

**Hamilton County Commissioner's Court**

**Regular Session**

**Tuesday, June 22, 2021**

**9:00 a.m.**

**Hamilton County Commissioner's Court met in regular session on Tuesday, June 22, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. with the following members present: County Judge Mark Tynes, Commissioners Johnny Wagner, Lloyd Huggins, Keith Curry and Dickie Clary. Tynes called the meeting to order and a quorum was established. Tynes led the invocation and Tynes followed with the pledges.**

**Jeanie Harrison applied to address the Court with her concerns over the recent relocations of the AgriLife Extension offices.**

**There were no budget adjustments to discuss.**

**The Court considered the following consent agenda:**

- A. Minutes from previous Commissioner's Court meetings**
- B. Approve Departmental reports**
- C. Approve bills submitted for payment in the amount of \$70,414.28, payroll in the amount of \$67,338.86; Tynes questioned two Verizon wireless bills on behalf of the Sheriff's Department, and the reason that the bills had more than doubled in price; until verification is obtained, those two bills will not be approved.**
- D. Certificates of continuing education – none**
- E. Application(s) for culvert - none**
- F. Building and Use Requests – American Legion Post 222 applied to use Courthouse grounds for annual haybale painting contest, September 15- November 10, 2021**

**Huggins moved to approve consent agenda and Clary seconded; motion carried unanimously.**

- G. Bonds –new bonds for Lisa Keeping, Jason Hume, renewal bonds for Tuwana Quigg, Rodney Finch and Ray Miller; ratify bonds for Daniel Stanfield (no longer employed), Kari Drueckhammer, Holly Bailey, Rachel Lamb, Joy Stevens, Valerie Massingill, Emma Byers and Jennifer Wuemling**

**Tynes made a motion to approve the bond items and Huggins seconded. The Court approved the bond items unanimously.**

*Two deputations from the Sheriff's Department were discussed: Lisa Keeping and Jason Hume. Clary moved to approve the deputations; Curry seconded and the motion carried unanimously.*

*Regarding Hamilton Count Facilities, the process of obtaining an automatic door for the east side of the Courthouse is moving forward. BellTex has given an estimate of \$4,948.00 to remove black algae from the Courthouse, and \$8,000.00 to remove black algae from the Annex. Clary expressed concern over the roof on the Courthouse and whether it needed replacing. No decision was reached.*

*Huggins drafted a Resolution regarding the American Rescue Plan Act. The Resolution outlines the logic used by the Court to interpret the act to enable the County to use the funds for an emergency communications/management plan. Huggins moved to accept the Resolution, Curry seconded and the Court approved the motion unanimously.*

*Huggins reported on progress from the Task Force on the upcoming emergency communications plan. He had received a letter from Motorola outlining its proposal; Chief Young is also working with Harris Communications on a proposal. Huggins will meet this evening with Hamilton County area fire chiefs to share progress and obtain their input on the plan. Huggins also explained the current coverage maps provided by Motorola for all types of phone/radio communication. The Sheriff noted that actual coverage is worse than shown on the maps, especially for hand-held radios. The Sheriff then gave his thoughts on that Department's needs from a communications plan.*

*The County Treasurer reported receipt of \$853,000.00 from the American Rescue Plan Act 2021. This money will be placed in a special dedicated account.*

*No action was taken on the CTIF Grant.*

*The Court then conducted its Budget Workshop and proposed the following calendar: July 6<sup>th</sup> – special budget meeting; July 13<sup>th</sup> – scheduled budget meeting; July 20<sup>th</sup> – special budget meeting; July 23<sup>rd</sup> – proposed budget filed with County Clerk; August 13<sup>th</sup> – notify newspapers of proposed budget hearing; August 18<sup>th</sup> – notice of budget hearing published; August 27<sup>th</sup> – public budget hearing; September 14<sup>th</sup> – adopt budget.*

*The following budget items were noted and discussed: total revenues down from projection; JP-1 fees down; delinquent taxes down; reimbursements down; County Clerk fees up; motor vehicle taxes up; interest payments down. The Court agreed that it makes financial sense to accept the health insurance increase rather than to change plans. Longevity pay is working and the Court agreed that the program remain the*

*same. The Appraisal District revenues are slightly down; that office will be moving soon because of mold in the current office. Costs for computer hardware will increase by 5%. District Court indigent defense costs will also rise.*

*The Court then addressed the proposed budget items brought by the Sheriff for that department. The Sheriff wants to employ another deputy to be trained and certified in mental health cases. He also asked for an immediate pay increase for all Sheriff Department employees, as well as guaranteed step-raises, arguing that a pay increase will not only keep current employees but also attract more and better applicants. The Department is losing deputies to the Hamilton Police Department, which has a higher rate of pay. The Sheriff also wants to hire a third Investigator. Huggins pointed out that the use of a County-owned vehicle for those deputies taking the vehicle home (out-of-county) is a significant benefit and adds to the whole compensation package. The Court asked for a clarification of the number of vehicles currently owned by the Department (19) and plans for those vehicles. The Sheriff stated that the Department is planning to sell five vehicles. The plan is to phase out all Crown Victorias and Explorers and to move toward full-size SUVs in the future. Tynes also noted that inmate medical expense is up.*

*The Court then moved into Closed Session.*

*The Court adjourned at 12:40 p.m.*

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*County Judge*

*Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
County Clerk*