SHANNON COUNTY COMMISSION

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 Vester Crider Beth Long Herman Kelly

Northern Commissioner Presiding Commissioner Southern Commissioner

Shelly Bland Caitlynn Cooper Angie Norris

County Clerk Clerk 2 Deputy Clerk

Commissioner Long called the meeting to order Monday, September 22nd, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present: Vester Crider, Northern Commissioner

 Herman Kelly, Southern Commissioner

 Beth Long, Presiding Commissioner

Shelly Bland, County Clerk

Visitors: Mike Bell – To video as a concerned citizen

 David Trotter

 Matt Lloyd – Fabick Caterpillar

 Karen Stewart

 Terry Merritt

 Patty Jones

 Terri Mae Pitz

 Allen Ford, Shannon County Coroner

 Jeremy Manning – Smith & Company

Karen Stewart brings in some papers that she made to track the percentages of the county budgets and offers to anyone that wants one.

Commissioner Kelly motions to approve the tabled meeting minutes from September 8th, 2025. Commissioner Crider seconds the motion. Motion carries with all in favor. (H-Y, V-Y, B-Y)

Commissioner Crider motions to table the minutes of September 15th, 2025. Commissioner Kelly seconds the motion. Motion carries with all in favor. (H-Y, V-Y, B-Y)

The Commission approves the presented invoices for payment. (H-Y, V-Y, B-Y)

Karen Stewart asks if you have to dedicate 10 o’clock to 11 o’clock just for the levy hearing, Shelly tells her, yes just in case someone comes in and wants to ask questions.

Patty Jones states that on social media someone had commented that these meetings were like a social gathering, but they don’t realize that there is a decorum, and you have to have things at certain times.

Commissioner Long asks Commissioner Kelly if he remembers what year they did the roll back for the levies. Commissioner Kelly tells Commissioner Long that he doesn’t remember but it was several years ago. The only way to get that roll back removed is to take it back to the vote of the people.

Commissioner Long discusses the levies more for Roads and General Revenue; she states that General Revenue needs to stay the same as it has been in the last couple of years because next year, we would never be able to make budget for sure if we roll back to the suggested rate. The rate would stay at 0.1700. Road and bridge would stay at 0.2410. Commissioner Kelly states that we really don’t have a choice but to stay with the 0.1700 for General Revenue for certain.

Commissioner Long shows Commissioners Kelly and Crider the new procurement policy that FEMA is requesting that we have updated. Commissioner Long says if anyone wants to look over the policy they can. Commissioner Long also states that we already had a procurement policy in place, but we had to update with new numbers. Commissioner Long states that the numbers for the bidding process have changed to higher amounts. Mike Bell asks if the bidding number just went up, Commissioner Long states that it did not, but the county had to update the policy to match the correct numbers. Mike asks if the old prices are on the policy too, Commissioner Long states that she updated the old policy with just the new numbers.

Terry Merritt asks if the departments have to make a purchase request. Commissioner Long tells Terry that they don’t have anything to fill out and generally the office officials are the ones that do the purchasing. Commissioner Long tells Terry that the county has a dollar general card that they use, if the janitor needs supplies she can go get what she needs. The card is always approved for the one taking it and it is always kept in the same place. Commissioner Long says, “No PO’s filled out prior to purchase”. Karen Stewart asks if they have something that is filled out for major things. Commissioner Long tells Karen the only thing, like in the procurement policy, we have to take bids for anything over that $11, 999.00. Commissioner Long states that the collector got a new credit card system this year and she came to the meeting and discussed it with the commissioners before she purchased, she wants to have it where anyone can pay their taxes online if they choose to do so.

