

**JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL  
EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MARY GORDON ELLIS EXECUTIVE BUILDING  
COUNCIL OFFICE  
NOV. 8, 2007  
10:00 A.M.**

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

CHAIRMAN TUTEN, COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR, ROY HUGHES- DEP. ADM.  
EMERGENCY SERVICES, JUDITH FRANK – CLERK TO COUNCIL

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT THE ELECTRONIC  
AND PRINT MEDIA WERE NOTIFIED.

DURING PERIODS OF DISCUSSION AND/OR PRESENTATIONS MINUTES ARE  
TYPICALLY CONDENSED AND PARAPHRASED.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 10:20 A.M.

**DISCUSSION ON FIRE AND EMS:**

MR. HUGHES INFORMED THE COMMITTEE THAT \$268,859.32 WAS COLLECTED  
THROUGH EMS BILLING DEPARTMENT. MR. HUGHES SAID THE COLLECTION  
AGENCY COLLECTS A PERCENTAGE OF WHAT THEY COLLECT FOR THE COUNTY  
WHEN THE BILLING DEPARTMENT TURNS BILLS OVER TO THEM THAT THE  
BILLING DEPARTMENT HAS NOT HAD SUCCESS COLLECTING.

MR.HUGHES REPORTED THAT 10 ROAD NAME SIGNS WERE STOLEN IN OCTOBER,  
AND ONE ARREST WAS MADE. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED ADVERTISING  
THE ARREST TO HELP DETER THE THEFT OF ROAD NAME SIGNS. MR. HUGHES  
SUGGESTED THAT AN ORDINANCE BE PASSED OUTLINING THE PENALTIES FOR  
STEALING ROAD NAME SIGNS. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR RECOMMENDED  
THAT AN ARTICLE BE PLACED IN THE NEWSPAPER TO LET PEOPLE KNOW THE  
IMPORTANCE OF THE SIGNS.

CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED IF THE COUNTY WAS ACCEPTING CREDIT CARD  
PAYMENTS FOR EMS SERVICES AND MR. HUGHES SAID THEY JUST STARTED TO  
TAKE CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS. MR. HUGHES SAID HE FELT IT WOULD HELP  
WITH THE COLLECTION OF OUT OF TOWN CLIENTS. CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED IF  
THE AGAPE AMBULANCE WAS BEING USED AND MR. HUGHES SAID IT CAN ONLY  
BE USED FOR NON EMERGENCY TRANSPORTS AND IT IS A PRIVATE SERVICE AND  
MEDICARE AND MEDICAID WOULD ONLY PAY A PORTION OF its CHARGES.  
CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID IT SHOULD HELP TRANSFERRING PEOPLE FROM THE  
NURSING HOME. CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID HE FELT THE COUNTY SHOULD ONLY  
CHARGE WHAT THE INSURANCE WILL PAY. MR. HUGHES SAID THERE ARE SOME  
PEOPLE WHO DO NOT HAVE INSURANCE AND THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE WHO  
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SERVICES. MR. HUGHES SAID THERE WAS ONE  
INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS CALLED 45 TIMES IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS AND WAS  
NEVER TRANSPORTED, BUT THE EMS TEAM STILL HAD TO RESPOND. MR.  
HUGHES SAID COLLECTIONS TO DATE ARE ABOUT \$750,000.00.  
CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED IF ANYONE WAS OUT ON DISABILITY AND MR.  
HUGHES SAID NOT AT THIS POINT IN TIME. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR ASKED

IF ALL THE PERSONNEL APPROVED IN THE BUDGET HAD BEEN HIRED. MR. HUGHES SAID THAT FOUR PEOPLE NEEDED TO BE FINALIZED AND MS. LUCAS WAS WORKING ON THAT AND THAT CLAY LUCAS WAS PART OF AN INTERNAL CHANGE AND HIS POSITION HAS BEEN FINALIZED AND MADE PERMANENT. MR. HUGHES DISCUSSED THE FACT THAT GEORGE WYNN IS GOING BACK ON A TRUCK AND ONE OF THE CAPTAINS WILL BE USED IN HIS POSITION UNTIL THAT POSITION IS CLARIFIED. MR. HUGHES SAID THE POSITION PREVIOUSLY HELD BY MR. WYNN IS NOW CLASSIFIED AS A SALARY POSITION WITH NO OVERTIME AND THAT POSITION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DAY TO DAY OPERATIONS OF FIRE AND EMS AND THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CALLS AFTER HOURS, BUT THEY ARE EXEMPT FROM OVERTIME. MR. WYNN ASKED TO BE PUT ON AN HOURLY BASIS AND HE REQUESTED TO BE PUT BACK ON A TRUCK.

CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED IF THE INVESTIGATION OF THE JENNESS FIRE WAS COMPLETE AND MR. HUGHES SAID IT WAS STILL BEING INVESTIGATED.

MR. HUGHES SAID HE SPOKE WITH DR. SANDFORD ABOUT ESTABLISHING A CADET PROGRAM IN THE HIGH SCHOOL TO GET YOUNGER PEOPLE INVOLVED.

MR. HUGHES SAID HE WAS LOOKING INTO SERVICE CONTRACTS IF THEIR EDUCATION IS PAID FOR BY THE COUNTY.

