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Stoddard County Commission Meeting - January 11, 2021

JANUARY 20TH 2021 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Bloomfield, MO - The Stoddard County Commission finalized the 2021 proposed budget at a special meeting on Thursday, December 31st. At the Monday, January 11, 2021 meeting they announced that a public hearing concerning the budget would be scheduled for 9 a.m. Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at the Stoddard County Government Building located in Bloomfield.

All but one elected official received pay increases for 2021.

The County Coroner's salary increased from \$20,800 to \$25,172 and the deputy coroner increased from \$8,000 to \$9,708.

The three County Commissioners' salary increased from \$113,647 to \$127,502.

The County Clerk's salary increased from \$54,289 to \$55,104

The County Collector/treasurer's salary increased from \$68,837 to \$72,847.

The County Recorder's salary increased from \$54,289 to \$55,104.

The EMA Director salary increased from \$25,000 to \$27,000. (Part-Time Position)

The Public Administrator increased from \$54,289 to \$59,164.

The County Assessor's salary increased from \$54,289 to \$56,457.

The County Sheriff's salary increased from \$60,736 to \$69,767.

The Prosecuting Attorney's salary (\$143,056) remained the same.

In other new business Carla Moore, Stoddard County Collector and Treasurer, questioned the Commission as to why the incoming collector had such a high bond. Josh Speakman will begin his position on April 1, 2021. Moore said her bonds cost \$5,904 at the beginning of her four year term and Speakman's bond cost the county \$36,044.00 a difference of \$30,140.00.

Presiding Commissioner Danny Talkington said only one company submitted a bid for the bonds because of the county's rating. The county received a fair rating following the most recent audit for 2017-18. The county was previously rated good. This reporter looked at all Commission Minutes from the election to the present and there is not a motion to acquire bids from bond companies.

The Commission was questioned by two businesses regarding CARES Act funding. Mary Ruth Boone, representing the French Market, in Dexter asked if the six businesses who received payroll were obligated to pay the money back. Talkington answer that they were obligated to pay the funding back; however the county has not received any payment yet.

According to Talkington, any money received will be used to fund businesses who submitted their paperwork by the November 30th deadline and who have not received any CARES Act funds. Talkington said if the county gets back all the estimated \$23,000 mistakenly paid for payroll, the amount would not be enough to fund the remaining seven businesses on the list. Several businesses were excluded from that list when the Commission voted on December 14, 2020 with new rules.

Ray and Heather Carrillo, who own Carrillo's Martial Arts in Dexter, also questioned the Commission on the CARES Act. They asked if there was additional money available at a later date would those businesses who applied this round would be first in line since they received nothing.

"If something comes up in the future, we want to make sure that we're on top of it better," Ray Carrillo said. "Again, we were really uneducated to the process and how we should go about it."

Talkington said others have asked about who would receive funds if any additional money becomes available. He said if a business didn't receive anything from this round of CARES Act, people have asked if they can be first on the list.

“As of right now, I have no indication that there will be any funding coming to us. And it would all be based on what the guidelines were that comes with that if it happened,” Talkington said. “But as of right now, I’ve heard nothing from anybody.”

Dee Loflin, ShowMe Times, asked if the Clerk's office could notify all media in Stoddard County as to when meetings would be held and email the agenda in a timely manner like the former Clerk did. It would be a great way to communicate to the public. Currently Cecil Weeks, Stoddard County Clerk, posts the Agenda on a bulletin board outside the Clerk's office on Friday afternoons. Once it is posted the building is locked for the weekend so the public doesn't have the 24 hours access as required.

Carol Jarrell said the emails including the agenda had been sent to the news organizations in the past and wanted to know why that could not continue. She made a motion for the clerk's office to begin emailing the Agenda to the news organizations in Stoddard County.

After some discussion Associate Commissioner Steve Jordan seconded the motion with the stipulation that every newspaper, online publication and radio station in the county receives the same email. That would include YHCTV, KDEX, the Bernie Banner, the New Puxico Press, the Dexter Statesman, and the ShowMe Times.

The Commissioners voted 3-0 to approve the motion and Danny Talkinging, Presiding Commissioner, stated he would talk to Cecil Weeks to have this happen.

LAST UPDATED ON JANUARY 20TH 2021 BY DEE LOFLIN

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