansas and was previously tagged into the County's internet. The agency had to have its own system for the phone system and this is why internet usage did not appear on its accounts in the past. In response to a question from L. Ecke as to why those departments are left orphans now and the County has to pick them up, J. Adams stated that there is no real definitive answer. L. Ecke stated that she supports the Health Department and Extension Agency and thanked J. Adams for his explanation, but stated she would like to find out why those departments were discarded so easily by the state.

735.2 Citizen Comments: There were no citizen comments made.

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

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2015-83, BOOK NO. 10, PAGE NO. 272

735.5 AN ORDINANCE RECOGNIZING REVENUE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$7,000 IN THE JDC GRANT FUND; AND APPROPRIATING \$7,000 FROM THE JDC GRANT FUND TO THE JDC HOFNOD BUDGET FOR 2015: R. Cochran introduced **An Ordinance Recognizing Revenue In The Amount Of \$7,000 In The JDC Grant Fund; And Appropriating**

\$7,000 From The JDC Grant Fund To The JDC HOFNOD Budget for 2015, and County Attorney Steve Zega read the ordinance.

- 736.1 R. Cochran explained that this ordinance recognizing revenue in hand from the JDC Grant Fund.
- 736.2 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the ordinance. R. Dennis seconded.**
- 736.3 Citizen Comments: There were no citizen comments made.
- 736.4 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the motion to adopt the ordinance.**
- 736.5 VOTING FOR: J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery, D. Balls, H. Bowman, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, J. Maxwell, and G. McHenry. **The motion passed unanimously by those present. The ordinance was adopted.**

ORDINANCE NO. 2015-84, BOOK NO. 10, PAGE NO. 273

- 736.6 AN ORDINANCE ANTICIPATING ADDITIONAL REVENUE OF \$10,000 IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS GRANT FUND; AND APPROPRIATING \$10,000 FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS GRANT FUND TO ADEQ-BMT WC 15-08 BUDGET FOR 2015: R. Cochran introduced **An Ordinance Anticipating Additional Revenue Of \$10,000 In The Environmental Affairs Grant Fund; And Appropriating \$10,000 From The Environmental Affairs Grant Fund To ADEQ-BMT WC 15-08 Budget For 2015,** and County Attorney Steve Zega read the ordinance.
- 736.7 R. Cochran explained that this ordinance is anticipating revenue of \$10,000 from the Environmental Affairs Grant Fund.
- 736.8 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the ordinance. A. Harbison seconded.**
- 736.9 In response to a question from B. Ussery, Grant Administrator Renee Biby stated that this is a grant that comes from Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and goes through Boston Mountain Solid Waste to assist in education where they have educators go to schools and talk to kids about recycling and environmental affairs.

- 737.1 L. Ecke stated that she thinks educating kids on how to recycle so they can hold their parents responsible is wonderful.
- 737.2 Citizen Comments: There were no citizen comments made.
- 737.3 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the motion to adopt the ordinance.**
- 737.4 VOTING FOR: J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery, D. Balls, H. Bowman, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, J. Maxwell, and G. McHenry. **The motion passed unanimously by those present. The ordinance was adopted.**
- ORDINANCE NO. 2015-85, BOOK NO. 10, PAGE NO. 274**
- 737.5 AN ORDINANCE RECOGNIZING REVENUE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$6,000 IN THE ANIMAL SHELTER GRANT FUND; AND APPROPRIATING THE AMOUNT OF \$6,000 FROM THE ANIMAL SHELTER GRANT FUND TO THE ANIMAL SHELTER-GIF BUDGET FOR 2015: R. Cochran introduced **An Ordinance Recognizing Revenue In The Amount Of \$6,000 In The Animal Shelter Grant Fund; And Appropriating The Amount Of \$6,000 From The Animal Shelter Grant Fund To The Animal Shelter-GIF Budget For 2015**, and County Attorney Steve Zega read the ordinance.
- 737.6 R. Cochran explained that this ordinance is recognizing revenue of \$6,000 from a State grant for the Animal Shelter.
- 737.7 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the ordinance. A. Harbison seconded.**
- 737.8 R. Cochran asked if the Animal Shelter had a particular project in mind for these grant funds; to which R. Biby responded that this is general improvement fund money that came from Senator John Woods through legislation and will be used to assist in purchasing canopies. She explained that the Animal League agreed to help paying for these outdoor canopies, but the estimate came in really high, so they got the \$6,000 and a couple more estimates that were more feasible and the plan is to ask the Animal League for the remaining money to build the canopies.
- 737.9 In response to a question from H. Bowman, R. Biby stated that this is part of the General Improvement Funds (GIF) money.
- 737.10 Citizen Comments: There were no citizen comments made.

- 738.1 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the motion to adopt the ordinance.**
- 738.2 **VOTING FOR: J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery, D. Balls, H. Bowman, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, J. Maxwell, and G. McHenry. The motion passed unanimously by those present. The ordinance was adopted.**
- ORDINANCE NO. 2015-86, BOOK NO. 10, PAGE NO. 275**
- 738.3 S. Lloyd thanked State Representative Micah Neal for his help with JDC Hooked on Fishing – Not on Drugs (HOFNOD) Program.
- 738.4 **AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING LONGEVITY PAY FOR FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES OF WASHINGTON COUNTY: R. Cochran introduced **An Ordinance Establishing Longevity Pay For Full-Time Employees of Washington County**, and County Attorney Steve Zega read the ordinance which is on first reading.**
- 738.5 R. Cochran stated that this is the County's longevity pay ordinance and this does not change anything with the way that longevity is currently being paid other than making it an ordinance as opposed to something that is discussed every year in budget controls.
- 738.6 **R. Cochran made a motion to suspend the rules and place the ordinance on second reading by title only. J. Maxwell seconded.**
- 738.7 **VOTING FOR: J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery, D. Balls, H. Bowman, R. Cochran, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, J. Maxwell, and G. McHenry. ABSTENSION: R. Dennis. The motion passed with thirteen members voting in favor and one abstention.**
- 738.8 County Attorney Steve Zega read **An Ordinance Establishing Longevity Pay For Full-Time Employees Of Washington County** by title only.
- 738.9 **R. Cochran made a motion to suspend the rules and place the ordinance on third and final reading by title only. The motion was seconded.**
- 738.10 R. Dennis stated that he abstained because he would like someone to explain this to him as he had never heard of longevity pay. He further noted that some people are paid for how long they have been employed by the County in addition to being paid a large salary.

