

VAN BUREN COUNTY QUORUM COURT
JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS
September 18, 2025

The Van Buren County Court met Thursday, September 18, 2025, at the Van Buren County Courthouse Annex in Clinton, Arkansas for the regular monthly meeting, with Judge James presiding. Members of the Quorum Court in attendance were Justice of the Peace N. Brown, S. Brown, B. Roberson, M. Bradford, B. Page, V. Lemings, R. Mays, E. Bass, P. Wellenberger, Pam Bradford County Clerk, and Jacob Frankin, Attorney also attended.

Next: CALL TO ORDER

Next: PRAYER: Given by J.P. V. Lemings

Next: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Recited by all. Led by Jacob Franklin

Next: ROLL CALL: All present

Next: AGENDA. A motion was made by J.P. V. Lemings and seconded by J.P. M. Bradford to add an additional ordinance and approve the agenda with changes. J.P. E. Bass asked what it concerned. Judge James informed him it was regarding the position of the Victim Witness Coordinator. All in favor of approving the agenda.

Next: MINUTES, TREASURER'S REPORT, APPROPRIATION ANALYSIS: A motion was made by J.P. B. Roberson and seconded by J.P. N. Brown to approve the Minutes, Treasures' report, as well as the Appropriation Analysis Report, all in favor. Judge James asked for any comments, there were none.

Next: COUNTY ROAD AND EQUIPMENT REPORT: [Attached]

Next: SHERIFF'S REPORT: Attached.

Next: COUNTY JUDGE'S COMMENTS: NONE

Next: COUNTY BOARDS/COMMITTEES ADDRESS THE COURT:

Van Buren County Sheriff Eric Koonce spoke briefly regarding the handout (attached) concerning additional employee. Paul Maddox offered his services to attend a budget meeting if it was deemed necessary.

J.P. V. Lemings spoke of his concerns regarding the compensatory time of different employees. Judge James offered to sit down with V. Lemings to explain how and why the decisions were made regarding the compensatory time.

NEW BUSINESS:

ORDINANCE:

- A. NEXT: J.P. B. PAGE READ AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE TO CORRECT THE SALARY OF THE MANAGER OF THE SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT, WHOS SALARY IS ALSO PAID FROM THE COUNTY ROAD DEPARTMENT** After reading the ordinance J.P. B. Page made a motion to adopt, second by J.P. M. Bradford. Judge James asked for any discussion, J.P. E. Bass asked why it has an emergency clause. Judge James explained it was because this was to take effect immediately. A motion was made by J.P. B. Page to acknowledge the emergency clause and second by M. Bradford. The Ordinance was approved and given **NO. O-2025-33**
- B. NEXT: J.P. E. BASS READ AN APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ORGINAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE #O-2024-54, THE ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET FOR 2025, TO APPROPRIATE \$6,057.84 INTO CERTAIN BUDGETS IN COUNTY GENREAL #1000.** After reading the ordinance J.P. E. Bass made a motion to adopt, second by J.P. M. Bradford. Judge James asked for any discussion. The Ordinance was approved and given **NO. O-2025-34**
- C. NEXT: J.P. N. BROWN READ AN APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ORGINAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE #O-2024-54, THE ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET FOR 2025, TO APPROPRIATE \$61,534.00 INTO THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT BUDGET #1000-400.** After reading the ordinance J.P. N. Brown made a motion to adopt, second by J.P. B. Page. Judge James asked if there was any discussion, there was none. The Ordinance was adopted given **NO. O-2025-35.**
- D. NEXT: J.P. V. LEMINGS READ AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE TO APPROVE A NEW POSITION FOR THE VAN BUREN COUNTY VICTIM WITNESS COORDINATOR AND TO TRANSFER \$16,569.14 FROM THE CIRCUIT COURT-DIVIDION 5 BUDGET #1000-401 TO THE DEPUTY PROSECUTOR'S BUDGET #1000-146 TO FUND THE NEW POSITION.** After reading the ordinance a motion was made by J.P. V. Lemings and second by J.P. P. Wellenberger to adopt. Judge James asked for any discussion. J.P. Bass asked why the position is vacant. Attorney Jacob Franklin explained that the position is not vacant. However, the position is currently funded by a Federal Grant that will no longer be funding the position as of September 30, 2025. J.P. B. Page asked since this will only provide funding for the position for the rest of the year, what will happen after 2025. J.P. N. Brown said that it will be a 2026 Budget question. A motion was made by J.P. M. Bradford to adopt the emergency clause, second by B. Page. The ordinance was adopted and given **No. O-2025-36**

There were no public comments.

A motion was made to adjourn, seconded by all.

