

Gasconade County Commission

January 12, 2023

MINUTES

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

PRIOR MINUTES

Commissioner Jerry Lairmore made a motion to approve prior commission minutes dated 1/5/2023 8:30 AM. Commissioner Jim Holland seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Jerry Lairmore (Yes), Jim Holland (Yes), Tim Schulte (Yes).

PRIOR MINUTES

Commissioner Jerry Lairmore made a motion to approve prior commission minutes dated 1/9/2023 8:30 AM. Commissioner Jim Holland seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Jerry Lairmore (Yes), Jim Holland (Yes), Tim Schulte (Yes).

PRIOR MINUTES

Commissioner Jerry Lairmore made a motion to approve prior commission minutes dated 1/10/2023 8:30 AM. Commissioner Jim Holland seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Jerry Lairmore (Yes), Jim Holland (Yes), Tim Schulte (Yes).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Jerry Lairmore made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters authorized by RSMo 610.021 and in compliance with RSMo 610.022. Commissioner Jim Holland seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Jerry Lairmore (Yes), Jim Holland (Yes), Tim Schulte (Yes).

RECONVENE

Commissioner Jim Holland made a motion to close Executive Session and reconvene as the Gasconade County Commission. Commissioner Jerry Lairmore seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Jerry Lairmore (Yes), Jim Holland (Yes), Tim Schulte (Yes).
No motions were made or votes taken on any matter.

ROAD CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Neither Commissioners' Lairmore or Holland had any road issues reported that haven't been taken care of; the bid specs for both grader purchase and creek gravel had been prepared by the road dept. and approved by Commission for bid. Clerk Lietzow was ask to first take care of the grader bid due to price increase coming in late February and she will do her best after the budget work is all done.

Clerk Lietzow reminded the Commission they had to sign the 2 letters that Kelly Sink at MRPC is waiting for as it relates to their financial commitment to the Rock Island Line grant application due Jan. 25; they also have 2 letters of support, but it was advised to have at least 8. Owensville City Admin. Randy Blaske was in Commission meeting and said he learned that when the City applied for the grant they received for the Rock Island Line, so each Commissioner will try for more. He also mentioned that with their grant, they had to make a 25 year commitment for maintenance, but that isn't something that Commissioner Lairmore thought was in the county's application; just to be sure, Presiding Commissioner Schulte will ask this evening when he is at MRPC, for a copy of the application. Another issue Clerk Lietzow needs to be sure of is how the grant funds will come in versus be spent and how a pending donation from an individual may affect the budget process; that will have to be clarified as budget work continues today.

Collector Shawn Schlottach ask Commissioner Lairmore if he was aware that the proposed Dollar General location in the Bland area has totally been dropped as an option since the preferred location could not be secured due to MoDOT constraints; he thought they were still considering, but just at a different location.

Sam Voss, Commissioner of the Special #4 Road District, came in to Commission session asking them to appoint him to his position for the next term; he admitted failing to file in a timely manner with Clerk Lietzow's office for the April election and after she researched MO statutes RSMo 233.040, found that Commission could appoint him to another term. Commission ask if he agreed to serve and he did, so Clerk Lietzow issued him the Oath of Office which was signed by Commissioner Voss, all 3 County Commissioners' and Clerk Lietzow.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Treasurer Mike Feagan presented his monthly sales tax report showing a better month for law enforcement sales tax, but still not the same amount as the regular sales tax. He also mentioned to Presiding Commissioner Schulte that he will need to sign new signature cards at

the bank for the checking accounts, after Commission signs a letter officially removing Larry Miskel and adding him as Presiding; Clerk Lietzow has already received a new VISA card in his name and used it for reserving their rooms at the upcoming Commissioners' conference in March. Treasurer Feagan also ask Commission for their approval to deposit a refund check that dates back to some work done at the Courthouse with CARES funds that did not cost as much as expected, into the Courthouse Restoration Fund, as that is where those funds would be spent anyway and they agreed. He also gave them a copy of the 2nd round of ARPA applications pending with MRPC.

