

**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 23, 2021 ANNEX BUILDING**

ATTENDANCE: Justice, Michael White; Justice, Tobbye McClanahan; Justice, Reggie Cullom; Justice, Cecil McDonald; Justice, Harbans Mangat; Justice, Molly Jackson; Justice, Betty Hepler; Justice, Aaron Fleeman; Finance, Kelli Jones; Treasurer, Peggy Meatte; County Clerk, Janice Currie; Economic Development, Clif Chitwood, Tamika Jenkins; ANC Dr. Jim Shemwell; Public Affairs, Steven Savage; County Attorney, Jacob Holmes; NEA Town Courier, Revis Blaylock.

1. Meeting was called to order by Justice, Michael White. Last meeting a proposal for \$200,000.00 for ANC workforce grant was brought before the committee by Clif Chitwood. Fund was depleted asking to refund. Proposal was tabled. Meeting was turned over to Dr. Jim Shemwell from ANC College and Clif Chitwood.

2. Mr. Chitwood stated there was two separate programs. The \$200,000.00 was for straight line workforce development. For 20 years it had been the County's policy to pay 25% of training costs of Mississippi County industry who sends employee to ANC for training. State often paid 50%, company 25% plus wages while in training. Nucor invested \$750 million in Mississippi County. BRS in 6th year invested \$750 million. Atlas invested \$150 million. Training at ANC has brought people in. Justice McClanahan asked if all the training was industry only. Hospitality and retail companies had said they didn't come to Mississippi County because of untrained workforce. Meeting turned over to Dr. Shemwell.

3. Dr. Shemwell stated the work program was launched 25 years ago. Solutions Group employed people who had experience in industry. The group had a mechanical, electrical engineer, national welder. No tuition price charged. The companies were charged per hour. ANC for 20 years largest provider of custom training in Arkansas. Act 852 passed by the legislative in Arkansas reported what students earned first year out of college. ANC had the highest Associate Degree in Arkansas. 2020 averaged \$51,000.00 first year. Technical Certificate Average beat every bachelor degree average in the State. Dr. Shemwell stated ANC was the best college in the Country. Great River Medical Center was funding one of ANC's instructors. ANC would work with different organizations. State 50% had to be manufacturing. 400 people had gone thru the program. 50% were still working today. New Beta Grant Project. Career Connect. Wage reimbursement program. Income eligibility with child living at home. 100% wages reimbursed first month, 50% months 2-6. Stayed 1 year received another 50%. Justice McDonald asked if the program would reach out to help smaller businesses. Justice McClanahan stated ANC could create curriculum to be used. Motion was made by Justice Cullom to appropriate the \$200,000.00 for workforce training. Second was made by Justice Jackson. Motion passed. Presented to Quorum Court.

4. Precision Steel. GREDA voted in favor of a \$50,000.00 incentive. Purchase equipment. Had an arrangement with Farmers Bank to open business. 5 jobs within two years. \$15.00 to \$18.00 per hours. Met Economic Development guidelines. Justice McClanahan made a motion to appropriate \$50,000.00 for Precision Steel. Second was made by Justice Cullom. Motion passed.

5. Election for ½ cent Economic Development tax. County invested over \$40 million dollars since 2003. Had brought in over \$300 million. That brought in over \$5 billion for capital investment for private enterprise and created over 4000 jobs. 3800 still inexistence. \$130 million in Mississippi County payroll. Justice White stated the Court passed a Resolution for support of the tax. Ordinance needed to set the date for the Election. 2nd Tuesday in August. Cost to County around \$10,000.00. Motion was made by Justice McClanahan to set the Election date August 10 for the 1/2 cent sales tax. Second was made by Justice McDonald. Motion passed. Justice Mangat asked how the companies were recruited. Mr. Chitwood stated a study was done on retail for matching companies with communities. Results were turned over to the Blytheville and Osceola Chamber of Commerce. State doesn't help retail. Need to focus on bring quality of life incentive for businesses to the County. Efficiency Committee would have a meeting to discuss quality of life plan. Justice, Tobby McClanahan elected Chairman.

6. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by: Cindy George