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# C.D. Stewart Appointed by Governor as New County Commissioner

FEBRUARY 22ND 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

## C.D. Stewart Appointed by Governor as New County Commissioner

Governor Parson appoints C.D. Stewart to replace Steve Jordan as Stoddard County Commissioner.

At the opening of the Stoddard County Commission meeting on Tuesday, February 21st, Commissioner Greg Lentz stated that the Governor has recommended to appoint C.D. Stewart to replace Steve Jordan and himself as a Stoddard County Commissioner.

Lentz stated, "I will continue to do my due diligence and cooperate fully with the County and complete my duties as assigned until Mr. C.D. Stewart takes over."

It may be March 6 or 9th before the Senate of the General Assembly approves the appointment.

Here is the letter from the Governor

"To the Senate of the 102nd General Assembly of the State of Missouri:

I have the honor to transmit to you herewith for your advice and consent the following appointment:

"C.D. Stewart, Republican, 25788 County Road 307, Bloomfield, Stoddard County, Missouri 63825, as district One Commissioner of the Stoddard County commission, for a term ending when his successor is duly elected or appointed and qualified; vice, Steve Jordan, vacated."

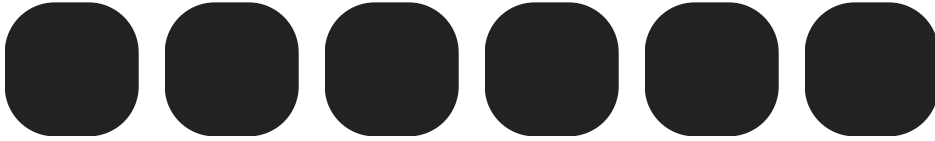
Respectfully submitted,

Michael L. Parson

Governor

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## Stoddard County Commission Meeting, Governor Appoints New Commissioner

FEBRUARY 22ND 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Stoddard County Commission Meeting, Governor Appoints New Commissioner](#)

Stoddard County Commissioners met on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 with Presiding Commissioner Greg Mathis leading in the Pledge of Allegiance and prayed over the county officials, county employees and the county commissioners. Commissioner Greg Lentz stated that the Governor has recommended to appoint C.D. Stewart to replace Steve Jordan and himself as a Stoddard County Commissioner.

Lentz stated, "I will continue to do my due diligence and cooperate fully with the County and complete my duties as assigned until Mr. C.D. Stewart takes over."

## **Water District #4 Update**

"Water loss is about 46% currently," stated Lea Long. "We are looking for an immediate infusion of \$247,000 in ARPA funds."

In 2021 they asked for funding from the Commission and have not obtained that money yet.

Commissioner Jarrell stated that, "Here in the last month or so they have had some major water problems, County Road #468 has been affected. A boil water was ordered for the entire district as well. I am all for helping the District #4 employees."

"I apologize for taking so long and the commissioners not moving forward on the ARPA Funding," continued Jarrell. "Katelyn Lambert, Bootheel Regional Planning is doing a great job for us."

## **Duck Creek Township**

Commissioner Lentz met with Doug Lowery, of Duck Creek Township and stated that he is in agreement with him. The main problem is the box culvert. It is too small for the 1200 acres and it crosses a major gravel road #420. The water backs up and has made another trail and hits culverts. There are three Tyson facilities on that road and gets a tremendous amount of truck traffic. If they don't get things fixed, they will lose the road.

Duck Creek Township would like to apply for much needed ARPA Funds that are available for Water, Sewer, and Infrastructure in Stoddard County.

They has applied through the Commission for a CDGB Gran and Bootheel Regional Planning Commission was handling the administration for the grant; however the former Stoddard County Presiding Commissioner Danny Talkington failed to sign off timely therefore the grant deadline was not met.

Had they known they would not have received the grant they would have applied for ARPA funding sooner.

Currently Duck Creek is requesting funds to cover the structural and contracting expenses they have incurred in 2022 for road maintenance and to offset expenses in 2023.

Structural improvements planned for there 2023 year include a 7x18x40 box culvert on County Road 420 to improve drainage at a cost of \$65,000. Tyson Foods has 3 house complexes along this road and flooding is a common issue. Also, there are erosion problems along County Road 487 and 436 from heavy spring rains that need to be repaired. The cost of installing rip-rap along the banks will be approximately \$25,000.

