

January 6, 2007

Wood County Commissioners Court
Court bids adieu to Judge Hightower;
Recognizes WC Master Gardeners
By JOHN SPARKS

Meeting with a short nine item agenda for their last meeting of 2006, Commissioners recognized the service of interim Wood County Judge Don Hightower in regular session on Friday, December 29. The court and those gathered also recognized the service of the Wood County Master Gardeners.

Commissioner Roy Don Shipp was absent.

"You did a fine job," said incoming Judge Bryan Jeanes in acknowledging Hightower's work on the 2007 budget and in handling the administrative duties of the county as well as the judicial docket of county court. Jeanes said Judge Hightower's work is making his own transition to County Judge much easier. Jeanes has served as Wood County Treasurer for the past four years. He was elected judge in the November general election.

Hightower took over by appointment of the commissioners after Judge Royce McCoy resigned in June. Hightower also received praise for his service from Precinct-4 Commissioner Jerry Galloway who presented Hightower with a gavel plaque.

Several Wood County Master Gardeners were present at the meeting as the Wood County Extension Agent Clint Perkins recognized the organization as an "Arm of the Extension Office into the county." There are now 25 Wood County Master Gardeners who volunteered 1,636 hours last year to projects throughout the county, including work on the Courthouse grounds. Their service is valued at \$29,513.44.

Commissioners also accepted the donation of 9-1-1 equipment from the East Texas Council of Governments. The equipment had been in use by the county, but became surplus as it was

replaced by new, technologically-advanced equipment. Some of the equipment is being held in storage for possible donation to another county or governmental unit, while several computers are being deployed into service within various county departments

Commissioners also approved:

- Claims of \$211,168.32 and \$4,155.
- Two-week payroll of \$245,757.55.
- Two-week employee/family health claims of \$64,522.19.
- Setting of January 26 as public hearing date for revision of the plat for Lake Holbrook Estates.
- Conducted public hearing for revisions to plat for Black Berry Creek Estates (expansion of some lots).

Personnel actions approved, were:

- Sandra Gallagher, resignation, Assistant District Attorney.
- James Ferral Burchwell, retirement, equipment operator, Pct.3 R&B.
- Bryan Matthew Bremmer, promotion, equipment operator I from laborer II, Pct.3 R&B, from 13.61/hour to \$14.11/hour
- Tommy John Wright, new hire, laborer, Pct.3 R&B.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Wood County Commissioners Court is Friday, January 12 at 10 a.m. A special meeting of the court can be called with 72-hour public notice.

A swearing-in ceremony for Bryan Jeanes and several other county officials will be held Monday, January 2nd at 9 a.m. in Commissioners Court Room at the Courthouse.