Commissioner Crider motions to accept the updated procurement policy. Commissioner Kelly seconds the motion. Motion carries with all in favor. (V-Y, H-Y, B-Y)

Commissioner Long has a couple of things that need to be discussed, and they need to be figured out before this next payroll. Commissioner Long states that she had two different lengthy conversations with the Jasper County Sheriff who is the chairman of the Deputy Supplemental Grant, which is suspended currently. Commissioner Long also talked to Liz Lueckel with DPS on Friday. Commissioner Long states they need to determine what they are going to do about the deputy supplement pay because we are not receiving that pay right now, that does not mean that if we were not to pay (we don’t have it to pay) that if we were to receive it then back pay could be made but there is nothing right now stating that we will receive it. Commissioner Long stresses that they need to decide because it is almost time for payroll and the deputies and the payroll clerk will have questions. Commissioner Crider asks how many people that the pay involves. Commissioner Long tells him 5 deputies, but the deputies who are not listed under the grant get the same amount of pay as the ones on the grant which 3 or 4 deputies are not on it, so when the grant is suspended and they don’t get their supplement pay the ones not on the grant will be getting the same amount. Commissioner Crider says that has always been that way. Commissioner Long tells him that we have never had any deputies that weren’t on deputy supplement because we have never had this many deputies at one time. Commissioner Long states again that if the grant is reinstated then they can be given back pay. Commissioner Crider asks how much money that would be. Commissioner Long calls Angie and asks what the pay would be. Commissioner Long says the total is $1038.00 per pay period for all deputies on the grant, that is $207.69 per person. Commissioner Long says she looks at it like it’s not fair for these guys to not get that amount if these guys are losing it, but again where is the line. Karen Stewart asks if you pay it then are you setting a precedence that you are going to continue to pay it, and wouldn’t that also suggest that you can continue to pay. Commissioner Long answers with “yes”.

 Terry Merritt asks, when these employees were hired was it stipulated on their hiring paperwork only if we keep the grant. Terry suggests to see what they were hired at because if you told them they were going to get this much money and it doesn’t stipulate this because we are receiving a grant then the county kind of got tied there in his opinion, sounds like there needs to be some housekeeping on was these people hired at $12.00 an hour with this grant coming in to make them up to $15.00 hr. or were they hired at $15.00 hr. and we are going to try to get the grant. Commissioner Long states that they are hired at minimum wage, and the supplement makes up to the max amount that they can make. Commissioner Long states there are five on the deputy supplemental, but she is under the impression that a couple of them have quit but she is not sure and has not heard that from the sheriff’s department.

Patty Jones states that she had the strangest thing that happened to her when they were doing the pantry distribution day she had a deputy come up to her and said he was curious as to what you all had going on up here today and she told him what they do, he didn’t look familiar and she ask if he was from around here, he says no and he is from Salem and he volunteers his time. Commissioner Long states that we have reserve deputies. Patty says that the volunteer deputy asks her if she may put in a good word for him with Sheriff Hogan to get hired on full time with the sheriff’s department. Patty says, “so you do have reserves?” Commissioner Long states that yes, we do. Patty also asks if they volunteer their time couldn’t that be a liability. Commissioner Long states that even if they do volunteer, they are considered a reserve and they must have their POST and all of the qualifications, it’s not just a random volunteering person. Allen Ford – Coroner, states that some that have the reserve don’t want to work full-time but they want to keep their POST, and they have to have so many hours to keep that.

The commissioners discuss the deputy supplemental pay again. Commissioner Crider states that he doesn’t know if that’s something they do once to help, then get bit in the hind end by it. Commissioner Kelly states that it may be a legal question and he hates not paying those guys. Commissioner Long states that she does not think Shannon County can pay the deputies as much as they probably should be making but there is only so much money and with not having the grant instated right now is only going to increase that deficit. Commissioner Long says she doesn’t want them to go without their money either.

