

**FILED**

APR 13 2021

LESLI PENNY

COUNTY & PROBATE COURT CLERK

# **QUORUM COURT MINUTES**

## **March 22, 2021**

March 22, 2021 Quorum Court Minutes

13 Justices of the Peace were present: Justices Longmire, Pasmore, Price and Weinstock were all present by Zoom. Also present were Sheriff Martyr Boyd, Lesli Penny, Wes Eddington and Terry McNatt. Candace Edwards was present by Zoom.

Judge Day called the meeting to order at 5:30PM.

Invocation by Perry Jackson, St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church.

Assembly and Pledge of Allegiance.

A presentation on Fidar Technologies was given by Judge Day. A packet was sent out and Judge Day proceeded with the highlights. Judge Day stated that there had been late fees and interest on the Circuit Clerks office's credit card all the way back to 2015. A lot of things were being paid late, then interest accrued. The county does not pay late fees or interest, that is taken care of on the front end. Judge Day stated that obviously people make mistakes and occasionally it must be fixed, but this has been going on since 2015. Judge Day spoke of an email that Candace Edwards sent to Kade Holliday asking him to pay \$3301.97 to Security Bank Card from Fund 3006. Email states "Craighead County has received reimbursement from Fidar for unpaid reimbursements and charges. This is per discussion with the Finance Committee and the full Craighead County Quorum Court." This email is dated 12/19/18. Also, attached in packet was an email from Candace Edwards to Jean Roos with Fidar. The email stated, "Please cut and send a check for \$4352.36 from Fidar for \$4352.36 made payable to Craighead County Circuit Clerk." This email was dated 11/01/2018. Judge Day refers to the last email dated March 11, 2021 from Adam Watkins with Fidar stating "I know you know this, but I just want to point it out again, the money that was disbursed was Craighead County money. It wasn't Fidar money...it's never that clear in the newspaper articles." Judge Day also said that in 2020 Candace Edwards did not accept the raise that the Quorum Court provided. Mrs. Edwards stated that she did not accept the raise to help pay back some of those fines and fees that she felt like she should have paid. Mrs. Edwards paid \$1,927.68, the balance of what was owed today, 3/22/2021.

Judge Day asks if there are any questions or comments. Justice Cook asks if there are any safeguards in place so that we won't incur any more credit card late fees. Judge Day stated that when he came into office, the County switched over to a PCard system in 2019. Judge Day said that has helped incredibly, and the County has been staying on top of it. Judge Day stated that there have been some issues, but the credit card company the County is with has been good to work with. Candace Edwards spoke of what she has put into place in her office so that this doesn't happen again. She has multiple people taking the credit card statements to make sure they get paid on time. She stated that there is a 3-step process to make sure that payments do not go past the due date again. First order of business was approval of Quorum Court minutes from March 8, 2021. A motion to accept was made by Justice Cline and seconded by Justice Weinstock. Judge Day took a vote and it passed unanimously.

Reports from Committees were read. Road, Public Service, and Finance Committee.

Old business:

Amended Ordinance Setting Forth Policies and Best Practices for Fire Districts and Annual Reporting to the Quorum Court – 3<sup>rd</sup> and final reading.

Motion was made to read by title by Justice Cline, seconded by Justice Rogers. Motion passed.

Title only was read. Motion to approve was made by Justice Tennison, seconded by Justice Percy. Judge Day asks if there are any questions or comments concerning said ordinance? Roll was called and passed unanimously.

New business:

A clean up Ordinance for budget year 2020 was read revising appropriated monies from the county budget monies and appropriating additional monies from unappropriated monies, for operating of the various offices, departments and agencies of the county, and for paying those obligations of the county which must be paid from the county budget monies. Judge Day asks if anyone has any questions concerning the Ordinance? Motion to approve by Justice Couch, seconded by Justice Williams. Roll was called and Ordinance passed.

A Resolution expressing the support of Craighead County Quorum Court to use available Hazard Mitigation Grant funds to build a saferoom and write the Hazard Mitigation Plan was read. Motion to accept by Justice Cline, seconded by Justice Rogers. Judge Day asks if there are any questions or comments? Justice Weinstock ask how many saferooms are currently in Craighead County? Judge Day stated he would get a list prepared and give out. A vote was taken and passed unanimously.

A Resolution of the Quorum Court of Craighead County, Arkansas, endorsing Camfil, USA to participate in the Tax Back program (as authorized by section 15-4-2706(d) of the Consolidated Incentive Act of 2003) was read. Motion to accept by Justice Williams, seconded by Justice Couch. A vote was taken and passed unanimously.

