

COURTHOUSE & PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Minutes for Feb. 20, 2018

3rd Floor, Bedford County Courthouse, Consecutive after Law Enforcement



Present: Chairman Billy King, Linda Yockey, Bob Davis, Chuck Heflin, Julie Sanders

Absent: 0

Others Present: County Mayor, Eugene Ray, County Commissioners, Bobby Fox, John Brown, Biff Farrar, Bill Anderson, Jimmy Woodson, Don Gallagher and Mark Thomas; IT Director, Josh Carney; Zoning Director, Chris White; E-911 Director, Phillip Noel; Finance Director, Robert Daniel; HR Director/ Executive Assistant, Anita Epperson; T-G reporter, John Carney;

1. **Call the meeting to order** – Billy King
2. **Prayer** – Heflin
3. **Roll Call** – All present
4. **Approval of the Jan. 23, 2018, Courthouse and Property Committee minutes** – Motion to approve,
(Davis, Yockey) unanimous.
5. **Zoning Reports** – Chris White was present and reports were sent out prior to the meeting. He said they had more permits in 2017 than any time ever before. They questioned if there was any way to tell if there were new people coming in and building or locals rebuilding but there really was not.
6. **IT Reports-** Josh Carney was present and reports were sent out prior to the meeting. Carney said we were far ahead of other counties on our IT depts. He said other counties ask us about our IT dept. all the time because we are so unique. Josh Wiseman recently received his certification as an ethical hacker. We also have a new domain coming soon, normally a domain like this would have cost the county \$50,000 but we are using Open Source and Linux so it cost nothing.
7. **Fire Dept. Report** – Mark Thomas was present and reports were sent out prior to the meeting. Thomas said 231 Distillery papers are still in John T. Bobo's office he is working on it.
8. **911 Communications Director Report** – Phillip Noel was present. Reports were sent out prior to the meeting. He said they are getting paid on time by the state.

Commissioner Yockey made a motion to approve all reports as given Commissioner Sanders 2nd unanimously approved.

9. Old Business – Linda said she had met with Mayor Ray, Josh and Chris about Monitors, Tablets to vote on and receive emails etc. Ask to see about getting this all in the works by the time Circuit Court moves out. Commissioner Sanders and Woodson said they would like to see the county go paperless. Woodson asked Robert about the tablets and Daniel agreed saying the school board has something similar and he too would like to see that.

10. New Business – Commissioner Thomas, Fire Chief, said he has lost 6 employees since Nov. and one of them was his long time mechanic adding up to 77 years' experience. He said they were going a ½ mile down the street and making \$8000 more a year and much better benefits. Julie asked was it the city and he said yes. He said we educate them and even if they sign a contract to stay a year or two sometimes the money is worth buying out the contract or as soon as it is up they leave. He said it is not just his dept. it is all the Emergency Mgt. workers. King said he had problems keeping employees as well but he did not know if more money was the answer, we could not compete with Murfreesboro. HR Director, Anita Epperson said she was having a lot of turn over with the Sheriff Dept. and Corrections Officers going to Lewisburg and the EMS could not get anyone at all. Thomas said he made less today than he did five years ago, if the county did get a raise the cost of insurance went up even more than the raise. Anderson said the private sector was even worse. Thomas said this would have the potential to affect the service he offers and the ISO rating which will make everyone's insurance cost go up. Thomas asked for a salary for all employees to be done and maybe raise them over the next 3 to 5 years to at least meet surrounding counties the same size as us. They suggested perhaps hiring MTSU to do the study. Yockey made a motion to ask Robert Daniel to pursue finding someone to hire to do the study and bring it Finance, Sanders Seconded. ***Unanimous to place on Feb. 27th Financial Management Agenda with a unanimous recommendation.***

Commissioner Heflin said he realized we have a meeting Monday night on the Regions Bldg. but he did want to touch on a few items. He had a list of items that had been discussed on Regions Bank Bldg. from the time of purchase what he could find from then until now, coming from the T-G, courthouse and property committee minutes, finance minutes and commission minutes. He said he was not able to find a lot about where it had come before courthouse and property or the commission and how much was going to be spent on the project.

Julie Sanders said she did not believe they would save money by remodeling versus paying rent, she said the high cost of the renovation is alarming.

Linda Yockey said the fee offices needed more room and when they purchased the building they were planning ahead for the future. The building was in great structural shape and a great offer and in the meantime they brought in what they paid for the building plus more. When the justice system was built they promised to keep business on the square and when they bought it they knew they could relocate a lot of office space there. She agreed a study session was very critical.

Julie Said she agreed it should stay on the square but a lot of offices will be empty when we have the jail and justice system move from the courthouse. She wanted to know what would happen with the courthouse.

Bill Anderson said Regions Bank is in good shape so why is it costing so much to renovate. He said over \$700,000 is way too much. Linda agreed the cost was too high. Bill said we should start over with another Architect we have waited this long.

Billy King said he worked for a living and lived within his means and we didn't have to have the best of everything. We didn't need marble floors and granite countertops. Barring asbestos the costs could be cut. He thinks it can be done for a lot less.

Linda asked Davis for a breakdown of cost at the meeting Monday night.

Mayor Ray said everyone can speak Monday night.

Jimmy Woodson said he knows there was some talk of selling the Regions bank and buying US Bank but there were a lot of problems with US Bank. He said the 3rd floor heat/cooling had a problem among other things. He asked what the drive thru would be used for at Regions but no one was sure yet.

Chuck Heflin said there were a lot of unanswered questions and expenses on the new Judicial Center that were not answered yet including furnishings, staffing, site work and many others and he did not think we should start one project until the other was finished.

Anderson said he heard that Coffee County had to hire 30 new jailers when it opened. What were we planning to do if we had that same problem? Mayor Ray said the Judge was planning to be at the meeting Monday night, everyone could speak then.

Commissioner Thomas said they were looking at land in Rover just FYI for a fire hall that would be coming up for discussion soon.

11. Announcements -

12. Adjourn – 6:42 PM (Heflin, King) unanimous.