Patty Jones asks what the prior sheriff made; Commissioner Long states that it was $42,000.00. Patty says, “Did I read where they are wanting a double of that salary?” Commissioner Long tells Patty that that is state mandated that your sheriff makes half of your associate circuit judge. Terry Merritt states that it is an unfunded state mandate. Commissioner Long explains that the counties had so many years to work up to that amount and there were questions about that as well, an elected official can’t take a pay increase in the middle of their term, therefore Shannon County didn’t implement it until January of 2025 and was updated again in July of 2025. Patty states that she would feel guilty as a sheriff if her budget was over. Commissioner Long states that it doesn’t have any reflection on him at all because it was a state mandate. Patty was just stating that she would hate to take that kind of money and not be able to afford to pay the deputies. Patty asks how many deputies we got by with in the prior administration. Commissioner Long tells her that she thinks Steve Blunkall had two or maybe three and a reserve, Darrin Brawley had three. Commissioner Long states that she isn’t sure, but she thinks we may be down to six or seven deputies now. Karen Stewart asks if we still have deputies that are still on administrative leave. Commissioner Long says that she is unaware, and she has never been notified by the sheriff’s department that any were on administrative leave. Karen asks if there are any that are getting paid and are not working. Commissioner Long states that she is not aware of that either. Commissioner Kelly asks if McCoy is getting paid. Commissioner Long states that McCoy is no longer on the payroll. Patty Jones says, “It seems like there should be an outside source monitoring the sheriff and jail budgets since they can’t do their own, and unbiased person”. Commissioner Long tells Patty that she understands but that is part of your duty as an elected official. Commissioner Long states that the commissioners do what they can. Patty asks if the commission is over the sheriff or if Allen, the coroner or anyone is over him. Commissioner Long states that there are no elected officials over another elected official. Patty says, “there has got to be someone above him though”. Commissioner Long tells her that it is the citizens and the attorney general and that it is for any elected position, locally your voters are over you. Patty says, “that the voters don’t really know what is going on monthly, they can come in but there is no audit monthly, correct?” Commissioner Crider states that the commissioners look at the budgets every quarter. Commissioner Long states that they look at them more often than quarterly, but they are addressed quarterly, and the clerk’s office and the treasurer balance every month. Commissioner Crider states that each office holder oversees their own budget.

Commissioner Long tells Commissioners Crider and Kelly that they must make a decision about the deputy supplemental pay. Commissioner Kelly says he is going to work on trying to get the supplemental grant back. Commissioner Kelly also states that he will be surprised if we can make it through the rest of the year. Commissioner Long states that they paid for the last pay period without having that money coming in. Commissioner Crider says, “we didn’t know it” Commissioner Long tells him that they knew it because they had received the letter on September 8th, 2025, stating it was suspended. Commissioner Crider says, “didn’t the sheriff say the grant wasn’t suspended?” Commissioner Long says, “he said it was paused”. Commissioner Long states that when she spoke with Randy Keiser and he said, “what is the difference between paused and suspended, in my book they are the same”. Karen Stewart asks, “is there money to pay the supplemental without taking from someone else?” Commissioner Crider states that it will eventually come down to taking from someone else and that isn’t fair. Commissioner Long states that we have six pay periods left this year. Commissioner Crider states that it would be roughly $6500.00 just for the supplemental. Commissioner Long states that it comes to $6230.70 and it will be that amount if there are five deputies remaining on the grant. Commissioner Long states that she doesn’t know from one pay period to the next who is gone or who has come on. Commissioner Crider says the deputy supplemental has nothing to do with the jail, it’s just the deputies. Commissioner Long tells Commissioner Crider that is correct. Commissioner Kelly says, “if we haven’t got it then we can’t afford to pay it, and I don’t think we’ve got it”. Commissioner Kelly states that when you are an elected official in Shannon County, you are in a poor county, and you know what the job pays, and you have a budget that you have to stay within. Commissioner Long states that if the money gets turned into the state treasurer’s office, then the grant will get reinstated and at that time, we will get the money, and the deputies could be reimbursed but are they going to stay until that happens. Commissioner Crider states that no matter what, it will be the commissioner’s fault. Karen asks, where is the party that should be speaking for these deputies, he should accept that responsibility and be here. Commissioner Crider states that he knows what it’s like to live from paycheck to paycheck and none of them three want to make the decision to pay or not pay. Commissioner Crider states that it’s going to come down to the other offices losing their employees and that isn’t fair to them. Commissioner Crider says, “What if they pay this pay period with the understanding that if the grant isn’t reinstated then they will no longer get that pay, would that give them some warning or is that going to turn around on us”? Commissioner Long says that she will not write a letter, and she doesn’t know how else to let the deputies know. Terry Merritt asks if they got together and make sure everything was turned in properly and submitted. Commissioner Crider says “no, and they aren’t going to, or I can’t see it happening”. Terry says, “if something isn’t got together and something worked out this can is just kicked plum off the face of the earth and this grant that is on pause will be done (we can call it suspended or we can call it paused) if the departments don’t get that reinstated the county is going to be out $6200.00 more besides the two or three thousand and that is horrible for our employees”. Commissioner Crider says, “And it is horrible for our county.” Terry Merritt says, “Absolutely, absolutely” Commissioner Crider says, “As you can see nobody that is involved is here to say anything”. Terry Merritt says, “he knows everyone is policed by the citizens so the department head that needs to get this turned in properly needs to really focus on that, and If I had employees that I knew that was not going to get paid if we don’t get this grant back I would be doing everything I could to get this grant and at least to the point as to where if there is somebody else involved and I think there is, another department that needs to work together, It's a shame we cant get 2 or 3 departments together for 90 minutes to just go through and prioritize the work and get it submitted, it’s embarrassing”. Commissioner Long states that the treasurer has been gone, and she will return next week, everything that was given to her has been forwarded to DPS for them to try to figure out how and where that money gets disbursed and if it was the correct amount. Commissioner Crider asks if it was and went to the right places would we have a time frame when that would be. Commissioner Long states that she isn’t sure what the time frame would be, but the money has not been turned over yet because the treasurer doesn’t know where to write the checks to, but she assumes once they get the payment the funds should be deposited quickly. Commissioner Crider states that the best-case scenario, 2 weeks. Commissioner Kelly states that he will do his best with the connections he has to get it worked out. Commissioner Kelly says, “we don’t all have to like one another but we need to work together for the citizens of this county and Michelle has been outstanding through all this and she always makes sure every penny is accounted for, and you can’t ask someone to turn in an improper document”.

