

STATE OF TEXAS §

DATE: AUGUST 6, 2015

COUNTY OF POLK §

SPECIAL MEETING

SCHELANA HOCK – ABSENT

MILTON PURVIS - ABSENT

## COMMISSIONERS COURT

AGENDA POSTING #2015 - 095

BE IT REMEMBERED ON THIS THE 6<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF AUGUST, 2015, THE HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS COURT MET IN “SPECIAL” CALLED MEETING WITH THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS AND MEMBERS PRESENT, TO WIT;

HONORABLE SYDNEY MURPHY, COUNTY JUDGE PRESIDING.

BOB WILLIS - COMMISSIONER PCT #1,

RONNIE VINCENT - COMMISSIONER PCT #2,

C.T. “TOMMY” OVERSTREET - COMMISSIONER PCT #4,

KHRISTIE NICHOLSON – CHIEF DEPUTY COUNTY CLERK

MARGIE AINSWORTH – COUNTY AUDITOR.

THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS, ORDERS AND DECREES WERE DULY MADE, CONSIDERED & PASSED.

CALLED TO ORDER AT 1:30 P.M. BY JUDGE MURPHY.

WORKSHOP FOR DISCUSSION OF FY2016 PRELIMINARY BUDGET:

JUDGE MURPHY REVIEWED COMMENTS AND CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY THE COURT MEMBERS REGARDING BUDGET MATTERS, AS FOLLOWS;

1) THE IMPACT OF USING ALLOCATING THE SAME PORTION OF THE TAX RATE TO ROAD & BRIDGE AS ALLOCATED LAST YEAR, NOTING THAT IT WOULD RESULT IN A \$209,034 INCREASE TO ROAD & BRIDGE FUNDING AND WOULD INCREASE THE GENERAL FUND DEFICIT TO \$311,359.

2) DISCUSS COST EFFECTIVENESS FOR I-69 AND GULF COAST STRATEGIC HIGHWAY COALITION MEMBERSHIPS, NOTING THE LONG TERM INVESTMENT IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BOTH ORGANIZATIONS. JUDGE MURPHY ALSO NOTED THAT SHE REQUESTED MEMBERSHIP/CONTRIBUTION FEE STRUCTURE FROM BOTH ORGANIZATIONS AND HAS PROPOSED TO REDUCE THE GCSHC FEE TO BE EQUITABLE WITH OTHER ENTITIES OF SIMILAR SIZE TO POLK COUNTY.

3) JUDGE MURPHY DISCUSSED THE POTENTIAL \$70,000 SAVINGS WERE THE COURT TO "WASH" AVAILABLE FUNDS NOT USED FOR CURRENT POSITIONS IN GENERAL FUND DEPARTMENT'S WAGE BUDGETS AND ANOTHER \$10,000 SAVINGS BY DELETING THE MERIT POOL FUNDS IF THE COURT INSTITUTED A MERIT FREEZE.

4) JUDGE MURPHY PROVIDED INFORMATION REGARDING HER PROPOSED REDUCTION IN COUNTY PAID STAFFING OF THE TEXAS AGRI-LIFE EXTENSION OFFICE, REPLACING THE CURRENT FULL TIME SECRETARY II POSITION WITH A PART TIME RECEPTIONIST FOR A SAVINGS OF \$28,000 ANNUALLY. COMMISSIONER OVERSTREET EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN OVER REDUCING THE SUPPORT STAFF IN EXTENSION.

5) JUDGE MURPHY NOTED THAT THE SUGGESTION TO REMOVE THE EMPLOYEE BANQUET FROM THE FY2016 BUDGET CAME FROM AN EMPLOYEE AND SHE DISCUSSED REVISING THE SERVICE AWARD PROGRAM TO REDUCE COSTS FURTHER.

COMMISSIONER TOMMY OVERSTREET PCT. #4 OFFERED TO RELINQUISH A PORTION OF HIS BUDGET TO FUND A FULL TIME SECRETARY I POSITION IN THE EXTENSION OFFICE, STATING HE THAT IT WOULD SUPPORT AREA YOUTH. COMMISSIONERS BOB WILLIS AND RONNIE VINCENT AGREED TO RELINQUISH AN EQUAL SHARE FROM EACH OF THEIR BUDGETS TO FUND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PROPOSED PART TIME RECEPTIONIST AND A FULL TIME SECRETARY I POSITION AND INDICATED THAT THEY FELT COMMISSIONER MILT PURVIS (ABSENT) WOULD AGREE TO THE SAME.

6) JUDGE MURPHY DISCUSSED THE SUGGESTION MADE THAT LARGER DEPARTMENTS RECEIVE A STATED PERCENTAGE REDUCTION SUFFICIENT TO BALANCE THE BUDGET. JUDGE MURPHY NOTED THAT IN THE THREE LARGEST DEPARTMENTS THAT HAD NOT MADE ANY SIGNIFICANT DECREASE IN THE FY2016 REQUEST, EVEN A 5% REDUCTION WOULD BE SIGNIFICANT AND COULD MEAN LOSS OF JOBS.

