1. DESHA COUNTY QUORUM COURT October 19 ,2023

Desha County Quorum Court met October 19, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. at the Desha County Courthouse. OPENING PRAYER: JP2, G. Lynn Weatherford.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: All

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| JP 1  2 | MEMBER  Troy Jackson Jr  G. Lynn Weather | PRESENT  x x | ABSENT |
| 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 | Norris Sims | x |  |

* 1. MINUTES

The September minutes were approved as mailed with a motion to accept by JP 2, G. Lynn Weatherford and seconded by JP 8, Dollie Wilson. All were in favor, Motion passed.

II. TREASURER' S REPORT

A motion to accept the Treasurer's report was made by JP 2, G. Lynn Weatherford, and seconded by JP 6, Ken Holt. All were in favor, Motion passed.

Sheriff, Mitch Grant gave his report for the month of September.

Ill. OLD BUSINESS

None

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2023-16. A Resolution allocating funds from the American Rescue Plan Act 2021 for approved countywide projects. The resolution was read. A motion to approve the resolution was made by. JP 7, Rita Kolb and seconded by JP 6, Ken Holt. All approved.

Resolution 2023-17. A Resolution approving the Desha County Sheriff to apply for an equipment grant through the Arkansas Department of Public Safety.The resolution was read. A motion to accept was made by JP 8, Ms. Dollie Wilson and seconded by JP 1,Mr. Troy Jackson. All approved.

Resolution 2023-18. A Resolution approving the Desha County Sheriff to apply for an equipment

S.T.E.P. overtime grant through the Arkansas Department of Public Safety Highway Safety Office. The resolution was read. A motion to accept the resolution was made by JP 2, G. Lynn Weatherford and seconded by JP 5,Hollis Mankin. All approved.

Ordinance 2023-16. An Appropriation Ordinance to amend the Sheriff's contribution fund.

The Ordinance was read in its entirety.A motion was made by JP 2, G. Lynn Weatherford to

suspend the rules and read by title only for a second and third reading. It was seconded by JP 4, Rick Helton.The roll was called, and all were in favor. The Ordinance was read by title only. The roll was called. All were in favor. The Ordinance was read by title only again. A motion to accept the Ordinance was made by JP 2, G. Lynn Weatherford and seconded by JP 5,Hollis Mankin, the roll was called, and all were in favor.

Ordinance 2023-16 Passed. 9 For and 0 Against.

Ordinance 2023-17. An Appropriation Ordinance establishing the 2024 budget.

The Ordinance was read in its entirety by County Clerk,Valerie Donaldson. A motion to suspend the rules and read for a second and third reading was made by JP 2,G. Lynn Weatherford and seconded by JP 4, Rick Helton. The roll was called, and all were in favor. The Ordinance was read by title only. The roll was called, and all were in favor. The ordinance was read by title only for a final reading.

A motion to accept the Ordinance was made by JP 2, G. Lynn Weatherford and it was seconded by JP, 8 Dollie Wilson.The roll was called, and all were in favor. Ordinance 2023-17 Passed. 9 For and 0 Against.

Discussion of Paper Ballots verses the use of Voting Machines. JP S, Hollis Mankin asked the County Clerk, Valerie Donaldson how much would it cost to go back to all paper ballots.

The County Clerk replied it was impossible to know because the County has over seven thousand registered voters. Also, more candidates with opposition would create more different styles of ballots. Each voter has a precinct they live in and a precinct part. These precincts and parts are defined by the area of land that they live in. Many candidates represent a particular district within the county. This could create up to one hundred seventy different ballot styles. Examples are a Dumas voter cannot vote on a McGehee alderman. That same McGehee voter that can vote on that alderman may have a JP running that they can vote for, but their neighbor across the street may have a different JP but same alderman. It's compared to a gigantic puzzle that overlaps School Districts, City Wards, State Representative Districts, JP Districts, Judicial Districts, Congressional Districts, County Wide Districts, and others. It's a tedious process to make sure every voter can vote on their proper ballot. It takes several days to make sure every voter is paired up with their correct ballot style. This can cause up to hundreds of different ballots. This also means that the county must order more than enough ballots to accommodate all the voters.

