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Route 153 In Stoddard County Closed for Railroad Maintenance

JANUARY 31ST 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

Route 153 In Stoddard County Closed for Railroad Maintenance

Missouri Route 153 in Stoddard County will be closed as railroad crews perform railroad maintenance on the tracks.

This section of the roadway is located from Route 60 to Route 114 near Essex, Missouri.

Weather permitting, work will take place Friday, February 10 from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The work zone will be marked with signs. Motorists are urged to use extreme caution while traveling near the area.

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Route AH In Stoddard County Closed for Railroad Maintenance

JANUARY 27TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

Route AH In Stoddard County Closed for Railroad Maintenance

Route AH in Stoddard County will be closed as railroad crews perform railroad maintenance on the tracks.

This section of the roadway is located from U.S. 60 to Route 114 near Grayridge, Missouri.

Weather permitting, work will take place Monday, February 13 from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The work zone will be marked with signs. Motorists are urged to use extreme caution while traveling near the area.

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Stoddard County Commission Meeting for January 23, 2023

JANUARY 23RD 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

Stoddard County Commission Meeting for January 23, 2023

Stoddard County Commissioners opened their meeting on Monday, January 23, 2023 with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer. They then read over the minutes from the past meetings.

Motion made by Commissioner Carol Jarrell to approve the Minutes for Monday, January 9, 2023. Seconded by Commissioner Greg Lintz. Presiding Commissioner Greg Mathis asked that the minutes be corrected to reflect he was a member of the SoutheastHEALTH Regional Board. The name of the board was recorded incorrectly. All three voted yes.

Motion made by Jarrell to approve the minutes for Wednesday, January 11, 2023. Seconded by Lintz. All three voted yes.

Motion made by Jarrell to approve the Tuesday, January 17, 2023. Seconded by Lintz. All three voted yes.

Mr. Loyd Rice with GoSEMO Fiber and Electric

"Share with the commission on the annual update," stated Rice.

"We have paid \$329,000 worth of taxes to Stoddard County. More than \$125,000 is due to hanging fiber. We serve the bigger half of Stoddard County. We have a natural boundary with Crowley's Ridge. The need is high for fiber. We definitely want to work with IDA and the County with infrastructure. We are hoping to hear some announcements for help with the western half of Stoddard County."

He also stated he was a Bloomfield resident and that he hated to see some of our gravel roads falling in. he said the county needed to keep being progressive and moving forwards with repairs.

David Cooper, Water District #5

\$31,000 + was initially approved for ARPA Funds. Turned in receipts. We are limited on funds so we had to wait until we had the monies to spend and then turn in receipts. Now it's my understanding that those rules have changed. We can ask for monies to make improvements.

Katelyn Lambert, Bootheel Regional Planning Commission, states that these expenditures are deemed good and the Commission can reimburse Waters District #5 for a total of \$13,200.15. Water District #5 now has \$15,015.15 left from their initial approved ARPA Fund amount.

"The first phase was to patch leaks using ARPA Funds. The leaks we know about have been taken care of for now," commented Cooper.

Requests by the board of Water District #5 for additional ARPA Funds. "We are currently purchasing water from the city of Bloomfield. We have done this for at least four years," per Cooper.

"Digital Mapping was approved by the Board as a recommendation from Missouri Rural Water. They hope to have it completed by February. We have located our valves," continued Cooper. "We are also trying to locate all the water meters. You will see a lot of blue markings around the area. The water valve replacement is a big chore. We have several valves that we feel are leaking. We could pay the city of Bloomfield to replace the valves."

County Road 510 is about five miles long and there are one or two sets of valves on that five mile stretch.

"The largest item is the meter replacement. Missouri Rural Water has also recommended that they replace the meter replacement with a wireless system. We would have to use an outside source to do that work. I have estimates as well." stated Cooper.

"Missouri Rural Water will come in and do a Rate Study so we can tell where we need to be as far as charging for water, etc. Our biggest problem over the years is that one meter has been connected to say five houses and we have some that are stealing water. We have roughly 300 customers," stated Cooper.

A voucher will need to be filled out and approved once the Budget Hearing has happened on Wednesday, January 25, 2023.

Water District #5 is requesting \$224,000 today. Their request has been sent to the attorney for approval.

There will be about \$30,000 left from the ARPA Funds if all the requests that are in will be allocated and paid per Lambert.

