

1 BAIL BOND BOARD MEETING

2 MAY 18TH, 2023

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4 THOSE PRESENT: Judge Raquel West

5 Judge Clint Woods

6 Judge Ranson "Duce" Jones

7 Judge Craig Lively

8 Valencia Simpson

9 Tim Funchess

10 Becky Bertrand

11 Keith Day

12 Kellie Holmes

13 Tom Roebuck

14 Dustin Galmor

15 Captain Lewis

16 Quentin Price

17 Al Reed

18 Haylee Fournier

19 Valencia Fontenot

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7 JUDGE JONES: So moved.

8 JUDGE WOODS: Second.

9 JUDGE WEST: The motion by Judge Jones,

12:31PM 10 second by Judges Woods. Any discussion? All in favor?
11 (ALL RESPONDED.)

12 JUDGE WEST: They're approved. Looks like
13 I have a note that there is not a report from the
14 district attorney's office.

12:31PM 15 MS. BERTRAND: No, ma'am.

16 MR. PRICE: I have no explanation as to
17 why.

18 JUDGE WEST: That's all right.

19 MR. PRICE: Sandra is not in today.

12:31PM 20 JUDGE WEST: Okay.

21 MR. PRICE: That's it.

22 JUDGE WEST: Do we have any applications
23 for renewal or new bondsmen or agents?

24 MS. BERTRAND: No, ma'am.

12:31PM 25 JUDGE WEST: Any complaints?

1 MS. HOLMES: No, ma'am.

2 JUDGE WEST: Report from the treasurer,
3 everyone should have a copy of that. Any questions or
4 comments? Any request for release of property or CDs or
12:32PM 5 anything like that? Do you want to speak up?

6 MR. ROEBUCK: Keith.

7 MR. DAY: Oh, I'm sorry. I was sitting
8 over here passively. So I have a situation where I am
9 trying -- it's similar to the situation we faced with Al
12:32PM 10 last month, but I'm trying to do mine without taking the
11 property -- going off of the -- on the property, I want
12 to do a partial lien on this property. Ken Whitlow with
13 the -- what title company is it, Tom?

14 MR. ROEBUCK: Texas Regional.

12:32PM 15 MR. DAY: Texas Regional Title was putting
16 together a partial lien -- partial release on this
17 property for me. But he didn't get it to Becky. So I'm
18 going to call him when I leave here. I want to check
19 and find out if we can get this possibly done. Is this
12:33PM 20 something that we can possibly have a vote on without --

21 JUDGE WEST: Y'all and all of y'all's votes
22 in the middle of the -- between meetings, I swear. So
23 high maintenance.

24 MR. DAY: I know.

12:33PM 25 JUDGE WEST: That's fine. I mean, I

1 don't -- we did it before by e-mail.

2 MR. DAY: The reason is we're trying to
3 close on -- we're selling our property, as well. The
4 way I did -- Al was able to take this property off. I'm
12:33PM 5 not able to. So that's why I'm wanting to do a partial
6 release. The value should all -- I mean, I've already
7 set -- kind of sat down with Becky and showed her
8 everything. The values will all be -- will workout even
9 with the release, so...

12:33PM 10 MS. BERTRAND: Once he did it with the
11 property right now, Keith has a long track of land and
12 we have it pledged for 300-plus-thousand dollars. His
13 independent appraiser came in and said if we minus that
14 back part off and we're just looking at the building.

12:33PM 15 It actually is valued at more than \$300,000. So his
16 value is actually going to end up going up even if we
17 release that back part.

18 JUDGE WEST: Okay. Just get -- if you get
19 all that documentation to Becky and then, Becky, you
12:34PM 20 send it to me. And then if everything is in order, I'll
21 send it out for a vote on E-mail.

22 MR. PRICE: The last part --

23 MR. DAY: Just a section --

24 MR. PRICE: You're attaching a lien to a
12:34PM 25 smaller piece of it then still?

1 MR. DAY: Right. The value is still there.

2 MR. ROEBUCK: When and if you get that part
3 of the -- send it to me.

4 JUDGE WEST: All right. Any others?

12:34PM 5 Anything else with regard to any release? Okay.

6 Auditor's office report?

7 MR. FUNCHESS: I passed out to everyone.

8 JUDGE WEST: Okay. And then the liability
9 revisit the surety liability.

12:34PM 10 MS. BERTRAND: We have Mary here.