Also they would like to implement a dust control product to reduce dust and road maintenance on their busiest 9 miles of a road will be \$4,000.00.

There total request at this time is \$213,974.00.

Duck Creek will have a meeting on Thursday and will be discussing putting out the bids. They have already spoken to a few contractors.

### **ARPA Update from Bootheel Regional Planning Commission - Katelyn Lambert**

Water District #4 - Waiting on Waters Engineering, Inc., for final numbers from the August 25, 2021 request for ARPA funds as there has been an increase in expenses since 2021. Lambert will give John Chittenden a call today. He is the owner of Waters Engineering, Inc. The Commission will wait on voting until all the numbers are updated and correct due to the request being from 2021.

Water District #5 - Working with them on grant for engineering possibly a DNR grant. They are working on the request for ARPA funds from the Commission. They are getting the new meters, valve replacements, mapping of lines, etc.

City of Dexter Request - The Distribution agreement has been sent. Waiting on Alisha Trammel to get back to Lambert.

Motion that the Commission approve \$480,000 in ARPA funds for the Bernie Water Basin Project was put to the floor. Commissioner Jarrell made the motion. Seconded by Commissioner Lentz. All three voted yes and passed without consent.

Motion that the Commission approve \$200,661.28 in ARPA funds for Water District #5 was put to the floor. Commissioner Jarrell made the motion. Seconded by Lentz. All three voted yes and passed without consent.

Motion that the Commission approve \$213,974.00 in ARPA funds for Duck Creek Township was put to the floor. Commissioner Lentz made the motion. Seconded by Jarrell. All three voted yes and passed without consent.

Industrial Development Association - Peter Coutavas

"I feel we should offer some type of incentive to rent these offices and buildings downtown Bloomfield such as free rent or reduced rent for a period of time,"

**Sheriff Carl Hefner Attended the Meeting**

"They forgot to enter the HIPPA business Agreement when they signed the contract for the new nurse from SoutheastHEALTH. Basically states we would not go out and tell the world what medical condition inmates have in the jail, etc. I just need the Commissioners to sign. It was an oversight when we went into the agreement."

Motion to sign the HIPPA Business Agreement that is going through SoutheastHEALTH of Stoddard County on the floor. Commissioner Jarrell made the motion. Lentze seconded the motion. All three voted yes and pass without consent.

### **HMN Architectural Firm Update**

The initial meeting was on January 9, 2023 with the new commission. Nothing has been done. Generator is not here yet. "This has been going on since August of 2022," stated Mathis.

Motion to allow Presiding Commissioner Greg Mathis to write a letter to HMN Architectural firm setting a 10 deadline to respond to the County concerning the generator. Commissioner Jarrell made the motion, seconded by Lentz. All three voted in agreement.

### **Cecil Weeks, Stoddard County Clerk's Office**

Letter has been received from the Governor's office making the official appointment to the Commission per Weeks.

"To the Senate of the 102nd General Assembly of the State of Missouri:

I have the honor to transmit to you herewith for your advice and consent the following appointment:

"C.D. Stewart, Republican, 25788 County Road 307, Bloomfield, Stoddard County, Missouri 63825, as district One Commissioner of the Stoddard County commission, for a term ending when his successor is duly elected or appointed and qualified; vice, Steve Jordan, vacated."

Respectfully submitted,

Michael L. Parson

Governor

### **Audit Update**

Per Weeks, Daniel Jones has agreed to honor their bid from last year of \$25,040.00.

"We need to motion release Devereux & Company from their bid contract and hire Daniel Jones and Associates CPA," stated Weeks.

Motion was made to release Devereux & Company from their bid contract due to lack of employees at their company to perform the audit and to hire Daniel Jones and Associates CPA to perform the audit. Cost will be \$25,000. Motion made by Jarrell. Seconded by Lentz. All three voted yes and passed.

### **Earthquake Insurance for the County Buildings.**

Tish Gentry with County Wide Insurance quoted Earthquake Insurance for the county buildings at \$175,000 with a 5% deductible per building. Coverage would roughly be \$18,630.00 total.

