

**LITTER TASK FORCE COMMITTEE MEETING
GARLAND COUNTY COURTHOUSE
COUNTY COURTROOM 200
FEBRUARY 6, 2023, AT 5:00 PM.
MINUTES**

Members: Chairman Anderson, Justice Dixon, Myers, Peters, McGrew, and Brown

Members absent: None

Also present: Citizens, Elected Officials, Staff, and Media

Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order, and Justice Dixon presented the invocation.

Chairman Anderson thanked Judge Mahoney for making him the Chair of this committee and then opened the meeting up to discuss options for roadside trash pickup.

Chairman Anderson asked Judge Mahoney to start the conversation. Judge Mahoney indicated that the County has a problem with roadside litter, and he felt like a large part of it is from discarding fast-food trash from vehicles. He spoke with the State of Arkansas about the problem, and they have a project they are pushing out to go to fast-food restaurants, encouraging their patrons not to litter. He also plans to add stickers to the house-to-house carts indicating to bag your trash and put the wheels away from the road. When the trash is not bagged, and the cart is not correctly placed on the road for pick up, trash blows out when the carts are dumped. Judge Mahoney would like the roadside mowers to add to their bid to pick up the ditches in the area they are working on. The mowing contract covers a large part of the county roads.

Judge said he would like to see more work done by the Detention Facility Litter Crew. It was mentioned community service might be utilized through the Judicial System. Justice Peters asked how many miles of road we were talking about. Judge Mahoney said 900 miles with 1800 miles of ditches. He said the feeder roads are the ones with the biggest problem. Justice Myers and Justice Anderson indicated partnering with the City of Hot Springs would be helpful.

Justice Dixon asked how often this needs to be picked up. Judge Mahoney named several roads that need to be revisited often. He indicated the neighborhoods will take care of themselves. Justice Peters asked if there was any money budgeted for the litter project. Judge Mahoney said that we still have money left from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) ACT Fund we could budget. There may be an option to contract with a service, and then we would need to revisit the service's funding each year.

Justice Peters asked why the detention facility no longer picks up trash regularly. Undersheriff, Lawrence explained that the detention facility is under the direction of the Sheriff and Chief Elrod. Still, he was willing to educate the committee on why using inmates is not always easy. The Detention houses pre-adjudication and post-adjudication inmates. Pre-adjudicated inmates have not been sentenced, and you cannot make them do community service; they can volunteer. Most of the time, post-adjudication are in the detention facility on a misdemeanor, serving only days in most cases. Inmates sentenced to the Arkansas Department of Corrections (ADC) are on a felony charge. Most are not held in Garland County long before moving to ADC and cannot be required to do community service either.

Another issue discussed is how we enforce citations. Undersheriff Lawrence stated you must prove that the person you are writing a citation to is the one who littered. The person must be in the Officer's presence to be enforced. The fine is from \$100 to \$1,000 or/and community service for a first offense. There was some discussion on how to enforce a fine. Justice Myers asked Attorney Howard if the County could issue an ordinance to write the citation to the vehicle instead of the person. Attorney Howard said

that the County ordinance could not preempt Arkansas Statute. Undersheriff indicated we could send out a reminder to staff to watch for violators.

Comptroller Ashmore asked if the City and County could partner with the schools to work on prevention. If you reach the kids, they will reach their parents. Judge Mahoney said we could contact Keep Arkansas Beautiful (KAB) for prevention, but first, we must clean our roads. Justice Peters said that Lake Hamilton has a second chance program, and they have to do community service, and Lakeside School District requires 100 hours of community service before you graduate. Justice Anderson said Hot Springs School District has a requirement too. Justice Peters said approaching some school districts would be a great outreach. Justice Anderson said the only issue would be the children would need to be supervised. He said we could do a project four times yearly and bring in some civic groups to supervise. Justice Myers said he would propose we have a Gorgeous Garland County Day, have the County provide the vest and bags, have every organization willing, in the County volunteer from 7 am till noon, and have a picnic to reward people at the Transportation Depot with a lot of public relations. Justice Dixon said her organization works with KAB but on a smaller scale. She said KAB provides the bags and tools needed.

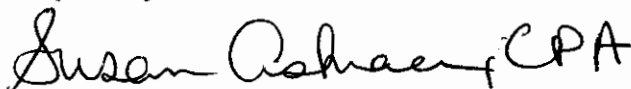
Judge Mahoney liked the idea of utilizing the county organizations that would like to volunteer. He asked Undersheriff Lawrence if the County could utilize 3-0-9 prisoners from ADC. Undersheriff Lawrence said that would be something to talk with the Sheriff about, but you do have to house, feed, and supervise them.

Judge Mahoney asked Gary Troutman, CEO and President of the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce and Hot Springs Metro Partnership, if we could get a list of the local organization, and Mr. Troutman said you might want to reach out to United Way. They have a Day of Caring you might join in with. Justice Peters said he would contact Lake Hamilton School District Superintendent and ask him to contact all the school districts. He suggested we make this a city and county project. Justice Peters asked if there was a piece of machinery that could help clean up the roads, and Judge Mahoney said yes, the landfill has a leaf vac, but it picks up everything and would all have to go the class 1, which would be a burden. Justice Peters suggested blasting it out to tourism. Justice McGrew asked about a timeline, and Judge Mahoney said he would like it done before we start mowing. It was mentioned that the County has a birthday in April that we might tie in with.

Justice Dixon asked if we could add something to the website, and Judge Mahoney said he would like to start a Facebook page later for Gorgeous Garland County. Justice Dixon will contact KAB for bags, gloves, vests, and supplies. Judge Mahoney will reach out to the mowing crew and see the cost of the trash cart stickers; Justice Peters will reach out to the School District Superintendents, and Justice Myers will reach out to the Board of Realty.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted



Susan Ashmore, CPA
Garland County Comptroller