Commissioner Greg Lintz contacted Bell City Fire - They initially requested \$253,170.00. They were told to seek other funds by previous Presiding Commissioner Danny Talkington. They did not seek any other funds as they did not know what to do. They felt they were all matching funds and they didn't have the funds to match. They were told to contact Lambert at BRPC. Money was for a building for the fire department. Contact person is Kevin Julian at Bell City Fire..

June 28, 2021 city of Bloomfield requested \$400,000 in ARPA Funds in order to pay down their loan with the USDA for the sewer and water project. This would lessen their monthly bill to the citizens of Bloomfield. He had called the Commission several times and no one returned his call. Lambert will contact the attorney and make sure it is a viable expenditure.

Mayor Tilmon came by Friday from the city of Bernie originally requested 183,000+ on July 26, 2021. Tilmon told the Commission that he had contacted previous Presiding Commissioner Danny Talkington several times, but never got returned phone calls. They wanted to refurbish a lift station and needed to put an alarm system in their lift station and get some spare lift pumps.

Waters Engineering has resigned from the city of Bernie and they have now hired Smith & Co. in Poplar Bluff for the water basin project and other projects.

The city of Bernie requested \$480,000 for the water basin project. Mathis has contacted Smith & Co. and talked to them about the cost. The city of Bernie is having a Special Public Hearing on Monday, January 23, 2023 for the CDGB Grant information.

Water District #4 for \$247,000 August 30, 2021. Commissioner Jarrell spoke to them and they are still very interested in the ARPA Funds.

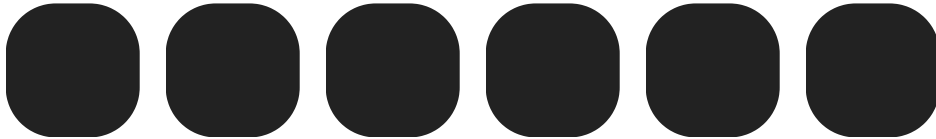
In another conversation, "We are going to update all the County boards," stated Mathis. "Many of them have not been updated in years." The Commissioners will be looking at the appointments over the next couple of weeks.

Commissioner Greg Lintz made a motion to adjourn at 12:42 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Mathis. Both voted yes as Commissioner Jarrell had to leave a few minutes early.

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Stoddard County Commissioner Meeting, Tuesday, January 17, 2023

JANUARY 23RD 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

Stoddard County Commissioner Meeting, Tuesday, January 17, 2023

The Stoddard County Commission meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer by Presiding Commissioner Greg Mathis.

Minutes from last week's meetings are not available as Mrs. Wheeler needed to be off work.

ARPA Funds

"It's ARPA day here at the Stoddard County Commissioners meeting," commented Commissioner Mathis.

"I did confirm with Ryan Slinkard, City of Advance, \$674,000 was originally requested. Numbers were reversed on the spreadsheet," according to Katelyn Lambert, Bootheel Regional Planning Commission. "I just wanted to clarify from last week's meeting."

List of ARPA Funds requested/allocated/approved from 2021 - present:

City of Dexter \$400,000 June 4, 2021 approved, but not paid.

Stoddard County Broadband (Matching Funds) 2021 \$1 million approved, but not paid.

Public Water District #3 Essex/Gray Ridge \$202,439 June 14, 2021 requested and approved, paid to date - \$198,074.00.

Public Water District #6. Bernie requested \$136,500.00 Requested on June 21, 2021.
(Not sure if approved or not)

City of Advance - Request \$674,000 - June 2021 -

"Have not received anything from the commission as to a yes or no on the project," stated Ryan Slinkard, Mayor of Advance.

City of Bloomfield \$400,000 June 2021 - Reason for the request was to lessen the burden of the rates for the people. This request has not been approved by previous Commission. Mr. Mathis will contact Mayor Aslin on this request for further information.

Water District #5 Request \$31,311.00 in June of 2021. Paid \$3,095.00 for Pipe repairs in 2022.

Mingo Residential Care Facility - July 2021 Requested \$38,758.68. This request has been cancelled by the previous owner Terry Cole.

City of Bernie - July 2021 - \$183,349.00 for a sewer project/truck. Mr. Mathis and Mrs. Jarrell will contact Mayor Tillman for more information.

Stoddard County EMA - Denied - This amount will be taken out of the 2022 budget and not out of ARPA Funds.

Public Water District #4 requested \$247,000 - August 2021 - Leah Huffman is the contact person and Mr. Mathis and Mr. Lintz will contact her about the funds.