Presiding Commissioner Schulte ask everyone present for their thoughts on the Commission putting the 3% sales tax for marijuana sales on the April 4, 2023 ballot as allowed by the passage of the new law in Missouri; the question is "Shall Gasconade County, Missouri impose a countywide sales tax of three percent (3%) on all tangible personal property retail sales of adult use marijuana sold in Gasconade County, Missouri?" When he attended a training session held by Missouri Ass'n. of Counties in December, the template for the language of the order calling for the election and the ballot language was given to all counties for consideration and many are doing so; Admin Blaske said the City of Owensville is also doing so on the same ballot. The general opinion around the room of elected officials and employees present was positive, particularly since the ballot issue had failed considerably within the county in November 2022. The Commission will take a final vote next Thursday and if approved, give to Clerk Lietzow for the April ballot.

Commission ask Gunnar Krull, Hermann Advertiser-Courier to speak about the new COVID restrictions that were in the newspaper this week; he said Dr. Michael Rothermich received information from the CDC that said levels have increased with confirmed cases thus requiring him to implement the recommendation to wear masks when inside again due to the new variants being prevalent in the county.

Jenny Schneider, Circuit Clerk and Recorder ask for an update from Commission about when their office floor would be tore out and Commissioner Holland said it will be the first 2 weeks in February; she wondered if they could also look at the door inside their vault in the basement that separates the 2 storage rooms since it will not close, and should, and Commission agreed. Collector Schlottach mentioned that she actually has a mini-vault within her vault for secure storage and digitizes all records that she is able to.

As happens nearly every year, Collector Shawn Schlottach brought the Commission 3 tax payments that were all postmarked December 2022 but not received until after her monthly closeout was complete; she could clearly show proof that they were valid and they agreed to accept without January penalties assessed: Nelle L. Zuroweste, 2884 Ocean Wave Road, Rosebud in the amount of \$26.96, The Warm Wood Co. LLC, %Craig Newman, P.O. Box 275, Bland, in the amount of \$563.92 and Anna and Kyle Cook, 702 Ingleside Drive, Columbia, MO in the amount of \$544.01.

MOTION/VOTE - ACCEPT 3 TAX PAYMENTS AS DETAILED WITHOUT PENALTIES

Commissioner Jim Holland made a motion to accept 3 tax payments as detailed without penalties. Commissioner Jerry Lairmore seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Jerry Lairmore (Yes), Jim Holland (Yes), Tim Schulte (Yes).

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Some employees and officials stayed for budget discussion, particularly raises for Courthouse employees. Donna Struttman, Assessor's office, wanted to know if this years' raises would be same as road dept's., not like last year when they received 5% and here at the Courthouse was 4%. While no one be-grudges Sheriff's road deputies getting more money because they are underpaid, Mrs. Struttman wanted to make the point that employees here are as dedicated, many long-serving and she doesn't feel there should be that difference. Collector Shawn Schlottach was present and couldn't agree more with what was said because the same applies to her deputy. Another point made was that when new hires come in now at higher starting pay, then get raises, they very soon are making as much as employees here for 20 years, which is happening in Clerk Lietzow's office.

The only disagreement Commissioner Lairmore has with all the points made, is that road dept. employees are responsible for operating \$200000 pieces of equipment plus have to work nights and weekends and holidays as the weather requires. He went on to say that it is his intent to give all employees across all dept's. better raises this year, a decision they plan to make today. He also pointed out the strong benefit package which is \$12000-\$14000 per employee and everyone agreed with him on that point. Presiding Commissioner Schulte said he has learned in a very short time here that current salaries across all dept's. are out of date for both employees and elected officials; he also has been studying the employee manual and that too, he hopes can be updated from 2014. He totally agrees that it is a slap in the face to any 20 year employee to see new hires, after just a few short years, be making the same money.