11 JUDGE WEST: Hi. Where are we on that?
12 You can come on up or stay there or wherever you're
13 comfortable giving information that you have.

14 MS. HELM: Okay. What was the question
12:35PM 15 again?

16 JUDGE WEST: The reports that we're trying
17 to get for the liability for the bondsmen. They used to
18 get a report.

19 MS. HELM: Daily report. So there is a
12:35PM 20 couple of things that they're leading up to getting that
21 report to start going out, and that is really basically
22 is they're finding it correct. Because we don't want to
23 start sending out a report and it not be correct. So
24 there was several steps we had to take to get to the
12:35PM 25 first point. I think we've kind of barely made it to

1 the first point. But we did get all of the bondsmen's
2 liabilities and the records merged and everything in
3 Odyssey just to make a long story short on that.
4 Odyssey is party based. They was going to resolve --
12:35PM 5 party based, we've have had a lot of issues with things
6 we had to merge. So because the bondsmen had records
7 and JP records, jail records, court records, we had to
8 merge those and make sure that we had everything linked
9 and had their liabilities correct. So Becky had worked
12:36PM 10 with us on making sure we had the correct information.
11 We got all the bondsmen put in. Then we also got all of
12 the attorneys that are able to write bonds linked and
13 made sure that they're in.

14 So the next step that we did is Becky has
12:36PM 15 been working with Tamara.

16 MS. BERTRAND: Tamara.

17 MS. HELM: I don't know why I was having
18 trouble saying Tamara's name. She worked really hard on
19 getting a book Becky has.

12:36PM 20 MS. BERTRAND: She's prepared a binder for
21 us and broke out every bond that they have. She broke
22 out on what bonds they show on accusation. And so we
23 compare that to our report. Previously a report showed
24 \$3.7 million. We've now got that down to \$889,000
12:37PM 25 that's not showing. So we're making some progress. And

1 then she also broke down some areas that -- where the
2 bondsmen submitted a surrender or an at large without
3 proper bond was filed. So their bond needed to be
4 released. And so those we haven't gone back. So there
12:37PM 5 are certain specific areas that we know to go look for.
6 And Tamara was kind enough to go through her entire
7 bonds in her office and break out every category for us.
8 And so we've been going -- go back and start reviewing
9 some of them to see -- I mean, what the data transferred
12:37PM 10 over -- transferred over back in '08 but they're still
11 showing to be on the bond but a disposition happened in
12 '08, '10, whatever. So those are some of the things
13 that we're going to have --

14 MS. HELM: A lot of that is because of
12:38PM 15 data. If those weren't closed out on the back screen of
16 the bond screen, I just did -- disposing of the case did
17 not automatically dispose of the bond. So what we want
18 to do is use her information to verify what information
19 may or may not be correct to determine if it's a
12:38PM 20 conversion issue, if it's an issue that the data was
21 wrong, if it's an issue of a process that we may do not
22 have in place with our current system, like, if it's an
23 accusation and getting off of that accusation, is the
24 jail doing what they're supposed to do on their side to
12:38PM 25 get the bond off of the charge basically. Once we can

1 verify that we have that correct, the report is written
2 to start E-mailing out to the bondsmen. We do have to
3 schedule that. I was just talking to our programmer
4 before I came up here. It is ready for us to set up to
12:39PM 5 schedule. We just don't want to start scheduling it
6 until we verify it is correct because we don't want to
7 be sending incorrect.

8 MR. DAY: Mary, how close are y'all to
9 getting the accusation -- the actual accusations past
12:39PM 10 and the current ones that are -- that we're now showing
11 is on that liability.

12 MS. HELM: Well, we were told -- is
13 Chief --

14 CAPTAIN LEWIS: He's not here.

12:39PM 15 MS. HELM: He's not here. We were told
16 they were all put in, but we are finding some that are
17 not. So we're unsure is what the status is on that or
18 what the -- if it's maybe some older bonds, if something
19 -- you know, missing, if maybe there is some other
12:39PM 20 drawer somewhere that has some additional bonds. But we
21 have found some bonds on Tamara's list that are not in
22 the jailing. So we need to verify which ones -- what
23 we're missing, verify that with the jail to see if it's
24 something that was overlooked, and then determine where
12:40PM 25 we are as far as making sure they're all in there. But

1 we did finally get a report. It took us a little while
2 that showed the accusations. Alex figured that out.
3 Alex is new in our office, so she's going to be working
4 with us.

