

Wednesday, February 2, 2000

Special Called Session

Commissioners' Court

Members of the Court present:

Jack Leath	County Judge
Keith Clark	Commissioner Pct. #1
Lynn Smith	Commissioner Pct. #2
Doyle Dickerson	Commissioner Pct. #3
Gene Nethery	Commissioner Pct. #4
Janice McDaniel	County Clerk

Agenda item #1-Joint Meeting with Tourism Commission to Discuss
Tourism Activities

Members of the Tourism Commission present:

Leon Addicks	Edith McCauley	Mary Ann McDaniel
Bob Russell	Don Woods	Ellen Meleton
Linda Mier	Jeanne Thomas	Maggie Hauser
Margene Boudreaux		

Judge Leath said this meeting is to discuss the position of Tourism Director. The lady, Ms. Ware that was previously hired has now declined the position. Our options are to go back through the applications we received, re-advertise, attempt to recruit without advertising or to look for a consultant to handle these matters rather than a full time employee. He said the Court decided to invite the Commission to a meeting to get their ideas.

Bob Russell, chairperson of the Commission, said that since we now have a job description, we might get more qualified applicants. He brought up the idea of the Court contracting with an organization to provide the services of a Tourism Director. The organization would take care of the salary, benefits and insurance. By putting an organization between this position and the Court, you remove the argument that the Director is going to make more than I am.

Judge Leath said the County is not against such an agreement as long as the money is spent; as it is set up to be.

Mary Ann McDaniel said she would still like to see us get someone that is very qualified in grant writing, public relations and is educated. We do not need a secretary. The average salary for this position in other cities is \$32,000.00. If we

don't get someone that is going to do it right the first time, we are spinning our wheels.

Commissioner Nethery said benefits would cost about 30 percent of the amount of the salary.

Judge Leath said we could get David Waxman to write any grant we want and he doesn't get paid anything unless we get the grant. His payment then comes out of the grant money.

Judge Leath said the Director would not get 10 percent of the grant if that person were a County employee.

Ellen Meleton said we could hire someone with a year contract and if this person increases tourism, then we can extend the contract for 3 to 5 years.

Commissioner Nethery said he would like for us to consider joining with neighboring Counties and or cities to promote the whole East Texas area. He said he thinks it would take more than 1 person to do what has been talked about. Maybe 2 or 3 people.

Edith McCauley said before anything is done, we need to sit down with pencil and paper and work up a budget. You need to know what is going to be spent on salary, benefits, advertising and etc.

Commissioner Nethery said that everyone understands that if we get more people in here, it is going to help everyone's business. He said maybe we should try to figure how, using tax money or whatever, to subsidize that fund. If we can't, maybe some other organizations in town will be willing to.

Don Woods asked if the fine money collected is tied up and Judge Leath said it goes into the general fund of the County.

Mary Ann McDaniel said that Ms. Ferrell is willing to give up a forty something thousand-dollar job in Houston to come to Sabine County for this job. She has a master's degree. She is more than qualified.

Maggie Hauser said the director would be paid from Hotel/Motel tax money, not ad valorem taxes. The criticism she heard from ladies was that if they had known the job was going to pay this much money, they would have applied for the job. She said they were not qualified for it. If you don't do it right the first time, do not bother to do it.

Mr. Russell said he recommends continuing to pursue this and again to do some more recruiting, request applications again, Ms. Ferrell's included. Let them see just what the job is.

Mary Ann McDaniel suggested trying Ms. Ferrell first. She was our first choice.

Commissioner Smith said he agrees with Mary Ann. A phone call would not hurt. He said he is prepared to face it. If these people would rather have this job than the elected position they have, then they need to apply. They may get it.

Don Woods said this job is going to be a lot more work than some of the elected officials jobs.

Mr. Russell said whoever does this work is going to be in the true essence of the words "earning their salary".

Judge Leath said before the elected officials are run down too hard, they earn their salaries. This is not a bunch of dummies working here. They do a great job and they work a lot harder than they get paid. I am going to defend the people that work for the County and they deserve to be defended.

The Commission is to contact Ms. Ferrell and bring their recommendation to the Court at the February 14th meeting.

This meeting was for discussion only and no action was taken.

Commissioner Nethery moved to adjourn. Commissioner Dickerson seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Jack Leath COUNTY JUDGE

Keith Clark COMMISSIONER PCT. #1

Lynn Smith COMMISSIONER PCT. #2

Doug Dickerson COMMISSIONER PCT. #3

W. Stuckey COMMISSIONER PCT. #4

ATTEST:

Janice McDaniel COUNTY CLERK

The State of Texas
County of Sabine

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THESE DOCUMENTS WERE FILED AND
DULY RECORDED IN THE COMMISSIONER COURT MINUTES OF SABINE
COUNTY, TEXAS.



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JANICE MCDANIEL COUNTY CLERK
BY Keith Clark
Deputy