

OCT 29 2021

MADISON COUNTY QUORUM COURT
REGULAR SESSION

CERTIFY THAT THIS INSTRUMENT WAS FILED
FOR RECORD IN MY OFFICE AND RECORDED
IN COURT BOOK 10 PAGE 2-4
TAMITHA BLOCKER COUNTY CLERK
D.C.

October 18, 2021

6:00 PM

The Madison County Quorum Court met on October 18, 2021, in regular session with all members present.

The Minutes from the previous meeting were approved as written.

The Treasurer's Report was approved as written.

The Expenditure Report was approved as written.

County Judge Frank Weaver updated the court on the Solar Project. Judge Weaver stated that he had selected Clear Energy as the ESCO for the solar project. Judge Weaver had participated in a kick-off meeting with Clear Energy in which they presented a proposed timeline for the project. An in-depth energy audit will be completed first, and Clear Energy hopes to have a final contract ready for quorum court approval by the December meeting. Construction on the solar array is scheduled to begin in January, according to the timeline.

County Judge Frank Weaver informed the court that before we could get our ordinance in place to purchase the new road graders, Caterpillar had a price increase of \$5000.00 per unit and an increase in the interest rate that they initially offered to the county. Judge Weaver stated that the new purchase price was \$3,157,764.00. Judge Weaver told the court that ARVEST Bank had approached him about the possibility of financing the purchase of the graders at a better interest rate than was offered by Caterpillar Financial Services. Judge Weaver introduced Jay Bankston, who is a Regional Account Manager with ARVEST Bank. Mr. Bankston gave a presentation to the court on what financing ARVEST could offer. The savings would be around \$99,000 over the life of the loan. After some discussion on the matter, the court agreed to finance the grader purchase through ARVEST. Due to the changes, County Attorney Billy Allred advised that an amended ordinance would need to be approved before Judge Weaver could place the order for the graders with Riggs Caterpillar.

Mr. Allred made the necessary amendments to Ordinance No. 2021-7, an appropriation ordinance authorizing the purchase of road equipment. Larry Garrett made a motion to place Ordinance No. 2021-7, as amended, on its first reading. Pattie Shinn seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion. County Clerk Tamitha Blocker read Ordinance No. 2021-7, as amended. Larry Garrett made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2021-7, as amended. Pattie Shinn seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion. Ordinance No. 2021-7, as amended, was adopted.

County Judge Frank Weaver introduced Lew Thompson, who spoke to the court about the need for an urgent care facility in Madison County. Mr. Thompson stated that he is willing to donate land upon which to build an urgent care facility. Mr. Thompson asked what role the quorum court might play or what type of incentives might be available through the state or county to help fund the construction of such a facility. City of Huntsville Economic Development Director Brandi Holt and Dr. Travis Embry also addressed the court about the need for such a facility and the economic benefits of having a facility available locally. After discussion, it was agreed that Judge Weaver would be the point of contact between the quorum court and Mr. Thompson. Judge Weaver will look into possible tax incentive options and grant opportunities that might be available to assist with such a project. Meanwhile, it was suggested that Mr. Thompson partner with the Madison County Health Coalition to see what information or guidance they might be able to offer that could assist with this endeavor.

In accordance with ACA 14-16-106, Judge Weaver reported to the court on some surplus equipment that was slated to be junked and taken to the Madison County Recycling Center. County Clerk Tamitha Blocker stated that the equipment consisted of an old scanner at the

Circuit Clerk's office, an old radio at the Sheriff's office, and the old GasBoy fuel system at the County Shop. These items are either obsolete or no longer in working order.

Judge Weaver briefly addressed the court about the ongoing opioid lawsuit, to which the county is a plaintiff. Judge Weaver stated that two proposed nationwide settlement agreements had been reached in the amount of \$26 billion. He has signed off on behalf of Madison County on the agreement; however, a few counties in Arkansas have yet to sign the agreement. He stated that once everything had been finalized, Arkansas would receive a portion of the settlement, which would then be divided between the state and each city and county. The formula for the division of the settlement has not yet been established. As information becomes available, it will be posted on the national opioid settlement website, which is available at: <https://nationalopioidsettlement.com>.

Judge Weaver informed the court that he had put out a request for proposals for consulting services to assist the county with record-keeping, federal audits, reporting, and the overall administration of American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds. County Clerk Tamitha Blocker stated that the request for proposals had been advertised in the Madison County Record. Judge Weaver said that anyone wishing to submit a proposal must do so by November 4.

The Criminal Detention Facilities Review Committee Report was discussed next. Judge Weaver stated that we are still out of compliance in two areas: staffing and space. Judge Weaver reported that he had recently met with Sheriff Rick Evans and County Clerk Tamitha Blocker to discuss possible solutions. Tamitha had also discussed the matter with current Jail Administrator Lola Mitchell. Sheriff Evans and Administrator Mitchell both agreed that adding a dispatcher would help alleviate the staffing compliance issue.