Pam Bradford, Van Buren County Clerk

COUNTY ROAD AND EQUIPMENT REPORT

September, 2025

New this month:

Bids have been let on the Oyler Road Project. We hope to have the asphalt laid by the end of October.

The Rabbit Ridge Road Project has experienced delays with the availability of the steel for the arch-top crossings. Tariffs on steel have created a demand for domestic steel which is a great problem. We are simply waiting for our turn.

MAINTENANCE:

NO CHANGE THIS MONTH: Trying to catch up on equipment repairs. Tariffs have created a bottleneck with the supply chain for many of our parts. When tariffs were being discussed, many supplies were hoarded before the tariffs were put into place creating a temporary supply shortage.

GRANT PROJECTS:

The Rabbit Ridge/Bricky Road low water crossing grant: Work in progress. The total value of this grant is just under \$1,000,000.00

Work is proceeding on the Oyler Road Grant. Base is still being applied for the grant to come behind us and pave as far as the grant funds will take the asphalt. The award to the county is \$500,000.00 with VBC providing match in the form of base rock, equipment, labor and gravel. Total project value is \$1,500,000.00.

Lake Cliff Road Bridge Project – Federal Grant application submitted and looks promising. Total price tag of approx. \$1 million. The feasibility study has been ordered.

Scotland Bridge Project - – Feasibility Study was completed. Waiting for further word. Federal Grant application submitted and looks promising. Total price tag of approx. \$1 million.

Archey Road Bridge Project – State and Federal Aid funded, County pays 2%. Total price tag of approx. \$1.5 million.

The Feasibility Study is begun on the Shirley Bridge Grant. The value of the new bridge will be approx. \$3 million.

FEMA reimbursement for the declared disaster – Reimbursements can take a very long time to receive. I hope to receive \$150,000 - \$175,000. Governor Sanders approved the disaster on May 9, 2024 and VBC is listed as an approved county. After submitting all the required paperwork, we received a book for each impacted road to be completed. **We are still waiting for the reimbursement.**



VAN BUREN COUNTY SHERIFF

Sheriff Eric Koonce

P.O. Box 451

Clinton, Arkansas 72031

Telephone: 501-745-3838

Fax: 501-745-4898

101 Total Incident Reports for August 2025

Misdemeanor:

Drug Violations - 12

Personal - 14

Property - 12

Felony:

Drug Violations - 6

Personal - 14

Property - 11

CID Call Outs - 3

Search Warrants - 3

Felony Affidavits - 6

Detention Statistics from 8/1/2025 to 8/31/2025

Agency	Booked				Released				Transferred			
	Male	Female	Unk	Total	Male	Female	Unk	Total	Male	Female	Unk	Total
Van Buren County Sheriffs Office	51	16	2	69	51	20	2	73	2	0	0	2
Clinton Police Department	5	1	1	7	5	0	1	6	0	0	0	0
Fairfield Bay Police Department	2	2	0	4	2	2	0	4	0	0	0	0
Arkansas Department Of Corrections	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Us Marshalls Office	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Totals:	59	19	3	81	59	22	3	84	2	0	0	2



Type Total Report

Print Date: 01-Sep-25
Print Time: 01:00:16
User Name: jwells

Incidents Created From: 01-Aug-25 00:00:00 To: 31-Aug-25 23:59:59 ; Unit Org: VAN BUREN.LAW.VAN BUREN LAW.VAN BUREN CO SO; Unit(s): All; Source: All; Community: All

Unit Org	Event	Event Description	Type Count
VAN BUREN CO SO	ABND/HU/OPEN	ABANDONED/HU/OPEN	3
VAN BUREN CO SO	ACIC	ACIC QUERY	102
VAN BUREN CO SO	ANML	ANIMAL	19
VAN BUREN CO SO	ASSIST	ASSIST AGENCY	4
VAN BUREN CO SO	COMPLAINT	COMPLAINT	1
VAN BUREN CO SO	COURT	COURT	3
VAN BUREN CO SO	DISTURBANCE	DISTURBANCE	2
VAN BUREN CO SO	EXTRA PATROL	EXTRA PATROL	61
VAN BUREN CO SO	FS	STRUCTURE FIRE	2
VAN BUREN CO SO	FV	VEHICLE FIRE	3
VAN BUREN CO SO	LAW ALARM	LAW ALARM	10
VAN BUREN CO SO	LPS	LAW PUBLIC SERVICE	29
VAN BUREN CO SO	MED	EMERGENCY MEDICAL CALL	9
VAN BUREN CO SO	MEDICAL ALRM	MEDICAL ALARM	1
VAN BUREN CO SO	MISSING PERSON	MISSING PERSON	4
VAN BUREN CO SO	MOTORIST ASSIST	MOTORIST ASSIST	20
VAN BUREN CO SO	MVA	MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT	19
VAN BUREN CO SO	MVA WITH PI	MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT WITH PERSONAL INJURY	3
VAN BUREN CO SO	PD	POLICE	189
VAN BUREN CO SO	PHYSICAL DOMESTIC	PHYSICAL DOMESTIC	4
VAN BUREN CO SO	PROPERTY CHECK	PROPERTY CHECK	11
VAN BUREN CO SO	PS	PUBLIC SERVICE	10
VAN BUREN CO SO	REPORT	REPORT	12
VAN BUREN CO SO	SHOTS FIRED	SHOTS FIRED	1
VAN BUREN CO SO	STOLEN VEHICLE	STOLEN VEHICLE	2
VAN BUREN CO SO	SUICIDE THREAT	SUICIDE THREAT	2
VAN BUREN CO SO	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	SUSPICIOUS PERSON	5
VAN BUREN CO SO	SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE	SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE	3
VAN BUREN CO SO	TEST	TEST CALL	2

