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# Stoddard County Commission Meeting - October 16, 2023

OCTOBER 17TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Stoddard County Commission Meeting - October 16, 2023

The Stoddard County Commissioners opened their weekly meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer for the community, Israel, and Mrs. Jarrell's husband, who is ill.

Commissioner Carol Jarrell will not be attending today as her husband is under the weather.

### **Katleyn Lambert, Bootheel Regional Planning Commission**

Water District #5 requested additional approved funds in the amount of \$5,563.23. Mrs. Lambert stated that all the paperwork was in order. They have \$50,724.87 left of their approved ARPA funding.

Motion to pay PSWD #5 \$5,563.23 for reimbursement on ARPA Funds for Project 1 made by Commissioner C.D. Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Mathis. Both voted yes and motion passed.

Updated spreadsheet available to the Commission.

According to the Bootheel Regional Planning Commission the Stoddard County Commission has available \$188,943.04 not allocated to anyone. This is due to some interest and other projects that were not approved.

### **Daniel Kingree, Project Manger/Water with Horner Shifrin**

"Just wanted to introduce myself as the Project Manager with Horner Shifrin," stated Kingree. "We would like to be able to help in any way we can to assist on projects."

They have had an office since 2012; however have never bid on any Stoddard County projects that anyone could remember. There are three engines and about 150 employees. They work with water, waste water, and road repair projected.

### **Issue with Speeding on Northview Drive in the County**

Northview Drive is located on the east side of Country Club entrance off Three Mile Road and they have had an issue with speeding in the area. for quite some time.

Mr. Mark McMillion is the spokesman for the group who attended today's meeting. He is a resident of Northview Drive. Also four other families were in attendance. "We have spoken to people up and down the street and are concerned about our children and pets.

We have about 15 or more homes on Northview St. In my opinion these folks are speeding in excess of 50 - 60 mph." The current speed limit is 25 mph.

One of the families on the street has spoken to this particular family that seems to be doing the majority of the speeding. We have spoken to Sheriff's office including Hunter Davis on May 10th and I spoke to a MO Highway Patrol Officer Arron Grainer on July 6th. We have a few videos of the speeders and a verbal discussion with the people," continued McMillion.

"We have asked about us putting in our own speed bumps with Liberty Township, but then we would be liable for any accidents. Liberty won't put them in because the snow plows and emergency vehicles have issues with the speed bumps.

Retired Marine Veteran and citizen that lives on the street stated, " Yes there is a danger to children and pets. My front yard is like a strip at Nascar. It is dumbfounding to see what is going on up there and in terms of quality of life it is not good. People are flipping us off and a particular family is racing down the street. You are on the edge of a drag strip and it's part of their daily entertainment and they don't care. I am trying to do something for our community. A change has to be made and this is an opportunity to fix."

There are signs, but they ignore them according to McMillion.

Andy Holden, Sheriff's Department stated, "As far as speed bumps go and emergency vehicles I don't think that is an issue and we will navigate those. Sounds like to me as a neighborhood has done what I would have done."

"We don't have radar guns and have never had them," continued Holden. " We can stop them and ticket them for C and I, but we can't write them a speeding ticket; however Highway Patrol can do that. We can put out a patrol car there, but the county is large and if they have to respond to another call then they do have to leave. It is with a very nice neighborhood and I will try to help you in any way I can."

The residents of the area presented a petition to address the speeding in their residential neighborhood outside of the city limit:

The residents of Glenwook Hills, specifically Northview Drive in Dexter are writing to express our deepest concerns regarding the ongoing issue of speeding in their residential area. Despite the clearly posted 25 mph speed limit signs, we have observed numerous instances of vehicles exceeding the speed limit, endangering the safety and well being of our community. We believe that immediate action is necessary to address this problem and ensure the safety of our neighborhood. We are particularly concerned about the safety of our children, pets, and elderly people who reside in our neighborhood. The presence of speeding vehicles poses a significant risk to their well-being. Our neighborhood is home to numerous families with young children who often play outside, ride bicycles or walk. Additionally, many residents have beloved pets that they walk or allow to roam within designated areas. The current speeding issues puts these vulnerable members of our community at an increased risk of accidents, injuries or even death. We strongly urge immediate action to ensure the safety of our children and pets by implementing the aforementioned measures to address speeding in our residential area.

We kindly request your support and assistance in implementing the following measures:

1. Increased police presence
2. Decreasing the speed limit
3. Traffic calming measures
4. Additional Signage

### **Cecil Weeks, Stoddard County Clerk**

"It is hard to find anyone to do county audits, last year we bid it out in November. I would like to put that out for bids to find an audit firm soon," commented Weeks. "Daniel Jones is currently performing our 2022 audit."

