

Minutes of the County Commissioners Regular meeting held on November 29, 2021

The Board of the Grady County Commissioners met on this day for an regularly scheduled meeting with the following board members: Mike Walker, Kirk Painter, and Ralph Beard.

The meeting was called to order and roll call: Mike Walker, Kirk Painter, and Ralph Beard

The meeting was opened with the "Pledge of Allegiance"

Kirk Painter made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 22, 2021 regular meeting. It was seconded by Mike Walker. AYE: Mike Walker, Kirk Painter, and Ralph Beard.

GCEMA/Fire Report/Safety Director: Dale Thompson gave the Commissioners the EMPG grant acceptance letter. Dale stated that he was with Lawton Communications last week to check repeaters and found that he needed to replace two batteries. Dale told the Board that he had a drone class Tuesday in Shawnee that he would be attending. Kim Duke had requisition requests and told the Board that there will be a run request meeting this Saturday, December 4, 2021. Bobby Cantu did not have anything to report.

Dale Thompson reported to the Board that as of November 26, 2021 there are 96 active cases, and 190 deaths in Grady County.

There was no action on the ARPA. Ralph Beard said that there was a special meeting being held today in the Commissioner's office at 1:00 with the consultant team Floyd and Driver and any participant who is requesting funds with the American Rescue Plan Act.

Mr. Spellman was in attendance and wanted to give the Commissioners an update on the Covid issues in the hospital. Mr. Spellman explains that the numbers seem to be dropping overall, but one of the reasons is because people are not getting tested. He stated that the flu rate is about a 1/3 of what it was in 2019. Mr. Spellman said that his team was meeting on Tuesday to look at all the medical and religious exemptions for employees who have not been vaccinated. There were very few medical exemptions that will pass, it will be more religious exemptions he explained. The bigger hospitals are not accepting any of the religious exemptions, the smaller hospitals are being more tolerant and are taking it as a recruitment opportunity since everyone is so shorthanded. Mr. Spellman stated "(CMS) Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has made a mess out of this" and it is the rural areas that are struggling. He said he is not sure how many religious exemptions they are going to grant but he wanted the Board to know there will be a significant amount. Because, when you look at the regulations and then look at every hospital that has denied the religious exemptions, they have been sued so then you get to defend terminating people for denying them their religious exemption. Mr. Spellman met with his staff individually and was amazed at how many people think that the law was stayed and are confused on the CMS rule versus the (OSHA) Occupational Safety and Health Administration rule. CMS is not very clear on their rules on religious exemptions, but the OSHA rules are very descriptive. If the hospital has to terminate people for not being vaccinated, it could create another Covid crisis. CMS is not giving the hospital guidance on what would qualify as a religious exemption. The only thing that CMS is requiring is for you to have a sincerely religious belief and that belief does not have to go back decades. The administration has been working on this issue for weeks and the goal was to try and get as many people

as they could get vaccinated. The Hospital Board's question is do we want to spend our funds defending lawsuits at this time? Their answer was no. Most people are asking him "if I was good enough to work for you during the crisis then why am I not good enough to work for you now." His answer to them was "you are." He stated that with everything he has read, if a person has had the disease, they are just as protected as being vaccinated if not more so. If you are vaccinated you can still catch Covid you will just not end up in the hospital. Mr. Spellman said he would be back at 1:00 for the ARPA meeting.

No draw request from the Grady Memorial Hospital.

Kirk Painter made a motion to approve Holiday Pay Policy for Grady County. It was seconded by Mike Walker. AYE: Mike Walker, Kirk Painter, and Ralph Beard.

Mike Walker made a motion to approve the bid request for the re-bidding of the construction of the Cox City Fire Station Addition. It was seconded by Kirk Painter. AYE: Mike Walker, Kirk Painter, and Ralph Beard.

There were no utility/pipeline road crossing permits, waterline/fast-line permits, and driveway/tinhorn permits.

Mike Walker made a motion to approve the purchase orders generated by the Grady County governing bodies during the current and previous months and authorize or deny payment of such purchase orders. It was seconded by Kirk Painter. AYE: Mike Walker, Kirk Painter, and Ralph Beard.

There were no monthly reports.

Mike Walker made a motion to approve the estimate of needs, request for appropriations, and transfer of appropriations for GCEMA. It was seconded by Kirk Painter. AYE: Mike Walker, Kirk Painter, and Ralph Beard.

New Business: Ralph Beard needed two things to go on the agenda next week: a road closure and a tort claim.

Kirk Painter made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by Mike Walker. AYE: Mike Walker, Kirk Painter, and Ralph Beard.

Meeting Adjourned.

Passed and approved on Monday, December 6, 2021.

Attest:

Will Locke
County Clerk

The Board of the Grady County Commissioners

Michael A. Welch
Chairman

Kirk J. Painter
Vice Chairman

Ralph Beard
Member

Seal

