

## Local News



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# Stoddard County Commissioner Meeting - Monday, June 12, 2023

JUNE 12TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Stoddard County Commissioner Meeting - Monday, June 12, 2023

The Stoddard County Commission meeting opened with a full house of citizens.

Presiding Commission Greg Mathis had everyone stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and then said a prayer asking for rain for the farmers!

### **Terry Bates, New Lisbon Township**

He had bids for bridges to be done within the New Lisbon Township. He has requested ARPA Funds to repair those bridges at a previous meeting.

Commissioner Mathis will hand deliver the documents to Bootheel Regional Planning Commission as they are in training today and could not attend the meeting.

### **Doug Lowery, Duck Creek Township**

Mr. Lower stated that fiber optic crews have caused damage on several roads in the area including County Roads 420, 481, 336, and 490. Loyd Rice, GoSEMO Fiber, was also in attendance and will make sure the company they have contracted with gets in touch with Duck Creek Township today.

### **Donnie Foster, property owner on County Road 527A Update**

Mr. Foster went to the Castor Township meeting on June 6th and they have agreed to abandon the county road. As far as the two culverts they will repair it with concrete and

then he will take over the maintenance of the road.

Foster asked if the Commission would close east of the bridge on County Road 527A as soon as possible so he can lay some gravel and work on building his home. Mathis will have it on the agenda for next week on Tuesday, June 20th as Monday is a holiday.

### **Lucille Mullins - Mayor for the City of Dudley**

According to Mayor Mullins, the citizens of Dudley received a letter from the Stoddard County Clerk's office that they will no longer be able to vote in the city of Dudley and will have to travel to Dexter in order vote. Only 19 people voted in the April election.

Commissioner Mathis asked for Cecil Weeks to come into the meeting and explain. "We have a shortage of poll workers. Each poll must have a Democratic judge and a Republican judge and in some years more than one of each depending on if it is a national election. The issue at hand seems to be not enough Democratic judges available to work the polls," commented Weeks.

There were only 19 people from the city of Dudley that voted in the April election. Every two years the Clerk's office evaluates the number of polls in the area and judges to work the polls.

"It is unfortunate and I am sorry, but this is the only way to fix the issue. If no one steps forward and declares to be a Democrat and is willing to work the poll then we just have to close it," stated Weeks.

"What can Stoddard County do for the City of Dudley," asked Mullins. "I thought the Commission was provided broadband for the county."

The answer is no, the County is not providing broadband for the Dudley area. Loyd Rice with GoSEMO Fiber explained that broadband is coming to Dudley area, but it is GoSEMO Fiber performing the work etc. and not the County.

Another issue that was brought up was the tipping fees. The Industrial Development Board oversees the tipping fees for the County. She is on the board, but had issues with how the tipping fees were distributed and wanted input by the Commission. WW Wood Products paid \$176,000 a month to bring their trash to Bloomfield landfill. Each of the cities receives tipping fees based on the number of residents in each city. Dudley only has 102 citizens, but has one of the largest contributors to the landfill and she felt they do not receive their proper share of the monies.

"It is not equally distributed," commented Mullins. "I'm on the IDA Board, but I do not feel our town receives enough money. How is a small town going to survive, we aren't as big as Dexter."

Mathis said he would contact Peter Coutavas, Director of the IDA, and find out how the tipping fees are handled and distributed throughout the county.

### **County Health Insurance Issue**

An employee turned in a bill for lab work. The insurance handbook said the employees do not pay for lab work and the insurance broker, John McCarty, has not responded to his email requests. Mr. Mathis will get in touch with him and try to resolve the issue.

### **Broadband Project Bid**

Motion to accept the bid from Ozark Physical Medicine for the CDGB Grant Broadband Project. There was no motion to accept the bid.

Motion to decline the bid from Ozark Physical Medicine for Broadband Project made by Commissioner Carol Jarrell. Commissioner Stewart seconded the motion. All three voted yes and the motion passed.