12:40PM 5 MR. DAY: The other question I have is how
6 much closer are we to the situation with the bond
7 assessment fees? Now, I'm not complaining because I'm
8 not paying a bill every month right now. But...

9 MS. HELM: Yes.

12:40PM 10 MR. DAY: I know it's a process.

11 MS. HELM: And I know Rhonda is not here.
12 So I spoke with Rhonda about that and Becky a couple of
13 weeks ago. So what we -- and I think we talked about
14 this a couple of months ago, maybe meeting. I don't

12:40PM 15 know. Time is crazy right now. If the bondsmen -- and
16 I'm not sure, Judge, if this is something that the board
17 needs to discuss or auditing or whatever. But what we
18 can do for now is we can run a report of all the bonds
19 that have been written. And the thing we can't do is --

12:41PM 20 I forget what the rule is. But if you write more than
21 two bonds on the same person or something, you don't
22 have to pay. Basically, the only thing we can do right
23 now is pull a report of all the bonds that you wrote
24 during that month. And if your office can determine
12:41PM 25 which ones you shouldn't pay, we can at least get the

1 money paid. We are going to continue -- I'm going to
2 set up a fee where you can either pay that to the county
3 clerk or the district clerk, either one. You can bring
4 your bill or bring your payment to either one of those
12:41PM 5 offices. We'll determine who -- it is probably going to
6 be Becky and just maybe one other person in district
7 clerk. Or you may all just want to pay Becky. That
8 might be easier to do. But we do need to get that done
9 because that money goes to the state. So only a very
12:42PM 10 small portion of that is the county money. Majority of
11 it is the state. I'm not sure if we can write an ECR
12 basically to do that billing. But I think we all agree
13 we would rather bill you than you have to pay every
14 time. I think that's both on your side --

12:42PM 15 MR. DAY: Absolutely.

16 MS. HELM: -- on our side. I know the
17 jail -- it would be difficult for the jail and your side
18 to have to pay that each time that you go out. So I
19 think Becky said she would be okay with -- you know,
12:42PM 20 taking that in once a month. It's just the program is
21 not as -- you know, AS400 was -- there was a custom
22 program that Maryann had written that had all those
23 rules in it, only assess this and -- with an ECR, we're
24 basically just pulling data. It's not a program, so...

12:43PM 25 MR. DAY: So in that scenario if we pay

1 Becky or whoever we end up paying, is that who we would
2 go to, to say, hey, this bond -- we impose this bond.
3 It was -- the code was entered wrong. Like, sometimes a
4 bond that I wrote might be on Chris -- Chris's list
12:43PM 5 or -- you know, one that's on -- Al wrote might be on my
6 list or something like that. So would it be the same
7 person who takes the check would handle that, or do we
8 know yet?

9 MS. HELM: We would probably need that
12:43PM 10 to -- I don't know if that would need to go through the
11 jail if the bond is on the wrong -- if the bondsman is
12 on the wrong person and someone is going to have to
13 correct the bond in the system, which would probably
14 need to be the jail. Because in the past, the bond was
12:44PM 15 put into the case on the Court side. But the Court
16 doesn't do that anymore. It's put on to the jailing,
17 so...

18 MR. DAY: Okay.

19 MS. HELM: I would say just communicate
12:44PM 20 that and Captain Lewis could probably --

21 MS. FONTENOT: Valencia.

22 MS. HELM: Valencia. I'm sorry your name
23 was not coming to me. It would probably be best --
24 because she actually has the bonds. Well, I guess that
12:44PM 25 would only be an accusation bond. If it's in the

1 Court -- I don't know, Becky, what's your thoughts on
2 that?

3 MS. BERTRAND: I missed the question.

4 MS. HELM: If they have a bond in the
12:44PM 5 system that's on the wrong bondsman and needs to be
6 corrected, like we send them their bill and then there
7 is a bond that they're being billed for that's not
8 really their bond. If it's --

9 MS. FONTENOT: It would still be through
12:44PM 10 me.

11 MS. HELM: It would still be there. Okay.
12 Okay. So you could just contact the jail and they can
13 get that corrected. I think the other thing that's kind
14 of on my list that's a process we need to figure out is
12:45PM 15 who updates. And Becky, help me fill in the words I'm
16 looking for.