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 8

- 739.1 S. Zega noted that JP's Lundstrum, Patterson and Pond were on the Court when they passed this program and the rationale behind it was that there was a point in time when the County was losing employees, especially law enforcement employees, and this was seen as an incentive to get them to stay. He noted that it is across the board and something that has been done through budget controls since about 2002. This was one of the things that was taken out of budget controls this year and was asked that it be brought to the Quorum Court as a codified ordinance.
- 739.2 H. Bowman asked if this was endorsing this as a permanent program or just for 2015; to which S. Zega responded that this is permanent in the sense that anything that the Court does is permanent, but can be taken away by ordinance at a later date.
- 739.3 A. Harbison stated when the County has enough money, she would like to see the longevity pay increased because it has been in place for at least 12 years.
- 739.4 VOTING FOR: J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery, D. Balls, H. Bowman, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, J. Maxwell, and G. McHenry. **The motion passed unanimously by those present.**
- 739.5 County Attorney Steve Zega read **An Ordinance Establishing Longevity Pay For Full-Time Employees Of Washington County** by title only.
- 739.6 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the ordinance. B. Pond seconded.**
- 739.7 Citizen Comments: There were no citizen comments made.
- 739.8 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the motion to adopt the ordinance.**
- 739.9 VOTING FOR: J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery, D. Balls, H. Bowman, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, J. Maxwell, and G. McHenry. **The motion passed unanimously by those present. The ordinance was adopted.**
- ORDINANCE NO. 2015-87, BOOK NO. 10, PAGE NO. 276**
- 739.10 REVIEW REMAINING 2016 BUDGET REQUESTS: Judge Edwards reported that the following budgets still need preliminary action taken.

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 9

- 740.1 Comptroller Cheryl Bolinger stated that the Employee Insurance was preliminarily reviewed at the October 15 meeting and County Insurance Consultant Nelson Driver is recommending no changes from the blue budget book.
- 740.2 Chief Of Staff George Butler reported that Nelson Driver had planned to be present at this meeting, but has the flu, noting that he can probably answer any questions. Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) is still crunching numbers on exactly what it will cost the County to become un-grandfathered and become in full compliance with the Affordable Care Act. He noted that this information will not be available until the first of the year. Since open enrollment has already started, if employees decide to make some changes, then a special enrollment period will need to be scheduled for the middle of 2016; or the changes will take effect in 2017. He stated that there has been some discussion about a wellness program, which has been tried in the past, and there is a cost factor with upfront money that the County will have to spend before it starts seeing any savings.
- 740.3 Judge Edwards pointed out that the court has already voted to approve the 2016 Employee Insurance budget and what is being presented will not affect anything at this time.
- 740.4 C. Bolinger verified that these are the budget numbers that the Court has already seen. Nelson Driver had thought he might be able to come back and reduce some of them, but feels like these are the numbers that the County needs to go with for next year. She does not believe that the Court actually voted on this at the last meeting, and since there are no changes, she would recommend that it goes ahead and vote at this time.
- 740.5 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the ordinance. A. Harbison seconded.**
- 740.6 L. Ecke asked whether the employee insurance plan had been working well for the county; to which G. Butler responded that it absolutely has worked well for the County in the past, although it is going to change and will not be quite as good. He stated that BCBS has been asked to look at several different scenarios in terms of increased premiums, co-pays and deductibles. Those numbers will not be ready until after the first of the year when it can be seen what it will cost to do all the things that the County is not currently doing.
- 740.7 A. Harbison stated she has spoken to Nelson Driver about this and he advised her that the County is still ahead by having its health insurance

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 10

self-insured with BCBS managing it; resulting in a savings of \$300,000 to \$400,000 a year.

- 741.1 G. Butler added that the Court can look at the County's costs right now and add about 40% to it if the County goes to a fully-insured program.
- 741.2 J. Maxwell stated that Nelson Driver had talked about several suggestions that he was going to make and give the members of the Court some scenarios. He would like to hear from N. Driver before the Court votes on this budget.
- 741.3 **J. Maxwell made a motion to table the Employee Insurance budget until Nelson Driver is available to give them the illustrations and suggestions.**
- 741.4 Human Resources Director Lindsay Huffaker stated that she talked to BCBS this week and part of the holdup is that the numbers will not be ready until after the first of the year, so if the Court tables this, then the budget will not be ready until after the first of the year either.
- 741.5 **J. Maxwell withdrew his motion.**
- 741.6 B. Ussery stated that BCBS is obviously dragging its feet on getting the numbers to the Court and he questioned whether it will give the County time before there is a price increase.
- 741.7 G. Butler reiterated that the numbers that BCBS is going to give the County are on various scenarios as far as increases in co-pays, deductibles, premiums. They are also double checking those numbers against what it will cost the County once it loses its grandfather status under the Affordable Care Act, which will be the case if the County makes any increases. He further noted that the County is locked into a contract with BCBS on the current figures.
- 741.8 L. Huffaker stated that the numbers she is getting have nothing to do with the County's agreement with BCBS, because it has a fixed rate and will pay the same amount to BCBS regardless. BCBS is determining how the County can organize its plan to bring money into the County to fund the insurance. She stated since the County is self-insured, it pays the actual cost of everything it spends. There are some changes that if the County makes them, then it will open the door to losing its grandfather status and there are a lot of new costs that would have to be covered that it is currently not required to. She stated that BCBS is evaluating what would

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 11

be a true cost or a savings for the County and does it still have enough people utilizing those services.