COMMISSIONER OVERSTREET ASKED BY HOW MUCH THE BUDGET DEFICIT WOULD BE REDUCED IF ROAD & BRIDGE WERE ALLOCATED 0.1429 PORTION OF THE TAX RATE RATHER THAN 0.1488. JUDGE MURPHY NOTED THAT THE CHANGE IN ALLOCATION WOULD REDUCE THE FY2016 BUDGET DEFICIT TO APPROXIMATELY \$43,000 AND ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR MAJOR REDUCTIONS IN THE THREE LARGER DEPARTMENTS DISCUSSED.

COMMISSIONER WILLIS NOTED THAT THE NEW SOFTWARE AND THE REQUIRED MAINTENANCE FEE THAT HAS RESULTED IN THE OPERATING INCREASE IN THE TAX OFFICE HAS BEEN LONG OVERDUE AND OFFSET BY MORE THAN 20 YEARS OF A MINIMAL MAINTENANCE FEE THAT HE HAD NEGOTIATED IN THE PREVIOUS CONTRACT FOR TAX SOFTWARE. JUDGE MURPHY AGREED THAT A REDUCTION IN

EITHER THE TAX OFFICE OR THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE WOULD REQUIRE LAYOFFS. COMMISSIONER WILLIS NOTED THAT THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT WOULD BE THE AREA TO LOOK FOR REDUCTIONS.

THE COURT REQUESTED AN ESTIMATED NUMBER FOR THE BUDGET BALANCE AFTER ENTERING THE ITEMS DISCUSSED IN THIS MEETING (EXTENSION SECRETARY I WITH FUNDING SUPPORT FROM ROAD & BRIDGE PRECINCTS, A REDUCTION IN GCSHS MEMBERSHIP FEE AND USING 0.1429 PORTION OF TAX RATE IN ROAD & BRIDGE)

THE COURT DISCUSSED THE FUTURE DROP IN THE DEBT SERVICE REQUIREMENT THAT WOULD OCCUR IF THE COURT KEPT NEW DEBT ISSUANCE AS LOW AS POSSIBLE. COMMISSIONER OVERSTREET ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE COURT LOOK AT REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS OF THE COUNTY TO DETERMINE WHETHER ANY BUILDINGS COULD BE DISPOSED OF.

COMMISSIONER WILLIS INDICATED THAT HE WISHED TO GO ON RECORD AS STATING, *"THAT THIS REDUCTION IN THE ROAD & BRIDGE (PORTION OF) THE TAX RATE IS NOT A GOOD IDEA IN MY OPINION, BUT TO GET EVERYTHING BALANCED IN THIS ONE YEAR, I'D BE HAPPY TO GO ALONG WITH IT OR I WILL GO ALONG WITH IT, BUT WHEN WE TURN THE CORNER HOPEFULLY SOON, BEFORE WE START ADDING EMPLOYEES BACK TO THE COUNTY PAYROLL, I'M GOING TO PUSH PRETTY LOUD TO GET THE ROAD & BRIDGE TAX RATE BACK UP TO WHERE IT WAS"*.

JUDGE MURPHY EXPRESSED HER CONCERN THAT, WHEN FUNDS BECOME AVAILABLE, CURRENT EMPLOYEES BE CONSIDERED BEFORE NEW EMPLOYEES ARE HIRED. COMMISSIONER WILLIS NOTED THAT IF THE JAIL POPULATION GETS DOWN TO A MANAGEABLE LEVEL, THE COURT SHOULD BALANCE ANY POTENTIAL INMATE HOUSING REVENUE FROM OTHER ENTITIES AGAINST THE SAVINGS OF REDUCING JAIL STAFFING.


THE COURT DISCUSSED DATA THAT WAS COLLECTED FOR STAFFING LEVELS IN OTHER COUNTIES FOR VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS, AS COMPARED TO POLK COUNTY.

THE COURT DETERMINED THAT, AFTER INCLUDING ALL CHANGES DISCUSSED IN THIS MEETING AND USING 0.1429 PORTION OF THE TAX RATE FOR CALCULATING ROAD & BRIDGE FUNDING, THE REMAINING AMOUNT NEEDED TO BALANCE THE FY2016 BUDGET SHOULD BE DECREASED FROM THE POLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S BUDGET.

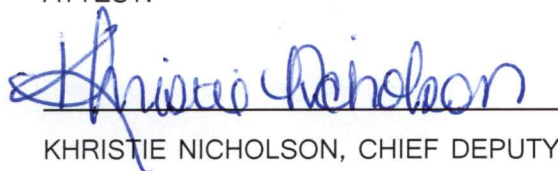
ADJOURN:

MOTIONED BY TOMMY OVERSTREET, SECONDED BY BOB WILLIS, TO ADJOURN COURT THIS 6<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF AUGUST, 2015 AT 2:45 P.M.

ALL VOTING YES.

  
SYDNEY MURPHY, COUNTY JUDGE

ATTEST:

  
KRISTIE NICHOLSON, CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK