

**COMMISSION MEETING  
MARCH 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2021**

Chairman Ben Fox called the regular meeting of the Greenwood County Commissioners to order at 9:00 a.m. Other members present were Roy Ballard, Paul Hodge, Chuck Spradlin, Robert Joe Morgan, Deputy County Clerk Deann McCafferee and County Counselor Paul Dean.

Commissioners led everyone present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Spradlin moved to accept March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Minutes, as written. Commissioner Hodge seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Hodge moved to approve payables in the amount of \$141,984.25. Commissioner Ballard seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Ballard moved to approve payroll in the amount of \$121,545.55. Commissioner Hodge seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Road and Bridge Supervisor Darrel Chrisman reported that the Road and Bridge Department had been removing timber from low water crossings. He informed the commission that State Street was now open. A brief discussion ensued regarding equipment specs and prices of equipment. Darrel stated there is an auction tomorrow and he has intentions to check the prices of snow plow trucks. He asked permission to spend up to \$30,000 for the purchase of said vehicle. Commissioner Fox moved to approve utilizing up to \$30,000 toward the purchase of a snow plow truck for the county. Commissioner Spradlin seconded. The motion carried 5-0. Chrisman reported he is looking into the purchase of a new pressure washer. Darrel is going to look into a gas or propane pressure washer rather than the diesel pressure washer Road and Bridge is currently using. Darrel discussed utilizing wire rope and steel posts for guard rails.

Commissioner Hodge moved to approve a ten minute executive session with Noxious Weed Director Levi Vinson for employee status at 9:24 a.m. Morgan seconded. The motion carried 5-0. Once the session concluded, an additional five minute executive session was requested for the same subject. At the conclusion of that session, an additional five minute executive session was requested for the same subject. Commissioners reconvened at 9:44 a.m. The decision was made to appoint Jarrid Baumgartel as the Greenwood County Noxious Weed Director, effective Monday, March 29, 2021, at a salary of \$38,000. Commissioner Spradlin stated that in 90 days they will have a review to discuss the salary further. Commissioner Spradlin moved to appoint Baumgartel. Morgan seconded. The motion carried 5-0. Levi Vinson stated that he will still be an employee of the Noxious Weed Department.

Commissioner Spradlin informed fellow commissioners that there is a bill that has been passed by the state house and the state senate, which is likely to be signed this week, stating that county Health Departments can no longer make requirements for masks, they can only make recommendations. Commissioner Spradlin asked County Counselor Paul Dean if he had seen such a bill, Dean stated he had not but he would look into the matter. Spradlin continued, "The way it shakes out, is that citizens then can, if they don't agree with what we put down as a mandate, they can bring suit." Spradlin stated that the bill could be vetoed but popular opinion is that it will pass. He would like the County to drop the mask mandate. Commissioner Fox asked Paul Dean his opinion on the matter. Dean stated he would like to table the discussion until next Monday, to allow time for him to look into the bill. Commissioner Spradlin responded that he did not agree with holding off on the decision. Commissioners had a brief discussion regarding the matter. Levi Vinson informed commissioners of the highlights of the bill, stating that the bill extends the disaster declaration; strikes a balance between government response and individual liberties and freedoms; allows for a hearing within 72 hours if anyone files a civil action in district court if they are aggrieved by a governor's executive order, school board policy or a directive from a county health official; the court must make a decision in 7 days; among other highlights. Vinson told commissioners that Governor Kelly has indicated that she would not veto the bill. Vinson stated that the Health Department had vaccinated at least 22% of the population of Greenwood County but that number of vaccinated individuals in the county is much higher as people have gone out of county to receive vaccines. Commissioner Ballard asked how the testing station is doing, Vinson responded that they may have 3 to 5 people tested a week. The recommendation was made to close the testing site and possibly move it to the Health Department. Commissioner Fox moved to terminate the rent for the current testing site at the end of the month of March and move the testing machine to the Health Department. Commissioner Ballard seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Fox asked Greenwood County Hospital CEO Sandy Dickerson her opinion on the mask mandate discussion. She stated that the hospital is under obligation to make people wear masks and she has had several questions regarding why a person has to wear a mask if they have been vaccinated. Dickerson had no concerns with removing the mask mandate.

Commissioner Spradlin moved to amend the mask mandate to a mask recommendation subject to local business requirements. Hodge seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Spradlin moved to adjourn at 10:17 a.m. Commissioner Ballard seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

The next commission meeting will be held on Monday, March 29, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

ATTEST: Kathy Robison  
Kathy Robison, County Clerk

[Signature]  
Ben Fox, Chairman

[Signature]  
Roy Ballard, Vice Chairman

[Signature]  
Chuck Spradlin, Member

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Paul Hodge, Member

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Robert Joe Morgan, Member