

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Session Agenda Thursday, October 17, 2024 6 PM

The Board met on this date in Regular Session. Chairman JT Surles, Commissioners Chris Tuten, Ben White, Austin Hosford, and Gene Hall were present. Clerk Jason Welty, Clerk Elect Trey Hightower, County Manager Shannon Metty, County Attorney Heather Encinosa, Assistant County Attorney Evan Rosenthal, HR Director Renee Long, and County Budget Officer Gus Rojas were also present.

1. 6 PM Call to Order, Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance

2. Public Announcements, Presentations & Awards

- a. ARPC—1977 Interlocal agreement
 - i. Provides assistance and capacity to the counties and does local government assistance. Provide work to the region at cost as a nonprofit. The dues in 1977 were \$5,000; as of 2022, they were still \$5,000. If tied to inflation, the dues would be over \$25,000. We have struggled to keep up with indirect costs such as rent, legal counsel, and single audits. The board unanimously agreed to increase the dues. They are looking to get the dues increased for the current fiscal year and index for inflation, which would still be less than \$25,000. This would allow them to be financially sustainable.
- b. Chairman Surles
 - i. Counsel, is this something that we need to put on another agenda?
- c. County Attorney Heather Encinosa
 - i. Does not think a budget amendment is necessary; the board can just vote to increase the dues.
 - ii. **Commissioner Tuten motioned to increase the dues and pay \$11,000, Commissioner Hall seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**
- d. Property Appraiser Angela Gray
 - i. Closed her books for the 23/24 year– presents to the board a check for unspent funds of \$26,000. Ready for audit.
- e. CareerSource
 - i. Not present.

3. Citizens Request & Input on Non-Agenda Items

- a. Leslie Wilkenson
 - i. Upset about Charles Culp being brought back into the courthouse: the scene of his crime. He is a felon who admitted to stealing from us; she cannot think of any justification for this. She wants to know that he will not be allowed back into the courthouse.
- b. Clerk Jason Welty
 - i. As part of Mr. Culp's sentence, the judge sentenced him to come back and fix the things that he broke. Welty accepted that and spoke to the state attorney before the sentencing and requested Culp come back to the courthouse. The purpose is to restore the things that he messed up. The

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audits identified things that were misplaced, but Welty has been spending time figuring out how we got to these numbers.

- c. Leslie
 - i. At what time can we put this behind us? Is he coming back? It is embarrassing.
- d. Clerk Jason Welty
 - i. He probably will not be coming back. Culp was in the courthouse today, but Welty has received all the information he needed from him. He can ask questions through electronic means in the future if he must.
- e. Chairman Surles
 - i. This is a very common practice, and we appreciate your concern.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. **Commissioner Hall motioned approve the Consent Agenda, Commissioner White seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

5. General Business

- a. Meeting Minutes-Continued from 09/25/2024
 - i. **Commissioner Tuten motioned to approve the minutes from January 4th 2024 to August 15th 2024, Commissioner White seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**
- b. Animal Control Ordinance Draft Discussion-Request Approval to Schedule and Advertise Public Hearing
 - i. The General Counsel provided revisions after the August 1, 2024, meeting to acknowledge the existence of community cats, to remove the provisions about animal defecation on private property, and to restrict the definition of public nuisance so that it does not include continuous barking within certain time periods/agricultural areas.
 - ii. Commissioner Hall
 - 1. Does the ordinance address signage in parks?
 - iii. County Attorney Heather Encinosa
 - 1. Currently, it does not. It includes a prohibition about running at large, which would allow an animal control citation. If this gets passed, you can post signs that say “no running at large.”
 - iv. Brent Forehand
 - 1. Opposes the ordinance because we do not enforce the current laws that are on the books.
 - v. **Commissioner Hosford motioned to direct staff to do a public hearing, Commissioner Hall seconded the motion, and Commissioner Tuten was in favor. Commissioners Surles and White opposed the motion.**
 - vi. Commissioner Hosford

