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Stoddard County Commission Meeting - Tuesday, January 16, 2024

JANUARY 16TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Stoddard County Commission Meeting - Tuesday, January 16, 2024

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

Jim Mayo - Stars and Stripes Museum/Stoddard County Historical Society.

"In 1964 we organized the Stoddard County Historical Society," commented Mayo. "We purchased the old General Baptist Church and put our museum in there. Over the years we have had to put a roof on it and do other things like fix the basement. We had to sell the old church because the floor was going out and we did sell the church to Bloomfield Schools. They have since torn it down and built a park lot."

"We bought another church and put a new roof on it, but the floor was also falling through so we got another building downtown, but we have a young lady wanting to rent it," continued Mayo. "Do you have any ideas where we can relocate our museum. We have a lot of papers, important historical papers."

"Is there anyway the County can help us out?" asked Mayo. "We want to stay as close to the Courthouse as we can. We are just asking if you all have any ideas or any vacancies?"

Mathis asked, "Is this for just storage or for opening to the public?"

Mayo went on to explain that the membership is getting old and we want to get it set up to turn over to the younger people. We are getting in a bind to find a location.

"We need a place for storage at this time with heat/air." stated Mrs. Sue Mayo. "We have a lot of cemetery books that were printed in 1992 and lots of paper that needs to be stored."

"We have a good history and we should preserve it," Jim Mayo went on to explain. "We need to preserve it. History grows every day and we are trying to save it. It is time for our younger people to take it over, but we want to make it strong for them."

"I think the upstairs of the courthouse would be a good spot," stated Mayo. "The old courthouse would be a great place for the history. Of course we would like to put an elevator in if we open it as a museum."

Commissioner Mathis stated that there is storage area; however it a little messy right now, but he would have to discuss it with some other elected officials as they store important documents in there as well. He would get back to Mr. Mayo as to whether or not that was a viable option.

Josh Speakman, County Collector/Treasurer

Speakman discussed drainage districts and ditches that need to be cleaned out specifically in the Advance area. Those ditches in question are #1333 and #14. The Commission and Mr. Speakman discussed several ideas and would form a game plan to help with the drainage of those two ditches.

There is monies available. Per Missouri State Statute 243.260 they can combine monies to help eliminate or improve the drainage in these ditches by performing some type of clean-out.

Per MO State Statute 243.260 - Districts may contract with other districts for outlets - cost determined, how. - Drainage districts organized or incorporated under this chapter may contract with each other, and with districts organized and incorporated under any other law of this state or under the laws of other states, for such outlet or outlets as the one may need and the other can furnish on such terms as may be deemed to be just and fair. The cost of obtaining such outlet or outlets to be paid as other expenses of the district for making improvements. If the districts cannot agree upon the compensation to be paid for the outlet, the district supplying the outlet, by action in the circuit court of the county wherein the district for which the outlet is supplied is organized, may recover from such district fair and just compensation for supplying the outlet. Any compensation received by the district shall be applied to improving its ditches or levees or reducing taxation or indebtedness.

Ads and Abates were postponed until next week.

Motion to accept the regular meeting minutes from January 8, 2024 made by Commissioner C.D. Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Carol Jarrell. All three voted yes and minutes approved.

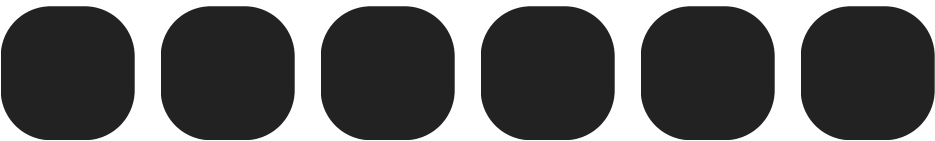
On Thursday, Budget Hearing will be at 9 a.m. for one hour per Commissioner Mathis.

Motion to enter into closed session at 11:03 a.m. made by Commissioner Carol Jarrell and seconded by Commissioner C.D.Stewart. All three voted yes and motion passed.

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Stoddard County Hazardous Mitigation Plan

Approved

JANUARY 09TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Stoddard County Hazardous Mitigation Plan Approved

The Bootheel Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission, or BRPC, received word that the Stoddard County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update for 2023 has been approved.

Approval was designated by State Emergency Management Agency, or SEMA, as well as the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA. Updates are required every five years for participating communities to be eligible for certain types of FEMA funding. SEMA estimates that every dollar spent on mitigation planning saves \$8 in disaster recovery funds.

The planning process began with a kick-off planning meeting in February 2023. A series of three meetings was held in Bloomfield, Missouri, in the County Commissioners' Chambers. County commissioners, mayors, city clerks, emergency personnel, economic developers and the public were all invited to be part of the update process, voicing their opinions on what mitigation projects should be prioritized with limited resources. A public survey gathered opinions from others throughout the county.

Beau Bishop, Stoddard County Emergency Management Director commented on the importance of the plan.

"Hazard Mitigation planning reduces loss of life and property by minimizing the impact of disasters," Bishop said. "All applicable stakeholders within a community should be represented during this process. BRPC provided a very thorough planning process which ensured that all hazards were considered and discussed, and that all voices were heard. In doing so, they took the lead in completing a comprehensive Mitigation plan for the citizens of Stoddard County."

Besides the content of the plan, the process of updating it created an opportunity for BRPC to meet with county and community leaders as well as stakeholders.

Jim Grebing serves as the executive director of BRPC.

"Hosting community meetings allowed members of our staff to meet with community members and hear their needs," Grebing said of the process. "We look forward to assisting communities with projects they designated themselves to make their communities safer and more resilient to natural hazards."

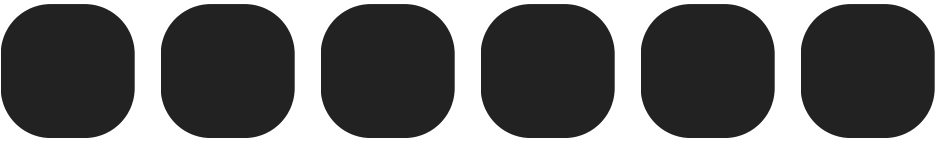
Stoddard is the first of six county plans that will be updated in the coming months in the Missouri Bootheel. The plan will serve as a resource to communities for years to come. To access a copy of the plan, go to <https://bootrpc.com>.

Bootheel Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission exists to promote and support the economic development of the region and to guide local units of government in a coordinated effort to develop the region in a way which would best promote public health, safety, general welfare and economic prosperity in accordance with existing and future needs. This is accomplished by providing technical assistance to cities, counties, businesses and other development organizations in the area, and by networking extensively with state and federal resource agencies. BRPC works with Dunklin, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Scott and Stoddard Counties.

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Mingo National Wildlife Refuge Planning Intermittent Closures for Feral Hog Control

JANUARY 08TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Mingo National Wildlife Refuge Planning Intermittent Closures for Feral Hog Control

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Inspection and Health Service (APHIS) will be conducting a multiple-day aerial operation to control feral hogs on Mingo National Wildlife Refuge between January 16 and 26, 2024. This management action will involve a helicopter flying over the refuge with APHIS personnel targeting and shooting feral hogs. For public safety, the entire refuge will be closed to public entry intermittently, with all roads entering the refuge closed. This closure includes all access to the refuge including vehicle, foot, bicycle, and horseback.

The refuge will be closed for periods over the ten days; however, because of numerous circumstances (weather conditions, etc.), the actual closure date(s) have not yet been determined. If planning to visit Mingo National Wildlife Refuge January 16-26, 2024, please check our website fws.gov/refuge/mingo for updates on this activity. You can also call the refuge office at 573-222-3589 to get an update on the timing of the closure(s).

This refuge management operation, paired with a larger eradication plan utilizing multiple tools, will substantially decrease the feral hog population on the refuge. Feral hogs are a non-native species that can proliferate quickly and negatively impact the native plants and animals of the refuge. Feral hogs are opportunistic feeders and will forage on the eggs of ground nesting birds and will even eat reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals. They also compete with native species like deer and turkey for important food sources such as acorns. Their rooting and wallowing behavior heavily alter the native habitats of the refuge, thus impacting the refuge's primary missions of protecting bottomland hardwood forest habitat and serving as an inviolate sanctuary for migratory waterfowl.

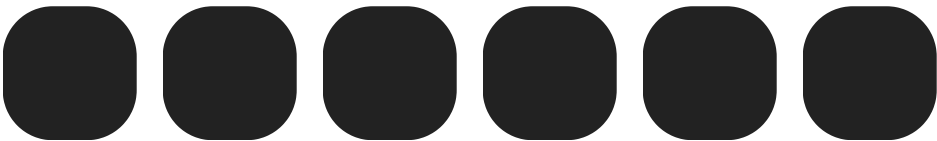
Mingo National Wildlife Refuge is located 1.5 mile north of Puxico, MO on State Highway 51. For more information, contact (573) 222-3589 or email the refuge at mingo@fws.gov. Check our website, fws.gov/refuge/mingo, for refuge updates and be sure to check our refuge events tabs for upcoming events and observances!

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The National Wildlife Refuge System, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is the world's premier system of public lands and waters set aside to conserve America's fish, wildlife, and plants. Since President Theodore Roosevelt designated Florida's Pelican Island as the first wildlife refuge in 1903, the System has grown to more than 150 million acres, 570 national wildlife refuges and other units of the Refuge System, plus 38 wetland management districts. Visit www.fws.gov

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2023 Annual Report Stoddard County Coroner’s Office Brent Stidham - Coroner

JANUARY 08TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

2023 Annual Report Stoddard County Coroner's Office Brent Stidham - Coroner

2023 Annual report Stoddard County Coroner's Office Brent Stidham - Coroner

To continue keeping the public informed and provide transparency, I am releasing my annual Coroner's report to the residents of Stoddard County. The Stoddard County Coroner's office consists of myself and Deputy Coroner Ashley Robey. It is our mission to investigate every death in Stoddard County and provide accurate death information for death certificates and family members. Death investigations often include, ordering and attending autopsies, collecting toxicology testing, responding to scenes, interviewing witnesses, locating and notifying next of kin, speaking with primary care physicians, and obtaining medical records. I once again would like to thank our Stoddard County funeral homes, Mathis Funeral Home, Watkins Funeral Home, and Morgan Funeral Home, as well as all first responders for their professionalism and assistance in 2023.

2023 saw a spike in child fatalities. This is the worst situation imaginable for the families as well as the first responders and agencies who work

these cases. During these cases the county has a Child Fatality Review Panel that is responsible for contributing information to help determine the cause of death, identify and help implement services available to the family, and identify ways to prevent further child fatalities. All information from these meetings is confidential. Autopsies are required in children under 18, with the exception of medical situations when a State certified Child Pathologist deems it unnecessary. In addition the Missouri State Technical Assistance Team (STAT) will reimburse counties who have an active Child Fatality Review Panel that completes the necessary procedures. In the last three years Stoddard County has had a 100% reimbursement rate for child autopsies. This is due to conducting meetings and completing required data entry in a timely manner. The due diligence of this panel assured that all child fatalities were thoroughly investigated, while also saving Stoddard County taxpayers \$14,000 in 2023. The Stoddard County Child Fatality Review Panel consists of the following members.

Stoddard County Prosecuting Attorney Sawyer Smith Stoddard County Coroner Brent Stidham

Stoddard County Sheriff Carl Hefner, Chief Deputy Andrew Holden, Detective Garry Brady and Detective John Atkinson

Stoddard County Chief Juvenile Officer Tonya Causey (Chairman) Members of the investigating law enforcement agency (municipalities) Members of the Stoddard County Health Department Members of the Missouri State Highway Patrol

Stoddard County Children's Division Stoddard County Health Department Stoddard County Ambulance District

It should be noted, if a death occurs in the city limits of a town with a Police Department, members of that Department attend the review meetings. In 2023 Officers from the Dexter

Police Department and Bernie Police Department attended meetings that concerned children from their

respective municipalities. I would like to thank all of these agencies for their work on this panel.

Another point in this year's report is that Stoddard County did not record a single overdose death. While in some cases drug use was a potential contributing factor, there were not any that were deemed an overdose. In overdoses an autopsy or toxicology testing is always performed. It is uncommon across the state to have a county without an overdose death, however, in Stoddard County there are several reasons we are successfully changing that trend. Those reasons include the public knowledge of properly administering Narcan, the increasing availability and success of inpatient and outpatient rehab facilities in the area, excellent effort by all Stoddard County law enforcement agencies, tough prosecution for repeat offenders, and zero tolerance for dangerous drug dealers. Together all of those things are helping Stoddard County fight fentanyl and the opioid epidemic.

Unfortunately 2023 saw an increase in suicide deaths and one homicide. Looking ahead, I hope to continue working with mental health agencies to eliminate suicide from our County and increase mental health awareness. I also plan to continue working with private entities, and local and state agencies to provide assistance and information that can keep Stoddard County a safe and positive place to live and work.

As Coroner I always strive to be professional, helpful and compassionate during what is a family's worst day. I will continue to speak for those who no longer have a voice to ensure that every death in Stoddard County is properly investigated. I will always ensure that the deceased and families are treated with dignity and respect. In addition, it is my duty to be mindful of taxpayers money. That makes me proud to say that after saving taxpayers over \$12,000 in 2023 our office has now saved taxpayers over \$35,000 in a three year period.

2023 budget information Total budgeted: \$60,978.99

Total actual: \$48,848.75

2023 case information

The following information is in regards to Coroner's Office cases only and does not include deaths occurring under the care of a physician such as hospice.

Total cases investigated and certified by the Coroner's office: 117 Scene responses: 88

Natural Causes: 94

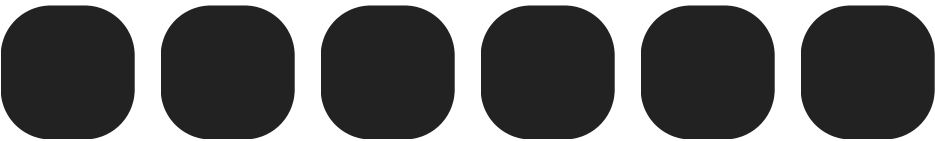
Homicide: 1

Suicide: 8
Motor vehicle accident: 6 Accident (fire): 2 Accident (fall): 2 Accident (other): 2 Cases pending: 2
Age groups
0-18: 5
19-45: 18
46-70: 47
70 and over: 47

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Stoddard County Commission Meeting - Tuesday, January 2, 2024

JANUARY 02ND 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Stoddard County Commission Meeting - Tuesday, January 2, 2024

The Stoddard County Commission began their 2024 year with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer over the county officials, state officials, police and fire and all those serving in the military.

Alisha Trammel, Dexter Chamber of Commerce - Cal-Maine Foods, Inc. Update

“I just wanted to add or rather explain a couple of things that were in the press release,” commented Trammel.

1. Investment of \$13 million putting into the upgrades of the processing plant, mill and hatchery. That is their initial estimate of investment into the buildings and the process.
2. Employment numbers will be in phases. Phase one is 96 employees. That 96 comes from the Missouri Works Program and other state incentives. County wage island average of \$44,000 per person currently and they will have to pay 80% of their salaries and 50% of their insurance benefits. They must have 96 employees and if they do not they are the disqualified from the Missouri Works Program.

Tyson pursued Cal Maine Foods, Inc. to purchase the buildings.

"We are actively recruiting for more businesses," stated Trammell. "The hotel project is coming along. I am actually meeting this week to get some dates."

Motion to accept the meeting minutes from Friday, December 29, 2023 made by Commissioner Jarrell, seconded by Commissioner Stewart. All three voted yes and motion passed.

Important dates:

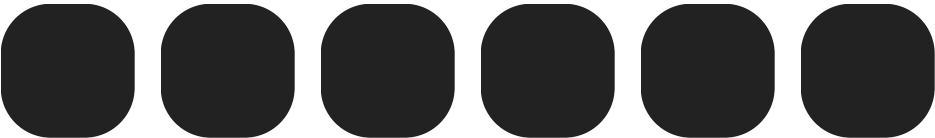
Martin Luther King Jr. day is Monday, January 15, 2024/ County offices are closed

January 10, 2024 is the last day to Register to Vote for February 6, 2024 Bond Election
Final Certification for the April 2, 2024 General Municipal Election is January 23, 2024.
Absentee Voting Begins for March 5, 2024 Charter Election is January 23, 2024
No Excuse Absentee Voting begins for February 6, 2024 Bond Election is January 23, 2024
Motion to enter into closed session made by Commissioner Jarrell, seconded by Commissioner Stewart. All three voted yes and motion passed.

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