Commissioner Lentz stated that he is against having earthquake insurance on his own properties. Commissioner Jarrell said she felt it's better to have the insurance and not need it then to not have it and need it. It would take a lot of monies to rebuild or repair.

Motion to accept the Earthquake Insurance additional monies at roughly \$175,000 cost for \$18,630,000.00 coverage made by Jarrell. Mathis seconded the motion. Jarrell voted yes, Lentz voted no, Mathis voted yes. Passed.

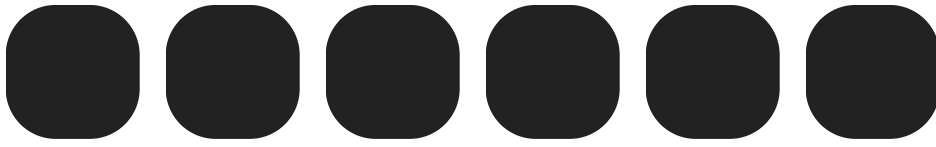
Motion to approve the minutes of February 14, 2023 made by Commissioner Lentz. Commissioner Jarrell seconded the motion. All three voted yes and passed without consent.

Motion to adjourn at 12:00 p.m. by Commissioner Jarrell. Seconded by Commissioner Lentz. All three voted yes.

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# Stoddard County Commissioner Meeting, Tuesday, February 14, 2023, Update on City of Bernie Water

FEBRUARY 16TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Stoddard County Commissioner Meeting, Tuesday, February 14, 2023, Update on City of Bernie

Stoddard County Presiding Commissioner Greg Mathis opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer for the county Tuesday, February 14, 2023. Monday, the Stoddard County offices were closed for Lincoln's birthday.

### Update on City of Bernie Water

Bill Robison with Smith & Company along with Greg Bell, Project Manager and a water and waste water expert gave an update on the city of Bernie water basin update. The city of Bernie had requested \$480,000 of ARPA funding from the commission.

"We are in a contract with the city of Bernie and Mayor Tilmon. Spent the last few weeks gathering information and reviewing plans," commented Robison. "This basin project is extremely important and needs to be done."

"The backwash basin basically when the backwash they can't backwash at the capacity they need. It was built in 1993 and just can't handle the capacity," stated Bell. "The new basin will be tied into the old one. Also the filters they have in place are clogged up so with a new basin they can blow that back out and media can get out and clean it out. The material will be concrete and can last more than 30 years. With this basin they can alternate the backwashing. We did find that the water plant is in pretty good shape. It could use some cosmetic changes, but the structure is good."

"When you get this new basin built and the population increases, just how long can this basin last?" asked Mathis. Bell stated at least into the 20-30 year range. The filter media has about a 15 year cycle and it hasn't been changed since 1994 so we have sent out quotes for those items first.

Water line replacements and piping at the plant is an ongoing project as well.

"What is the cost of this?" asked Commissioner Greg Lintz. Bell stated that he has seen around \$570,000, but could possibly see it around \$490,000. Just have get the complete plans done and the quotes in.

Commissioner Carol Jarrell had no questions at this time, but stated that she was glad Smith and Company were on track to getting something done in Bernie as the people of Bernie needed clean drinking water.

Bell stated that if we could get started today it would take 3-4 months to get the backwash basin completed. It's a 40'x40' basin with a 14' deep containment of 60,000 gallon capacity. The walls are 15" thick.

"We are moving quickly as possible and getting quotes. They are due in on February 22, 2023 at Smith & Co," stated Robison. "It will be gravity feed. The pumps will be downsized and won't require a larger motor and it will allow the basin to be filled and send to the sewer system at a slower rate which will be better for the city of Bernie. I have met with Mr. Tilmon weekly and got some of the older plans and looked at those and discuss the project. I feel pretty good that we have a pretty good start."

It was noted by Cecil Week, County Collector who lives in Bernie that the city had posted on Monday, for people to conserve water on Saturday, February 18th so they can repair a water leak in the tower. Mayor Tilmon was not present for the meeting.



## **Stars & Stripes Museum Request for Land**

Sue Tippen attended the meeting on behalf of the Stars and Stripes Museum requesting ground be donated by the County Commission for a new building.

