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Stoddard County Commissioner Meeting - Tuesday, May 30, 2023

MAY 30TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

Stoddard County Commissioner Meeting - Tuesday, May 30, 2023

The Stoddard County Commissioners began their meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer. It was a full house with more than 15 people in attendance. Mr. Mathis began with the closing of County Road 570.

Closing of County Road 570 Update

Sally Cato and Mrs. Blackshire approached the Commissioner a few weeks ago regarding the Blackshirt property and wetlands and would like to close the County Road 570 which runs through their property. Rick Shipman was also in attendance today and is a property owner on CR 570. He is in agreement to consider the road abandoned as it is no longer being maintained by Castor township.

"I drove out there yesterday," stated Presiding Commissioner Greg Mathis.

Dale Moreland, Castor Township, had instructed and gave permission to Auten Land Services LLC to lay pipe along CR 517 which also crosses onto the easement of CR 570. Auten Land Services has destroyed some of the property and gates on the property owned by Mrs. Blackshire and Mr. Shipman.

"I have been told that they will put this back into working order with the gates and land," stated Rick Shipman, landowner.

"I will talk to my clients and see what they want to do with Auten Land Services and how they have conducted themselves. I am sure the family will want to receive some compensation for the damage. I have been dealing with Bob Conrad with Auten Land Services," stated John Scott, attorney for the Blackshirt family who was also in attendance.

County Road 527A

Donnie Foster had attend the Commission meeting a few weeks ago and has requested that County Road 527A be closed.

"I also drove out there yesterday," stated Mathis.

The discussion was more with the bridge out there and who would maintain the bridge if the road was considered closed. Will the township maintain the bridge or the property owner is the question.

"We took out the old bridge. It was an iron bridge with wood flooring," stated Moreland of Castor Township. "Foster owns 100 acres now around the bridge. We have replaced the bridge with pipes and rock around it to keep from washing out."

"If you look at the bridge, it is starting to cave in and needs more rock on the north side too," stated Foster.

"The Township and Mr. Foster will need to get together and decide who will be maintaining the bridge and where do we close it from the bridge, before the bridge," stated Mathis.

Moreland announced there would be a meeting at the Castor Township office on Tuesday, June 6th at 6:00 p.m. and they can work out all the details at that time.

New Business - City of Essex

"We have been trying to get a grant for our streets as nothing has been done to those streets since 1970's," commented Jena Mitchell, City of Essex Clerk.

"We wrote the application in December 2022 and it has been denied due to lack of funds. We believe it is because of the cash-match and not enough in-kind money. So we are thinking they are needing a little financial help with this application. I am thinking about \$50,000 in ARPA Funds," stated Tiffany Belcher from Bootheel Regional Planning Commission.

"Currently we are obligated with all of our Funds, however there are some of the projects might not spend all their money and we could be able to help," commented Mathis. "Get all your information together along with the amounts and we will at least get your name on the list for potential funding."

New Business - Harold Greene, Consultant for Ozark Total Healthcare DBA Ozark Physical Medicine

"We are the bidder for the Broadband Project," commented Harold Greene, consultant for Ozark Total Healthcare. "However the bid was over \$900,000 above the amount of money available."

The previous Commissioners dedicated \$1 million dollars for Broadband for the Puxico area and awarded that money to GoSEMO Fiber. Then Bootheel Regional Planning Commission helped with a CDGB government grant in the amount of \$1.4 million dollars.

Once the bid meeting occurred there was only one bid and it was for \$3.82 million dollars. If the bid is accepted the options are to either shorten the miles of fiber ran or ask CDGB for more monies.

Another option is to not accept the CDGB grant and just award the \$1 million to GoSEMO Fiber and allow them to go ahead with the rural portion of Stoddard County near Puxico and they will pay for the rest of the fiber.

Tiffany Belcher, Bootheel Regional Planning Commission stated, "Because the bid is over \$900,000 a committee has now been created because of prevailing wages and the costs of products keep rising. You can put a contingency on there if CDGB has the funding to cover the overage or cut back on the miles to get the cost down. There are 76 miles to cover in the Puxico rural area."

"We are willing to go in either direction. We can either scale the project back or if CDGB has the funds, we are more than willing to do either," stated Harold Green with Ozark Physical Medicine.

"The County would be the owner of this project for Broadband infrastructure if they so choose to go this route and accept the CDGB Grant from Bootheel Regional Planning Commission. It would be a five year contract then the Internet Service Provider (ISP) would take over both the maintenance of the fiber lines as well as from the pole to the homes.

Greene stated that there are several ISPs in the area including, but not limited to AT&T, Windstream in Wappapello, and GoSEMO Fiber. "We have a tendency to go with GoSEMO Fiber," stated Greene.

"I would have bid on the city of Puxico Broadband project; however I did not have time. GoSEMO Fiber didn't give me time to bid on that project and we would have been the only bidder there as well. If I can give my two cents worth if anything I would like someone in Stoddard county to get these grants," stated Greene.

Note: The Bid Announcement is placed in the print newspaper for two weeks and that was done by the city of Puxico in both the Dexter Statesman and the Puxico Weekly Press.

Board of Equalization Update

The Board of Equalization opens the first Tuesday in July; however that falls on July 4h so it will be open July 5th - 19th. Mary Worley and Mike Bollinger are on the board and can be available if anyone has questions..

"We had to raise countywide 10% on residential owners due to it being state of Missouri mandated." per Dan Creg, Stoddard County Assessor.

The Commissioners will open the Board of Equalization at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 5, 2023.

Other Business

Motion to approve the Minutes from May 15, 2023 made by Commissioner C.D. Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Carol Jarrell. All three voted yes and passed.

Motion to approve the Minutes from the Closed Session Minutes for May 15, 2023 made by Commissioner Jarrell, seconded by Commissioner Stewart. All three voted yes and passed.

Motion to approve the Minutes from the Closed Session Minutes for May 17, 2023 made by Commissioner Jarrell, seconded by Commissioner Stewart. All three voted yes and passed.

Motion to approve the Minutes from May 22, 2023 made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Jarrell. All three voted yes and passed.

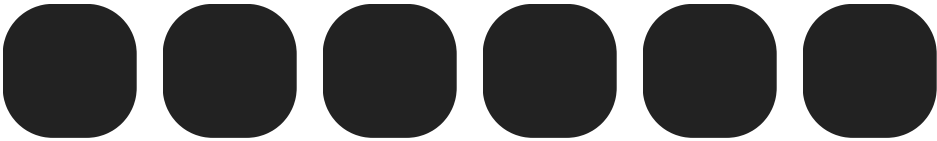
Motion to approve the Minutes from the Closed Session Minutes for may 22, 2023 made by Commissioner Jarrell, seconded by Commissioner Stewart. All three voted yes and passed.

Motion to go into Closed Session at 11:15 a.m. made by Commissioner Jarrell, seconded by Commissioner Stewart. All three voted yes and passed.

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