Lola Mitchell currently serves as both the jail administrator and as a full-time dispatcher. As things now stand, Lola does not have sufficient time to perform her jail administrator duties adequately. Tamitha explained that if we hired an additional dispatcher, Lola would still serve as a full-time jail administrator, but she would only dispatch during times when a regular dispatcher may be unavailable due to job turnover, training, vacations or illnesses. Adding an additional dispatcher would help ensure that two dispatchers are always on duty and would allow Lola the time necessary to handle jail administration functions more efficiently. Tamitha explained that there had been an increase in 911 funding over the past couple of years that could help pay for an additional dispatcher.

Judge Weaver mentioned the possible use of American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds to renovate the current dispatch area to allow more space for administration and dispatching functions. If possible, this would help get us in compliance with jail standards regarding space. Tamitha stated that any renovations could fall under COVID mitigation efforts, allowing the use of ARP funds to be spent on the project. Judge Weaver stated that he had contacted an architect to see what might be done to increase space within the dispatch area. TW Dotson asked if the renovations would include curbing to help with the water issues we continue to experience at the jail. Judge Weaver said we would look at that to see if anything could be done, possibly a different door type. Pattie Shinn mentioned perhaps moving the entryway to a different location. Judge Weaver explained that these were all things that the architect could explore.

Judge Weaver introduced Ordinance No. 2021-9, an ordinance adopting federal audit policies for Madison County. After a brief explanation of the need for such an ordinance, Larry Garrett made a motion to place Ordinance 2021-9 on its first reading. Wendy Pettz seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all court members voted in favor of the motion. County Clerk Tamitha Blocker read Ordinance 2021-9. Pattie Shinn made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-9 on its first reading. Larry Garrett seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all court members voted in favor of the motion. Pattie Shinn made a motion to suspend the rules and place Ordinance No. 2021-9 on its second reading by title only. Larry Garrett seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion. County Clerk Tamitha Blocker read Ordinance No. 2021-9 by title only. Pattie Shinn made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2021-9 on its second reading. Larry Garrett seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion. Larry Garrett made a motion to suspend the rules and place Ordinance No. 2021-9 on its third and final reading by title only. Wendy Pettz seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion. Larry Garrett made a motion to adopt


Ordinance No. 2021-9 on its third and final reading. Pattie Shinn seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion. Ordinance No. 2021-9 was adopted.

Judge Weaver introduced Ordinance 2021-10, an appropriation ordinance. Judge Weaver explained that the purpose of the ordinance is to provide premium pay to employees through American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds. Judge Weaver stated that he had visited with several County Judges and that many counties had already done this for their employees. Judge Weaver explained that this ordinance would provide premium pay in the amount of \$2.50 per hour to each eligible employee for each hour worked, not including holidays or other time off. County Clerk Tamitha Blocker stated that premium pay was an authorized use of ARP funds and that the period calculated for the premium pay was from January 27, 2020, through December 31, 2020. After a few questions and a brief discussion, Pattie Shinn made a motion to place Ordinance No. 2021-10 on its first reading. Larry Garrett seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion. County Clerk Tamitha Blocker read Ordinance 2021-10. Pattie Shinn made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-10. Jack Hudgins seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion. Ordinance No. 2021-10 was adopted.

Judge Weaver introduced Ordinance No. 2021-11, an appropriation ordinance. Judge Weaver told the court that the Solid Waste Department needs a backup truck driver. Judge Weaver stated that the current driver is often unavailable because he has a special needs child. Judge Weaver said that he had been acting as a backup driver for quite some time now but that it isn't feasible for him to continue to do so. The appropriation ordinance would allow a backup driver to be hired through the end of the budget year. Judge Weaver stated that we would have to see if revenues would sustain the position next year. Luke Dotson asked if it was necessary to have someone employed full-time to serve as a backup driver. He also wondered if a CDL driver from the road department might serve as a backup. Judge Weaver explained that we couldn't combine funds and that he couldn't spare a driver from the road department as they stayed behind as it is. Tamitha Blocker further explained that the general manager at Solid Waste planned to use the backup driver in two roles, as an operator on the floor where they also need additional help and as the backup driver. TW Dotson suggested requiring a CDL license for the other solid waste operators as a job requirement to help alleviate the problem. After further discussion on the matter, Larry Garrett made a motion to place Ordinance No. 2021-11 on its first reading. Pattie Shinn seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion. Pattie Shinn made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2021-11. Wendy Pettz seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all members voted in favor of the motion. Ordinance No. 2021-11 was adopted.

With no further business, a motion was made by Pattie Shinn and seconded by Larry Garrett to adjourn the meeting. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED: 
COUNTY JUDGE

ATTEST: 
COUNTY CLERK

DATED: October 21, 2021