A Resolution recommending the appointment of Kurt Beeson to Southridge Fire Board was read. Motion to accept by Justice Cline, seconded by Justice Tennison. A vote was taken and passed unanimously.

An Ordinance to repeal Ordinance 2021-8 in its entirety that was approved by the Quorum Court which amended the 2021 Annual Operating Budget to add Fund 3553, Y20 Accountability Court Grant Veterans Fund. A motion to adopt by Justice Percy, seconded by Justice Cline. Judge Day asked if any questions or comments? Roll was called and Ordinance passed unanimously.

A Resolution recommending the reappointment of John Freeman to the Northeast Arkansas Industrial Development Commission was read. Motion to accept by Justice Rogers, seconded by Justice Noel. Judge Day asked if any questions or comments? A vote was taken and passed unanimously.

A Resolution recommending the reappointment of Jeff Oleson to the Bono Fire Protection District Board was read. Motion to accept by Justice Cline, seconded by Justice Williams. Judge Day asked if any questions or comments? A vote was taken and passed unanimously.

A Resolution recommending the appointment of Roy Guthrie to the Southridge Fire Protection District Board was read. Judge Day asked if any questions or comments? Motion to accept by Justice Couch, seconded by Justice Lewis. Roll was called and Resolution passed unanimously.

A resolution recommending the appointment of Amanda Escue to the Craighead County Public Library Board was read. Motion to accept by Justice Tennisson, seconded by Justice Noel. Judge Day asked if any questions or comments? A vote was taken and passed unanimously.

Justice Cook would like the people being appointed to come introduce themselves to the Quorum Court. He stated that some people that are newer may not know them or what they do. Judge Day stated that he has cut down on inviting people to the meetings because of Covid. Judge Day stated that Justice Cook has a valid point and he will try to arrange something.

Announcements:

Not any announcements.

Public comments:

Paty Lack announced that she is working with the Jonesboro Beautification Committee and they are trying to pick up trash in the community. They feel that it will get to a point that businesses will not want to come into our community. Guy Pardue and Beverly Parker are both on the committee and are going to establish some dates for the whole community to come together and clean up the different neighborhoods. The committee would like to encourage the JPs to encourage their district to put together something to clean up their area.

Candace Edwards asked to make a public comment. She wanted to address the court about what happened two weeks ago. She said she felt like it was miscommunication. Ms. Edwards stated that she understood that some thought that games were being played. She stated that was not the case. She stated that when an employee leaves her office, they are immediately removed from access due to the level of confidentiality that comes through her office. The minute they leave, their computer access is ended immediately. It does take some time to get back on. She stated she should have done better at explaining the situation. Ms. Edwards asked that the Court please reconsider the Ordinance approved. She said being down two employees has really been a burden on her office. She said that May 1<sup>st</sup> when the Arkansas Supreme Court may begin allowing jury trials, her office will be working full force. A jury trial is scheduled for every Monday in May. On one Monday there are two trials scheduled. She stated that not having those two employees will be a huge impact on how her office will be able to serve the court system and the people coming into the system.

Judge Day asked if there are any more comments? Justice Weinstock asked Ms. Edwards if she is in her office every day. Ms. Edwards stated that she is working every single day, but she cannot say that she is in the office every single day. She stated that she has many underlying medical conditions and with Covid, she chose to do a lot of her work from home. Justice Weinstock asked Ms. Edwards if she has access to everything she needs at home. Ms. Edwards stated that their software is web-based, and she has everything she needs.

Justice Williams asks Ms. Edwards if her office is all caught up at this time. Especially since they have not had any trials for the past two months. Ms. Edwards stated that they are caught up on current stuff. She also stated that the Circuit Judges have currently made a big changeover and they are currently going

through cases and they have some cases going back to '96. She stated that her employees have worked hard trying to get caught up. She stated that the back cases are not caught up.

Roger Kidd of Craighead County asked when the Clerk works at home, do the other employees work from home also, who has access for that software at home? Ms. Edwards stated that some employees in the past have worked from home. Justice Cook stated that he appreciates Ms. Edwards paying the money back, he also understands her desire for those two positions to be added back. Justice Cook did state that he feels at this time their office just needs to work more efficiently to get the work done. Judge Day asked if there were any more public comments?

A motion to adjourn was made by Justice Cook, seconded by Justice Williams. The motion passed.

The meeting ended at 6:21 p.m.