Stoddard County Ambulance District requested \$225,000 in 2021. Approved and has been paid \$126,940 and \$89,250.00 - In October of 2020 were approved for CARES Act monies, the approval had fallen through the cracks and the Commissioners ran out of funds.

"We told SCAD that they could put requests in for ARPA Funds for new purchases not related to what they purchased during the CARES Act request," commented Commissioner Jarrell. "That way they could purchase new equipment that was highly needed and would not come out of their budget."

To date SCAD has received a total of \$216,190.00 so they still have about \$8,810.00 in approved ARPA Funds.

Bell City Fire Dept requested \$253,173 January of 2022 - Former Presiding Commissioner Danny Talkington asked that apply for other funds assistance to firefighter grant - Not sure if they went after any additional monies. Mr. Mathis and Mr. Lintz will

contact them for further information.

Stoddard County Sheriff's Office - Requested \$165,250 in 2022 for a body scanner. They were approved and paid for the body scanner in 2022

City of Bernie - Via email at 4:12 p.m. on January 6, 2023 requested \$480,000 for a water basin. Legal approved as a good project. Lacking Commission Approval at this time. Mr. Mathis and Mrs. Jarrell will contact the mayor.

City of Dexter - \$400,000 approved by Commission in 2022. This is a two-part project totaling \$800,000. City of Dexter has not been paid.

Doug Lowery with Duck Creek Township - "We put in last year for a grant for \$500,000 to re-asphalt the road and the Commission never signed off to send into the state. Because of that, the deadline was missing so we are now requesting ARPA Funds today, January 17, 2023. Reason is County Road 420 is a major road for us and needs repair.

"It won't slip through the cracks this time. I promise you," stated Commissioner Mathis. "You will get an answer from us!"

City of Advance, Ryan Slinkard, Mayor of Advance - "Parkview Acres area wants to be annexed because the drinking water is not drinkable and they cannot even use it to cook.

If we annex that portion of the town and they want to be annexed. In June 2021 we asked for \$500,000. We never heard back from the Commission. Now we would like to ask for more because Smith & Co. has a quote of \$874,000. Prices have increased since 2021.

The scope of the project has not changed just the amount of monies requested."

They are eligible to apply for other grants through the Bootheel Regional Planning Commission on top of whatever monies are received by the Commission according to Lambert.

"Typically how long does it take to get a CDGB Grant? asked Mathis. It would take 6 + months to get the monies according to Lambert.

"Advance did pass a bond issue and will kick-off in the fall of 2023. The bond issue can not be used for the annexation and water/sewer for the people in Parkview Acres," stated Slinkard.

It was stated that the ARPA Funds must have a commitment by December 2024, and spent by December 2026 by Lambert.

"I understand the process so if I have any other questions I can get with Bootheel," stated Slinkard.

"I would like Bootheel to keep us up to date," Mathis said.

"We obviously have monies that have not been approved by the Commission. We need to get together with these folks who have applied for ARPA funds and see where we are currently," continued Mathis.

New information came out of the meeting that had not been originally discussed by previous Commission pertaining to the ARPA Funds.

Distribution Agreement will have to be signed by the water district or municipalities that are not a part of the Stoddard County. They will submit their Cost Requests directly to Bootheel Regional Planning Commission, contact is Katelyn Lambert.

"Let's pretend that city XYZ has a project going on and they do not have the money in their budget to complete the project. Can they do the pay request directly to Bootheel Regional? Yes, per Travis Elliot, Stoddard County's attorney, as long as they follow correct steps in the Distribution Agreement. The county can actually pay the invoice director to the vendor. If the city does not follow the steps you do not have to pay. There will have to be some form of tracking in place to obtain invoices and receipts.

These questions were in regard to city of Bernie not having the funds up front to complete the projects. According to Lambert, "I have not heard from the city of Bernie on any CDGB grant. They have not contacted me on that special grant just ARPA funds last Friday, January 6th for the \$480,000," stated Lambert.

"What do you have for us Mrs. Trammel," stated Mathis.

"I need a new approval and a commitment letter to city of Dexter is what I need today," per Alisha Trammell, City of Dexter Chamber of Commerce Director.

Smith & Co. Engineering Bridge Repair Update

Colter Gaebler from Smith & Co. Engineering stopped by to say hello and to answer questions about how BRO works.

The BRO process has changed - all the monies go into one big pot. Each county would request funds for eligible bridges to get repaired. There is one bridge #784 county road bridge will be completed by March 31, 2023.

