

# KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION

## Special Meeting

Monday – July 26, 2021 – 8:30 A.M.

The Special Meeting of the Knox County Commission was held on Monday, July 26, 2021, at 8:30 A.M., via ZOOM.

**Commission members present were:** Dorothy G. Meriwether, Commissioner District #1, Richard L. Parent, Jr., Commissioner District #2 and Sharyn L. Pohlman, Commissioner District #3

**County staff present included:** County Administrator Andrew Hart, Finance Director Kathy Robinson, Administrative Assistant Wendy Galvin, Systems Administrator Mike Dean, Communications Director Robert Coombs, Airport Manager Jeremy Shaw, and Sheriff Tim Carroll.

**Absent:** EMA Director Ray Sisk, Chief Deputy Patrick Polky, Prosecutorial Assistant/Investigator Shane Riley, Register of Probate Elaine Hallett, Jail Administrator Bob Wood, Register of Deeds Madalene Cole, and District Attorney Natasha Irving.

### Special Meeting – Agenda Monday July 26, 2021 – 8:30 A.M.

- I. 8:30 Meeting Called To Order
- II. 8:32 Action Items
  - 1. Act to Award the Bid for a Tracked Excavator for Use by the Knox County Regional Airport.
  - 2. Act to Award the Bid for a 1-Ton Truck with Dump Body, Plow and Solid Material Spreader for Use by the Knox County Regional Airport.
- III. 8:40 Discussion Items
  - 1. Approval of ARPA Grant Application Request Form and Associated E-mail to be Provided to Knox County Municipalities and Interested Non-Profit Agencies.
- IV. Adjourn

#### I. Meeting Called to Order

Commissioner Meriwether called the Special Meeting of the Knox County Commission to order at 8:39 A.M.

#### II. Action Items

1. **Act to Award the Bid for a Tracked Excavator for Use by the Knox County Regional Airport.**  
Enclosed are the bid results sheet for your review as well as the submitted bids from Nortrax and Union Farm Equipment. Union Farm Equipment was the lowest bidder with a bid of \$109,990.00. The Airport Manager would request to add the two upgrades for the excavator identified on the bid for an additional \$8,900.00, for a grand total of \$118,890.00. The upgrades include the installation of a hydraulic angle dozer blade and a hydraulic tilt upgrade for additional ditching capabilities. Another area that the Airport lacks in equipment is the ability to maintain steep slopes and vegetation that is too large for a rotary cutter. With advances in industrial equipment, small excavators with various attachments can accomplish tasks that the Airport needs to undertake to stay within compliance regarding vegetation management.
  - *A motion was made by Commissioner Meriwether to Act to Award the Bid for a Tracked Excavator for Use by the Knox County Regional Airport to Union Farm Equipment in the amount of \$118,890.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pohlman. A vote was taken with all in favor.*
2. **Act to Award the Bid for a 1-Ton Truck with Dump Body, Plow and solid Material Spreader for Use by the Knox County Regional Airport.**

The Airport's 1-Ton pickup with dump body is beyond its useful service life, and is due to be replaced. It was scheduled to be replaced with AIP funds in this year's AIP grant, but it was discovered that the airport is only allowed to have 2 carrier vehicles newer than 10 years old that were purchased with AIP funds. The Airport Manager and Stantec recommend that the bid be awarded to Fuller Chevrolet GMC for an amount not to exceed \$97,413.00. Enclosed is a letter from Stantec explaining the bid processes and their recommendation.

- *A motion was made by Commissioner Meriwether to Act to Award the Bid for a 1-Ton Truck with Dump Body, Plow and Solid Material Spreader for Use by the Knox County Regional Airport to Fuller Chevrolet in the amount of \$97,413.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pohlman. A vote was taken with all in favor.*

### III. Discussion Item

#### 1. Approval of ARPA Grant Application Request Form and Associated E-mail to be Provided to Knox County Municipalities and Interested Non-Profit Agencies.

- Commissioner Parent had one exception on second page need to be updated before it gets sent out.
- Commissioner Meriwether stated if they (Commissioners) receive any questions that they need to send them to Administrator Hart to view before any action is taken. He stated that would be a good idea.
- Commissioner Meriwether asked Administrator Hart if he and Finance Director Robinson felt comfortable and had a handle on things. She stated that if the burden is too great for either of them to please make sure to consider bringing on someone else.
- Administrator Hart stated yes they both feel comfortable. They've been to numerous meetings and new things are still coming out.
- Commissioner Meriwether has another item she'd like to talk about regarding the ARPA. It would be revisiting the question of "Essential Workers". We have been warned over and over to move slowly and make decisions slowly and personally, she feels like she's almost being "cornered" by making decisions without all the information. The essential worker premium pay is not a closed question yet. If you read the guidance it is not clear, so she'd like to discuss further. Based on her reading of the document she does not believe we should have given premium pay to the Sheriff. This is based on the fact that it addresses income inequality; we shouldn't be giving premium pay to anybody who's receiving an annual income that exceeds 150% of the average annual income for the Community that we're working in. The average annual income for Knox County is \$44,148, 150% of that amount is \$66,222. So any employee that exceeds an income of \$66,222 should not be receiving premium pay. She will be requesting from Kathy in writing what average annual pay wages for a Dispatcher are and a Deputy to get an idea if we are in the ballpark. She believes that some Dispatchers may qualify for premium pay and this needs to be discussed further.
- Administrator Hart spoke: what the plan would be isto bring this back to the August Meeting for further discussion.
- Commissioner Meriwether does not want to vote on this when she doesn't know what the whole scope is. She does not want to be pressured into this especially as soon as August. She would like all the Departments that feel that their workers or essential workers that should be receiving premium pay. At the time, for the Sheriff's Department we made a decision on the best information we had.
- Commissioner Pohlman stated she looks forward to the opportunity to review this in more detail and thinks Commissioner Meriwether made some very good points. She agrees that we did make the best decision with the information we had for the Sheriff's Department at that time. Unfortunately, that created some feelings among other Departments that should be addressed. We should look at each Department, review with all the information we have so we can move forward on this issue.

- Commissioner Parent stated that in regards to the “Essential Workers”, he agrees that the people working in the Jail, they had to work with Inmate population knowing that some of that population had come in contact with COVID. He feels they deserved it as they had no recourse. In terms of the Sheriff’s Department, he sat in on the negotiations and was told that the increase that was given it was agreed that was sufficient. In terms of Communications, those workers had to shop at the market well everyone had to do that. He tries to make decisions on his gut feeling. He will listen to any argument and will change his decision if needed, he’s ready to listen.
- Commissioner Meriwether stated that at this point they have to deal with the consequences of the votes they made “then” and would like to open that discussion again. We need a further discussion; she wants to go back to the caution of not moving quickly on anything. At that time, there was an emergency situation and they felt pressured to come up with an answer.

**IV. Adjourn**

- *A motion was made by Commissioner Meriwether to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pohlman. A vote was taken with all in favor.*

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Galvin  
Administrative Assistant

**The Knox County Commission approved these minutes at their regular meeting held on August 10, 2021.**