

DESHA COUNTY QUORUM COURT

December 18, 2025

The Desha County Quorum Court met in regular session on December 18, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. in the Desha County Courthouse. OPENING PRAYER Offered by JP District 2, G. Lynn Weatherford PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE recited by all in attendance.

Called by Desha County Clerk, Valerie Donaldson

JP District Justice of the Peace Present Absent

1	Troy Jackson Jr.	X
2	G. Lynn Weatherford	X
3	Patricia Watkins	X
4	Ricky Helton	X
5	Hollis Mankin	X
6	Kenneth Holt Jr.	X
7	Rita Kolb	x
8	Dollie Wilson	x
9	Vacant	

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the November meeting were approved as mailed upon a motion by JP 2, G. Lynn Weatherford, seconded by JP 8, Dollie Wilson. Motion carried unanimously.

II. TREASURER'S REPORT

A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made by JP 5, Hollis Mankin, seconded by JP 2, G. Lynn Weatherford. Motion carried unanimously.

III. SHERIFF'S REPORT

The Sheriff presented his report to the Court. Report received by consensus.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Syrene Church Memorial Garden Cemetery

JP 3, Patricia Watkins, inquired whether a decision had been made regarding the Syrene Church Memorial Garden Cemetery. County Judge Smith reported that he had been in contact with the adjacent landowner, who is also attempting to reach the out-of-state property owners. Judge Smith stated that once all landowners are contacted, a committee will be formed to address the matter and provide a recommendation.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Regional Library Contract

County Judge Smith addressed the Court regarding the contract with the Regional Library located in Monticello, Arkansas. He explained that a county-wide tax millage funds the Regional Library, with additional funding supporting local libraries in Dumas and McGehee. The original contract was enacted in 1994 and requires counties to provide library buildings, insurance, maintenance, and utilities.

Judge Smith noted that utilities for the two local libraries cost the County approximately \$20,000 in 2025, with projected costs of \$28,000–\$30,000 in 2026. The 2024 millage generated \$272,000, and Desha County contributed \$250,000 in 2025. For 2026, the Regional Library has requested \$310,000, an increase of \$60,000. Judge Smith expressed concern that Drew County, which is approximately 59½% larger than Desha County, received a \$7,000 reduction, while Desha County's contribution increased significantly. He further noted that county hospitals receive only \$52,000 each from their millage. Judge Smith stated his desire for funds sent to the Regional Library to offset utility costs for the Dumas and McGehee libraries.

The County Attorney advised that a one-year notice is required to renegotiate or terminate the contract, and a letter has been sent accordingly. Judge Smith extended invitations to representatives from the libraries and neighboring county judges to attend meetings on this issue.

A motion was made by JP 2, G. Lynn Weatherford to negotiate a new contract with the Regional Library that is more equitable for Desha County. The motion was seconded by JP 3, Patricia Watkins.

Motion was approved by all members present.

Delta Memorial Hospital Asbestos Abatement Project

Judge Smith reported that the asbestos abatement project at the former Delta Memorial Hospital in Dumas will exceed original cost estimates. An inspection conducted in 2013 was used for initial projections; however, a 2023 inspection revealed additional asbestos. The contractor requested an additional \$82,500. After reviewing the updated study, Judge Smith negotiated the cost down to \$49,800, resulting in savings of \$32,700 for the County. A motion to continue with the project, to be completed by the end of 2025, was made by JP 5, Hollis Mankin and seconded by JP 6, Kenneth Holt Jr. Motion carried unanimously.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by JP 5, Hollis Mankin, seconded by JP 6, Kenneth Holt Jr. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.

Approved: Wayne Smith Date: 1-16-24

Desha County Judge

Attest: Valerie Donaldson Date: 1-15-24

Desha County Clerk

FILED

Valerie Donaldson, Desha County Clerk

Valerie Donaldson

1-21-24

1-21-24

RECORD
Valerie Donaldson, Desha County Clerk
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Valerie Donaldson
By: Valerie Donaldson Deputy