Commissioner Long states that Michelle can’t turn something in that she doesn’t know the amounts to send or where to send them. Commissioner Crider says, “This may be something they need legal representation for but if they pay this one time does that get us in trouble, will we have to do it from then on?” Commissioner Kelly states that he just doesn’t know. Commissioner Long states that she doesn’t know if it would mean anything by putting it in the minutes that this was discussed and we are going to see what we can do about getting this grant reinstated and they can revisit the topic later. Commissioner Crider says he would like to try something like that. Commissioner Long states that she thinks that it is fair not only to the commission but to the treasurer and sheriff to give some time to see what can be done about the supplement but also for the deputies. Commissioner Crider says, “that will be a little over a thousand dollars for this pay period, right and the bad thing is it just puts us farther in the hole and we are digging in deeper and that’s not saving the county”. Commissioner Long states that we are saving a little bit of money because there are less deputies than there were. Commissioner Kelly states that when we start out next year, we will have less money to make a budget with. Mike Bell asks if there will be a lot of stuff that won’t have to be budgeted for next year because it was taken care of this year. Commissioner Longs answers with “we hope”. Commissioner Crider states that there is no way to know that. Terry Merritt says, “He would be concerned about the manner the employees were hired, anytime he hired employees or have been hired I had a document telling me how I was getting paid and how much, and if there is a document that says this employee was hired at this many thousands a year or an hourly wage and if it does not mention that you are going to make this much as long as we get this grant then you are only going to make this much, you may have a document and I am not an attorney but you may have a document with the mutual agreement that employees are supposed to get paid this much money, I would make sure that document lists you will make this much money only if we get this grant before you go not paying them, and that is horrible because the county is broke but you really got to pay attention and you don’t want to make it worse by breaking the county’s word to somebody”. Terry says he would look to see what it said when they were hired, the agreement. Commissioner Long states that she doesn’t want to get into another legal battle and wants to work on seeing if they can find out any documentation on the hiring with the sheriff’s department.

Commissioner Crider makes a motion to pay the deputies the deputy supplemental pay this pay period (September 16th through September 30th, 2025) Commissioner Kelly seconds the motion. Motion carries with all in favor.