Mr.Mankin stated that he didn't trust the bar code on the ballot that voters place into the machines because he believed it could change votes. The County Clerk explained that there was no way that was happening in Desha County or Arkansas. The Clerk gave an example. When a voter

goes to the polling site to vote. They state their name, DOB, and show their ID. Once the poll worker verifies that the DOB, Address, and Name are correct they place a blank ballot into the electronic pollbook. The electronic pollbook prints a barcode at the top of that blank ballot that it gets from the secretary of state voter registration.

That ballot is then placed into the voting machine, and the bar code pulls up the correct ballot for the voter. Once the voter makes their selection, that same ballot is ejected by the machine to the voter. The voter can see their selections on the paper. If all their selections are correct, the voter proceeds to the second machine which is the tabulator. Those two voting machines are NOT connected to the internet. On election night all votes are tabulated by a computer that is NOT connected to the internet . All polling sites are required to post two zero tapes when the poll opens and two result tapes when the poll closes on the door. They are also required two send a zero and results tapes back to the courthouse. Those tapes are compared to the results that were tabulated from the tabulation computer that is NOT connected to the internet. They must match. At that point the results are taken to the Secretary of State Computer and uploaded to the Sec of State website which anyone can view in real time. Those results are published by counties on the Sec of State's website. They must match the results tape and the results tabulation report.

Election Coordinator, Don Wesson stated that he felt the same way as Mr. Mankin at one time. He said since he has been the election coordinator and understands the process, he no longer feels that way. He stated the voting machines are very secure and are not connected to the internet.

He stated that Arkansas elections are mainly run by republicans on the state level,and they agree that Arkansas voting machines are not changing votes and are very safe. The majority of democrats and republicans agree that Arkansas voting machines are safe.and secure.

Election Commissioner, Carsell Mathis spoke that the voting process is the same as it has always been, and the process has always worked. He further stated that he found it ridiculous that the process is being challenged. He added that Desha County has the best voting practices in place when people are allowed to do their jobs properly.

JP 8, Dollie Wilson stated that she represented Desha County within the State of Arkansas, and she agrees with the State that our voting machines are safe and reliable.

JP 3, Paticia Watkins stated that she also had faith in our election process. She said it was her understanding that the County as well as the State had a lot of cybersecurity measures in place when it came to elections.

A motion to adjourn was made by JP 5, Hollis Mankin and it was seconded by JP 2, G. Lynn Weatherford. All were in favor. Metting adjourned.

Dated this 16th ,day of November 2023 .

Approved:

Desha County Judge,

Richard Tindall

Attest:

Desha County Clerk,

Valerie Donaldson

**ORDINANCE 2023-17**

# BE IT ORDAINED BY THE QUORUM COURT OF DESHA COUNTY, STATE OF ARKANSAS, AN ORDINANCE TO BE ENTITLED: "AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE MILLAG E RATES OF THE COUNTY".

**ARTICLE 1.** The following reflects the millage rates made in accordance with AC.A 14-14- 904. The following millage shall be collected in the year 2024.

1. **COUNTY LEVY**

GENERAL COUNTY GOVERNMENT ROAD TAX

HOSPITAL MAINTENANCE TAX LIBRARY TAX

5.0 MILLS

2.0 MILLS

.4 MILLS

1.0 MILLS

1. **PUBLIC EDUCATION LEVY**

MCGEHEE SCHOOL DISTRICT DUMAS SCHOOL DISTRICT MARVELL SCHOOL DISTRICT DERMOTT SCHOOL DISTRICT

40.46 MILLS 42 .00 MILLS

33.00 MILLS

41.81 MILLS

1. **MUNICIPAL GENERAL LEVY**

ARKANSAS CITY DUMAS MITCHELL VILLE MCGEHEE

REED TILLAR WATSON

4.0 MILLS

5.0 MILLS

4.1 MILLS

4.0 MILLS

5.0 MILLS

1.6 MILLS

5.0 MILLS

**ARTICLE 2.** It is deemed necessary for the smooth operation of Desha County Government that this ordinance be approved.

DATE: 11-16-2023 APPROVED:

Desha County Judge,

Richard Tindall

ATTEST:

Desha County Clerk,

Richard Tindall