17 MS. BERTRAND: The bond status.

18 MS. HELM: The bonds status if there's
19 certain --

20 MS. BERTRAND: If certain events happen in
21 a case, if a surrender was filed. The Court needs to
22 now go onto that bond on the case and release you from
23 it, where that was never a step before. And it's
24 something that really wasn't explained to us when we
12:45PM 25 were going through this. We just kind of had to figure

1 it out or if the Court issues an at large about proper
2 bond, the Court is going to raise the bond. The surety
3 that was currently on the bond, again, we have to go in
4 there and physically mark that bond as being released.

12:45PM 5 If we don't, it's still going to be listed on the
6 liability. So it's just another step for us that we
7 have to identify these are the things that need to
8 happen in order to get you off that bond.

9 MR. DAY: Well, wasn't that the case before
12:46PM 10 the old system? Didn't y'all have to go through like a
11 third page or --

12 MS. BERTRAND: It was back bond page, yeah.

13 MR. DAY: Okay.

14 MS. BERTRAND: So it's just another way for
12:46PM 15 us to do in this system, yeah.

16 MS. HELM: Yeah. We just need to make sure
17 everyone knows what pieces -- you know, because the
18 Courts don't have to do as much anymore on the bonds,
19 thankfully. They're not having to enter those bonds.
20 They've got plenty of other stuff to do. But they don't
21 have to enter those bonds anymore. We just need to make
22 sure in their processes -- so if there is something you
23 come across that when we do start sending you your
24 report and you say, well, you know, I was taken off of
12:46PM 25 this. Just communicate that so we can make sure that

1 we're all on the same page of making sure our Courts
2 have the processes in place for each, you know, just
3 trying to keep communication open. Because sometimes if
4 we just call one Court and that one Court knows we're
12:47PM 5 supposed to do something but we don't communicate it to
6 everyone then -- we don't all know, you know, new
7 processes, so...

8 MR. DAY: I know I'm kind of -- you know,
9 putting you out there on this question. But I mean, are
12:47PM 10 we -- I mean, obviously we're looking probably at least
11 end of the summer before we start getting any sort of
12 printout for the bondsmen showing us a list of our
13 clients and --

14 MS. HELM: I would like to have that done
12:47PM 15 within the next few weeks.

16 MR. DAY: Okay.

17 MS. HELM: I'm going to work with Becky
18 on -- now that we have Tamara's. That's going to help
19 us a lot, so we can -- and we did find a report that
12:47PM 20 shows us all the accusations and the bonds that are
21 attached to cases. So I'll schedule some time with
22 Becky for us to go through what's she's finding, so we
23 can identify if -- as long as none of those things are
24 conversion issues. If it's just things that we
12:48PM 25 physically someone hasn't done or that we didn't know

1 there was a process that needed to be done, then it
2 shouldn't take us long to get those reports.

3 MR. DAY: So what about the portal access
4 for us, are we closer to that?

12:48PM 5 MS. HELM: I think that's being worked on
6 by Tyler.

7 MS. BERTRAND: Yeah. Portal access is
8 still being worked on by Tyler, but public access will
9 be available first, meaning you can actually come to our
12:48PM 10 office and access the public access. There is a rule,
11 Rule 21C, the Rules of Civil Procedure that the clerk
12 shall not post over the internet documents containing
13 sensitive data. So that's why we can't immediately put
14 all of our imaging documents because we don't know which
12:48PM 15 ones contain it or not. But we can control it by coming
16 in our office and viewing anything that's been filed
17 because it's not over the Internet and check on these
18 cases.

19 MR. DAY: So we're at the --

12:49PM 20 MS. BERTRAND: But the portal is going to
21 show you the description and all of the information and
22 hope to give you some imaging information.

23 MR. DAY: Will that be county clerk and
24 district clerk?

12:49PM 25 MS. HELM: Yes. We're working on that with

1 county and district clerk. Everything is the same.

2 We're trying to keep things cross --

3 MS. BERTRAND: The public access will come
4 before the portal access.

12:49PM 5 MR. DAY: So you'll actually have computers
6 set up for the public?

7 MS. BERTRAND: We have them now in our
8 offices.

9 MS. HELM: Yeah. So you'll be able to come
12:49PM 10 in to the clerk's office. You can search those cases in
11 Odyssey. We're just trying to make sure we have
12 lockdown what the public people shouldn't see first.