 (H-Y, V-Y, B-Y). Commissioner Long says, “for the deputy supplemental, lets specify”. Commissioner Crider says, “let’s see if we can work something out before the next pay period, if not we are not going to be able to pay them the full amount if the supplement is not brought back”

Commissioner Long states that they will revisit this issue on October 13th, 2025, and we will see if we can pull some answers together before then. Mike Bell asks, “Michelle will be back then?” Commissioner Long states that Michelle will be back. Commissioner Long states that she has hopes that we will be able to get the supplemental grant reinstated because that will be extremely critical to Shannon County as a whole if we lose that forever. Karen Stewart asks, “It’s not just this one that will be in question, that’s the way I read it”. Commissioner Long answers with “2024-2025 has been completed and closed out, 2026 is the one that is suspended currently, but if you lose 2026 to negligence you will not get 2027”. Commissioner Kelly states that he thinks Terry touched on a vital point, there are two offices and he has got to get that stuff to Michelle and I do believe we can get it reinstated, that is with the people that I know in Jefferson City but we need to make sure he is turning over what he has to turn over to Michelle. Commissioner Crider says, “that puts the county out for one pay period a little over one thousand dollars”. Commissioner Crider states it needs to be noted in the minutes. Commissioner Long says, “Let’s wait and we will make that determination at a later date when we have information and I don’t want anything to get twisted or turned that was not discussed in here, I would like to get some more stern answers so on the 13th we can put it all together”.

Commissioner Long asks Jeff Williams if he has a topic to discuss. Jeff Williams states he wants to talk about Delaware Road in Commissioner Kelly’s district. He states that it has been months and it’s terrible. Commissioner Kelly tells Jeff that they have been working on FEMA and they have 60 days, less than that at this time and they are working on how much money it will take, the cost of chat, how many loads and the cost to put it back and they said it could be up to six months before we receive any money, we hope we can get it quicker than that but there are portions of the road that we will be working on and they have a lot of areas all over the county that’s like that. Jeff says, “So you are waiting on FEMA money, you may not be getting that”. Commissioner Kelly says, “Well I think we are going to get it, we have had meetings, and we are going to work on that”. Commissioner Kelly states that he is guessing at the cost, but he thinks it is probably around 4 million dollars for the whole county. Jeff asks, “We are talking six months out to fix that?” Commissioner Kelly tells Jeff that he will bring him a pencil by, and he can see what it costs. Jeff says, “FEMA wasn’t that way before so I am not going to get into the political part of it, there’s a big bunch of cuts on the political side, I talked to Drew up there and he said he talked to you before and he’s got clay that he’ll provide for you right there, that road in front of Drew Whisenhunt’s is 4’ below at least and it has got to be raised up or you are going to continue to have that bellowed out every time, the other part there that the condition that needs addressed is, and I don’t know how you will do it because it’s on a landowner. When Greg had that timber cut up there on him they dropped a lot of limbs and debris in that creek bed and there are two monster drifts down there that is stopping that up and redirecting it to that road and a lot of your problem is getting him to allow you or whatever, to go in there and clean those drifts out because that is part of your problem, you can’t see them right now because the horse weeds, etc. has them covered up, but there are two large drifts out there and water is going to run to it’s easiest passage and that road has got to be raised up and he is providing you the clay”. Commissioner Kelly tells Jeff that he has talked to Drew about that and what we are going to do, and they have also talked about diverting the water somewhere else. Jeff says “Yeah, he mentioned that and you all can work on that, just what I am seeing it’s a problem but surely before you get some FEMA money you can get some rock or do something or get a grader, it needs graded it hasn’t been graded and I don’t know what is going on with the grading but the grading stops at the O’Dell’s, there’s been some rock hauled on that stretch, it’s so rough past the O’Dell’s, it’s been 2” rock or 3” dumped in there but there’s never been a grader and it’s just dumped and it needs to be graded #1 to fill the potholes, which would be good to fill with that big rock, I agree but then you are going to have to put some base on it because it’s just like driving on a, it’s rough”. Commissioner Kelly agrees. Jeff says, “I am also bringing to your attention whether you are aware of it or not, at Debbie O’Dell’s numerous times there has been rock hauled to that point or graded to that point and then it’s just drop the blade here and there, all the way up through there, I don’t know what’s going on but obviously we got a place up there, I may have to drive it, amongst other people and as you mentioned a while ago when I got here whether we like one another or we don’t like each other we have a duty to do what’s right for the county”. Commissioner Kelly says, “absolutely, what I have focused on is we will be hauling some more material and working on that, we have been so far behind”. Jeff says,” I know there was a lot of flooding, don’t get me wrong but this is been a lot of months, I don’t have to come back to the meeting but I’d like to get a report back from you on some kind of timeline to get something achieved up there, I mean for everybody that is driving it, its beating rigs apart”. Commissioner Kelly tells Jeff they will be making some improvements when the money gets in. Jeff says, “I will expect to hear back from you then”. Commissioner Kelly tells Jeff that he will come by and let him know.