MR. HUGHES SAID THERE WERE SOME PROBLEMS CONCERNING HOW INDIVIDUALS ARE PAID AND OVERTIME SINCE THEY ARE CLASSIFIED AS EMTS AND FIREMEN. MR. HUGHES SAID HE IS WORKING ON RESOLVING THIS ISSUE. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR SAID THAT THIS ISSUE WAS NEVER PRESENTED TO THE COUNCIL AND HE FELT THE COUNCIL NEEDED TO BE AWARE IF PEOPLE ARE REFUSING TO SERVE AND IF A PERSON IS HIRED TO DO A JOB, THEY SHOULD NOT SAY WHAT THEY WILL AND WILL NOT DO. MR. HUGHES SAID HE IS TRYING TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SCALES AND OVERTIME ISSUES. MR. HUGHES SAID HE FELT THE CLASSIFICATIONS SHOULD BE IN THE SAME STANDARDS.

MR. HUGHES DISCUSSED GETTING A HANDLE ON SPENDING AND WHAT THE FUNDS ARE BEING SPENT ON. MR. HUGHES SAID THAT HE HAS INFORMED HIS DEPARTMENT THAT ANY EXPENDITURES OVER \$1,000.00 MUST BE APPROVED BY HIM. MR. HUGHES SAID HE IS WORKING ON A GAS CARD SYSTEM THROUGH THE STATE. MR. HUGHES SAID HE IS REQUIRING THAT ALL FUEL TANKS BE FILLED AT PUBLIC WORKS AND HE DISCUSSED WITH HIS STAFF THAT THE UNITS MUST STAY IN THEIR DISTRICTS. MR. HUGHES SAID THERE WERE A LOT OF ISSUES THAT NEEDED TO BE RESOLVED, BUT HE WAS WORKING ON TRYING TO INSTILL PRIDE AND RESPECT IN HIS DEPARTMENT.

MR. HUGHES SAID THEY WERE MOVING 3 TANKS TO ROBERTVILLE WHICH WILL HOLD 32,000 GALLONS OF WATER. CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID THAT HE SHOULD DO A NEW RELEASE. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR SAID HE FELT THAT THE BEST RESULTS IN GETTING THE PUBLIC TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENING IN IS THEIR AREA IS THROUGH COMMUNITY MEETINGS. THE COMMITTEE ASKED MR. HUGHES TO SET UP A COMMUNITY MEETING IN PINELAND.

MR. HUGHES SAID THE ISO RATING WAS TO BE DONE IN NOVEMBER, BUT THERE IS STILL A LOT OF ISSUES THAT NEEDED TO BE ADDRESSED. THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED DELAYING THE ISO INSPECTIONS. CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID THAT MR. HUGHES COULD GET HELP FROM PUBLIC WORKS, IF NEEDED.

MR. HUGHES SAID HE WAS GOING TO SCHOOL AND HE WAS TAKING EMT AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CLASSES AND HE WOULD BE ATTENDING A HURRICANE CONFERENCE FOR ONE WEEK IN JANUARY IN MIAMI.

MR. HUGHES SAID THEY WERE WORKING ON THE STATION FOR FIRE TOWER ROAD AND THE AREA NEEDS TO BE CLEARED.

MR. HUGHES SAID THE FUNDRAISING EVENT FOR MR. COLEMAN RAISED \$3,300.00 AND MR. COLEMAN WAS BACK TO WORK.

**DISCUSSION ON DETENTION CENTER:**

MR HUGHES REPORTED THAT THE JAIL HAD 175 INMATES THE PAST WEEKEND AND THAT IS 40 INMATES OVER CAPACITY. MR. HUGHES SAID THAT MR. BENJAMIN HAD A HANDLE ON IT. MR. HUGHES SAID THE COUNCIL NEEDED TO CONSIDER EXPANSION OF THE DETENTION FACILITY. THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED THAT THE MUNICIPALITIES PUT PEOPLE IN THE DETENTION CENTER, THE MUNICIPALITIES COLLECT THE FINES, AND THEY SHOULD ASSUME SOME OF THE COSTS INVOLVED WITH HOUSING PRISONERS. MR. HUGHES SAID THE COUNTY HAS TO PROVIDE A JAIL AND HE IS NOT AWARE OF ANY MUNICIPALITIES THAT HAVE TO PAY TO HAVE THEIR INMATES HOUSED IN THE COUNTY JAIL. MR. HUGHES SAID THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR AT THE JAIL HAS BEEN HIRED AND HE WAS SCHEDULED TO START WORK THE 2<sup>ND</sup> WEEK IN NOVEMBER. MR. HUGHES SAID THE DETENTION CENTER HAD SOME STRUCTURING PROBLEMS, AND THEY HAD ABOUT SIX POSITIONS OPEN. MR. HUGHES SAID THE SYSTEM WORKS WELL, HOWEVER, THEY ARE UNDERSTAFFED AND OVER CAPACITY.

COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR SAID THE HE LIKED WHAT MR. HUGHES HAS BEEN DOING AND HE SAID THAT PEOPLE WILL DO WHAT YOU ALLOW THEM TO DO. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR SAID THAT IF PEOPLE CANNOT FOLLOW THE RULES THEN THEY SHOULD LOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT ELSEWHERE. MR. HUGHES SAID THERE ARE A LOT OF GOOD PEOPLE WORKING FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES AND THE COUNTY.

THE COMMITTEE TOLD MR. HUGHES IF HE NEEDED ANY HELP TO CONTACT THE COMMITTEE AS THEY WERE HERE TO HELP HIM. THE COMMITTEE WENT INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AND THE MEETING ENDED AT 11:25 A.M.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

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JUDITH M. FRANK, CCC  
CLERK TO COUNCIL

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FRED TUTEN  
CHAIRMAN