

**MINUTES OF MEETING
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
9:00 AM Friday, November 1, 2019
Fountain Lake District Offices #1**

ATTENDANCE

Committee Members Present

Pamela Avila
Greg Jones
David Childs
Mike Hood
Curt Malone
Cheri Nelson
Jerry Yeric
Bob Pettey
Jim Zahnd

POA Liaisons

Mike Medica, Board Liaison
Leslie Nalley, POA CEO

Other Board Members

None

Justices of the Peace

Keith Keck, Saline County
Larry Raney, Garland County

School District Liaisons

Dr. Michael Murphy, FLSD
Melissa Speers, Jessieville SD

Committee Members Absent

David Whitlow

Ex-Officio Members Present

HSV Area Chamber of Commerce Liaison

Position Open, Executive Director (absent)

Ex-Officio Board Members Absent

Bob Shoemaker

Press

Lewis Delavan, Village Voice

OPENING OF MEETING

Call to Order: Vice Chair Greg Jones called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Notified Absences: David Whitlow.

Agenda: The Agenda was approved with 2 changes. There are no new Committee members to introduce and the New Business item shown below was added.

Minutes: The minutes of the October 4, 2019 meeting were approved.

GAC SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Tri-Lakes – David Whitlow

- Submitted in writing, attached to Minutes.

2020 Census Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee – Jim Zahnd

- Submitted in writing, attached to Minutes.

Hot Springs and Garland County – Jerry Yerick

- Submitted in writing, attached to Minutes.

Saline County – Curt Malone

- No written report submitted.

Broadband – Greg Jones

- No written report submitted.

Website – Pam Avila

- No written report submitted.

NEW BUSINESS

- A question was raised as to whether the GAC should play a role in the upcoming POA Board election process. After discussion, the matter was tabled, and Jerry Yeric was asked to meet with various Committee members and report at the next meeting.

SPECIAL PROGRAM

GET TO KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS – FOUNTAIN LAKE SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Dr. Michael Murphy, Superintendent of Fountain Lake School District, and several members of the Fountain Lake faculty and administration presented an overview of the School District, its curriculum and the various programs available to students.
- District Overview:
 - FLSD is an important member of the HSV community as 300 of the District's 1377 students (grades K-12) reside in the Village. FLSD also has 58 pre-K students.
 - The Village is an important part of the FLSD as 72% of registered voters in the District live in the Village.
 - The average teacher salary in the District is \$38,500, which is slightly higher than the State average of \$38,000. Total average teacher salary and benefits is \$60,000, with 28% in benefits.
 - In 2018, FLSD had a graduation rate of ranging from 89% to 93% looking at a 4-year graduating cohort and a 5-year graduating cohort and a college-going rate of slightly more than 50%.
 - Under the Arkansas School Choice Program, students may choose to attend any school regardless of residence. Currently, 90 students living outside the District choose to attend schools in the FLSD, while 34 students living in the District choose to attend school in other Districts.

- Academics:
 - FLSD is implementing a literacy program in grades K-8 this year and a writing program in those grades next year. Individual Personal Success Plans are provided in grades 5-12.
 - FLSD provides breakfast in the classroom and an after-school program for grades K-4.
 - In addition to traditional classrooms, middle school and high school students have project-based classes through programs such as Project Lead the Way and through a partnership with National Park College. FLSD students can receive college credit in health occupations, mechanics and criminal justice. Through its AG Department FLSD students can be certified as tig/mig welders upon graduation.
 - Teachers utilize Google Apps for Educations and blend instruction between books and digital platforms. Computers are issued to students in grades 7-12 and computers are available to students in the K-5 classrooms.
 - FLSD offers Environmental and Spatial Technology (EAST) classes in which students identify real-world problems and then use state-of-the-art technology to search for solutions to those problems
- Finances
 - FLSD's annual budget projection for 2019-20 is \$15,840.00, with employee expenses accounting for \$9,600,000 of that amount.
 - Per pupil expenditure is \$10,527.
 - At year-end, FLSD had an Operating Fund balance of \$2,587,000 and a Building Fund Balance of \$2,056,556.
- Challenges and Opportunities facing FLSD
 - There has been a significant turnover in both District employees (e.g., 3 Head Football Coaches and 2 High School and 1 Elementary School Principals) and School Board Members (13 Board Members have recently served on the 5-member Board)
 - The Highway 7 expansion project will impact the District for the next several years.

REMINDERS & CALENDAR

Next POA Board Meeting: 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, November 20, at the Ouachita Building.

Next GAC Meeting: 9:00 a.m., Friday, December 6. Special Guest Speaker Greg Mabry President of the Hot Springs Downtown Businesses Association (thanks to David Childs).

