

**FIRE POLICE & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING  
APRIL 2, 2020 1:30 BURDETTE COURTHOUSE**

**ATTENDANCE:** Chairman, Justice Rick Ash; Justice, Neil Burge; Justice, Howard Norvell; Justice, Michael White; Justice, Bill Nelson; Justice, Alvin Clay; Justice, Betty Hepler; Justice, Molly Jackson; Public Affairs, Steven Savage; County Attorney, Jeremy Thomas; NEA Town Courier, Joseph Fondren.

**1. Meeting was called to order by Justice, Rick Ash: Brandon Bryan vs Mississippi County lawsuit for overtime.**

**2. County Attorney, Jeremy Thomas stated the suit was under Federal and State statutes. If the claimants win \$1.00 then the attorney fees have to be paid in full. The County settled for \$30,000.00 to the employees. We agreed to argue what the plaintiffs would get and what the attorney's would get separately. The employee portion was settled but not the Attorney fees. We will try to negotiate the attorney fees. We have not received the spreadsheet on how many hours the Attorney's worked on the case. Justice Ash stated the Judge has asked for the information and will review the case.**

**3. Justice Ash stated we will be looking at paying the settlement amount of \$30,000.00. There were 12 employees in the law suit. The amounts owed the employees is itemized in the settlement agreement. Jeremy Thomas stated we need to appropriate the \$30,000.00 to make the settlement payment. Justice Burge asked if all were employees of Mississippi County. Mr. Thomas stated they were either deputies or jailers. Justice Nelson asked how the hours of overtime were determined. Mr. Thomas stated with the jailers it was easy. They said they came in 15 minutes early to receive information on inmates and stayed 15 minutes late to update the next person. Average 30 minutes per day. Jason Owens represented the County and was the lead lawyer. Justice Nelson stated a lot of Counties ask their deputies to come in 15 to 30 minutes early to get a report. Justice Ash stated Blytheville had run into this problem. They were asked to come in 15 minutes early. If the employee works a 12 hour shift they would get a 1 hour paid lunch break. Federal Courts ruled we had to do that. Dispatchers came in 15 minutes early. Unpaid lunch hour. Employee would leave the building and not come back. Police officers were paid for their lunch break because they had radios and were still in their cars. The ruling was received from the Department of Labor.**

**4. Justice Norvell stated with Game & Fish, the employees keep a log book, time sheets and radio logs. All had to match. GPS systems could help keep track of vehicles. Justice Ash stated we should have time clocks for the jail and GPS systems in the deputies cars.**

**5. Motion was made by Justice, Michael White to move the \$30,000.00 settlement to Finance for appropriation to go to the Quorum Court. Second was made by Justice, Howard Norvell. Motion passed.**

**6. Meeting adjourned.**

**Minutes submitted by: Cindy George**