Commissioner Kelly motions to keep the levies the same as last year. General Revenue 0.1700, Road and Bridge at 0.2410. Commissioner Crider seconds the motion. Motion carries with all in favor. (B-Y, H-Y, V-Y)

Terri Mae Pitts is in to speak about Chip Hollow Road. Terri Mae introduces herself. Terri Mae says, “I am the one that questioned the public road issue that came to surface last week, I am not sure what conclusion that was come to about it, but I do have documentation that I have requested numerous times from the commission, I have a letter stating the road is public, it has Shane Van Steenis, Presiding commissioner at the time and Dean Cox, Northern Commissioner at the time. Commissioner Long asks, “You do have the letter?” Terri Mae answers “yes”. Commissioner Long says, “I have never seen this, this is what I stated last week and if I had this, you know I couldn’t do it on a handshake, that has gotten us in trouble in the past and beings that there is a letter”. Terri Mae says, “My question is, I have requested that a dozen times why could it not be pulled from any files when I requested that?” Commissioner Long states as far as she knows it doesn’t show that it has been recorded. Terri Mae says, “recorded?” Commissioner Long says, “At the recorders office as a public document”. Terri Mae says, “So would that have been signed in a meeting?” Commissioner Long answers with “I don’t know”. Commissioner Crider asks Commissioner Long if that is in the minutes, Commissioner Long answers with “No, this is just a letter, and it doesn't even have a date on it”. Commissioner Long states that the commissioners at the time were Dean Cox, Shane Van Steenis, and Herman Kelly, but it doesn’t even have a date on it and Shane and Dean are the two that signed it beings that it is on the North side. Commissioner Long is wondering if the county has minutes that go back that far. Terri Mae says “1997 is when that document took place”. Commissioner Long states that she has been waiting for some kind of proof that was something besides just a handshake. Commissioner Crider states that he can’t find anything that goes back that far. (1997). Commissioner Long states that if they are going to write up a new letter they need to attach a copy of the letter that Terri Mae brought in. Terri Mae says, “I do have the code section letter that was used to site this letter, section 228.190”. Terri Mae states that she has the correspondence between two landowners in question, being her grandparents who are both deceased, her brother and her have ownership of the said property that has brought this to issue, her parents as well as the landowner who does not want it to be maintained a public road because he stated in letter that he would close the road and there is no other legal access, or no other access period to the properties which he has requested $25,000.00 for easement, which they will not be doing. Commissioner Crider asks if there is anything on anyone’s deed that gives easement on that road. Commissioner Long states the easements that were given are to the property owners to the North of the property. Terri Mae states that would have been around 2008, they are from out of town but they would be able to attend what ever meetings are necessary, to Terri’s understanding the only reason they went through an easement process was because they were uninformed it was a public road, and were informed by other party that it was private and they needed an easement. Commissioner Long asks Terri Mae if she has all the documentation. Commissioner Long makes copies. More discussion over the road. Commissioner Long tells Terri Mae that she will let her know something.