For Official Use Only



Type Total Report

Print Date: 01-Sep-25
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Incidents Created From: 01-Aug-25 00:00:00 To: 31-Aug-25 23:59:59 ; Unit Org: VAN BUREN.LAW.VAN BUREN LAW.VAN BUREN CO SO; Unit(s): All; Source: All; Community: All

Unit Org	Event	Event Description	Type Count
VAN BUREN CO SO	THEFT OF PROPERTY	THEFT OF PROPERTY	6
VAN BUREN CO SO	TRAN	TRANSFER/TRANSPORT	50
VAN BUREN CO SO	TRANSFERRED CALL	TRANSFERRED CALL	1
VAN BUREN CO SO	TRF	TRAFFIC CONTROL	2
VAN BUREN CO SO	TRFC	TRAFFIC RECKLESS DRIVER	16
VAN BUREN CO SO	TS	TRAFFIC STOP	530
VAN BUREN CO SO	UNATTENDED DEATH	UNATTENDED DEATH	2
VAN BUREN CO SO	VERBAL DOMESTIC	VERBAL DOMESTIC	3
VAN BUREN CO SO	WARRANT	WARRANT SERVICE	28
VAN BUREN CO SO	WELFARE CHECK	WELFARE CHECK	16

Type Count -VAN BUREN CO SO: 1190

Total Incidents: 1190

Proposal for an Additional Full-Time Employee at Van Buren County Detention Center

I propose adding a full-time employee to the Van Buren County Detention Center to alleviate significant operational strain and ensure the county's continued success. Currently, our two Transport/Bailiff Officers are burdened with nearly 500 hours of comp-time, projected to exceed 600 hours by year-end, potentially costing the county over \$10,000 in overtime—far beyond our budget. A part-time helper, already paid approximately \$6,000 this year for transports, bailiff duties, and after-hours on-call support, is depleting our part-time funds. Most transports are court-ordered by a judge, we have court 1-8 times per week, requiring a bailiff for each session and extensive travel—e.g., picking up detainees from locations like Calico Rock, Batesville, Newport, Little Rock, Pine Bluff, and Malvern, plus other county jails and mental health facilities statewide. This forces our officers to spend weekends driving across the state, running up overtime. Denying this hire would worsen this strain, risking financial overload and service disruptions. We are currently short staffed four people based on Arkansas Department of Corrections Standards, as was brought to the County Safety Committee's attention in a previous quorum court meeting by the sheriff. This creates an enormous officer safety issue as well as a community safety issue. The new employee would assist with transports, serve as a court bailiff, cover after-hours on-call transport and hospital sits, fill in for detention officers' vacations, sick leave, and personal time, and act as the county's PREA Coordinator—a state-required role to maintain our invaluable 309 program. Losing the 309 program due to not meeting the state's mandated PREA requirements could cause the county to hire a full-time cook and kitchen staff, shift current county employees to building and grounds maintenance for the jail and sheriff's office, and cover vehicle maintenance (e.g., oil changes, tire repairs) and additional costs like mowing properties, moving furniture, painting buildings, trash pickup, and cemetery care—potentially totaling tens of thousands more. This hire would rotate with current transport officers, lessening comp-time and enhance the 309 program's community support, a vital asset to Van Buren County. With the Detention Center already having relinquished one employee spot when dispatch moved to the 911 center, we are doing our best with limited resources. Approving this position is not just beneficial but essential to prevent a cascade of costs and maintain our operational integrity—I urge your support to meet this critical need.