- 742.1 B. Ussery stated if the Court budgets this money for next year, will they be able to hit that budget; to which L. Huffaker responded that is the unknown because for the last two years, she has had to ask for money, so there needs to be ways to bring more money in.
- 742.2 G. Butler stated that there is always the possibility that the Court would have to infuse more money into the Fund, the County is also looking at coming into full compliance with the Affordable Care Act and at more out-of-pocket money from the employees; theoretically, this should not change from what is currently being done.
- 742.3 H. Bowman stated that the County's health insurance has increased by 23% from its 2015 budget and the bottom line has increased by 19%; and asked if this was due to additional employees or the Affordable Care Act because those are enormous increases.
- 742.4 G. Butler stated that this is due to a combination of things, but there have been some major illnesses that have hit the fund, so it has to be built back up. He does not believe it is so much an increase in employees, but rather inflation and increase in claims. He stated that there are some things that the County will have to provide through the Affordable Care Act and maybe provide for free. Right now, it is only picking up part of that cost. He stated he is pretty sure the County is ready to shed its grandfather status if it needs to, and the Affordable Care Act will impact it once that happens.
- 742.5 L. Huffaker noted that most organizations across the United States are seeing anywhere from 5% to 8% in more claims every year because of the Affordable Care Act. She stated that dependents can stay on the plan up to the age of 26 and now the county will cover pregnancies on dependent children up to the age of 26; the County has had many of those occurrences, as well as several catastrophic claims or \$100,000 range for medical care. She stated that the County is covering more people longer. She stated that in order to maintain this grandfather status, the County has not seen a lot of increase in premiums and co-pays, which is something the Court will inevitably have to look at.
- 742.6 H. Bowman asked about the risks of giving up the grandfather status; to which G. Butler responded that the County will have to track actual out-of-pocket costs more carefully and will include a lot more things so

employees will reach an out-of-pocket cost much earlier. From that point forward, the county would have to pay 100% for every medical service, including prescriptions. He stated that the County would have to offer free vision and dental screenings for dependents; there are some experimental drugs that will become mandatory; certain specialists will become primary care physicians; certain medical devices will be free, such as breast pumps and all birth control would be free. He stated that the County may have to incur some costs with clinical trials and start paying 100% of preventative care such as colonoscopies and bone density scans.

- 743.1 A. Harbison stated her understanding was that the money that Insurance Consultant Nelson Driver has been putting in the insurance fund and the increase of \$885,950 is what he projected and hopes will cover everything.
- 743.2 J. Maxwell asked if there will be a point where the County is forced to lose its grandfather status; to which G. Butler responded that it will if the County increases anything else on the employees. With respect to a time frame on losing the grandfather status, he stated that everybody will supposedly lose their grandfather status in 2017 regardless, but he does not know for a fact that this will happen then. J. Maxwell stated that the items listed by G. Butler are all subject to the whims of the employees as to when they or their dependents use it. The benchmark that Blue Cross Blue Shield is talking about that they would have to raise co-pays, deductibles and premiums for employees to be able to offset the cost of that grandfather; to which G. Butler responded that is what BCBS is looking at currently.
- 743.3 J. Maxwell asked if anyone had an estimate as to what that might look like; to which L. Huffaker responded she does not have a real set number she can provide at this time. However, she can tell the Court that because of the Affordable Care Act, the County is limited on how much it can raise co-pays and premiums because the plan still has to be affordable as defined by law. With the guidelines of the Affordable Care Act, it takes into play a percentage of what the compensation is. The Court has limits that when it looks at raising it, the area that will be looked at strongest if it touches premiums will be on dependents or families rather than on the employee, because that is what is defining affordable. J. Maxwell stated that it seems like if the Court was looking for ways to help its employees and not punish the county either, not messing with the grandfather status as long as it can makes a lot of sense.

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 13

- 744.1 S. Lloyd noted that the ACA tax increased from \$57,000 in 2015 to \$68,000 for 2016 and asked how this was figured; to which L. Huffaker responded it is the average covered lives or individuals covered by the plan for the year with a dollar multiplier to come up with the dollar amount. She stated that originally this tax was set to be a 3-year tax and everyone is waiting to see if that actually happens.
- 744.2 R. Dennis asked what makes a 26-year-old eligible to be a covered dependent; to which L. Huffaker responded that is part of the Affordable Care Act that mandated all employers who offer health insurance, must offer coverage to dependent children up to the age of 26, including biological, step-children or adopted children and marital status does not change that.
- 744.3 In response to a question from L. Ecke, L. Huffaker explained that the current employee insurance budget is set to accommodate the plan as it currently is and BCBS is currently working on methods to save money, so this budget can potentially be cut in the future. She added that everything that is currently in the budget is correct as long as it does not have an astronomical amount of catastrophic claims.
- 744.4 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the motion to approve the Employee Insurance Budget as presented.**
- 744.5 **VOTING FOR: J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery, D. Balls, H. Bowman, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, J. Maxwell, and G. McHenry. The motion passed unanimously by those present. The Employee Insurance Budget was approved as presented.**
- 744.6 Sheriff Tim Helder addressed the Quorum Court stating that the Sheriff-Law Enforcement and County Jail budgets have been tentatively approved; however, he has an adjustment to make to capital expenditures due to vehicle price increase. He stated that the price that was used during budget preparations for the new Tahoe vehicles was \$31,050 per unit, the current contract price; however, the State of Arkansas published an updated bid/contract on October 20 and the pricing on the Tahoes has now increased by \$4,836 per unit. The new price is \$35,886 per unit and \$36,142 for the Captain's vehicle with carpet and a center console; and the updated cost for the 7 Tahoes for the Sheriff's Enforcement budget is \$251,458, which is an increase of \$33,678 over the request tentatively approved on September 29. He stated that the Detention Center's Transport Division had requested 5 Tahoes so the cost line item will go to

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 14

\$179,430, which is an increase of \$24,180 over the request tentatively approved.

