

**Garland County**  
**Special Meeting of the**  
**Public Health, Welfare, and Safety**  
**Minutes**  
**November 15, 2021**  
**5:30 P.M.**

Public Health, Welfare, and Safety Members Present: Chairman Larry Raney, Vice Chairman Jimmy Young, Justices Esther Dixon, Matt McKee, and Thomas Anderson  
Members Absent: None

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

Chairman Raney called the meeting to order, and Justice Dixon presented the opening prayer.

Chairman Raney asked Judge Darryl Mahoney to open the discussion about the proposed special election on the question of levying a county-wide five-eighths of one percent (0.625%) sales and use tax and the ordinance providing for the levy five-eighths of one percent (0.625%) sales and use tax for a period of five years. Judge Mahoney stated that in 2016, the public voted to fund the extension of the Martin Luther King Expressway. He noted that 30 million dollars of the bond funds went to the expressway, and 24 million dollars was divided per capita among the incorporated areas in Garland County for road and bridge projects. He said the bond is projected to pay off in May of 2023 but will be paid off in early 2022.

Mahoney stated that the repair and maintenance of county roads are ongoing. He said that the proposed tax funds would be used to repair or replace the existing roads and bridges in the county. Mahoney stated that all prior road and bridge projects were paid for out of the five-eighths funding allocated to the county from the first bond issue, and once those funds are used, the county will need to find another source to fund the ongoing projects.

Mahoney then discussed the proposed engineer position in the 2022 Road Budget. If approved by the Quorum Court, the engineer could take core sampling and inspect the county roads and bridges to see what repairs were needed. The engineer would also minimize the time necessary for the design and environmental assessment of county road and bridge projects. Mahoney noted that safety is a concern and that road and bridge improvements are needed as the county grows and develops. Justice Anderson asked if the tax would be ongoing. Mahoney stated that the proposed ordinance would be for five years, and the situation would need to be assessed again at the end of that period. Justice McKee asked about any plans that the judge has for the proposed funds. Mahoney said that he has a list of roads and bridges that need to be repaired or replaced if the funding is approved. He said one example is Millcreek Road. The road needs significant repairs and would be heavily traveled once the bypass is opened. Mahoney also said that the county has one-lane bridges that need to be expanded to two lanes and stated that the county has older bridges that have rail cars in place that need to be replaced. Justice McKee asked about the four intersections that are a concern on the expressway. Mahoney stated the State of Arkansas would address those intersections, using half-cent tax that became an amendment in 2020. He also noted that the


county's money set aside for the intersections will become available in July 2022 and will go back into roads and bridges. Mahoney discussed the aging bridge report, the expenses involved in replacing a bridge, and the safety issues for school busses and residents. He also explained that new bridges have a larger footprint, which sometimes requires buying right-of-way parcels to build them. Mahoney discussed the current collections from the road tax and how it is divided up per capita. Mahoney said that if approved, the road tax would not affect how the county asks for state aid money or grants.

Justice Anderson made a motion to approve the ordinance for a special election, seconded by Justice Braziel. Mahoney discussed the process and cost of repairing patches on the road. He also discussed the issues with utility companies when lines are moved and the problems with permits when cutting into the roadways. Chairman Raney asked for other questions or discussions. With none, the motion passed without opposition.

Chairman Raney introduced the consideration of an ordinance providing for the levy of a five-eighths of one percent (0.625%) sales and use tax for a period of five years. Justice Anderson made a motion to approve the ordinance, seconded by Justice Dixon. Chairman Raney asked for other questions or discussions. With none, the motion passed without opposition.

Justice McKee made a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lanie Martin", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lanie Martin  
Garland County Finance Director