Presiding Commissioner Mathis will contact Jim Grebing, Bootheel Regional Planning Commission Director, to see if anything else needs to be voted on or discussed with the Commissioners on the CDGB Grant. The Commission does not wish to proceed with this grant.

Mathis will send an email to Mr. Greene and Ozark Physical Medicine to notify them.

### **Loyd Rice, GoSEMO Fiber**

Rice readdressed the opportunity of receiving the 1 million dollars of ARPA funds for internet/broadband in the rural Puxico area. Rice addressed the previous Commission in 2021 and asked for ARPA funds. The previous Commissioners voted to dedicate 1 million of the ARPA funds for broadband in the rural Puxico area and school district. Today's proposal was just another offer as to how the monies would be used to adequately serve those people who do not have internet or have poor quality internet in the Puxico School District.

### **Beau Bishop, Stoddard County Emergency Management Agency Director**

He updated the Commissioner on the Stoddard County Emergency Radio Group (SCERG). This group of individuals want to have a communications system available to

the citizens of Stoddard County in the event of an all-out outage. They believe every citizen in the county should have a voice during an emergency or disaster within Stoddard County.

An FCC license is required to operate the GMRS system. Licenses are issued for a ten-year term and can be renewed between 90 days prior to the expiration date and up to the actual expiration date of the license. GMRS Licenses are granted to individuals and are allowed to be used by their immediate family members. Citizens of Stoddard County would be introduced to this process through monthly meetings for the public. The citizens would bear the cost of their own radio equipment. Additional information would be shared with the Citizens about powering up their radio equipment without power at meetings. During an emergency, the Citizens would be able to make contact with our group and in turn we would relay to the appropriate agency.

They are asking for additional equipment through donation. At the present there are three repeaters which are all owned by the members. They would like to eventually have two additional repeaters or one high power repeater to be used in conjunction with the present repeater covering 90% of the County.

The request is for \$6065.00. They have also developed some rules for those wanting to use the radios etc.

The Commission will review the information and decide on the donation at a later date.

### **William Dowdy, Maintenance Supervisor for Stoddard County Buildings**

A Standard Service Contract Agreement proposal for \$3,936.00 by Advance Systems Technology out of Indiana to have the annual inspection for the control panel for the Juvenile Detention Center was given to the Commissioners at a prior meeting. Advance Systems Technology has proprietary rights to the equipment etc and are the only ones that can work on the control panel.

Motion to accept the Standard Service Contract Agreement from Advance Systems Technology in the amount of \$3,936.00 made by Commissioner Stewart. Seconded by Commissioner Jarrell. All three voted yes and passed.

### **Other Business**

Motion to approve the May 2023 Adds/Abates from County Collector Josh Spearman made by Commissioner Jarrell. Seconded by Commissioner Stewart. All three voted yes and passed.

Motion to accept the Minutes from Monday, June 5, 2023 made by Commissioner Stewart. Seconded by Commissioner Jarrell. All three voted yes and passed.

Motion to accept the Closed Meeting Minutes from Monday, June 5, 2023 made by Commissioner Stewart. Seconded by Commissioner Jarrell. All three voted yes and passed.

Custodial Help: Daytime cleaning for the various Stoddard County Government Buildings. If anyone is interested in applying they can send a resume to P.O. Box 110, Bloomfield, MO 63825. The ad will also be placed in the Dexter Statesman.

Letter from Garrett Payne who is currently serving on the SB40 Board. He has resigned as a member of the board and thanked them for allowing him to serve the last three years. If anyone has interest on serving on the SB40 Board please contact a County Commissioner or send a resume to P.O. Box 110, Bloomfield, MO 63825.

Motion to enter into Closed Session RSMo Section: 610.021 (13) Personnel at 11:39 a.m. made by Commissioner Jarrell. Seconded by Commissioner Stewart. All three voted yes and passed.

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