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Stoddard County Commission Meeting - July 3, 2023

JULY 05TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

Stoddard County Commission Meeting - July 3, 2023

The Stoddard County Commission began their weekly meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer over the county employees and law enforcement.

New Assessor Sworn in to Office

Jacob Clary, was sworn in as the new Assessor, prior to the start of the Stoddard County Commission meeting.

Closing of County Offices

Judge Rob Mayor sent a text to Presiding Commissioner Greg Mathis on Friday that he was closing the Judicial building today, Monday, July 3rd at noon. "The question is do you want to close at noon or stay open until regular closing time," asking Commissioners Carol Jarrell and C.D. Stewart.

Motion to close the Government Building and County offices at noon made by Commissioner Carol Jarrell and seconded by C.D. Stewart. All three voted yes and the motion passed.

"The employees will be paid for the 4 hours while the offices are closed," stated Presiding Commissioner Greg Mathis.

Loyd Rice, GoSEMO Fiber attended along with Donnie Brown, Intern with an update on the Broadband/Internet

Rice distributed a paper update along with some changes from the original proposal submitted last month. Each month there is an update on the grants so it is an ongoing process.

"The BEAD Grant is yet to have all the rules published," stated Rice.

Davis-Bacon Program has stipulations of prevailing wages and affirmative action along with some Human Resources layers that GoSEMO is not set-up to handle at this time.

A question from Mathis was what are the number of households in that 40 miles of broadband outside the city limits of Puxico and how many in the last 33 miles that will be delayed somewhat due to grant application on the BEAD Grant. Rice said he would get that information to the Commissioners.

In a letter to the Commissioners, "GoSEMO Fiber would like to continue to offer to build 40 miles of fiber broadband infrastructure in the northwest Stoddard County as outlined to be the Puxico rural area in the failed CDBG application. Pending final details and a signed memorandum of understanding should the Commission decide to honor the former Commissioner's decision to allocate 1 million in ARPA funds to broadband. The project timeline is anticipated to last 12 months, once the project is started. It is the intent of GoSEMO Fiber to complete the remaining unserved portions of the county when an appropriate funding opportunity is made available, including the 33 miles that remain in this immediate area of the filed CDBG."

"GoSEMO is currently working on (3) MO Broadband Grant applications territories, awarded funding of \$17 million this past December 2022. Two of these projects are in Stoddard County, with approximately 22 miles of infrastructure being built to serve approximately 701 of the county's unserved citizens. This same MO Broadband Office will also run the next anticipated round of broadband funding which will come through the NTIA, known as the BEAD program."

Josh Speakman, Stoddard County Collector/Treasurer

Speakman announced the Land Sale on the 4th Monday of August. He will have a press release available to the newspapers explaining the process. It will be held in person at the courthouse on August 22, 2023.

Carl Hefner, Stoddard County Sheriff

Hefner wanted to know how his employees were going to be compensated for the four hours that the County offices are closed due to the holiday. Sheriff's department are considered essential personnel and they just can't close the sheriff's department.

"They knew that when they went to work at the sheriff's department and the knew they would work when other county employees are off," stated Commission Jarrell. "There job is to keep the county safe at ALL times."

"We are a different beast," stated Hefner. "We get the same raises as everyone else gets so we are the same beast in that scenario, but not when it comes to getting paid time off."

"I think they should get the 4 hours of straight time, not overtime, but they are a different animal and should be compensated for these hours." stated Commissioner Stewart.

"During the snow days back in the winter, the sheriff's department worked and others could not come to work and the offices were closed. They were not compensated additional monies," commented Commissioner Mathis.

Mathis asked Hefner if he would get a list together of all employees that had to work during the hours of the County offices being closed and present that on Monday. This included any employee that worked between noon and 4:30 p.m.

Sawyer Smith, Stoddard County Prosecuting Attorney

Sawyer Smith presented a Memorandum of Agreement utilizing the Stoddard County Law Enforcement Restitution Fund (LERF) monies which will be used to pay Lance Butler, attorney at law, to serve in the Prosecuting Attorney's office on a part-time basis. He will be paid \$6,000 per month for the next six months for the services as a self-employed person and not as a direct employee.

Other Business

There was no update on the ARPA funds this week. The Commission is waiting on an updated spreadsheet of the requests. Katelyn Lambert, Bootheel Regional Planning Commission, returned from her Leave of Absence today and will hopefully get a spreadsheet and all the updates next week.

Board of Equalization will be held on Wednesday, July 5th at 10 a.m.

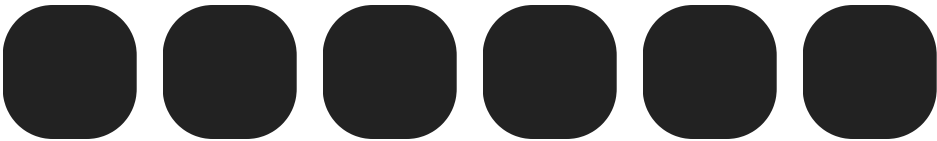
Motion to accept the regular meeting minutes from June 27, 2023 made by Commissioner Jarrell, seconded by Commissioner Stewart. Mathis abstained due to absence that particular day. Motion passed with two votes by Jarrell and Stewart.

Minutes for the closed meeting from June 27, 2023 were not available.

Motion to enter in Closed Session made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Jarrell at 11:05 a.m. All three voted yes and passed.

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