

Gasconade County Commission

January 20, 2022

MINUTES

The Gasconade County Commission met with Presiding Commissioner Larry Miskel at the Courthouse beginning with Pledge of Allegiance. Attendance: Commissioner Jerry Lairmore, Absent; Commissioner Jim Holland, Present; Presiding Commissioner Larry Miskel, Present.

PRIOR MINUTES

Presiding Commissioner Larry Miskel made a motion to approve prior commission minutes dated 1/13/2022 8:30 AM. Commissioner Jim Holland seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Jerry Lairmore (Absent), Jim Holland (Yes), Larry Miskel (Yes).

ROAD CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Commission received for file 2 consent forms, Gregory Michel and Tony Kottwitz, both on Rehmert road.

Commission reported one of the road dept. trucks with snow plow and cinder spreader caught fire Sat. morning; driver was actually on Hwy. Y between Lake and Holzschuh roads when there were flames from front of the truck and his guess is possibly a hydraulic hose busted spraying on manifold. Both Hwy. Patrol and Owensville Fire Dept. were on scene and truck is totaled but possibly the blade and cinder spreader can be saved; it has all been moved to the shed at Drake for insurance co. decision after a patrol report is issued. Clerk Lietzow ask about if there needed to be any adjustments to the budget now and they said the road dept. indicated they would be able to handle it within as is.

Commission decided to publicly advertise for the supervisor position in the road dept.; they have 1 or 2 in-house employees interested and will now wait to see if there are any other applicants. Deadline for applying is Feb. 16, 2022.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Commissioner Holland did not approve the minutes as they were read earlier when Clerk Lietzow said he had agreed to the elected officials getting the 4% cost of living raise as had been voted by the salary commission in Nov. While Clerk Lietzow and others thought he did, he said he agreed to look into it further and see where we were at. Clerk Lietzow said the bottom line of general revenue did not change more than a few dollars when the raises were calculated, so her office was working on the budget as if all decisions were made, except for the detail by dept.; she reminded him it is advertised to be available for public inspection starting 3 days ago and it is still in it's infant stages. Presiding Commissioner Miskel said those final decisions will be made today.

Collector Shawn Schlottach was in the meeting for another matter but when she heard the prior week's minutes read, she ask why the Courthouse employees' only received 4% raises when the Sheriff's deputies and road dept. received 5% raises when it obviously cost the same for all to live. Presiding Commissioner Miskel said those positions require a technical expertise and certifications necessary to perform their duties and both depts. have been way underpaid for a long time and we are losing a lot of employees and finding no new hires to take their place; he said also the minimum pay for Courthouse employees and Sheriff's deputies is \$14.00 per hour so anyone making less will be brought up to that and he was happy to say everyone got a raise. Collector Schlottach thought it odd that the Courthouse employees' would be punished by receiving less of a raise just because of their dedication to their jobs.

Circuit Clerk and Recorder of Deeds Pam Greunke was also in the meeting and she wanted to talk about the Commission raising the starting pay to \$14.00; while she agrees with that, she has an employee serving as Deputy Recorder of Deeds who has been here almost 7 years and is only making \$14.05. When ask for her recommendation, she said \$14.50 per hour and Commission agreed to consider that during today's meeting. She also wanted to point out that while she has heard some who work for the county think that we only have secretaries working here, when in reality the deputy clerks do the same work of the elected official; in her office handling as much as \$20000 monthly in recording fees plus does all the marriage license work. Presiding Commissioner Miskel ask if Commission wouldn't have proposed \$14.00 starting pay, would she have been happy with current raise of 4% plus the 5 cents an hour for another year of service and she would have been satisfied just because it was a raise like everyone else was getting. Commission agreed to look at that today too, as they expected there to be some exceptions; he also told both officials that all budgets were approved in their entirety for office expenses as they were all in line, with only Commission decisions on raises being the difference.

Collector Schlottach had brought in 3 more payments received for current taxes, all postmarked by December 31, but not actually received until the last few days. Commission agreed to accept without penalties same as last week for: Gene and Ronda Weiss, 12430 Glengate Dr., Maryland Hghts, MO, Havin Materials Service Inc., 527 E. Independence Rd., Union, MO, Michael and

Susan Loewenstein, 2508 Winter Leaf Court, Wildwood, MO.

Commission received a response from the individual who's private website appears in conjunction with the county's website, and indicated he had no problem if the county wanted to edit the information to our own satisfaction because he obviously doesn't have any control over what google pulls from websites or uses as their own links. Commission agreed to try the edit option.