Karen Stewart asks about the cameras for the courthouse and if Commissioner Long has gotten any information. Commissioner Long states that she has not, and she has not talked to the company in Jefferson City, but she did talk with Devon McClain our IT and he will let them know that she wants them to come to the courthouse to see what we have and that it has not been scheduled yet. Karen also asks if it was true if something happened in the meantime no matter if it had been erased or whatever that IT could probably get the footage back, does the IT have that capability. Commissioner Long states that the cameras are not hooked on our IT service, the cameras that are onsite are with Alert 360. Commissioner Long says, “There was an incident that happened out front on the South end last week, the smoke bucket had been torn apart and cigarette butts were all over the picnic table and the janitor went and ask if they could look back and she was told that we only have live service not recordings, which I know that is not correct, she did go to the sheriff’s office and that was the information she was given”. Karen shows the commissioners and visitors a chart she made from looking at the Ozark National Scenic Riverways site the number of visitors we have coming through our area, she states that it isn’t just Shannon County, but it is an average of people coming through ONSR from 1979 to 2024, the number is 1,436,596. Karen states there was a question about maybe generating money from tourists. Karen states that maybe someone could work on this for revenue. Karen says, “The last thing she has is just from a personal stand point, and I want to just caution everybody, including myself to make sure any story you tell about what happens here, or what’s going on that it be done with accuracy and I would like to take a moment and give you two scenarios, and I spoke to the prosecutor this morning to make sure that I was right in my thinking. Several years ago, I owned a store and as part of that store, we even sold Bass Pross stuff. We had a cooler that had a motor on it that sat on the porch of my store and there were some children that took the cooler and rode it away and I asked him what the term for that would be, he said, “Theft”, I said OK I understand that. So that could have been my story right there. I said, so what would have happened, and he said, “It would not be filed with us, but a statement would have been made, and it would have gone to juvenile authorities”, I said would that have affected children throughout their lifetime, he said very possible. I spoke to him right out here (at the courthouse). Now, here is the other side of the story If I told it from where I truly stood on that story, there was a young mother came in, she had two children, they got on the cooler, and they rode it at Summersville across and over by the bank and all that. I had to go and retrieve it and brought it back, we had a good laugh about it. But there’s the two sides of the story, I could have said they stole my cooler, they were like 5 and 6 years old. I asked the prosecutor, and he said they could have been charged. I did not do that because I think we all need to be gracious to one another and look at the whole picture and pick and choose what we are going to do with that information and portray accurately, I would never ever have charged those children because they were having an good time and I laughed at them but you can see how it could have been switched over and used against them”. Karen tells Mike Bell that those kids were his grandchildren. Mike asks Karen if she reported them to the FBI too. Karen states that his daughter came into the store quite often, and she regrets that all this that has taken place has divided that friendship between them. Her point was to get across to people to report things as factually as they can.

Jeremy Manning with Smith and Company came in to speak with the commissioners. Jermey states that he wants to take a semifinal walk through the jail and was wondering if the commissioners could go with him, there are still things he would like to see in the future for the jail and he knows that finances are a huge hindrance. There will be a jail board meeting on Thursday night at 5:30 pm. Jeremy asks if he can interject more, Commissioner Long states that he can. Jeremy states that they have been awfully busy and they have had something that has hit their office hard, his boss has a lot of health problems and the company is in turmoil in that regards, he wanted to say something that he had brought up, he has done a lot of marketing and community research, he told Jeremy one time that every dollar spent locally circulates seven times on average. Jeremy said “that hit me while we were walking through the jail a while ago, that almost 100% of that jail was done with local sources and our other competition in that bid was from Farmington and that is a company that I work with all the time and they are a good company but they are big and it didn’t happen, they didn’t get the project, it happened to be done locally and it was split up in two different projects, trying to save money. I have counties come to me all the time saying I have got to have this bridge, I say I know what you need but I am not going to start there, I need to know what you can afford, and that is the way this started and you guys have won the lottery and you don’t even know it. I know it because I’m a third party and I see it all the time, I bid, and bid, and bid and we do a lot, and I am wrapping up a 4-million-dollar bridge, a few counties’ north of here, and I know what construction goes for and you guys got a heck of a deal”. Jeremy says he was watching the electrician working at the jail, and he is very impressed with him. Jeremy says looking back there’s a lot of other people that haven’t watched the evolution (to Commissioner Long Jeremy says, even you, you weren’t here when this started) and I am one of the only completely independent third party people that has been trough this from the start and Vester, you weren’t here but I will tell you that your predecessors, they did a good job. Commissioner Crider says, “they did a lot of good to help the county, didn’t they?” Jeremy answers “yes”. Commissioner Crider states that some of them got kicked in the hind end for trying to help but that’s exactly what they were trying to do. Jeremy says, “That is exactly what they were trying to do, and they did whether anybody realizes it or not, I presented this to a person that was very disgruntled and asking questions and the point was brought up and we are still trying to work through water pressure, will you have enough water pressure for fire suppression and we don’t know that yet, this person in the community ask in a pretty rude way of asking me, well why in the world did the county build this addition if they don’t know if they can have fire suppression yet, I said well A. You don’t have to have to, you are not even legally required to and B. You are on a time limit, if someone was to walk up to and said I’ll give you a half million dollars to build a house, but try to order HVAC right now, can you get it just like that (no) but I’m telling you that you have got to have this house built in six months are you going to go ahead and say no, keep your half million dollars, I don’t want it , are you going to make that decision, what are you going to do, you are going to build as much as you can with that half million dollars and you can always come back.”