"We consider the Stars and Stripes Museum as the major tourist attraction for Stoddard County," stated Tippen. "We are looking to build a new building. We have about 1,000 visitors per year and we would like to have room for new exhibits and storage for donations.

"We decided the only answer to our problem is to build a new building. We have an architect already in place and we want to build on the south side of the barn," continued Tippen. "We wanted a little more space/land behind the museum and requesting the County donate that land to us."

She said that the Veterans Commission at the cemetery said they may be willing to donate a strip of land to the museum as well. Building size is undetermined at this time, it's about 7 acres of land we need.. We will have a meeting with the architect in March.

## **David Cooper, Water District #5**

Everything is going well at the water district. "I signed the Distribution Agreement for the ARPA Funds and waiting on the Commissioners to sign," commented Cooper, President of Water District #5.

Motion to sign the County Distribution ARPA Funds Agreement with Water District #5 made by Lintz, seconded by Jarrell. All three voted yes and duly passed.

"Our board is real solid and we have managed to get most of our leaks repaired. We are waiting for our ground to dry out and see if we have any more leaks. We are paying our bills to the city and hopefully within the next couple of months have the city of Bloomfield paid off for back water billing," continued Cooper.

## **Discussion about the County Audit**

An email was received by County Clerk, Cecil Weeks from Devereux & Company that they have experienced an unforeseen severe staffing shortage that required them to realign and reallocate their hours for the rest of 2023. They will not have the hours to perform the audit that they earned the bid on for the 2022 accounting year.

On December 12, 2022 the previous Commission accepted the bid from Devereux and Company, CPA for \$17,500. Daniel Jones and Associates CPA had the only other bid for

\$25,000.

Motion was made to call Daniel Jones and Associates to see if they can do the audit.

Cecil Weeks is to call them and ask since they had the second bid submitted in November of 2022. Commissioner Lintz made the motion and seconded by Jarrell. All three voted yes and duly passed.

### **Stoddard County Insurance Update**

"We need about 60 days to get a smooth implementation of insurance," commented John McCarty, Arch Brokerage. " There wasn't much information available to get an item line by item line. So we didn't have the information available.

Here is a timeline he had on his phone and discussed during the Commission meeting.

10/24 Call from Commissioner Danny Talkington approved the bid

11/17 Talkington approved the plan design and summary 1500/5700 deductible

11/29 Talkington excluded St. Francis to drive business to SoutheastHEALTH

11/30 Open Enrollment Meeting began

12/05 Changes made to the deductible

12/07 Onboarding call with Cecil Week's office

12/12 Threshold change to make the process smoother

12/15 First Invoice was sent out to be paid

12/19 Talkington signed the voucher

12/22 Transferred over and sent it

12/22 New Funding approved

12/25 Week of Christmas got the last deductible change \$1,500/\$3,000

01/01 New Commissioner begins their 2023 year.

1/26 Got a response back there would be additional money to the County of \$30,000 in order to change the plan to a 3-tier plan. This would be the 4th change to the plan design in the last 3 months. This would not go into effect until March 1st or April 1st. And could be a train wreck with claims according to McCarty. The other option would be the HRA option and could be a train wreck as well. Southeast would have to be on the Explanation of Benefits in order to pay out on the plan.

As of today, February 14, 2023 the benefits states \$1,500 in-network/\$3,000 out-of-network according to Mr. McCarty.

The floor was open to questions and concerns: These will be general statements that McCarty has promised to fix timely.

There are people who have insurance cards who do not want the insurance.

One person had the wrong name and still does not have a physical new card yet. The plan changed from Express Scripts to CVS and some prescriptions have increased by 40%

Benefits Overview booklet has not been distributed to employees. The Commission now has a copy of the latest plan design.

Employees who have terminated their employment have yet to receive COBRA under this plan. Federal law states the employees must receive COBRA notification within 30 days. ACP program was cancelled. About a half of dozen people are on this plan. Employees have numerous questions regarding that cancellation.