13 The portal is a little bit slower because the portal is
14 really made to either be an actual monitoring person
12:50PM 15 that we don't know who are from what we would show you
16 to being an attorney. And attorneys have a lot more
17 ability because, you know, they do sign a disclaimer as
18 an officer of the Court that we can give them

19 information. And if it's something that -- you know,
12:50PM 20 they're not supposed to probably see. You know, they
21 sign disclaimers if they know they're not supposed to
22 give that information out. So we just have to be
23 careful on setting up other registered users to the
24 portal and make sure we only give them access to what
12:50PM 25 they need to access. So it's a little more work on the

1 portal side.

2 MS. BERTRAND: It's very complex.

3 MS. HELM: Yeah. It's very complex.

4 MS. BERTRAND: You stayed till 6:30 the
12:50PM 5 other night, and we got through only a small portion of
6 it.

7 JUDGE WEST: Thank you.

8 MS. HELM: You're welcome.

9 JUDGE WEST: Thank you for trying. And we
12:50PM 10 know y'all's working so hard.

11 MS. HELM: We're trying. It's a daily
12 struggle. We make two steps forward and three steps
13 back.

14 JUDGE WEST: Yeah. I know. We appreciate
12:51PM 15 you.

16 MS. HELM: If there is anything that y'all
17 think of and concerns this, let Becky know. She
18 communicates with us or really anybody, and we'll -- I
19 did talk to Rhonda just the other day about the billing,
20 because we do need to get that -- the financial part
21 done so y'all don't owe us a whole bunch at one time.

22 MR. DAY: Judge, can we see if any of the
23 other bondsmen have any questions, so I'm not asking.

24 MS. RITENOUR: I have a question. On that
12:51PM 25 daily report, it will have court dates on it; correct?

1 MS. HELM: Correct.

2 MS. RITENOUR: It will all be linked up the
3 report?

4 MS. HELM: Yeah. I think it does. I'm not
12:51PM 5 sure if that's one of the things I ask him to give the
6 next court day. When you do start getting those
7 reports -- which I will communicate probably through
8 Becky to let y'all know when to expect to start getting
9 them. But when you do start getting them, if there is
12:52PM 10 any problems, just communicate to us and let us know
11 because -- you know, it's all new. And some things with
12 converted data versus the new cases are a little bit
13 different, too. So you may have to tweak that as time
14 goes.

12:52PM 15 JUDGE WEST: Anybody else? All right.
16 Thank you. Any other business that we need to -- at
17 this time not on the agenda we need to talk about?

18 MR. DAY: Do we want to -- you know, we had
19 the 30-day liability issue. Do we -- I mean, need to
12:52PM 20 have some discussions about -- because I don't think
21 we're any closer today than we were 30 days ago on
22 knowing liability issues for the bondsmen.

23 MS. BERTRAND: Well, we said we were going
24 to come back at this meeting and reevaluate the
12:52PM 25 situation. We were actually hoping to have some of the

1 this done. So I think we need to extend that another
2 30 days.

3 JUDGE WEST: Yeah. I would agree.

4 MS. BERTRAND: Revisit it next month's
12:53PM 5 meeting.

6 JUDGE WEST: Need a motion and stuff on
7 that.

8 MR. DAY: I make a motion.

9 JUDGE LIVELY: Second.

10 JUDGE WEST: Motion by Keith, second by
11 Judge Lively to extend for 30 more days -- kind of that
12 grace period on liability issues for the bondsmen. Any
13 other discussion about that? All --

14 MR. DAY: Judge, is it specific to a number
12:53PM 15 of days or is it going to be the next meeting? In case
16 we have to change the meeting date for anything.

17 JUDGE WEST: I think what we did last time
18 was make it the meeting -- we talked about that -- so
19 let's -- whatever the days are to the next meeting.

12:53PM 20 MR. DAY: Right.

21 JUDGE WEST: Just in case that meeting does
22 get moved. Any other discussion? All those in favor?

23 (ALL RESPONDED.)

24 JUDGE WEST: Any opposed? All right. That
12:53PM 25 passes. Anything else we need to take up? Is there a

1 motion to adjourn?

2 MR. ROEBUCK: Motion to adjourn.

3 JUDGE WEST: All right. We're adjourned.

4 Thank you all very much. Thanks.

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