

**FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING GARLAND COUNTY
COURTHOUSE COUNTY
COURTROOM 200
May 1, 2023, AT 5:30 PM.**

MINUTES

Members present: Chairman Braziel, Vice-Chairwoman Dixon, Justices McGrew, Anderson, Owen, Hunter, and Raney

Members absent: None

Also present: citizens, elected officials, staff, and media

Chairman Braziel opened the meeting with Justice Anderson presenting the invocation.

Chairman Braziel introduced a resolution authorizing the Prosecuting Attorney to apply for an FY 2022-2023 Victims of Crime Act grant totaling \$123,657.02, with the federal award being \$95,082.32 and the local match being \$28,574.70. A motion for do pass was made by Justice Owen and seconded by Justice Hunter. Chairman Braziel asked for questions or discussion. Justice Owen commended the Prosecutor and the County Judge for applying for these grants. With no other discussion, the motion passed without opposition.

Chairman Braziel introduced an ordinance to authorize a one-time premium payment to the Garland County Law Librarian from the Law Library Fund. Attorney Howard indicated a typo that needed to be corrected. Judge Mahoney indicated that the Law Library has its own funding. A motion for do pass was made by Justice Raney and seconded by Justice Dixon. Chairman Braziel asked for further discussion, and with none, the motion passed without opposition.

Chairman Braziel introduced an ordinance to amend the 2023 Garland County Budget Ordinance O-22-57; to anticipate revenue, un-appropriate funds, and appropriate funds in various budgets.

- a. The Sheriff has determined that the level of salaries of commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such is below the level of comparable law enforcement in the region and that this disparity hinders staffing retention and lessens employee morale and job satisfaction.
- b. The Sheriff has surveyed salaries of more than 15 comparable law enforcement agencies in Arkansas and has determined that the salaries as set forth in the attached Exhibit A would aid staffing retention, increase employee morale and job satisfaction, improve public safety, and can be achieved at the current revenue levels.
- c. The Sheriff requests to un-appropriate (\$302,950.02) in the Detention Fund, County Jail Budget, and unfund six correction officer positions.
- d. The Sheriff requests to appropriate \$302,950.02 in the Detention Facility Fund, County Jail Budget, to pay for salary increases of commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such, to help promote employee retention.
- e. The Sheriff requests to appropriate \$171,756.49 in the County General Fund, Sheriff's Budget, to pay for salary increases and benefits of commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such, to help promote employee retention. The County General Fund will receive \$6,777.22 from the City of Hot Springs as a reimbursement of the District Court Bailiff's increase.
- f. The Sheriff requests to appropriate \$6,700.62 in the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Fund,

- Sheriff's Budget, to pay for salary increases and benefits of commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such, to help promote employee retention.
- g. The Circuit Court Division I Judge requests to appropriate \$3,448.57 in the County General Fund, Circuit Court Division I Budget, to pay for a salary increase and benefits of commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such, to help promote employee retention.
 - h. The Circuit Court Division II Judge requests to appropriate \$12,094.76 in the County General Fund, Circuit Court Division II Budget, to pay for salary increases and benefits of commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such, to help promote employee retention.
 - i. The Circuit Court Division III Judge requests to appropriate \$3,448.57 in the County General Fund, Circuit Court Division III Budget, to pay for a salary increase and benefits of commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such, to help promote employee retention.
 - j. The Circuit Court Division IV Judge requests to appropriate \$3,572.31 in the County General Fund, Circuit Court Division IV Budget, to pay for a salary increase and benefits of commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such, to help promote employee retention.
 - k. The Prosecuting Attorney requests to appropriate \$1,440.55 in the County General Fund, Prosecuting Attorney's Budget, to pay for a salary increase and benefits of commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such, to help promote employee retention.
 - l. The Prosecuting Attorney requests to appropriate \$2,839.87 in the Drug Task Force Investigator Grant Fund, Prosecuting Attorney's Budget, to pay for a salary increase and benefits of commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such, to help promote employee retention.

Chairman Braziel asked if they wanted to approve as a whole or individually, and Judge Mahoney explained how all sections are related. A motion for do pass was made by Justice Dixon and seconded by Justice Anderson. There was some discussion on the need to be competitive with other agencies.

With no further discussion, the motion was passed without opposition.

Chairman Braziel introduced an ordinance to pay premium pay in June.

- a. The Quorum Court of Garland County recognizes the need to provide resilience to our local government by providing premium pay to eligible workers retroactively, as authorized by the Act and guidance from the Final Rule.
- b. The premium pay and matching benefits to be paid to all eligible employees with the exclusion of all elected officials, poll workers, election commissioners, equalization board members, county library employees, and law library employees, was appropriated in the original budget for 2023.
- c. The premium pay and benefits of \$383,213.60 appropriated for commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such will not be distributed. These deputy sheriffs that were under the pay rate threshold received a pay increase instead to support employee retention (see attached ranges).
- d. The Sheriff has determined that the level of salaries of commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such is below the level of comparable law enforcement in the region and that this disparity hinders staffing retention and lessens employee morale and job satisfaction.
- e. The Sheriff has surveyed salaries of more than 15 comparable law enforcement agencies in Arkansas and has determined that the salaries as set forth in the attached Exhibit A would aid staffing retention, increase employee morale and job satisfaction, improve public safety, and can be achieved at the current revenue levels.
- f. The premium payments will exclude all elected officials, poll workers, election commissioners, equalization board members, county library employees, law library employees, and commissioned deputy sheriffs employed as such.