Assessor Paul Schulte pointed out in his budget that the big expense of \$80000 for new

compatible GIS and the fly-over was done in 2022 so that line item will not be as high this year. He did mention that with Lisa Diebal's planned retirement in December 2024, he would like to hire a replacement to learn the job in advance.

Collector Schlottach wanted to make sure Commission was aware of pending legislation to remove personal property from MO tax books, with no mention of replacement revenue; she is seeing where there are more tax sale parcels bought every year by government groups operating under corporate headers.

With that, Clerk Lietzow started going over a long list of decisions that need to be made today; Treasurer Feagan was called back in to offer his insight on ARPA funds and the new Opioid and LATCF. Commission did agree with Clerk Lietzow's recommendation to let Prosecuting Attorney Mary Weston have the entire \$43500 for the opioid programs she will be developing. The LATCF is \$50000 from US Dept. of Treasury, for very generalized county government use and an additional \$50000 coming in this year; Treasurer Feagan will be responsible for meeting the reporting requirements which are not as yet detailed.

Sheriff Scott Eiler came back in to review the new numbers he arrived at with Commission request to come closer to the \$700000 General Revenue contribution to his budget; he eventually reached \$720000 to their satisfaction which will be most all of the payroll and benefits. The new Law Enforcement Sales Tax fund will have all the dept's. expenses for everything including a small portion of the payroll and benefits that GR couldn't cover, all expenses for Sheriff, Jail and Swiss location. He said he will be starting a new lease this year for 3 new vehicles, since there were 3 new hires in the budget originally; Commission ask if the vehicles have cameras and he said no, but they do have GPS, and the officers have body cameras which will be getting an upgrade to a computerized version. Clerk Lietzow will have to study the cash flow carefully since this fund is just starting, before declaring the budget workable. Sheriff Eiler also made sure to budget for pending grants that may be approved at some point this year, so that there won't have to be budget amendments made during the year. He also added back in the DSSSF supplement to the deputies at Commission request.

Another issue discussed with Sheriff Eiler was funding in the budget somewhere for someone to work security at the front door; he said with the additional court days added to the docket, his dept. will have someone here 65-70% of the time. Commission ask him to consider on the other 30-35% of the time, to have command staff working in the office upstairs, rather than at the Swiss location, and Sheriff Eiler will consider. Also, it was brought to Sheriff Eiler's attention by Commission that currently not everyone conducting business is being walked through security or wanded, and they agree with all the offices here, that it should be. He said his officers feel to be fair, then all employees should be too, which can be done.

The final decision was to give Courthouse employees 5% raises with a nickel for another years service and again raise starting pay this year to \$15 per hour and anyone currently below that, be raised to \$16 per hour. Clerk Lietzow's office will spend the next few days re-calculating all numbers to ensure their accuracy and setting up the new funds required through the accounting and payroll system.

Last thing Presiding Commissioner Schulte forgot to mention earlier this morning was he attended the Hermann Chamber of Commerce meeting and learned that Montgomery County has a developer with a 5000-acre mega-site at New Florence, with no word on what it will become.

REPORT OF FEES

Commission received monthly report of gross collections from Shawn Schlottach, Collector for the month of December in the amount of \$11,005,566.59 for real and personal and \$2,166,604.66 for railroad and utility, for a grand total of \$13,172,171.25.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Jerry Lairmore made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters authorized by RSMo 610.021 and in compliance with RSMo 610.022. Commissioner Jim Holland seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Jerry Lairmore (Yes), Jim Holland (Yes), Tim Schulte (Yes).

RECONVENE

Commissioner Jim Holland made a motion to close Executive Session and reconvene as the Gasconade County Commission. Commissioner Jerry Lairmore seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Jerry Lairmore (Yes), Jim Holland (Yes), Tim Schulte (Yes).

A motion was made to turn the personnel matter from this morning over to legal counsel Ivan Schraeder.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Jerry Lairmore made a motion to adjourn commission until 1/19/2023. Commissioner Jim Holland seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

SIGNATURES