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1. The purpose is to clean up the ordinance that we have and address a few of the issues such as dogs running at large. He understands the Boards' hesitations. He would like to see it move forward.
- c. Parking Ordinance-Postponed until November 7th
- d. SHIP Program FY 2022-2023 Funding Awards
 - i. Kirsten – SHIP Program Advisory – The fiscal year 22/23 application process is completed; there were two applicants. She is requesting approval signature of other applicants. K2K was low bidder - \$151k and \$157k – sufficient funding to cover projects – award K2K to enter the agreement with Ms. Cummings.
 - ii. Conditionally approve Ms. Merit, pending the completion of the application.
 - iii. **Commissioner Hall motioned to approve, Commissioner White seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**
- e. Canvassing Board Appointment
 - i. Assistant County Attorney Evan Rosenthal
 1. Approve appointment substitute member – Judge Robert Plaines requested a new alternate canvassing board member. Resolution will remove Commissioner Hosford and replace with George Evans.
 - ii. Commissioner Hosford
 1. The statute clearly states two reasons why a canvassing board member would have to step down: a candidate who has opposition in the election being canvassed or is an active participant in the campaign or candidacy of any candidate who has opposition in the election being canvassed.
 - iii. County Attorney Heather Encinosa
 1. Provides clarification regarding the language in the statute that Hosford referred to.
 - iv. **Commissioner White motioned replace the Canvassing Board member with Mr. Evans, Commissioner Tuten seconded the motion, and Commissioner Hosford opposed. Commissioner Hall and Chairman Surles voted in favor; motion passes.**
 - v. Phil Colandra
 1. Spoke in favor of Judge Plaine's assessment.
- f. FY 24/25-Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement
 - i. Standard Agreement
 1. **Commissioner White motioned to approve, Commissioner Tuten seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**
- g. FY 24/25-DOH Jefferson County Contract
 - i. Standard Agreement

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1. Commissioner White motioned to approve, Commissioner Tuten seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

6. Clerk Of Court

- a. VAB Appointment – consensus from board to appoint Commissioner White to replace Commissioner Tuten.
- b. Says thank you as this will be his last county commission meeting. Clerk Trey Hightower will be appointed on November 1st.

7. County Engineer

- a. Provided an update on Old Lloyd Rd. Waukeelah Hwy is progressing well. The Army Corps of Engineers permit is holding up work in the wetlands. CR 149 Phase 1&2: meeting with DOT with questions; will be updated at the next meeting. Humane Shelter is done. Grant applications are due in March. The commission should be thinking about the following projects to submit.
- b. Chris Morris
 - i. Road Bonds contract – design project wolf creek bridge repair, Boston Hwy Culvert replacement planned to have final plans by the end of the month. CEI service – Precon for Government Farm Rd and Precon for Asheville Hwy. We expect to break ground next week, and for it to pick up in January after holiday season.
 - ii. Water Street – City of Monticello project.

8. County Attorney

9. County Manager

- a. Capital Improvements Plan—The draft is coming along well. It is good to have a permanent plan when applying for grants. We will move forward with roads, stormwater, and parks and look at facilities in another phase.
- b. Kennels – Jim has them in the building office. They should be here December 2; she is working with Mr. Lance Pigot to prepare the land.
- c. Clerk Elect Hightower
 - i. Thanked Clerk Welty.
- d. Veterans Affairs officer – The roof at the Veterans’ Affairs office is in poor shape. The VA officer will be in the library on Tuesdays and Wednesdays instead of the VA Office.

10. County Commissioners

- a. Commissioner Hall
 - i. If a business wants incentives, who do they go to? Manager Metty responded that we do not have many incentives. We are working on developing a land development code first, but economic development is on pause until we update the code.
- b. Commissioner Tuten
 - i. The plan is to concentrate development on Hwy 19 to ensure we control it, and it fits in the community.

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- c. Commissioner Hall
 - i. Restitution for the County from the recent court cases on January 13th.
- d. Chairman Surles
 - i. We appreciate everyone's patience regarding debris pickup.
 - ii. Received a petition from a resident about high-speed internet. Marquee for the county commission.

11. Adjourn

- a. **Commissioner Hosford motioned to adjourn, Commissioner White seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**