Clerk Lietzow said she had been contacted by Purple Wave online auction checking to be sure the vehicle we sold had been picked up and she said Sheriff Scott Eiler said it had not; when the buyer came to get it, while he knew it didn't start, did not bring proper equipment to winch it onto a trailer and said they would be back and have not heard anything since. Purple Wave reached out to the buyer, who called both Clerk Lietzow and Sheriff's Dept. to let them know they were trying to find a company to take care of it for them because they were not equipped, but definitely still wanted it and would make every effort to get it this week.

Clerk Lietzow told the Commission she had been contacted by Nikki Holdmeier, Juvenile Officer, about the parent and GAL contracts that had been signed by the Commissioners' in Franklin, Osage and Gasconade counties and now that the Judicial Finance Commission and Supreme Court ruled on pending litigation, the Commissioners have been removed as signing officers on these contracts and signing agreement now should be with the courts. The other counties have already agreed so she said Gasconade County would also, but only after talking first with Associate Judge Ada Brehe-Krueger, who serves as the Juvenile court judge, and she agreed that would be best, too.

Clerk Lietzow said she had completed the ARPA revenue loss calculation for 2021 versus the base year of 2019; she reminded Commission that from 2019 to 2020 there was over \$59000 that Treasurer Mike Feagan had been able to transfer to general revenue fund for any use. It doesn't look as if there will be any loss, but she turned it over to Treasurer Feagan for one number missing yet, so when he finished it, there is \$2165, which is better than nothing.

Before Commission went back to work on the final budget issues to be settled, Collector Schlottach ask if she could see the wording for the law enforcement sales tax as she understands they have agreed to put it on the April ballot; Sheriff Eiler who was in the meeting also, gave her a copy. Her biggest concern is if this passes, does general revenue benefit in any way at all; if Commission continues to give Sheriff's budget the same amount as they do now, plus he will have the sales tax, how is that fair to the rest of the offices funded by general revenue. Presiding Commissioner Miskel said it will be a year by year decision as to how much the Sheriff's budget still receives from general revenue because according to legal counsel, there can be no long term guarantee of any amount. He personally does not foresee Sheriff's budget continuing to receive the same amount as now, so there should be relief to GR but it will be on a year by year basis. She also ask the question of why the cities are receiving a share of the tax when they can and do pass their own taxes all the time; Presiding Commissioner Miskel said it is Commission and Sheriff's opinion that this tax, if passed, will support all law enforcement agencies in Gasconade County.

Presiding Commissioner Miskel then ask Clerk Lietzow what else she needed for budget decisions; she ask if they were prepared to give details on the raises for the road dept. and they were. The lump sum of 5% will be distributed evenly between the 11 employees, not to include the new hires from Dec. and Jan. as they are set to get their 6 month raise in 2022, or the office manager as she will fall under the 4% number same as Courthouse employees. Regarding the Deputy Recorder as pointed out earlier this morning, they agreed that if the budget could cover it as it is now, then they had no problem with it and Clek Lietzow is sure it will cover it. Presiding Commissioner Miskel also mentioned being contacted by Assessor Paul Schulte about the special request he had made regarding pay of his Deputy Assessor which was more than the 4% raise given by Commission; Presiding Commissioner Miskel said since that was not a general revenue fund budget, and Assessor had his own funding, he could do that.

The last issue to decide is the elected officials cost of living increase and Presiding Commissioner Miskel said he is in support of it particularly for those who have made this job their livelihood and bear the responsibility of the elected position over employees who are being paid more money; Commissioner Holland cannot support it as he feels the recent assessed valuation increase given and the new statutory option given is enough. Clerk Lietzow clarified that the assessed value increase is not a voted raise, it is an automatic feature of the salary commission statute and the statutory increase also was simply that, to which Commissioner Holland said it is still a raise. Being at an impasse, Presiding Commissioner Miskel, text Commissioner Lairmore to see if he was available to talk; he has been suffering from some serious COVID issues but seemed to be improving at last text. He was available, and over the telephone was able to vote and offer his opinion being same as Presiding Commissioner Miskel's so he made that motion and Presiding Commissioner Miskel seconded and the vote was as follows: MISKEL YES LAIRMORE YES HOLLAND NO

ADJOURN

Presiding Commissioner Larry Miskel made a motion to adjourn commission until 1/27/2022.

Commissioner Jim Holland seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

SIGNATURES
