

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
COLQUITT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Tuesday, July 7, 2015
7:00 o'clock p.m.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 o'clock p.m. by Chairman Terry R. Clark.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The invocation was given and the pledge of allegiance led by Commissioner Winfred Giddens.

PRESENT: Those present were Commissioners Luke P. Strong, Jr., Winfred Giddens, Marc DeMott, Donna Herndon, Paul Nagy, Johnny Hardin, and Chairman Terry R. Clark. Also present were County Administrator Chas Cannon, County Attorney Lester Castellow and County Clerk Melissa Lawson.

ALSO PRESENT: Alan Mauldin, Reporter with the Moultrie Observer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETINGS HELD ON MAY 21, 26, 28, JUNE 2, 4, 11, 16, & 18: Commissioner Hardin made the motion to approve the minutes as presented for meetings held on May 21, 26, 28 and June 2, 4, 11, 16, & 18. Commissioner Strong made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

RECREATION PRESENTATION: At this time, Mr. Cannon began an informative presentation in order to give an explanation of the county's perspective regarding funding for the Parks and Recreation program.

Mr. Cannon began with a prioritized list of budget objectives, stating that Public Safety, Public Works, and the Judicial System comprise approximately 70% of the overall county budget, with most of these objectives being state mandated. As a result, Mr. Cannon stated that Recreation was one of the county's lowest overall budget priorities, but that it was still a priority.

Mr. Cannon explained that Recreation was funded through the Special Service Tax District, with no citizens located within the City of Moultrie paying any taxes for the county's portion of funding for the Parks and Recreation program. Mr. Cannon noted other services also funded through the Special Service Tax District, emphasizing that Recreation was the largest funded program within this fund.

Mr. Cannon explained that the current budget for the Special Service Tax District required a slight increase in the millage rate, as well as the utilization of approximately \$40,000.00 in reserve funds.

Mr. Cannon compared the overall county operating budget to the operating budgets of the City of Moultrie and the Board of Education, noting that the county's budget was significantly smaller in comparison.

Mr. Cannon presented statistical and historical information regarding the Parks and Recreation program, including operational, participation, and funding information.

Mr. Cannon stated that the Parks and Recreation budget consisted of initial figures, figures including indirect costs, and figures without indirect costs. Mr. Cannon further stated that working with three separate groups of figures was confusing to both the City and the County.

Mr. Cannon stated that participation numbers for organized sports were received on an annual basis, but stated that if equitable funding was to be determined based on participation, the county must be given participation numbers regarding unorganized events at remaining Recreation facilities. Mr. Cannon voiced his understanding that obtaining these figures could be difficult, but stated that it was imperative in order to be in compliance with the contractual agreement between the City and the County.

Mr. Cannon declared that an annual operating budget should also be submitted, but admitted this would be a shared responsibility.

Mr. Cannon stated that duties of the Recreation department were now facilitated between three separate City departments, making it difficult for these departments to obtain auditable expenditures when requested, as per the contract terms.

Other issues discussed by Mr. Cannon included no charge participation scholarships, of which detailed participation information was currently not being collected by the City.

Mr. Cannon stated that the County would agree to increase funding for the Parks and Recreation program from \$600,000.00 to \$630,495.00, and continue to fund at the previous fiscal year's monthly installment for at least 11 months. Mr. Cannon further stated that the County understood that the City would attempt to keep all recreational programs fully funded and operational.

Mr. Cannon stated that the City and County would continue to renegotiate contract terms over the upcoming year, in an effort to ensure equity in participation and funding.

Mr. Cannon stated that if a shortfall in funding were to be discovered, the county would commit to funding the 12th month of the Recreation program out of any "true-up" funding or any other available funding source.

Mr. Cannon stated that the goal is to obtain a new Parks and Recreation agreement beneficial to both the City and the County. He further stated that the proposed plan would keep the county portion of the Parks and Recreation program fully funded, while injecting transparency and allowing for contact renegotiations.

Mr. Cannon stated that upon receipt of the final tax digest, he would submit a budget amendment for board approval.

CITIZENS HAVING BUSINESS WITH THE COUNTY: Dorothy McCranie addressed the commission, emphasizing the importance of Recreation to her personally and to Moultrie and Colquitt County. Having grown up in Colquitt County, Ms. McCranie stated that she and her brothers were very involved in the Recreation program, as were currently her children.