"I have asked you to talk to Pam Wheeler on more than one occasion and keep her in the loop as she administers the insurance for the county employees," commented Commissioner Jarrell. "If they have an issue or complaint they come see her. I don't know why you have not gotten with her. I'm not sure if you were told by Mr. Weeks not to talk to her or by Talkington or what, but she need to be in the loop! We are not on the same page!"

"It is not the commissioner's fault by no means," stated McCarty. He told the employees you can throw the rocks at me, but I don't want to tell you anything that is not correct.

There was much discussion around the room, but finally Mr. Mathis asked, "What are our options."

Stay on the plan for the remainder of the year would be the best option.

When asked how much is administrative cost per employee per month? McCarty did not know the exact amount.

If we have the HRA plan how does that work," asked Mathis. "It would be administered by a third party administrator; however the paperwork will end up on Wheeler's desk," commented McCarty.

"I'm just going to say this. The insurance is a cluster "#@\$% ". I completely blame the previous commission and I point my finger at you Mrs. Jarrell," stated Mathis. The insurance should have been completely taking care of by December 31st. Most start working on insurance bids in late June or early July to get completely timely. The previous commission began in October. There is a one year contract with this insurance so they will be looking again in a few months, but the employees will have to deal with this for now.

Mathis stated do we have a motion to keep the insurance as it with the plan we have now. Commissioner Jarrell made the motion. Commissioner Lintz seconded. All three voted yes.

### **Ice Storm Pay for Employees Who Worked While County Offices Were Closed**

Sheriff Hefner requested the Commission to make a decision on if employees should be paid if they came in when the County closed the offices to be paid time and a half.

Mathis stated to bring in a list of employees who worked when the offices were closed and the Commission would make a decision on Tuesday next week.

Motion to approve the minutes from January 30, 2023 meeting made by Jarrell, seconded by Lintz. All three voted yes and duly passed.

Motion to approve the minutes from February 6, 2023 meeting made by Jarrell, seconded by Lintz. All three voted yes and duly passed.

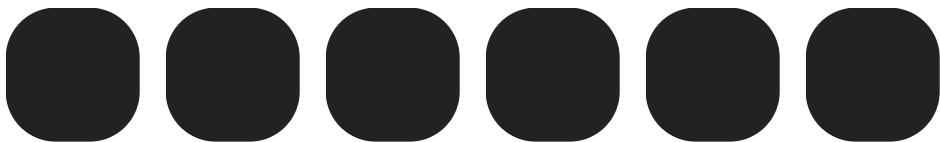
Motion made to except the change order for Brown Construction GNA in the amount of \$25,260.00 dated February 10, 2023 by Lintz. Seconded by Jarrell. All three voted yes and duly passed.

Motion to adjourn at 1: 18 p.m. made by Commissioner Lintz. Seconded by Commission Jarrell. All three voted yes.

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## Local Family Looking for Kevin McCay

FEBRUARY 13TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Local Family Looking for Kevin McCay](#)

Update: He was found.

If anyone near Clarkton or Holcomb or even the Dexter area sees Casey Williams' father, Kevin McKay, Please contact her immediately. Her phone number is (573) 963-2670. Thank you!

He walked away from the Freedom House on foot and his daughter is trying to find him. She appreciates everyone's help looking for her dad.

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## Route 25 in Stoddard County Reduced for Shoulder Work

FEBRUARY 12TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Route 25 in Stoddard County Reduced for Shoulder Work

Route 25 in Stoddard County will be reduced as Missouri Department of Transportation crews replace roadway lighting.

This section of roadway is located from Lighthouse Road to the commuter parking lot in Dexter, Missouri.

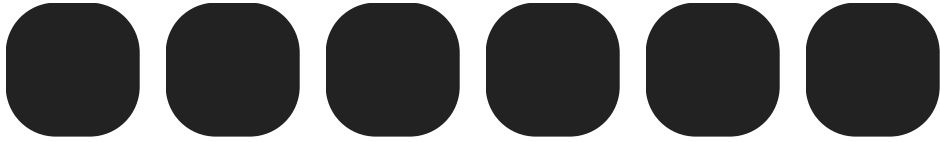
Weather permitting, work will take place Tuesday, Feb. 14 from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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

For additional information, contact MoDOT's Customer Service Center toll-free at 1-888-ASK-MODOT

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