

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
AUGUST 6, 2021 1:30 ANNEX BUILDING**

ATTENDANCE: Chairman Justice Michael White, Justice Harbans Mangat, Justice Reggie Cullom, Justice Rick Ash, Justice Cecil McDonald, Justice Betty Hepler, Justice Toby McClanahan, Justice Joanne Henton, County Attorney Jacob Holmes, Finance Kelli Jones, Collector Susan Short, County Clerk Janice Currie, Assessor Harley Bradley, Sheriff Dale Cook, Captain David Gladden, Judge John Alan Nelson, Public Affairs Tom Henry, NEA Town Courier, Revis Blaylock.

1. Meeting was called to order by Justice Michael White. Assessor's Office. Mr. Bradley had an employee retiring and asked to take that salary to raise his lower paid employees salaries. He would not refill the position. Resolution was passed in the regular Quorum Court meeting to give the money to employees. Retroactive back to the first of the year. Appropriation Ordinance needed to be passed at this months meeting. Motion was made by Justice Reggie Cullom to appropriate \$16,517.45 to increase salaries. Second was made by Justice Harbans Mangat. Motion passed and would go to Quorum Court.

2. Insurance settlement. Bills were \$658,029.36 of un paid insurance claims. Payment process was discussed. \$200,000.00 had been appropriated. When payment process was started and used another appropriation was needed. Justice Cullom stated the county needed to be able to pay claims when negotiations began. Justice McClanahan agreed. No updates from Jeremy Thomas. Judge Nelson agreed the appropriation needed to be increased. Third party would contact the health care providers and notify Financial Management. Checks would originate thru the county. Captain Gladden asked if he would be repaid the money he had paid on claims. County employees that had paid on their claims would be paid back their money. Performance Health was the negotiator. Justice Mangat stated if Mr. Thomas was so busy could the county get someone else to represent us. Mr. Holmes stated if Mr. Thomas had the money in hand they would start working. Judge Nelson suggested the checks be written in house. Performance Health wanted a split. Only get paid if money saved. Justice White suggested a meeting be scheduled with Jeremy Thomas in the evening. Dave Nichols would also be included. Meeting would be scheduled for Thursday, August 12th at 6:00 p.m. Annex building. Janice Currie asked why the county would give Performance the money when they were partially responsible for this mess. Justice Ash stated if they negotiated a smaller amount the county would be saving money. Gerber Life didn't do their part. Motion was made by Justice Reggie Cullom to increase the \$200,000.00 appropriation to \$660,000.00. Second was made by Justice Harbans Mangat. Motion passed.

3. Pafford. Meeting turned over to Justice Cullom. Meeting with Pafford was to have an ambulance in Wilson, AR. Response time from Pafford to Wilson was 45 minutes. City of Wilson had agreed to furnish a place for the ambulance, take care of the utilities, living quarters and showers updated. Pafford was asked to furnish the ambulance. Justice Cullom was told the county could not enter into a contract with an ambulance company. Judge Nelson had worked with Pafford. There was another ambulance service that wanted to put an ambulance in Wilson. Meeting turned over to Judge Nelson. Complaints were some areas

in the south end were not getting the same quality service as the north end of the county. Pafford was asked to provide the best service in Arkansas. It was suggested if the county bought an ambulance and leased back to Pafford and staffed 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Certification, insurance, medical personnel and drivers were expensive. Pafford asked for two ambulances, 7 ventilators. County would purchase two ambulances. One in Blytheville and one in Wilson, staff both and all equipment. PPE were hard to get. Volunteer first responders were requested to be brought up to date with their secondary education. Ambulances etc. may qualify under the American Rescue Fund. Justice Cullom said the State would furnish the ventilators to the county. Pafford would provide payroll. American Rescue Plan would be researched. Cost of ambulances \$140,000.00 to \$150,000.00 up to an additional of \$25,000.00 depending on equipment. Wilson ambulance would not make transfers.

4. Budget process. Sept. 13. First meeting reviewing anticipated revenue projections. Sept. 20th regular Finance Meeting. Sept. 28th Quorum Court Meeting. Oct. 4 first budget first budget expenditure review.

5. ARDOT would replace 22 bridges in the county before the end of the year. Same for next year. Culvert replaced on Co. Rd. 876. Co. Rd. 175 needed to be repaired before school starts.

6. Personnel Committee Meeting. The committee recommended to move to Finance an appropriation for \$150.00 for gift cards from the Rescue Plan money. Motion was made by Justice Mangat to appropriate \$150.00 gift card for employees to get the COVID vaccine retroactive for employees who had already been vaccinated. Second was made by Justice Reggie Cullom. Motion passed.

7. Reminder for infectious disease event at ANC gym. August 18. 6:00 p.m. First responders would meet at 5:30.

8. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by: Cindy George