Commissioner Long states that she wants to discuss the props holding up the wall, she is wondering what they are going to do, the city is going to want their parking back. Jeremy suggested and reached out to Semo Mud Jackers who put the piers in for the building. Commissioner Long states that she has not called them back yet because she wanted to get Commissioners Kelly and Crider’s input to see where we would be at to secure the wall. She states that she has no idea what the cost will be, but Jeremy said it would be the cheapest way to go about securing the wall. Jeremy says, he has a pretty good idea of what it would cost, if they do lateral tiebacks through the wall, they are usually $3,500.00 each, they usually do them at a maximum of 10 feet, maybe 6 to 8 feet center spacing. Jeremy states that there was a question if the wall was sound or not, no one really knows, and you will never get someone to come in and say for sure because no one knows. Commissioner Long says “Jeremy corrected me on Friday, I was under the understanding that when they come in and done the study on the wall, that study was on the building, the building wasn’t going anywhere because the piers were put down in the ground so I feel like this is extremely important for us to do so we have that security in that wall”. Commissioner Kelly states that the jail board had brought that up to the county commission. Jeremy states that the only other information they have on the wall is that some of the guys working out there have seen the wall move. Jeremy says you could hire us; it would be a little costly, and we could mark the wall and do a survey. Commissioner Long says, “Why would we do that when we could put security into it with Mud Jackers.” Jeremy agrees and states that the monitoring would have had to happen a while before. Jeremy says, “The big question was including the grand jury thing that happened, I don’t know how you would, the legal whatever anyway I know some of the questions that were ask at that time was that the jail on that entire corner is built on drilled piers and so if that wall was to fall, the jail is not going anywhere”. Dave Trotter states that in his opinion, if you take the jacks down the wall itself will fall, we just don’t know when. Jeremy states that the contractors are pretty sure of that. Commissioner Long states that she will get the call put into Semo Mud Jackers and get them scheduled to come. Commissioner Long states they will have to take bids, but she would like Semo Mud Jackers to come and look at it first.

Jeremy states that the landscaping around the courthouse is beautiful. Commissioner Long states that Tony Orchard has got a thumb for flowers.

Commissioner Kelly and Jeremy discuss a bridge that needs to be done on one of the south side county roads. Commissioner Kelly is wanting some numbers for FEMA. Jeremy states that a lot of the counties are making it to where the bridges have to be 2 lanes.

Patty Jones brought up an issue that happened in a previous meeting, it was discussed, and the issue was resolved.

Mike Bell states that he did not call the Springfield News leader. Commissioner Long states she did not feel attacked in the writing, and it’s done and over with and she did not take offence.

Commissioner Kelly motions to adjourn the meeting at 12:00 p.m. Commissioner Crider seconds the motion. Motion carries with all in favor. (H-Y, V-Y, B-Y)

The next meeting will be held on Monday, September 29th, 2025, at 9:00 a.m., in the county courtroom, on the first floor of the courthouse.

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Beth Long, Presiding Commissioner

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Vester Crider, Northern Commissioner

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Herman Kelly, Southern Commissioner

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Shelly Bland, County Clerk