

**Garland County**  
**Public Health, Welfare, and Safety**  
**Minutes**  
**May 24, 2021**

Public Health, Welfare, and Safety Members Present: Chairman Larry Raney, Vice Chairman Jimmy Young, Justices Esther Dixon, Matt McKee, and Thomas Anderson  
Members Absent: Justice Jason Braziel and Jim Sorrells

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

Chairman Raney called the meeting to order, and Vice-Chairman Young presented the opening prayer.

Chairman Raney opened the meeting and introduced a county resident, Ellette Vinyard. Ms. Vinyard founded a non-profit organization for animals called Companion Connection. She explained that one-third of companion animals get lost in their lifetime, and 80% of lost animals are never found. She said that the best way to recover a lost pet is to make sure the owner's information is attached to the pet's collar and to have the pet microchipped. Ms. Vinyard noted that registering the microchip is a necessity for it to be effective. Registry fees are nominal and could help owners quickly reunite with their pets. Ms. Vinyard stated that her organization uses a national pet recovery database that offers free microchips to 501C-3 non-profits called HomeAgain.com. Chairman Raney then asked a local veterinarian, Dr. Bob Zepecki, if he would like to speak. Dr. Zepecki commended the Spay & Neuter Program and suggested attaching a microchip packet to the Spay & Neuter vouchers when handed out at the Sheriff's Office. He noted that more owners would microchip their pets if the cost were minimal. Garland County Judge Darryl Mahoney and Chairman Raney stated that, if implemented, they would like to make microchipping a pet a requirement of the Spay & Neuter Program.

Chairman Raney asked Judge Mahoney to discuss short-term rentals in Garland County. Judge Mahoney stated that many short-term rentals in the county are causing public health and safety issues and generating problems for some residents. Judge Mahoney noted that most homes in the rural areas of the county share a grinder pump for their sanitary waste. He stated that a rented home occupied by several people could cause roadways to become blocked with vehicles, excessive garbage, and septic systems to become overloaded. Justice McKee stated that the City of Hot Springs maintains the grinder pumps and noted that they have the authority to shut off any pump overloading the system. The city could also require the resident to install a larger grinder pump, if necessary. Judge Mahoney stated that the cost of a larger grinder pump would be split between the residents that share it and costly for the non-rental resident. Justice McKee then addressed the garbage problems by suggesting monitoring and issuing an additional trashcan to any residence that constantly has excessive garbage. Justice Brown stated that noise is also an issue with short-term rentals. He stated that enforcement of the county noise ordinance is a slow process, and the courts may not enforce the regulations. Judge Mahoney stated that an option to help alleviate the continual problems would be to have short-term rental owners register with the county, which would help law enforcement and other entities contact the homeowner should any problems occur while renting the home. Justice McKee noted that solutions needed to be found for the short-term rental concerns instead of adding regulations to the residents. Judge Mahoney stated that the county does not

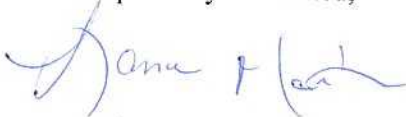
have a way to track the short-term rental owners and noted that the county does not know if a house is a weekend home or a short-term rental.

Justice McKee stated that there are agencies that respond to emergencies in Garland County. He noted that the Sheriff's Office should respond to a loud noise complaint, and the City of Hot Springs should respond to any sanitation or sewage concerns. Justice McKee said that the county would need to monitor the garbage problems. Justice Young then introduced Betsy Smith, a county resident, to talk about the short-term problems she is experiencing. Ms. Smith explained that she has lived next to a short-term rental for several years and has had parking and garbage problems on her street. Ms. Smith is also concerned about the liability to her as a homeowner for children who may be injured while using her dock without her knowledge. Justice Anderson suggested that Ms. Smith form a neighborhood watch system to help with the problems she is facing. Justice Dixon stated that the Sheriff's Office is holding a Neighborhood Watch meeting on June 15th at 6:00 pm.

Justice McKee suggested inviting the Sheriff, a representative from Environmental Services, and the City Sanitation Department to the next Public Health, Welfare, and Safety meeting to further discuss the short-term rental issues and find solutions to the short-term rental concerns.

Justice McKee made a motion to remove to adjourn, seconded by Justice Young.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lanie Martin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and "M".

Lanie Martin  
Garland County Finance Director