#760 was completed in November 2022 and open to traffic. Just a few papers to sign and get MoDOT to finish paying.

Brent Stidham, Stoddard County Coroner

"Everything is on paper in the Coroner's office. Sometimes I get fax or a letter in the mail with medial records, etc. There is a system out there for Coroners, a software program to upload all the information including medical records. It's \$220 per year. It would be good to have to upload documents and photos and it is web based so there would be no additional costs for computers etc. I can even use my phone even." commented Stidham.

"If it's in your budget then do it. It's at your discretion," stated Mathis.

Marijuana Tax

Motion that the Stoddard County Commission places a 3% sales tax on recreational marijuana. Commissioner Carol Jarrell made a motion, seconded by Mathis. Any discussion? Everyone is doing this just about every city and county is putting it on the April 4th ballot. "If it is put on and it is passed, can it go to a certain fund or in general revenue," asked Mathis.

"My understanding is that you can write this two different ways. One way is going to General Revenue and it can go to anything the Commission want or designate the monies and then you are locked in," commented County Clerk Cecil Weeks.

In the last election 61% were not in favor of recreational marijuana and 38% were in favor of it according to records for Stoddard County.

"We have no idea what kind of tax revenue this will generate," commented Commissioner Lintz. If we do not put it on the ballot now it would be next year or hold a special election.

Vote was taken, Lintz yes, Jarrell yes, Mathis yes. Passed without prejudice.

Transportation Committee

Motion made by Commissioner Jarrell to appoint Greg Lintz to the Transportation Committee. Seconded by Mathis. Lintz abstained from voting. Mathis and Jarrell voted yes.

Motion made by Commissioner Jarrell to appoint David Wyman to the Transportation Committee. Seconded by Lintz. All three voted yes.

Adds and Abates

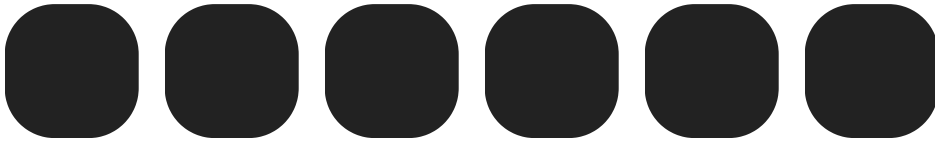
Adds and Abates from Josh Spearman, County Collector. Motion to approve the adds and abates made by Commissioner Jarrell, seconded by Commissioner Lintz. All voted yes and passed without prejudice.

Commissioner Jarrell made a motion to adjourn at 12:07 p.m. seconded by Commissioner Lintz. All voted yes and passed without prejudice.

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City of Bernie Public Hearing Set for 1 p.m. Monday

JANUARY 22ND 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

[City of Bernie Public Hearing Set for 1 p.m. Monday](#)

Bernie, MO - The city of Bernie will hold a public hearing on Monday, January 23, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. at 101 West Main in Bernie to discuss the city's submission of an application for the fiscal year 2022 Community Development Block Grant (CDGB) program according to a public notice posted on their building. (Though I think the CDGB Grant is for the 2023 year).

The city is interested in obtaining all citizens' input on community development needs within the city. As part of the hearing process citizens will be asked to verbally assist in the completion of a Needs Assessment document. This document will detail what the residents feel are strengths and weaknesses of the community.

The city of Bernie needs as much local participation as possible in order to reflect the true desires of the community as a whole as well as the comments relating to the proposed project application. The state of Missouri has established a maximum application request for each funding category. Activities that are eligible for funding include the improvement of public works, public facilities, housing rehabilitation and others called by law. At least 51% of the funds must be used to benefit low-and-moderate income persons. No displacement of persons will be proposed.

The city of Bernie is proposing to repair and rehabilitate the water system throughout the Bernie Community. The city is seeking \$750,000 from CDGB for gap funding to accompany the USDA Loan and Grant. The project if funded will benefit 52% low/moderate income persons. All citizens including those in the targeted area are encouraged to attend in order to comment on the proposed activities.

For more information on the proposed project contact City Clerk at (573) 293-5318 or by email at jacobcameron@berniemo.com. If you need special accommodations for the public hearing, including LEP assistance, please contact the city clerk by January 20th by 12:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at an accessible location and the city will make every effort possible to provide reasonable accommodations.

(Notice of Public Hearing was sent to the ShowMe Times by a concerned citizen. The ShowMe Times will be in attendance.)

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