- 745.1 R. Cochran stated that not being able to provide capital for the Sheriff's Department or anyone else last year and the age of the vehicles given to the department, he believes this is a reasonable request.
- 745.2 **R. Cochran made a motion to adopt the adjustments to capital expenditures to the Sheriff-Law Enforcement and County Jail line items and adopt the Sheriff's Budget with this change. B. Pond seconded.**
- 745.3 J. Patterson stated that this is quite an increase to his budget; however, as he did not buy any new vehicles last year, he needs to keep these wheels rolling and he will support this.
- 745.4 T. Lundstrum stated he does not know how this keeps happening when the County has zero inflation, noting that he is not getting a raise on this Social Security this year.
- 745.5 A. Harbison stated that Sheriff Helder has always tried to keep things under control and she will support his request.
- 745.6 L. Ecke stated that she believes in law enforcement and what the Sheriff's Department does for Washington County and she will be supporting this request.
- 745.7 H. Bowman stated that he was amazed that Sheriff Helder could come in with a budget he did this year based on adding so many vehicles and asked what he sacrificed to this; to which Sheriff Helder responded that last budget cycle they cut a couple of positions and there were a lot of small items that was determined that the department could do without. He noted that every department is going through this and none of this comes without sacrifice. He stated if the Court has to make any further cuts, then it will be in personnel because the operating budget is about as low as it can get. H. Bowman stated that this is a large budget that Sheriff Helder had worked hard to keep it under control.
- 745.8 R. Dennis stated that while he is all for this request, at the same time, noted that he has been seeing a lot of natural gas vehicles out there and even though gas is cheap currently, it will not stay that way. He asked if there was any way that the Sheriff can convert the vehicles over to natural gas to save fuel as they go forward; to which Sheriff Helder responded

that has had presentations done through the years and there is a cost involved to retrofit and the ability to find places that his department can use to refuel 24/7. He stated there may come a time when it is more available, but at this time it is not very practical for his division to do that. R. Dennis noted that his father had a truck that he could flip a switch over to gasoline and flip the switch if he needed more power. He believes it would be worth researching and suggested that they retrofit the vehicles when he buys new vehicles; to which Sheriff Helder responded that he does not know that they are included on the state bid and it would still be a retrofitted cost, but he will continue to look into this.

- 746.1 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on the motion to approve the Sheriff-Law Enforcement and County Jail Budgets with the adjustments to capital expenditures.**
- 746.2 **VOTING FOR: J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery, D. Balls, H. Bowman, R. Cochran, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, J. Maxwell, and G. McHenry. The motion passed unanimously by those present. The Sheriff-Law Enforcement and County Jail Budgets were approved with adjustments to capital expenditures.**
- 746.3 **DISCUSSION ON WASHINGTON COUNTY COMPENSATION FOR EMPLOYEES AND ELECTED OFFICIALS FOR 2016:** County Salary Consultant Blair Johanson addressed the Quorum Court with the research and information that he has provided with a power point presentation. He stated that some of this information is consistent with what was previously offered, with some additional information.
- 746.5 With respect to average annual pay comparisons, B. Johanson noted that he added Elected Officials pay to the County Employees 2015 average, which puts the County closer in line to the state average of \$37,940 or \$18.24/hour at \$38,849 or \$18.68/hour, but it is still below the Northwest Arkansas Regional 2014 average of \$42,410 or \$20.39/hour. He stated that the question was asked how many employees the County had above the midpoint compared to where it is today with the 2% adjustment, when looking at how the employees pay stacks up against the internal pay line, he noted that it goes from 45% to 52% above the midpoint line. He stated that it was requested that he include Pulaski County and some of the other Class 6 counties as a comparison on pay, he noted that based on comparisons, Washington County is behind Pulaski County by 2.2% with the other smaller Class 6 Counties flattening out and not paying as well based on the size of the county and where it is located.

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 16

- 747.1 B. Johanson addressed the statistical details for salary survey pay lines when the Court looks at the Northwest Arkansas market. The Northwest Arkansas Human Resources Association (NOARK) survey, which involves a combination of public and private organizations like the NWA cities, the Department of Labor for the area, and Benton and Sebastian Counties, was 3.31% behind on a mean basis and 4.9% behind on a median basis based on the pay in 2015. He further noted in 2014, the County was behind by 1.81% mean and 2.88% median; and in 2013, it was behind by 3.24% mean and 4.45% median. He explained the reason for the decrease in that percentage is because a while back when trying to address the compression and pay issue, the overall adjustment made in the 2014 budget was 4.5%. Last year, the County went with 2% and the market moved about 3%, which is why it lost some ground between last year and this year. He addressed the information from Pulaski, Craighead and Saline Counties, stating for Pulaski County, Washington County's average internal pay is 2.2% behind Pulaski County and to the positive for Craighead and Saline Counties. He explained that when those three counties are included, the impact it has is that it makes up some distance and drops down to a negative 0.26% behind the market mean and a negative 1.44% on a median. He noted that while these counties provide a frame of reference, the reason that these counties are not included in the study is because they are not in the market recruitment area meaning that there is a different cost of living associated with those regions of the state. Craighead and Saline are smaller counties and do not have as much money in resources to work with, so those counties will pay less than Washington County. The NWA market is different than central or eastern Arkansas with less unemployment.
- 747.2 B. Johanson stated that there were questions regarding the health insurance monthly premium cost share with employees in both the private and public sectors and compared to other counties. Washington County pays \$411 per employee. With employee only coverage, the employees pick up \$75; with employee and spouse coverage, \$257; with employee and children coverage, \$197; with employee and family coverage, \$480. From a percentage of the cost share standpoint, Washington County employees are picking up 15% of the total monthly employee only premium; for employee and spouse coverage, employees are picking up 38% of the total monthly premium; for employee and children coverage, employee are picking up 32% of the total monthly premium; and for employee and family coverage, employees are picking up 54% of the total monthly premium. Compared to Benton and Sebastian Counties, the cost share for Washington County employees is considerably higher than what is happening in the marketplace. He further addressed these percentages

