

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 9, 2020 1:30 ANNEX BUILDING**

ATTENDANCE: Chairman, Justice Michael White; Justice, Molly Jackson; Justice, Bill Nelson; Justice, Neil Burge; Finance, Kelli Jones; Treasurer, Peggy Meatte; Assessor, Harley Bradley; Harbans Mangat: Cecil McDonald; Tobbye McClanahan; Public Affairs, Steven Savage; NEA Town Crier, Revis Blaylock.

1. Meeting was called to order by Justice, Michael White. 2021 budgets. District Courts, Mental Health Grant, Construction Funds, Motor Fuel Tax, Elections, Economic Development.

2. District Courts. Carried across. Blytheville District Court 2021 request \$88,965.00. Osceola District Court 2021 request \$93,737.00. Kelli Jones stated a 3% raise figured for Osceola District Court Clerk. Blytheville Clerk did not know if the raise was figured in the budget. 3% was added for Blytheville. The county paid salary, social security and Medicare.

3. Mental Health Grant. Pass thru. Original grant for \$300,000.00. Revenue \$82,793.62. Expenditures \$82,793.62. Draw downs are done when bills were paid. 2021 draw down will expend the money. Travel \$32,099.58 moved to contract labor.

4. Osceola & Blytheville Construction. Blytheville construction. \$17,329,138.53. Bond money was accruing interest. Justice Jackson stated the committee wanted to start 2021 with \$1 million. Meetings continued on a monthly basis. \$675,000.00 not allocated. Justice White stated if money was left in the Blytheville Construction Fund extra monies could be used in Osceola. Courthouse finished by end of July 2021. Osceola Courthouse Fund. \$2,024,676.80. Bids have been received that would commit the full \$2 million. Exceeded \$32,000.00 would come from the interest earned. CD Construction. \$8,746,426.34. Transfer to construction fund.

5. Economic Development. Justice White stated Clif Chitwood wanted to zero some projects. Does the Court need to do an amendment. Justice Nelson stated Peggy Meatte said a Court Order could be done. Peggy Meatte stated the county did not need to do a Court Order. No Court Order had been done. Amended Ordinance will go to full Court. Justice Nelson stated there may be a new industry coming to the County. 2021 request \$6,730,508.12.

6. Elections Commissions. Carried across from 2019 budget.

7. Motor Fuel Tax. \$150,000.00 budgeted for 2020. Used for fuel at the road department. Carry over for 2021. Amended if needed.

8. Insurance cost share. Justice Burge presented figures last week. County base share capped at \$800.00. Above 50/50 between County and employee. \$1,000.00 raise. Justice Ash presented a proposal. Larger cost share increase. Giving employees raise of few thousand dollars, shifting bulk back to cost share program. Salaries would look \$4,000.00 to \$5,000.00 higher. Increased cost in retirement, taxes. Cost to County additional \$200,000.00. Justice

White suggested the committee looks at these changes mid- year 2021. Loss ratio was larger than expected. Justice White suggested the committee take a serious look at Justice Burge's new proposal. Increase employee's salaries: \$1,200.00. Base compensation \$800.00 per employee. Total cost to County. \$252,000.00. Amounts above \$800.00 50/50 split between employees and County. 2021 employee share \$48.06. County Share \$848.06. 2020 cost to County \$1,853,726.40. 2021 cost to County \$1,872,516.48. Insurance increase to County \$18,790.08. Allows the Quorum Court to balance increases between the county and the employee. Encourages employees to move to Medicare when eligible. All insurance covered under the \$9,600.00 base. Base price below \$800.00 insurance would cost nothing to the employee. Justice Burge stated if the arbitration suit was lost the county may have to have \$1 million to settle claims. Life, dental and vision would be paid by the County. 100%. Motion was made by Justice Jackson to accept the proposal from Justice Burge for \$1,200.00 raises and insurance cost share \$800.00 base, 50/50 employee and county share. Second was made by Justice, Bill Nelson. Motion passed and will go to Quorum Court.

9. Justice Nelson stated the Insurance Committee voted to send to Finance Committee a request to consider to put \$1 million in escrow. Jeremy Thomas to get a letter to notify collection agencies they would receive their money. Justice Jackson agreed possibilities had been discussed. Money escrowed would be out of reach. Motion was made by Justice, Bill Nelson to start exploring legal process and requirements for setting up a \$1 million escrow dedicated to 2019 employee insurance costs not covered. Expiring first two quarters of 2021. Second was made by Justice, Neil Burge. Motion passed. Turned over to Jeremy Thomas.

10. 2021 budget presented in December. Ordinances for November Quorum Court meeting. CARES ACT Fund and Appropriation for construction fund \$250,000.00. Justice Jackson requested \$1 million be appropriated in the November meeting. Motion was made by Justice, Molly Jackson to appropriate \$1 million to the courthouse construction fund. Second was made by Justice, Neil Burge. Motion passed. Presented to Quorum Court in November.

11. Treasurer, Peggy Meatte stated the construction fund would go down after checks were issued today. Checking account was drawing more interest than CD now. Justice Jackson stated the next few months pay apps would be large. Finance recommended to cash the CD and deposit in checking account. Mayor Wagner called about Senior Citizens Center. Justice White stated it had been taken care of. \$6,000.00 a year to supplement Senior Citizens utilities. Petty Meatte asked about the Circuit Clerk's account. Kelli Jones stated for 2021 salaries will come from another account. Tax collection for October almost \$16 million. County General get \$1.2 million, does not included tax settlement.

12. Assessor, Harley Bradley stated Nucor was finishing pilot agreements. County General could receive another \$61,000.00. Checked why taxes were not being paid on aircrafts on the air base. Clif Chitwood said over \$1 billion in investments had been made in Mississippi County. Justice White asked Mr. Bradley about his employee retiring Dec. 31, 2020. Mr. Bradley stated he would be giving up a slot and not hiring another employee.

13. Vacation buy backs. Employees were worried they would lose vacation days because of COVID-19. Policy book stated buy backs were available when funds were available. Justice Jackson stated maybe a carry over could be done for 2021. Justice Ash would be contacted to set a Personnel Meeting.

14. No Finance Meeting for November 16th or 23rd. November 30, 2020 next Finance Meeting.

15. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by: Cindy George