Ms. McCranie stated that when the opportunity presented itself, she often took visitors to Colquitt County on a tour of available recreation facilities, praising the great Recreation program that is operated in Colquitt County.

Ms. McCranie stated that she hated to hear that Recreation was such a low priority for the county, stating that more emphasis should be put on the program.

Ms. McCranie stated that she wanted to stress that city residents do pay for the Parks and Recreation program, the only difference being that these funds are paid to the city.

Ms. McCranie presented the joint contract agreement between the City and the County, stating that the document itself governed and dictated the joint Recreation program between the City and the County. Ms. McCranie stated that the contract initially established county funding for the Recreation program at 60%, but stated that it may be adjusted based upon participation, emphasizing that the percentage did not have to be adjusted.

Ms. McCranie discussed past fiscal “true-ups,” stating that during some of these “true-ups,” the county actually owed money back to the city. Ms. McCranie stated that upon the most recent “true-up,” the City owed money to the County, of which was paid.

Ms. McCranie stated that according to Mr. Cannon’s presentation, there has been a 58% increase in county Recreation funding from 1995 – 2014; however, Ms. McCranie stressed that there had been no increase from 2007 to date. She further stressed that the commission should have had a better understanding of the Recreation program, especially with certain commissioners serving on the Recreation Advisory Committee. Ms. McCranie stated that she planned to attend the next Recreation Advisory Committee meeting scheduled for July 22, 2015.

At this time, Ms. McCranie stated that \$681,000.00 was not an ample Recreation budget, and subsequently requested that the county increase this funding. She further stated her opinion that “the cart was getting before the horse,” but agreed that transparency was essential to the Parks and Recreation program.

In closing, Ms. McCranie suggested starting with obtaining participation information, voicing her prediction that county participation would be higher than anticipated. Ms. McCranie thanked the board for their time and consideration.

APPROVAL OF MOTION TO INCREASE COUNTY FUNDING TO JOINT PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAM: Commissioner Hardin made the motion to increase funding to the Parks and Recreation program at the previous year’s fiscal monthly installment level of \$56,827.00, with re-evaluation, if necessary, to be performed during the twelve month. Commissioner DeMott made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF LIST OF UNPAID INVOICES: Commissioner Strong made the motion to approve payment of the list of unpaid invoices. Commissioner Herndon made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF TAX RELIEFS AND ADDITIONS: Commissioner Hardin made the motion to approve the list of tax reliefs and additions. Commissioner Herndon made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

County Administrator Chas Cannon presented the following agenda items:

APPOINTMENT TO MOULTRIE – COLQUITT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION - TABLED: Mr. Cannon stated that it was the consensus of the board to table this appointment.

APPOINTMENT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES BOARD: Commissioner Strong made the motion to re-appoint Mrs. Dorothy Crapps to an additional five year term on the Colquitt County Department of Family and Children Services board. Commissioner DeMott made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CONTRACT WITH CJT SOFTWARE, INC.: Commissioner DeMott made the motion to approve the contract with CJT Software, Inc., regarding the provision of case management software for the Magistrate Court. Commissioner Strong made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF RENEWAL OF CONTRACT WITH TRINITY SERVICES GROUP, INC.: Commissioner Giddens made the motion to extend the contract agreement with Trinity Services Group, regarding the provision of inmate food services at the Jail and Prison, for the term July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016. Commissioner Herndon made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF RENEWAL OF MAINTENANCE CONTRACT – E-911 CENTER: Commissioner Herndon made the motion to renew the maintenance contract with RCE of Valdosta, Inc., for the term October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016. Commissioner Strong made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF TELECOMMUNICATION PROPOSAL – CITY OF MOULTRIE – Commissioner Hardin made the motion to approve the telecommunication proposal from the City of Moultrie concerning the provision of a direct Ethernet network connection between the Annex, Roads and Bridges, Facilities Maintenance, and the Fleet Maintenance Shop. Commissioner Nagy made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF BID FOR PORTLAND CEMENT – ROADS & BRIDGES DEPARTMENT: Commissioner Strong made the motion to approve the sole bid from Concrete Enterprises, in the amount of \$130.00 per ton, regarding the provision of Portland cement to be utilized on Selina Drive. Commissioner Hardin made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF BID FOR ASPHALT – ROADS & BRIDGES DEPARTMENT: Commissioner DeMott made the motion to approve the recommended bid from The Scruggs Company, in the amount of \$71.00 per ton, for the provision of 12 mm asphalt to be utilized