compared to a portion of the private sector, stating that in 2014, Washington County's cost sharing is consistent in employee only, employee and spouse, and employee and children coverages. However, in employee and family coverage, the County is again higher than what is happening in the public private sector. He noted that in 2015, the percentages for cost sharing were the same with Arkansas Compensation Association (ACA) and were in line with what is happening across the country. NOARK is not expecting to see employers pick up more of the cost, but are instead asking employees to pick up more.

- 748.1 B. Johanson next addressed the monetary premiums and how Washington County compares to the private sector on the overall cost, stating that it looks like Central Arkansas' actual costs are running higher per month in that market than in Northwest Arkansas. When using public and private sectors, the County is staying pretty consistent with what is happening there except for NOARK with employee and family is \$1005 compared to the County's \$891. He stated that the reason he wanted to offer this is in looking at the County's self-funded plan and what is charged per month to fund that plan is compared to other counties in the public and private sector. He stated from an employee only standpoint, the County is a little bit higher; from an employee/spouse/child, the County is pretty close to what is happening in the NOARK study in our region; and from an employee/family standpoint, there is almost \$110 to \$115 more in the market being charged per month for total cost.
- 748.2 B. Johanson addressed a comparison to offer a frame of reference with what the other counties and cities are planning for budget increases. This shows anywhere from about 2% to 3%; and if the County has any kind of merit program, work toward 4%. The overall average for merit for NW Arkansas based on the NOARK study is about 3.75%
- 748.3 B. Johanson stated with respect to pay study adjustment recommendations, he would recommend a general increase adjustment of 3% based on the County being 3.31% behind the market on a mean basis and 4.45% behind the market on a median. He stated the regional projected average salary adjustments in 2016 will range from 2.8% to 3.6% with the average for the market being about 3%. He stated that he is recommending that the Court not adjust the range structure this year, but wait until 2017 to do this at the minimum midpoint maximum. He noted whenever the Court adjusts the minimum midpoint max, there is an additional expense, because there will be employees who fall below the minimum and have to be brought above it. He is recommending that those employees' range structure last another year before it is adjusted.

He stated that when the Court adjusts the range, it is adjusting the range a little bit behind what employees' pay is adjusted to, because if the ranges are moved at the same rate, then there will be compression with the new employees' salaries catching up with the older employees. B. Johanson stated that in 2017, he would recommend around a 2.5% adjustment to the range structure and this pay structure adjustment will increase the lowest grade level pay range minimum from \$10.76 to \$11.03 per hour. He stated for elected officials, he would recommend continuing with the current policy of being paid at 85% of the state allowable pay range maximum.

749.1 B. Johanson addressed a benefits study that goes into a lot more detail than just health insurance from April of 2014 to use as a frame of reference, because benefits usually do not change that much. He stated that his thinking is that Washington County's benefits are competitive with the marketplace and the differentiator is the retirement plan based on the amount of money going into it. This is very helpful for the folks who are 5 to 15 years away from retirement, but the new employees coming in who are 30 years away from retirement will be more concerned about wages as opposed to retirement. He stated that this is a significant expense and the Court should not put it into a light that the retirement benefit does not make a difference, because it is significant compared to what is being offered in the marketplace. He stated that the County has to strike a balance between attracting new people and paying a wage that brings those people in and at the same time recognizing that it has a pretty lucrative retirement plan compared to the marketplace.

749.2 J. Maxwell asked about Washington County's insurance plan and what it covers vs. ACA or NOARK; to which B. Johanson stated that the NOARK study outlines the deductibles and co-pays being offered in the plans, and gives a good visual of what is being offered. He asked B. Johanson to quantify or rate where the County's insurance plan is as opposed to the other entities; to which he responded that he would want to work with Human Resources Director Lindsay Huffaker to look at the specifics about the co-pay and deductible to make it current. He noted in the 2014 study, he looked at the average deductibles and co-pays from Washington County, NOARK, ACA and the Federal Government. He noted a rule of thumb under the County's grandfather plan. Generally, this plan is probably a better plan from the employees' perspective as far as holding down cost and when you get outside of the grandfather plan, the employees have to cover other expenses and will see higher expense on premiums. He stated right now, because the employees do not have a high deductible plan, this would be more expensive to the employees, but

they can manage the premium better. Since the County does not have that, it is probably a better plan than what is out in the marketplace.

