



**2019 State of the County Address
Thursday, January 17, 2019
5:00 PM
Washington County Courthouse, Quorum Court Room**

Welcome to the 2nd Annual

“State of Washington County Address”!

To our citizens of Washington County – thank you for being here. We wish to also welcome our county employees, and leadership teams across the County. Thanks to Sen. Boozman, Sen. Cotton, Congressman Womack and Gov. Hutchinson for their ongoing support of the county and their staff for joining us this evening. I also thank our state legislators who are in attendance.

The county-wide elected officials will share with you- the **“State of your County” with highlights from 2018 and a few goals for 2019. We are again glad you are here!**

*****INTRO EACH ELECTED OFFICIAL 1-4 minutes to share*****

2018 was another tremendous year! We were met with many challenges but I am so proud of how our teams rose to the occasion and delivered amazing results. We have great employees who worked with you, the citizens of the county, to drive the success we saw in 2018. I appreciate my monthly coffees with the mayors, our monthly breakfast with the elected officials, and my partnerships with the Judges in Benton, Madison and Carroll County. I will continue to work and foster these relationships in 2019 and include working with our district judges.

Here a few of our successes in 2018:

Fiscal Responsibility: Last year I shared we reduced our budget by over \$850K – a very significant accomplishment. This year our leaders looked at their operations and again reduced our budget by \$760K. This allowed us to give pay raises in many areas to compete in the market. It also allowed us to pick up the financial responsibility of our county wide software system which reduced the financial obligations on most of our elected officials. A big salute to

our senior leaders who continue to deliver exceptional service and look to be efficient with their budgets. I cannot reiterate how appreciative I am of our team to make the hard call to be both diligent in managing their budget and improve services.

Roads & Bridges:

We did have several roads and bridge projects completed in 2018.

- We provided maintenance on 1500 miles of roads by grading and brush hogging
- Crushed 45,360 tons of rock for road materials
- Opened a new 30' ft. precast bridge on Blue Springs Road
- Design and completed repairs to open CR67- Orr Road Bridge, after being closed over 2 years.
- We chipped and sealed 67 miles of county roads
- Received \$75,000 Unpaved Roads Grant to assist with the construction of Blue Hole Road (WC 870)
- Constructed and paved 1.5 miles on Ervan Beeks Road
- We had 1,445 road issues calls and 1422 resolved. This is 98.4 percent response to our citizen's road concerns through Dec. 2018

Department of Emergency Management/911: Received additional certificates

- Our Community Resilience Coalition briefed our Congressional delegation in Washington D.C. and we received Community Preparedness Award from the State of Arkansas because of the ongoing work of the coalition.
- We have reviewed, corrected, and submitted all 9-1-1 data for the 2020 Census for Washington County
- Received an Urban Search and Rescue Grant for an USAR Tractor and Trailer. Placed the necessary communications and rescue gear and ready for deployment for structural collapse and earthquakes and other catastrophic events
- Grants also received for Special Weapons & Tactics (S.W.A.T) and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN)
- Our first Washington County Youth Preparedness Council was formed involving students from four High Schools.

Veteran Services Office

In 2018 the Veterans Office has served over 2,300 veterans. Ending the year serving 200 veterans a month with quality service and connecting them to earned benefits creating help for them and their families.

The Planning Team:

Reviewed and processed 300 requests to include permits, variances, and exemptions. In conjunction with the expertise of our Planning Board, we approved **38 LSD and CUP** projects in 2018.

GRANTS:

- The County received 20 of 21 grants for **\$3, 008,882 million** dollars in grants in 2018.
- This is now back to back years of for this department procuring over \$3 million in grants for the County which benefits Departments across the County while relieving pressures on their budgets.
- Our Grants Director was also elected VP of the Arkansas Chapter of Grants Professionals.

Animal Shelter continues to deliver in serving the needs of the county after transforming their business model.

- We had 829 dogs and cats transported to other states in short supply of animals and sent to “No Kill” facilities.
- Reduced Veterinary costs over \$38K
- Secured \$10K in grants to assist in animal transport program.

Our Building & Grounds Team:

- Renovated and restored the original Washington County National Guard Armory building. Now being leased to Elizabeth Richardson Center – generating revenue for the County.
- Planned and built the new Courtroom on the 5th floor of the Washington County Courthouse increasing efficiency in the county while leveraging security measures.

Our County Library System –

- Checked out over **1.1 million items up 6.7% from 2017.**
- We also saw a 21% increase in downloadable ebooks in 2018. Keep reading Washington County.

Juvenile Detention Center:

- 465 intakes for a total of 6, 876 days spent in detention
- No juvenile escapes or suicides in 2018
- The Evening Night Reporting Center continues to gain attention both in the state and nationally as a great model and best practices. Thanks to the partnerships of nonprofits, our Juvenile Court and JDC.
- We secured a Technical Assistance Grant to provide a higher level of supervisory training to County Department Heads and partnered with Benton County supervisors

- Many awards and recognition of staff to include 2 National Bob Radar Awards for Line Staff Worker (Asst. Dir. Kendrick Sexton) and Service Worker of the Year (Social Worker Shelley Clingan), Community Hero Award for Juvenile Care worker- Micah Dennis for Northwest Arkansas African American and Latino Male Youth
- Staff Development Coordinator Jeremy Patterson became President of the Arkansas Juvenile Detention Association
- 260 hours of volunteer services were provided to staff and residents with no charge to county
- Hosted 3 interns. Two Master level clinical interns from the U of A Fayetteville & U of A Little Rock and a PhD Interns from the U of A Psychology department
- Remained in compliance with all State and Federal compliance boards

I salute all my senior leaders and their teams: **HR, IT, Comptroller, Purchasing, Archives, Environmental, and Executive Staff**

A few goals for 2019: We will continue to improve leadership & services focusing on Infrastructure and Public Safety:

ROADS:

20 miles of asphalt paving to bring up road condition and add longevity for several years.

New Road Construction

- Trace Branch, Parker Branch and Walden Mountain, and our South Campus Access Road Project
- 30 miles of Chip and Seal

Bridge constructions:

- Brush Creek, 612, and Parker Branch

County Facilities:

- Old Court House Historical Grant Project
- UAMS vacant property maintenance review
- Building renovations with JDC and Court Annex

Public Safety and Security:

- We will focus our ability to plan and prepare for disasters and recovery, more importantly adapt to the events whether from individuals, groups, or infrastructure – it is an ongoing work.
- We will continue to offer county trainings like Stop the Bleed and Active Shooting.

- We will continue to work on Security Access System (received partial grant to begin on the courthouse).
- Continue to work with Sheriff on county-wide radio systems

Thanks to our Elected Officials, JPS, Mayors, Judges, and County Employees for serving the people of Washington County. Washington County was ranked #1 in overall transparency in fiscal, administrative, and political measures. I was recognized but this is a tribute to all our leaders. The State of Washington is County is definitely bright because of what you do every day.

Citizens of Washington County, it is our privilege and pleasure to serve you.

Good evening, Washington County and God Bless you!