- g. An eligible employee is defined as an essential worker who worked between October 9, 2022, and March 25, 2023, and is in active status on April 22, 2023.
- h. The eligible full-time employees will receive \$2.00 per hour for up to 500 hours worked between October 9, 2022, and March 25, 2023, and eligible part-time employees will receive \$2.00 per hour for up to 250 hours worked between October 9, 2022, and March 25, 2023.

Chairman Braziel asked for questions or discussion, and Judge Mahoney explained the need for premium pay. A motion was made by Justice Raney and seconded by Justice McGrew. With no further discussion, the motion passed without opposition.

Chairman Braziel introduced an ordinance to amend the 2023 Garland County Budget Ordinance O-22-57; to anticipate revenues, appropriate, and transfer funds in various budgets.

- a. The County Judge received an insurance reimbursement of \$10,260.45 and a refund from the Department of Finance and Administration for estimated sales and use taxes of \$30,718.00 in the County Treasurer's office. He would like to appropriate these funds in the Solid Waste Fund to the Solid Waste Budget for parts and repairs and tax refunds, respectively.
- b. The Prosecuting Attorney requests an appropriation of \$28,574.70 in the County General Fund to the Transfers-Out Budget to pay the county match for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Grant.
- c. The Circuit Court Division I Judge requests an appropriation of \$40,000.00 in the Circuit Court Division I Cost Fund to the Circuit Court Division I Budget for an audio upgrade in the Division I courtroom. This will also require a transfer from the Court Cost Fund to the Court Cost Budget to fund the sub-fund noted above.
- d. The Circuit Court Division II Juvenile Judge requests an appropriation of \$20,075.00 in the Circuit Court Juvenile Probation Fee Fund to the Circuit Court Division II Budget to pay for ankle monitors for juveniles in support of court services and programs as indicated by Arkansas Code Annotated § 16-13-326.
- e. The Circuit Court Division II Juvenile Judge requests an appropriation of \$27,095.11 in the County General Fund to the Circuit Court Division II Budget to pay for the salary and benefits of a new juvenile probation officer. The position control number will be PCN 1000.0402.1921, and the annual salary will be set at \$33,945.60.
- f. The County Judge requests an appropriation of \$18,704.54 in the County General Fund, Transfers-Out Budget to reimburse the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Fund for worker's compensation insurance premiums estimated for the 2023 premium pay. The ARP Fund can not pay for estimated costs, and the worker's compensation insurance premium generally receives a yearly reimbursement. Due to the uncertainty of the actual cost, ARP will not be funding these costs.
- g. The County Judge requests a transfer in the ARP Fund, County Judge's Budget of \$130,000.00 from the salaries full-time, with \$100,000 going to buildings and \$30,000.00 to engineering and architectural to pay for the completion of the Armory renovation.

A motion for a do pass for section (a) was made by Justice Owen and seconded by Justice Dixon. Chairman Braziel asked for discussion, and with none, the motion passed without opposition.

A motion for a do pass for section (b) was made by Justice Anderson and seconded by Justice McGrew.

Chairman Braziel asked for discussion, and with none, the motion passed without opposition. A motion for a do pass for section (c) was made by Justice Owen and seconded by Justice Anderson. Chairman Braziel asked for discussion, and Justice Owen spoke about the Division I courtroom; with nothing further, the motion passed without opposition.

A motion for a do pass for sections (d & e) was made and amended by Justice Raney and seconded by Justice Owen. Chairman Braziel asked for discussion, and with none, the motion passed without opposition.

A motion for a do pass for section (f) was made by Justice Dixon and seconded by Justice McGrew. Chairman Braziel asked for discussion, and with none, the motion passed without opposition.

A motion for a do pass for section (g) was made by Justice Owen and seconded by Justice Anderson. Chairman Braziel asked for questions or discussion, and Judge Mahoney explained that there were several change orders on the renovation. With nothing further, the motion passed without opposition.

Chairman Braziel introduced a transfer of \$455.30 from the buildings line item to the advertising and publications line item in the Safe Room Grant Fund, Grant-In-Aid- Public Safety Budget, to pay for bid notices. A motion for do pass was made by Justice Anderson and seconded by Justice Dixon. Chairman Braziel asked for questions or discussion, and Judge Mahoney explained the increase in the bid and the need to return to FEMA and ask to increase the grant. There was some discussion. With nothing further, the motion passed without opposition.

Transfer From	Transfer To	Amount
3570.0503.4002	3570.0503.3040	\$455.30

Other Business

Chairman Braizel introduced Cole McCaskill with Hot Springs Metro Partnership (HSMP) and he presented the monthly report. There was some discussion, and a motion for a do pass was made by Justice Anderson and seconded by Justice Dixon. With nothing further, the motion passed without opposition.

Chairman Braziel asked the committee to review the position and salary change report and the overtime report. Then the sales tax collection report, rebates, and Oaklawn revenue report were reviewed. As well as the American Rescue Plan update report. Judge Mahoney indicated that Treasurer Stockdale had made some good investments, and the interest rates were locked in at a good rate. There was discussion on a list of roads that Judge Mahoney provided the committee and where these projects are now. Justice Owen asked Judge Mahoney the status of the completion of the Martin Luther King extension. Judge Mahoney explained that the engineer had made an error that caused the bridges to need additional work.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Susan Ashmore, CPA
Garland County Comptroller