- 750.1 R. Cochran addressed the adjustment for the pay raise, which is done about every 4 years and in the other three years that scale is used for new employees at the same rate. He stated other companies are adjusting those more frequently and questioned whether it might be better to take the 2.5% and divide it by 4 and give that amount every year, which would keep the County more competitive with the market on entry level. B. Johanson responded stating that the general rule of thumb is that most organizations will adjust pay structure about every two years somewhere in the neighborhood of 2% to stay competitive with salary inflation and the market. Then there are some organizations that put together step at about 1%, because salary inflation adjustments are moving at 3% and structure is moving at 2%; however, most organizations will try to let that last a little longer or move about 2% every two years. He stated if the Court wanted to move into something a little more regular, he would suggest in the neighborhood of 1% on an annual basis. R. Cochran asked if that would help with the compression problem that the Court has encountered; to which B. Johanson responded that it would help as long as employees' pay adjustments are tracking high in the structure. R. Cochran stated that the Court could always temper the pay grade structure adjustment by what is being done with raises and keep it about half of what they are doing on an annual basis. B. Johanson stated some organizations that are moving structure and employee pay simultaneously at the same amount will eventually run into compression.
- 750.2 R. Cochran stated in order to stay competitive for hiring, the County has to pay its employees a little bit more to get them off the new hire rate; and he believes that is not treating the employees right. B. Johanson stated that was a good point, because you are looking at incremental expense; and if it was a lesser amount, then it would be more incremental and not as significant. B. Johanson noted that every time the County tries to do this, it had to push back, because of the expense associated with moving the structure and it would get voted down. He stated that his role is to try to keep the structure and wages competitive and he is not sure that the County can do this from a budget standpoint. B. Johanson stated he would recommend that in 2017, the Court go with the 2% and then after that implements something on a regular basis.
- 750.3 A. Harbison addressed the compression issue, stating that the Court would have to ask for a general increase at 3% and questioned if it could do 2%. She questioned what that would do to the structure and

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 20

compression or whether it would be better to go on and do a 1% pay structure increase. B. Johanson stated that this would move the minimum closer to the other. He recommended that the pay stay where it is with the structure so the County can put its dollars toward the employee pay adjustments. In 2017, when the Court has a better feel for the budget, it can do the 2% structure change, which would have some cost associated with it. At that point, the Court would probably look at a 3% employee pay adjustment. B. Johanson further responded that giving a flat amount to each employee would not have an effect on the structure, because that is where the employee pay is moving within the structure.

- 751.1 A. Harbison asked if he would recommend 2% across the board; to which B. Johanson responded that periodically the County has gone with a 75 cent or \$1 raise, which made a greater difference for the person at the lower end of the schedule than the higher part of the schedule. He always recommends that the Court not do that successively, because it is penalizing compensation and appropriate pay for employees who are making a contribution to the county at a higher level in the structure. He stated that he would recommend looking at a percentage as opposed to 50 cents or 75 cents, because it fits better with each person's pay. B. Johanson stated another possibility would be from a certain threshold dollar amount, such as \$50,000 and above, give 2% and below \$50,000 and give 3%. He stated as a frame of reference, if the Court uses 2% based on full-time employees, the average would represent 35 cents; 2.5% represents 44 cents; and 3% represents 53 cents.
- 751.2 In response to a question from A. Harbison about what a 2% increase would cost including benefits, Cheryl Bolinger stated it would represent \$563,011.93; and a 3% increase would represent \$821,491.
- 751.3 B. Ussery stated when the Court is looking at the chart, it has helped the employees at the bottom, but those at the top are well below the average pay. The County will have trouble keeping those employees, so the Court needs to take that into consideration.
- 751.4 H. Bowman asked about longevity pay for particular organizations; to which B. Johanson responded that this is seen more in the public sector with cities counties, schools, etc. than in the private sector and those numbers are not included in his calculations.
- 751.5 R. Cochran noted that the Court has not done anything with elected officials' salaries in several years and asked if he recommended leaving those at the current policy of 85%; to which B. Johanson responded based

on the current biennium for the state allowable and 85% of a higher allowable actually provides an adjustment for elected officials. He stated if that is allowable at state level, he would have probably come back with a higher percentage, but since the allowable went up, he felt like 85% of a higher allowable gave the elected officials a little more pay. He stated that he would look up what that percentage would equate to and provide the information.

- 752.1 C. Bolinger stated that the increase for elected officials' salaries would be 3%.
- 752.2 T. Lundstrum stated that he has a problem with elected officials' salaries in that several of them are making the same money, but have a different number of people working for them. He stated that he would like to see Sheriff Helder's salary raised from 85% to 90% based on the responsibilities of the job and because he has more people working for him than any other elected official in the county. He pointed out that Sheriff Helder is confronted with many lawsuits and other stressful situations from day-to-day.
- 752.3 A. Harbison stated that she believes they should do a 2% raise for County employees across the board. She realizes that the ones at the top will get more than the ones at the bottom, but the Court needs to look at job responsibilities attached to elected officials like Sheriff Helder and reward them so they will hopefully stay employed by the county. She further noted that a lot of employees stay with the county because of its retirement benefits.
- 752.4 **A. Harbison made a motion that they raise County employees' salaries 2% across the board using the money provided by the County Clerk. D. Balls seconded.**
- 752.5 J. Maxwell stated that there have been a lot of talk about employee retention and asked what the County's turnover rate is compared to the other regions that it is being compared to; which L. Huffaker responded that this year the turnover rate was about 8%. She further explained in Human Resources, she uses the rule of thumb that the County never wants to be over 10%. J. Maxwell stated that it sounds like the County has a very benefit rich employee retirement, health care insurance, etc. and asked how successful it has been at keeping its employees compared to other reference points relevant to Washington County; to which L. Huffaker responded that the average turnover is about 15%.