GAC Committee Reports - Dec. 6, 2019

Tri-Lakes Metropolitan Planning Organization Report – David Whitlow

The Tri-Lakes MPO Policy Board did not meet in November 2019.

Planning and transportation Information below should be of interest to residents of Hot Springs Village:

- In early November ARDOT opened bids on the 5.8 mile extension of the Kind Expressway. Three bids were submitted. McGeorge Contracting of Pine Bluff was the apparent low bidder. The company stated that the work could be completed in 890 days. McGeorge's bid was for \$75.15 million. Some early work could begin by the end of 2019.
- Governor Asa Hutchinson and other state leaders have launched a campaign to keep a half-cent sales tax in place for road needs. The current tax is set to expire in 2023. The ballot initiative will be a top priority for passage by the state.
- The environmental studies portion of the Southwest Trail Project was recently completed. A draft environmental assessment has been completed and submitted to ARDOT for review. The final alignment has not been set, however a preferred alignment will be completed and recommended by early 2020. When completed, the proposed alignment will be submitted to the public for review and comment.
- Two bridge replacements on Highway 7 North over Bear Creek and the South Fourche are nearing completion. Both are near Hollis, Arkansas. Completion is scheduled for May 2020.

Hot Springs—Jerry Yeric

The more than \$120 million of the 2020 budget includes \$1.5 million in change orders for the city's public safety communications system project, a consequence of the former Army and Navy General Hospital's unavailability as a host site for a critical repeater in the system's microwave network. The building's strategic perch overlooking downtown Central Avenue would have allowed radio signals to reach into and out of downtown and also cover the Highway 70 east area. The development and delay of finding a new location is estimated to cost the city an additional \$1 million dollars.

County Judge Darryl Mahoney told justices of the peace last month that the delayed rollout of the city's communications system is affecting radio coverage north of the city. A dead spot in the Fountain Lake area will persist until the city's system goes live.

Segregating firefighters gear worn at fire scenes from the firehouse's living quarters is a relatively new practice. Avoiding constant exposure to the carcinogens the gear absorbs outside the station is critical to managing cancer risks. This will be an expensive endeavor and would take 10-15 years to complete in Hot Springs.

The Hot Springs Board of Directors voted to freeze sanitation rates next year, a price hold the city said is partially owed to next year's addition of new accounts in recently annexed areas adjacent to Lake Hamilton.

The Hot Springs Advertising and Promotion Commission approved its 2020 budget and the city's 2020 marketing plan. Visit Hot Springs CEO Steve Arrison presented a summary of the 2020 commission budget, which projects nearly \$9.7 million in revenues, including nearly \$6.9 million in tax collections.

Garland—Jerry Yeric

Garland County Quorum Court elections will have 4 of the 13 seats contested.

Dist. 3 Esther Dixon D* George Pritchett R

Dist. 4 Larry Williams D Jimmy Young R*

Dist. 9 Cortney McKee D Matt McKee*

Dist. 10 Lee Crawford D and Jim Sorrells R*

The salary for JP is \$8,588.

*Denotes incumbent

State Representative District 22

Three people have filed for the special election on March 3rd to serve the remaining year of Mickey Gates term: Richard McGrew R, Jack Wells R, and Judy Bowers L.

For the general election primary there are three Republicans who have filed: Richard McGrew, Jack Wells, and Richard Midkiff. The winner of that election will be elected for a full term.

A mutually beneficial pact between Garland County and the city of Hot Springs will stretch the former's paving budget and secure easements for the latter's raw water transmission line. The county has agreed to let the city put part of its 17-mile long raw water line in county right of way. In return, the city will rebuild and overlay county-maintained roads affected by the project. County Judge Darryl Mahoney said the city will pay the full cost of rebuilding and

overlaying Cozy Acres Road, where the city hopes to begin installing the 42-inch line early next year.

The Quorum Court approved a resolution, which the Hot Springs Board of Directors adopted earlier, calling for the area's congressional representatives to develop a funding plan for securing the Army-Navy building and keeping the utilities on after state funding expires at the end of June.

The 2019 millage rates the Garland County Quorum Court ratified included a rollback for the rate the city of Mountain Pine assesses for its general fund. Mountain Pine is the only taxing entity in the county with an adjusted 2019 millage rate.

The 5 mills will drop to 4.9 on tax bills the county will send out in February, the result of the total value of real and personal property inside the city's corporate limits increasing by more than 10% from the 2018 to 2019 tax years. The state tax code calls for a rollback when a tax base's total value increases by more than 10%.

Benton GAC – David Childs

The primary news is that the bids will be opened for construction of the Career Training Center on Thursday. Ground breaking should be in December and classes should start in Fall 2021.