Motion to give Cecil Weeks, County Clerk, permission to bid out the financial single audit for the 2023 year made by Commissioner C.D. Stewart, seconded by Commissioner

Greg Mathis. Both voted yes and motion passed.

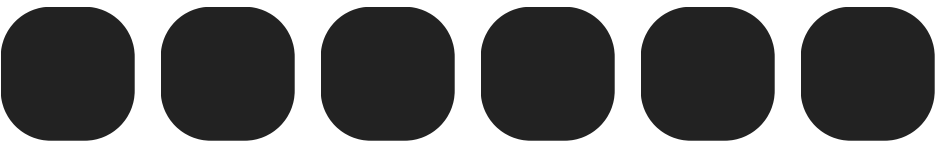
Motion to except the minutes from the open session on Tuesday, October 10, 2023 made by Commissioner C.D. Stewart

A request by Sawyer Smith it enter into Closed Session requiring personnel at 11:35 a.m. made by Commissioner C.D. Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Greg Mathis. Both voted yes and motion passed.

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# Route U in Stoddard County Reduced for Pavement Repairs

OCTOBER 16TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Route U in Stoddard County Reduced for Pavement Repairs

Route U in Stoddard County will be reduced as Missouri Department of Transportation crews perform pavement repairs.

This section of roadway is located from Route H to Route 25 near Bernie, Missouri.

Weather permitting, work will take place Tuesday, Oct. 17 and Wednesday, Oct. 18 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

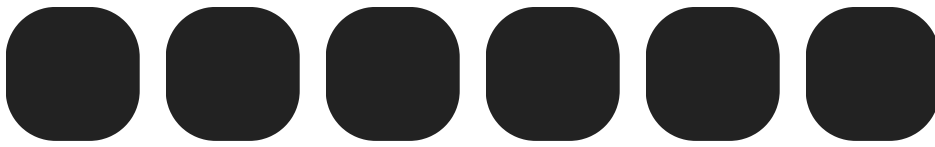
The work zone will be marked with signs. Motorists are urged to use extreme caution while traveling near the area.

For additional information, contact MoDOT's Customer Service Center toll-free at 1-888-ASK-MODOT

LAST UPDATED ON OCTOBER 16TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

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# Stoddard County Commission Has Light Agenda for Tuesday, October 10, 2023

OCTOBER 10TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

**Stoddard County Commission Has Light Agenda for Tuesday, October 10, 2023**

Presiding Commissioner Greg Mathis opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer.

The regularly scheduled Monday meeting was moved to Tuesday due to the Columbus Day holiday. The Agenda is light as well today.

Motion made to approve the September 2023 Adds/Abates from Josh Speakman, Collector made by Commissioner Jarrell. Seconded by Commissioner Stewart. All voted yes and motion passed.

Motion to pay \$198,780.00 to Castor Township for the asphalt overlay for county road 413 that was paid to Causey Companies made by Commissioner C.D. Stewart. Seconded

by Commissioner Jarrell. All three voted yes and the motion passed. Castor Township requested these funds

Motion to accept the regular meeting minutes from October 2, 2023 made by Commissioner C.D. Stewart. Seconded by Commissioner Jarrell. All voted yes and motion passed.

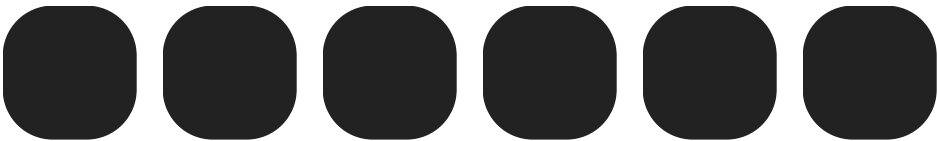
Motion to accept the closed meeting minutes from October 2, 2023 made by Commissioner C.d. Stewart. Seconded by Commissioner Jarrell. All voted yes and motion passed.

The Commissioners adjourned and entered into closed session around 10:30 a.m.

LAST UPDATED ON OCTOBER 10TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Farm to School Month Proclaimed by Governor

## Farm to School Month Proclaimed by Governor Parson

Governor Mike Parson proclaimed October to be Farm to School Month in Missouri. Farm to School Month celebrates school nutrition professionals, farmers and ranchers nationwide for their contributions to feeding Missouri students.

“Thousands of Missourian’s grow and raise delicious products that are served on school breakfast and lunch trays every day,” said Director of Agriculture Chris Chinn. “I appreciate the opportunity to recognize this connection from Missouri’s farmers and ranchers to the school table. It is important for students to understand that their food is grown and raised by people in their own community and other communities across Missouri.”

Schools can celebrate Farm to School Month by participating in the national Crunch Off to bring awareness of Missouri grown products. Gather students, co-workers, community members and local food enthusiasts to crunch into a Missouri apple or any other locally grown produce during the month of October. To register your Crunch Off event, click [here](#).

Missouri school districts and Early Childcare Education Centers (ECE) can purchase their produce from a local farmer and receive reimbursement up to \$1,000 with the Promoting Specialty Crops in Missouri Schools Grant Program. This project aims to increase the consumption and knowledge of specialty crops in children and adults in schools/ECEs.

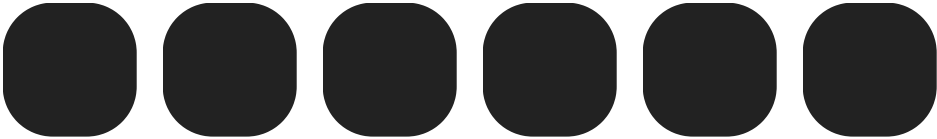
Each school/ECE is required to complete one educational activity about specialty crop production. It is highly encouraged that this activity include the farmer, and can be either in-person or virtual. The specialty crop can be for taste testing, educational activity or served in regular school meals.

If you grow apples or other produce and are interested in selling in bulk to schools and groups participating in the Crunch Off, contact Lexi Jose at [alexis.jose@mda.mo.gov](mailto:alexis.jose@mda.mo.gov).

For more information about the Missouri Department of Agriculture and its programs, visit the Department online at [Agriculture.Mo.Gov](https://Agriculture.Mo.Gov).



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# Stoddard County Commission Meeting - Monday, September 25, 2023

SEPTEMBER 26TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

Stoddard County Commission Meeting - Monday, September 25, 2023

The Stoddard County Commission entertained more than 15 people in attendance for the morning meeting. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer.

## Katelyn Lambert, Bootheel Regional Planning Commission w/ARPA Update

ARPA Request for Water District. \$15,168.02 for Water District #5

Motion to pay Water District #5 \$15,168.02 already approved thru the ARPA Funds made by Commissioner Carol Jarrell. Seconded by Commissioner C.D.Stewart. All three voted yes and the motion passed.

## SS/SB 190 Bill Informational Discussion

Concerned Superintendents and Asst. Superintendents in Stoddard County attended the Commission meeting today. Cindy Crabb, Puxico School District, Gavin Miller, Dexter School District, Jason Karnes, Bloomfield School District, Brad Botsch, Bernie School District, Carrie Tripp, Richland School District, Shannon Garner, Advance School District, and Matt Asher, Bell City School District were on hand to discuss the new Senate Bill 190.

"I have a statement to make on behalf of the County Commission in regards to Senate Bill 190 and the role of how the Stoddard County Commission will play into the this bill. SS/SB 190 modifies provisions relating to the taxation of seniors," commented Presiding Commissioner Greg Mathis. "It does exempt Social Security payments from Missouri Income Tax and Missouri is the 40th state to do so."

"It provides property tax relief to senior citizens if individual counties pass an authorizing ordinance or if a petition is submitted to the County Commission in support of such credit and is subsequently submitted to and approved by the voters," continued Mathis. "The legislation did not mandate that the tax credit 'shall be' forced upon each county, but allows each county to make their own determination as to whether the tax credit is implemented.

SB 190 was passed by the Legislature during the 2023 legislative session and recently signed Governor Parson signed the bill on July 6, 2023. The legislation modifies the law relating to the taxation of seniors. It has two main provisions, one related to property tax credits and one that deals with income taxes on retirement benefits.

"The law, as currently written, allows counties to provide a tax credit to seniors who are eligible for Social Security and who owns their home, use it as their primary residence and are required to make tax payments on that home," commented Mathis.

Under SB 190, qualifying seniors would be exempt from increase in the amount of property taxes they owe based on when they first became eligible for Social Security.

"We realize the financial burden increased property taxes can have on some senior citizens and we are not opposed to looking at options that could address this issue," stated Mathis. "However, it is important to also recognize that our school district relies on property taxes as a significant revenue source. Reductions in this important revenue source can lead to negative impacts on our students and teachers," continued Mathis.

"The amount of property tax credit shall be equal to the difference between the real property tax liability in the given year minus the real property tax liability on such homestead in the year in which the tax payer became eligible tax payer." Mathis said.

There are still many questions about the implementation of this legislation and the definition of some terms used in the new law, but here is what you need to know about its impact on each school district.

Mathis had several good questions regarding the new bill and asked Josh Speakman, Stoddard County Treasurer/Collector. Speakman was unable to answer some of the questions because the new law is not clear on many items.

According to the Missouri Tax Commission, the County Collector would be required to calculate the credit based on the tax liability for the homestead when a qualifying individual first became eligible for Social Security benefits, which might have occurred a few or many years in the past.

Generally, under provisions of the Hancock Amendment, taxing jurisdictions (like school districts) can adjust their tax rate to make up for lost revenue. However, SB 190 does not provide the option for school districts to adjust their tax rates to recoup (e.g., recover) lost revenue, which will lead to an overall reduction in the amount of property tax revenue a school district will receive.