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 22

- 753.1 H. Bowman stated that he knows because of all the confusion at the Road Department this year that the County has had many employees leave and asked if that is where the predominant part of the turnover has been or is there other departments with higher levels of turnover than average. L. Huffaker responded that the Road Department definitely saw an increase in its turnovers and sadly it has been tenured employees leaving; and the other departments have remained fairly static. She further stated the last time she checked, the turnover rate at the Road Department was about 10% this year, and last year its turnover was about 4%.
- 753.2 R. Cochran asked if A. Harbison's motion included elected officials; to which she verified that the figure she was given by C. Bolinger did not include elected officials.
- 753.3 County Attorney Steve Zega stated for purposes of carrying the motion, he believes it would be best if A. Harbison's motion said that because "county employees" the way it is stated would be broad enough to include elected officials.
- 753.4 R. Dennis stated that he will not support A. Harbison's motion, because he just does not like percentage raises and sees them as totally unfair. He stated that it takes more work to do it the other way.
- 753.5 B. Ussery stated his understanding that elected officials get 85% of the rate that the State elected officials, so automatically get a 3% raise; to which C. Bolinger responded that if the court votes to keep the salaries at 85% then the Elected Officials would get a 3% raise, but it is not automatic.
- 753.6 B. Ussery stated that he would like the Court to review the elected officials' offices and consider giving the smaller offices 80% instead of 85% of the total, which would apply to incoming elected officials and not current people. He stated if the County is paying considerably more than surrounding counties to manage a lot fewer people, giving the example of the Court paying its County Collector \$91,000 a year and Pulaski, Benton and Sebastian Counties pay the Collectors in the low \$80,000.
- 753.7 A. Harbison stated that she understands R. Dennis' concerns, but she believes that 2% is all the County can afford to give this year and it is best to just give it across the board, because you get into other problems with compression, range and structure of the salaries. She stated that it is easier to do this and it prevents problems down the road that usually costs the County more money to take care of. She stated that she would

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 23

encourage the Court to go ahead and do this, because it has the money and needs to use good common sense with this budget and move on to get it passed.

- 754.1 R. Dennis stated common sense says that \$10.76 at 2% is equal to 21.5 cents an hour increase; and \$750 for longevity pay for anyone employed for 9 years is equal to 36 cents an hour increase. He stated that this is just unfair for people at the bottom.
- 754.2 R. Cochran stated he knows that the County's budget is tight and a 2% raise does not refill the employees' gas tanks and disagrees that the County has had zero percent inflation. He stated that the most valuable assets are the county employees and if the Court does not take care of them, then it will lose them and their leadership.
- 754.3 **R. Cochran made a motion to amend A. Harbison's motion to make it 3%.**
- 754.4 **A. Harbison and D. Balls accepted R. Cochran's motion as a friendly amendment to her motion.**
- 754.5 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on A. Harbison's motion with the friendly amendment.**
- 754.6 VOTING FOR: B. Pond, B. Ussery, D. Balls, R. Cochran and A. Harbison. VOTING AGAINST: J. Patterson, H. Bowman, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, J. Maxwell, and G. McHenry. **The motion failed with five members voting in favor and eight members voting against the motion.**
- 754.7 **T. Lundstrum made a motion to increase Sheriff Helder's pay to 90% of his range. J. Patterson seconded.**
- 754.8 A. Harbison asked T. Lundstrum where this money will come from; to which he responded that the same budget that all of this other money is coming from. He stated that the money that the County Clerk has generously offered is not her money, but taxpayer money that belongs to Washington County.
- 754.9 A. Harbison stated that it is taxpayer money, but is the County Clerks' money and she has said she will give it to the Court for county employee raises. She stated that she came with a proposal and where the money would come from.

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 24

- 755.1 Judge Edwards stated that she is the Chief Administrator of this county and has to make major decisions and she feels like with her position in this county that all the responsibility falls on her other than the Sheriff's budget. She stated she feels this is a slap in her face, because she is female and overlooked as the County Judge.
- 755.2 T. Lundstrum apologized that Judge Edwards has taken offense to his motion, but his decision to do this was based on the number of people in the Sheriff's Department that he manages and had nothing to do with gender. He stated that this is her last year as County Judge and if she was going to continue on as Sheriff Helder plans to continue on, he would have taken a different view of that as well.
- 755.3 C. Bolinger stated that the Sheriff's current salary is \$96,825 and this increase in Sheriff Helder's salary would be \$106,631.10 and the benefits would be \$12,955.67.
- 755.4 A. Harbison stated that she is sorry this is getting into personalities and if the County had the money she would give everyone a 10% raise, but it does not have it. She stated that Sheriff Helder is an excellent Sheriff and his budget only increased \$100,000 with the new vehicles. The County Judge almost has as many employees as the Sheriff. She stated that she cannot vote for T. Lundstrum's motion, because it is pointing out one elected official over another and all of the county's elected officials do really good jobs and work hard at what they do.
- 755.5 R. Dennis stated while he thinks it is a good idea, he would take the person out of it and just use the title.
- 755.6 **R. Dennis made a motion to amend T. Lundstrum's motion to include the Washington County Judge as well.**
- 755.7 **T. Lundstrum and J. Patterson accepted R. Dennis' motion as a friendly amendment.**
- 755.8 L. Ecke stated that she would like to see the Court members table T. Lundstrum's motion to give them time to consider what is right and good for the whole as she is proud of every elected official in this county.
- 755.9 **L. Ecke made a motion to table T. Lundstrum's motion and discussion until a later date. S. Lloyd seconded the motion.**
- 755.10 **Judge Edwards called for a vote on L. Ecke's motion to table.**

