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Red Oak to hold local option election

As required under the law, Ellis County Commissioners authorized a local option election to consider the legal sale of beer and wine for off-premise consumption only in the City of Red Oak, pursuant to certification of a petition containing the required number of signatures.

According to Elections Administrator Jane Anderson, 483 signatures were needed to call such an election in the City of Red Oak. The petition was filed on January 19, 2010 and 483 signatures were in fact verified and accepted. The election will be held on May 8, 2010, which is the next uniform election date.

Anderson also received approval from the Court to increase the hourly wage for election clerks from \$8.00 per hour to \$8.50 per hour to match the State's rate of pay for 2010 primary election workers. A third election-related vote approved the early voting schedule to be used for a Democratic and Republican Primary Run-off Election if it is necessary.

With early voting ongoing in the March 2 Democratic and Republican Primary Elections, Anderson noted that any closure or delayed opening of County offices due to bad weather would also affect the polling places.

"If people will check the Ellis County website, it will have either closings or delayed openings posted," she said, adding that in the event of inclement weather voters may want to call before travelling to the polling place.

Constable Mike Jones, pct. 4, asked the Court to accept two grants of \$4,000 each from TxDOT.

"Every year, TxDOT has a program for 'Click It or Ticket' and for 'Impaired Driver Mobilization' or the DWI program," Jones said. "These are at two separate times of the year and cover about two weeks each time. You simply do your normal course of business, and then you submit the stats on what you've done."

Jones said 15 agency names are pulled from among the applications submitted for each program.

“We were lucky enough to win \$4,000 on ‘Click It or Ticket,’ and then three months later we won another award,” he added. “We can use this (funding) to purchase equipment, such as vehicle equipment, and it doesn’t cost the County any money.”

It was with some reluctance that Commissioners accepted the resignation of Jimmy Roy from the Emergency Service District #6 Board of Directors, with Commissioner Ron Brown, pct. 4, casting a dissenting vote.

“I don’t think he ought to resign,” Brown said.

“Back when we reappointed him in December, we knew he was going to try to serve out six months to a year to help get the new directors a chance to get ready on the budget and so forth,” said Commissioner Heath Sims, pct. 3. “I want to thank him for his service. Mr. Roy carried the load of that ESD maybe a little heavier than most because of being retired and having more time. Volunteer firefighting I know is his love, and I want to thank him.”

In other business, Commissioners:

- Authorized the County Judge to sign a redemption and conveyance by Quitclaim Deed on property struck from the tax rolls in 2008 for which delinquent taxes have now been paid;
- Approved an interlocal agreement and accompanying work order with the Ennis Garden Club for the Bluebonnet Trail annual event;
- Took no action on a proposal to reclassify one Deputy I to a Civilian Animal Control Officer within the Sheriff’s Office;
- Authorized a final continuance of the arbitration agreement with the City of Midlothian and the County of Ellis vs. Kehe Foods regarding a tax abatement agreement;
- Approved the preliminary plat for McGregor Estates, Phases 2 and 3, 26 lots, in precinct 3;
- Took no action on a proposal to award the bid for the construction of the Adult Probation and Emergency Management Offices;
- Approved Infrastrux T&D Services to provide all labor, materials, equipment and supervision necessary to install 990 feet of underground conduit for street lights in association with Oncor as a budgeted part of the County’s ongoing Bond Program at a cost not to exceed \$8,000.