"Property tax funding provides a tremendous amount of the total operating revenue for our districts," commented Presiding Commissioner Greg Mathis. "If there is a major decrease in tax collections with no option for recoupment, we could be forced to ask our voters to approve a tax rate increase. This places the burden of additional taxes on our non-Social Security eligible residents.

**Scott County will host a regional meeting for elected officials and anyone interested on October 11, 2023 in Sikeston at the Minor Convention Center. It starts at 9 a.m. and they do break for lunch and go until 3 p.m.**

### **SS/SB 190 Property Tax Credit**

This act authorizes a county to grant a property to eligible taxpayers residing in such county, provided such county has adopted an ordinance authorizing such credit, or a petition in support of such credit is delivered to the governing body of the county and is subsequently submitted to and approved by the voters, as described in the act.

Eligible taxpayers are defined as residents who 1) are eligible for Social Security retirement benefits; 2) are the owner of record of or have a legal or equitable interest in a homestead; and 3) are liable for the payment of real property taxes on such homestead.

The amount of the property tax credit shall be equal to the difference between the real property tax liability on the homestead in a given year minus the real property tax liability

on such homestead in the year in which the taxpayer became an eligible taxpayer.

A credit granted pursuant to this act shall be applied when calculating the eligible taxpayer's property tax liability for the tax year. The amount of the credit shall be noted on the statement of tax due sent to the eligible taxpayer by the county collector.

The amount of property tax credits authorized by a county pursuant to this act shall be considered tax revenue actually received by the county for the purposes of calculating property tax levies.

In the coming months, the Stoddard County Commission will be monitoring this issue to see if the state legislative re-visits the approved legislation that was subsequently signed into law in order to correct concerns that have been raised," stated Presiding Commission Greg Mathis. "Also to see if any lawsuits will be filed regarding the approved law."

### **Josh Speakman, Stoddard County Collector/Treasurer**

There are a lot of open ended issues/questions out there," stated Speakman. "The Missouri Associations of Counties has formed a task force to address concerns of their membership."

"Reasons I have reservations, it doesn't address new construction on a home is just one and the law doesn't define the residential vs the areas surrounding the home," continued Speakman. "There will be a major financial impact on the schools in Stoddard County."

"Just to implement this with the software change is going to cost the county \$25,000 plus a person to come in investigate all the parameters of the tax credit," continued Speakman. "We will need a uniform procedure for eligible recipient to provide the necessary documentation to verify eligibility and that will cost the County dollars."

"I don't want to see it go to the ballot yet due to the verbiage of the bill," Speakman said of the SB 190 Bill. "It needs to be hashed out in one more session of congress. It will be very challenging to implement this bill."

Aaron Mathis, representing the Dexter School Board asked if there was a way to determine how many homesteads in Stoddard County that are 62 years of age or above. Speakman said that it would be quite difficult to figure that out.

Mathis opened the floor to the superintendents, etc in attendance.

Anytime you can get a tax break that is great and we do respect our seniors, but we do have to take care of our schools and the budgets going down the road," Brad Botsch,

Superintendent of Bernie Public Schools. "I agree with what Mrs. Tripp said, that we are "pitting" our children against our seniors."

Gavin Miller, Asst. Superintendent of Dexter Public Schools, "As we move forward in education we are having to adjust to many budgetary cuts, funds are going away and we are required to hire more people. The Tyson closure is going to affect our schools as well, especially at Dexter. I would love to see seniors have tax breaks, I have in-laws that would qualify, but again I agree with others here we have to maintain our budgets,"

"At that point the Stoddard County Commission will move forward to hear from all affected parties and then make a decision as to whether we as a Commission draft an ordinance to be voted on by the people and approved or do nothing and allow the question to be placed on the ballot via a petition by concerned constituents. Implantation would not go into effect until the 2024 tax cycle," stated Mathis.

Motion to accept the minutes from September 18, 2023 made by Commissioner Stewart. Seconded by Commissioner Jarrell. All three voted yes and motion passed.

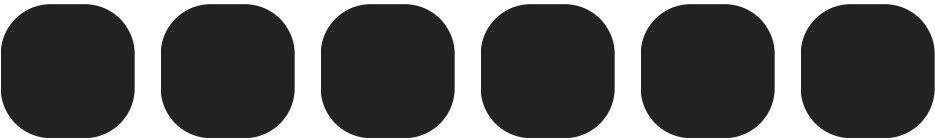
Motion to accept the closed session minutes from September 18, 2023 made by Commissioner Jarrell. Seconded by Commissioner Stewart. All three voted yes and motion passed.

Motion to move into closed session at 11:00 a.m. made by Commissioner Stewart. Seconded by Commissioner Jarrell. All three voted yes and motion passed.

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