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 25

- 756.1 VOTING FOR: J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery, D. Balls, H. Bowman, R. Cochran, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, J. Maxwell and G. McHenry. VOTING AGAINST: R. Dennis and T. Lundstrum. **The motion passed with eleven members voting in favor and two members voting against the motion. The issue was tabled until a later date.**
- 756.2 FINALIZATION OF THE 2016 BUDGET CONTROLS: Judge Edwards noted that the court still needs to finalize Sections 2 and 7 in the revised Budget Controls. She stated that these budget controls have been tabled 3-4 times and the Court needs to try to pass it tonight, if possible.
- 756.3 County Attorney Steve Zega explained with regard to Section 7 on salaries that were to be determined later in the budget process and this sort of bleeds into Agenda item #16 - discussion on budget finalization. He stated that the Court could conceivably act on Budget Control #2 with the changes outlined therein that has been discussed.
- 756.4 **S. Lloyd made a motion that the Court adopt Budget Control #2. R. Cochran seconded.**
- 756.5 J. Maxwell stated that his one concern with the second portion of this budget control is that he wants to ensure the Court does not have an unintended consequence with this and are cutting some department out that is currently sharing costs. He asked if there were any departments that do not fall under this Utilities, Cleaning and Maintenance services umbrella that is currently paying costs for another department. C. Bolinger responded that the IT Department has servers that provide services for the entire county. Also, the Comptroller, Human Resources and IT Departments look at their budgets at the end of the year and put part of that cost back to county general and the other budgets that they support. She stated she is not sure what this would do to the way those departments currently do business, because she is not sure how all departments handle every situation, and asked about the Planning Department.
- 756.6 Planning Director Juliet Richey addressed the Quorum Court stating that the Court added to this budget control, "This does not apply to departments who work together in cost sharing projects," which is meant to cover, but she sees it as kind of nebulous wording, but if the Court can construe it to continue what the Departments are doing, that would be fine with her. J. Richey asked C. Bolinger if the utilities cover rent and utilities for those departments who are located in the Road Department building. C. Bolinger responded that the utilities for any department that is down

there and not part of the Road Department is recouped back to the Road Department from County General, because everything spent in the Road Department budget has to be for road purposes. The utilities calculated for the Planning and Environmental Affairs Departments is transferred to Road from General at the end of the year. She further stated that rent is charged, noting that this was once worded as rent, but really was utilities and is calculated by square footage.

- 757.1 J. Maxwell stated that he is not opposed to the cleaner accounting that this is attempting to do and he knows that the Court has tabled this before, but he really believes that this section should continue to be tabled to make sure it is worded correctly. For instance, he questioned the security cameras for the Sheriff's building if IT purchased them; should it be an IT expense. C. Bolinger responded that she does not believe so, because that would still be under the fixed assets and tracked as part of IT if IT purchased it. She cannot think of any expenses that this would come into conflict with.
- 757.2 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on S. Lloyd's motion to adopt Budget Control #2 as amended.**
- 757.3 **VOTING FOR: J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery, D. Balls, H. Bowman, R. Dennis, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, T. Lundstrum, J. Maxwell and G. McHenry. ABSTENSION: R. Cochran. **The motion passed with twelve members voting in favor and one member abstaining. Budget Control #2 as amended was adopted.****
- 757.4 R. Cochran stated that he would like to see the Court consider implementing a new policy for employees at the top or above their pay grade wherein they pay one amount like a bonus or longevity pay to them at the end of the year and does not raise their salaries outside of their range. He stated the reason this is troubling to him is because the range is set based on a point scale of what the job is and the qualifications and merits of the person in that job. The Court should not continue moving the salaries up because the job is worth so much per JESAP. He noted if the pay scale range increases and that salary is below that, then those employees would be eligible for a raise.
- 757.5 **R. Cochran made a motion to implement a new policy as Budget Control #9, for employees at or above their maximum pay line for their grade to receive a bonus in an amount equal to the percentage raise received by other county employees on the first pay period of December of each year. D. Balls seconded.**

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 27

- 758.1 A. Harbison asked B. Johanson to comment on R. Cochran's motion; to which he stated that this usually is hand-in-hand with the decision made on the employee percentage adjustment for the general increase. It is made at the same time so the Court knows what the amount would be for those over the maximum to receive that allocation as a bonus and is not added to those employees' salaries.
- 758.2 R. Cochran added that it also allows the employees to enjoy a bonus similar to longevity pay because those employees have obviously been employed by the County for a long time and should not be denied a bonus increase. This would be a one-time thing and will not change the base amount. B. Johanson stated that this is an acceptable policy and one that has gained greater popularity of rewarding people for their contribution and yet not allowing them to get over the maximum.
- 758.3 A. Harbison stated that she supports that concept, but believes the Court should table this until the kind of raise, if any, will be awarded.
- 758.4 **A. Harbison made a motion to table R. Cochran's motion until a later date. J. Patterson seconded.**
- 758.5 **With no further discussion, Judge Edwards called for a vote on A. Harbison's motion to table.**
- 758.6 **VOTING FOR: J. Patterson, B. Pond, B. Ussery, D. Balls, H. Bowman, L. Ecke, A. Harbison, S. Lloyd, and J. Maxwell. VOTING AGAINST: R. Cochran, R. Dennis, T. Lundstrum, and G. McHenry. **The motion passed with nine members voting in favor and four members voting against the motion. The issue was tabled until a later date.****
- 758.7 L. Ecke stated when numbers, ideas, proposals, or solutions are being made to the Court, it is a lot easier if it is put down in writing. This gives the other court members an opportunity to review, digest and process it. She stated that she is not getting this at all and believes it would benefit those people to be able to see it, have a good discussion, and are better able to make an educated decision.
- 758.8 S. Lloyd concurred with L. Ecke's statements.
- 758.9 **DISCUSSION ON 2016 BUDGET FINALIZATION: A. Harbison made a suggestion that at their next meeting they finalize the budget.**
- 758.10 **A short recess was taken at this time.**

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Washington County Quorum Court
November 10, 2015
Page 28

- 759.1 Judge Edwards announced that the Court does not have enough information at this time, so the Court needs to put this on hold until its next meeting on Monday, November 16th or Tuesday, November 17th.
- 759.2 In response to a question from J. Maxwell, S. Zega stated that he sort of did that by not voting for the 3% raise, but the court has not spoken on that because it does not have enough information with which to operate and make a big informed decision on the budget.
- 759.3 CITIZEN COMMENTS: There were no citizen comments made.
- 759.4 ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Carly Sandidge
Quorum Court Coordinator/Reporter