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on the parking lot of the Hamilton Volunteer Fire Department. Commissioner Herndon made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF INVOICE – SOUTHWEST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION: Commissioner Hardin made the motion to approve payment of the third quarter invoice submitted by the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission, in the amount of \$7,844.93. Commissioner Nagy made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF RENEWAL CONTRIBUTION FOR PROPERTY & LIABILITY INSURANCE – ACCG/IRMA: Commissioner Herndon made the motion to approve the renewal contribution of \$238,860.00 regarding the provision of property and liability insurance coverage for the term July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016. Commissioner Hardin made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER COUNTY BUSINESS FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR: At this time, Mr. Cannon addressed items received after the agenda deadline.

APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF ARCHWAY INVOICE: Commissioner Strong made the motion to approve the fixed fee invoice from the University of Georgia College of Public Health, in the amount of \$10,000.00, pursuant to the contractual agreement with The Archway Partnership. Commissioner DeMott made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF INVOICE – COUNTY ATTORNEY: Commissioner Nagy made the motion to approve payment of the invoice, in the amount of \$7,005.00, regarding legal services rendered for the month of June by County Attorney Lester M. Castellow. Commissioner Giddens made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearings

The following public hearing was duly called and advertised for the purpose of a request for road closure and a request for variance. Lester Castellow, County Attorney, called the public hearing to order.

Request for Road Closure – Wilkes Road – Mr. Cannon stated that Commissioner Nagy requested in the June board meeting that road closure proceedings commence for Wilkes Road, located within his district. As a result, Mr. Cannon stated that all adjoining landowners were notified and the required number of advertisements were published in the county's legal organ. Mr. Cannon presented a map of the proposed closure.

Mr. Castellow asked for any comments in support of the application.

Preston Jimmerson addressed the board in support of the road closure, stating that trash, tires, and animal carcasses were often dumped along the road. In closing, Mr. Jimmerson requested that the commission seriously consider closing this road.

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Commissioner Nagy stated that this issue was a matter of public health and safety, and urged his fellow commissioners to consider the application for road closure.

Mr. Castellow asked for any comments in opposition to the application. There being none, the next request was presented.

Request for Variance - Justin H. Cox, Chief Compliance Officer, presented an application received from Walter Powell, requesting a variance for property located at 1364 Elton Clark Road. Mr. Cox explained that Mr. Powell desired to construct a Stack House but could not meet setback requirements. Mr. Cox presented an aerial view of the property.

Mr. Castellow asked for any comments in support of the request for variance.

Mr. Walter Powell addressed the commission, stating the he originally did not need the Stack House, but now that his operation has progressed, it was necessary. Mr. Powell thanked the board for their time and consideration of his request.

Mr. Castellow asked for any comments in opposition to the request for variance. There being none, the public hearing was closed.

APPROVAL OF REQUEST FOR ROAD CLOSURE – WILKES ROAD:

Commissioner Nagy made the motion to approve the request for closure of Wilkes Road, as presented in the public hearing. Commissioner DeMott made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF REQUEST FOR VARIANCE: Commissioner Giddens made the motion to approve the request for variance submitted by Walter Powell, as presented in the public hearing. Commissioner Strong made a second. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Daniel Davison, 905 J R Suber Road, addressed the commission, conveying his pleasure to report that his family had agreed upon a contract to purchase property on J R Suber Road, formerly intended for a poultry operation. Mr. Davison stated that he was especially appreciative for the support of the commission that insisted on a deliberative process during the entire ordeal.

Richie Turner addressed the board, thanking them, on behalf of all the children, parents, and grandparents, for funding the Parks and Recreation program.

Wilma Hadley thanked the board for funding the Parks and Recreation program. Mrs. Hadley stated that as a grandmother, she thoroughly enjoyed watching her grandson, stating that the Recreation program was not just for the young, but the young at heart.

Rick Moss addressed the board, voicing his appreciation for the commission's hard work concerning the Parks and Recreation program. As a Recreation Advisory Committee board member, Mr. Moss stated that he would like to report that the committee has had a frozen budget since 2007. During this time, Mr. Moss stated that the committee has also instructed Terry Peek, City of Moultrie Recreation Director, to bring in additional meets and tournaments in order to generate sales tax proceeds within the county. Mr. Moss stressed

that Mr. Peek facilitated these tournaments in addition to his regular work load, and praised Mr. Peek for his efforts in accomplishing more with less.

Mr. