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COUNTY & PROBATE COURT CLERK

**QUORUM COURT MINUTES**  
**AUGUST 28, 2023**

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211-216

## QUORUM COURT MINUTES AUGUST 28, 2023

Judge Day called the meeting to order at 5:27 PM.

The invocation was led by Clint Burns, Restore Church, Brookland, AR.

Assembly and Pledge of Allegiance was led by Darrel Cook.

The roll was called as twelve Justices of the Peace were present. Justice Cline was absent.

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### EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

**Branon Thiesse**, Craighead County Cooperative Extension Office addressed the Quorum Court to thank them for serving the citizens of Craighead County. The meal provided catered by Trauma Hogs was provided to Quorum Court members. He introduced Maleigha Dawn Cook, 4-H County Extension Agent. Ms. Cook had active 4-H members present on their opportunities afforded by 4-H including culinary arts, dance, and leadership. Culinary arts students were acknowledged for winning 1<sup>st</sup> place in a recent competition out of 22 teams in the state. A leadership student was acknowledged for being the only known Craighead County student to ever be elected to an office at the State level.

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The first order of business was the approval of Quorum Court Minutes from August 24, 2023. A motion to accept the minutes as prepared was made by Justice Forrest and seconded by Justice Weinstock. With no questions or comments, Judge Day called for a vote, and it passed unanimously.

Justice Couch read minutes from the August 14, 2023, Road Committee meeting.

Justice Rogers read minutes from the August 14, 2023, Public Service Committee meeting.

Justice Longmire read minutes from the August 14, 2023, Finance Committee meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

A **Resolution to reappoint Eric Watson to the Brookland Fire Protection Board** was read. Justice Rogers made a motion to approve and was seconded by Justice Pasmore. Judge Day asked for any comments or questions. All were in favor and passed unanimously.

Motion to read by title only **Resolution to reappoint Cliff Baxter to the Brookland Fire Protection Board** was made by Justice Pasmore and seconded by Justice Barnes. A vote was taken, and the motion passed. Clerk read the Resolution by title only. Justice Pasmore made a motion to approve and was seconded by Justice Williams. Judge Day asked for any comments or questions. All were in favor and passed unanimously.

Next item up for business, an **Appropriation Ordinance for Assessor Professional Development Recognition** was read. Motion to approve made by Justice Weinstock and seconded by Justice Longmire. Judge Day asked if there were any questions or comments. Justice Couch asked why the funds were sent. Judge Day responded that previously the State paid employees directly for getting certified. For

whatever reason this time around, the State has changed and now gives that money to the county. Judge Day asked again for any other comments or questions from the Quorum Court or from the public. With roll call completed, the Ordinance passed unanimously.

Next, **Appropriation Ordinance to Add Fund to Road Budget for Pavement Preservation.** Motion to approve was made by Justice Couch and seconded by Justice Tennison. Judge Day asked if there were any comments or questions. Justice Rogers inquired where the money came from. Judge Day responded that our estimate was lower than the bids due to inflation of the price of cement and asphalt. The road fund has a reserve; therefore, the money must be appropriated before it is spent. Justice Barnes asked what makes line item 2024 different. Judge Day replied there are rules on how the money is spent that is reported back to the State and internally this is the line item used. With no other questions or comments, Judge Day asked for the roll to be called. The Ordinance passed unanimously.

**Resolution to Accept 12/31/2022 Craighead County Audit.** Motion to approve was made by Justice Tennison and seconded by Justice Rogers. Judge Day asked if there were any comments or questions. Judge Day commented that members look into the financial statement and not the cover letter (about page 6) that no issues came to the attention of management and nothing for Legislative Audit to report. Judge Day stated that in the exit interview, it was outstanding. Judge Day praised the Sheriff's Office for no findings for the first time. With no questions or comments, all were in favor, the resolution passed unanimously.

First (1<sup>st</sup>) reading of **Ordinance to Amend Ordinance 2022-17 and Ordinance 2014-3 for Policies and Procedures for Full-Time Sherriff's Deputies for Military Leave and for Other Matters.** Judge Day stated that this will move the Ordinance forward since it was in its first reading and comments could be made at subsequent reading. Justice Cook requested discussion on the matter. Justice Cook inquired about the number of hours being numerous and how we are benefiting our deputies. Justice Cook continuing if vacation time was being used. Sheriff Boyd replied, "No." Judge Day remarked that the hours in question are on top of all other leave and vacation the employee receives being in the military. Sheriff Boyd highlighted that he had no active military employed as deputy sheriffs at this time. Sheriff Boyd continued that the policy is, to his understanding, the standard practice and our county is adopting to this policy. Justice Allison questioned if the leave will be unpaid leave. Judge Day responded that the leave is paid. Judge Day asked for any other comments or questions. There were no further comments.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Judge Day spoke on the reason the Quorum Court meets yearly at the County Extension Office is our partnership with others funding the Extension service. He is impressed with the leadership skills of the youth demonstrated tonight and appreciates the supper provided tonight.

Judge Day remarked that budget season begins on September 1. All elected officials and department heads were notified last week.

Judge Day called attention to the Annex building project. Money has been transferred within the budget to the Capital Fund from the General Fund as detailed in past appropriation. Judge Day asked for any other announcements or public comment.

Justice Longmire requested recognition of contact made to some Quorum members by Judge Boling regarding county employees having problems with medical insurance. Justice Longmire recommends

that a five (5) question survey be provided to employees to assist in what the needs may be for next year. Judge Day stated that a meeting was held with St. Bernards this morning to address concerns. Issues with software, formulary changes, physician not completing forms, are just some areas causing problems. However, these concerns have all been resolved months ago and Judge Day is unsure why the concerns are being brought up at this time. Justice Cook stated that the issues brought forward recently were the same issues he addressed last year when the meeting took place in the basement and issues are still going on. Justice Cook asked if action could be taken to look into a different insurance company. Judge Day countered that he examines all options every year. Justice Longmire recalled that in the past a broker gave a presentation on options available. Justice Barnes commented that a point that stuck out in the meeting with Judge Boling, was the possibility of seeing employee's ailments or health issues that employees would want to share (being that the information would be invasive). Justice Barnes would like to look at these items during a presentation if possible. Judge Day responded that HR is here to get employees to the right person and that the people that are HIPPA certified can do those things. Justice Allison stated that process that the claim gets processed and adjudicated and then Lacey has to approve it. Judge Day remarked that she does not approve anything. Justice Allison replied that was what she read in an email; approve payment. Judge Day answered that they send us a bill of whatever happened in the last two-week period from the insurance company saying this is what we paid, and you need us to send a check for doctor's appointments, dental, surgeries, prescriptions, glasses, and eye doctor. Justice Allison countered that it sounds like to me in the beginning there was either a lack of communication or lack of education for the employees. Several comments were made in those emails they thought everything was going to remain the same, that they would get to see their same doctor, get their same pharmacy benefits, and it didn't appear to be the same. I think education is critical to know that when you change insurance carriers you are going to have a potential disruption in pharmacy because not every carrier has the same contract. If a lot of people are taking prescription meds, it is unnerving that you have to go through a process of prior approval or have to change your medication that works for you. I'm not sure of a good solution to that but education may be a part of it. Judge Day replied that possibly try to put out a one pager out to the employees. In particular, if you look at your insurance card, the name on your insurance cards says United Healthcare. But we are just using their network and we are not insured by United Health. There is such a turnover in doctors' offices that they have not been trained on self-insurance and it says call this number. And yet, they don't call. Justice Allison stated that in my personal experience I went to my ophthalmologist's office. I had to pull my information up and show them the details of what my coverage was. They told me that when they were trying to get an authorization that it was about a 30-minute wait. A lot of times that staff does not have that kind of time to wait. And it paid. But I also called ABA and said I'm not loaded in the system, so it doesn't even show I have coverage. It took another month or two to be uploaded to the platform. The nice part about it is there is no network. Judge Day stated there are a lot of benefits to what we have. It's cheaper for the employees. We have a lower deductible. How we started when we opened it up was that we wanted every bit of the benefits we had with Blue Cross and a lower deductible. Justice Cook asked so you are not worried about using them for your knee surgery. Are you using them. Judge Day said yes. Justice Couch stated I've learned that you need to call the number on the back of the card, and not the number on the front of the card. I just self-pay because we have to meet the deductible anyway. I hope we research it, because of the benefit for the employees. Who are we saving money for, the taxpayer. Judge Day replied it's both. It's cheaper on the taxpayer and cheaper on the employees. Justice Longmire said that's why I suggested sending out a survey to all county employees. Just a five or ten question survey.

Are you satisfied with the insurance we have. Would you rather have Blue Cross and Blue Shield versus United Healthcare. This would be something for your office to put out there. Just give some options. Would you be willing to pay more. Judge Day stated I'm going to remind you where we have been. That we were looking at 15%-20% increases. Justice Longmire continued what I am hearing is willing to pay more. Judge Day questioned and not get a raise. Justice Williams stated let me speak in your defense because some of this you've gave me an answer. I've had problems. I've heard of problems. You made a statement about turnover in some of the offices. I've been to offices that look at that card and say United Healthcare, we don't cover that. I don't like that name being on there because it gives me problems. I've had letters, some of them here, that I'm going to send you to a collection agency. The thing about is these are on bills that were paid. The medical people at St. Bernards said yes, this has been paid. There's a mess up somewhere. It's not ours. It's not in HR. It's something in that software. I have been refused at a chiropractor. If someone would have checked on it or if I would have known to say. But the other part is how do you keep that from happening. You can't keep that from happening. Changing everything wouldn't change all of it. Judge Day replied there's a lot of different issues. Justice Longmire stated employees shouldn't have to deal with that. Even if it's just a simple survey. Have you had any issues with our current insurance. Justice Cook asked can you send out that survey anonymously. A lot of them are not going to reply back with their name on it. Justice Forrest stated I don't have the insurance. I have Blue Cross Blue Shield. I've had Blue Cross Blue Shield for a long time and don't have any problems. But I have someone to call that takes care of the problem. Judge Day said that's really been our key. We have two people that handle it, Michelle Davis, and Aligrace. That's their job. From my understanding they're good. Justice Tennison stated they are good. I've had dealings with Aligrace. I had a bill from the hospital for my back surgery. I contacted Lacey. She had me contact Aligrace. Once I contacted her, I got with the people who sent me the bill. They had the wrong phone number and submitted it wrong. Once they got it submitted right, as far as I know it got paid. Justice Williams stated maybe if they did a presentation or whatever insurance we decide to go with. However, this rolls out, is to do a presentation that you have to go to the back of the card instead of the front of the card because everybody seems to be having the same problem. Justice Allison said you shouldn't have to explain that. It should be one number. They call it. It needs to be simple. Justice Longmire stated probably needs a corrected card. We are probably doing it the best way we should, but lack of communication. Justice Williams said I don't think any insurance you're going to deal with is ever 100% to 400 people it isn't going to take care of it. Justice Barnes said after having two kids in the last three years you can't even get an itemized billing statement from the provider from the hospital upon discharge. I can't even reconcile this knowing that I have letters in the mail for billing and not knowing what was actually billed to me. It's going to be tough to track regardless. Justice Allison replied upon discharge they don't have all the charges entered. Justice Barnes stated you still never get one even after. Judge Day asked for any other comments. Discussion regarding formulary changes was had.

Judge Day asked for any public comment. None offered.

Justice Allison inquired about **OLD BUSINESS** with the check on behalf of Paul Ojo's estate. I spoke to a couple of residents in Bay about what to do with the money. Where are we at in that process. Judge Day replied I have been making the rounds. I have spoken to his friends and several of his co-workers, talked to the school and talked to the city. We are still vetting that out. I'm leaning towards one that makes sense. That if he was still living that he would have liked, but still vetting that out. The only thing that has rung out true learning about Mr. Ojo is that he was proud to be in the United States. He was extremely

proud of his American education, and he didn't like government. Justice Allison stated some of the residents that I had or contacted me because I had presented that, that I knew had lived in Bay. They were interested in security cameras because of the crime. The mayor mentioned a Senior Citizen van would be helpful. Someone else had mentioned a park in Bay. I had even thought that sometimes we have matching funds for the fires department. That this would be a great opportunity to have available that we could match. Judge Day replied this guy was really big into education. He was a social worker. Maybe like setting up a scholarship for graduates of Bay to continue their education. All great things.

With no other announcements or comments from the public, Justice Forrest made a motion to adjourn, and Justice Rogers seconded. Judge Day called for a vote, and it passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:51 PM.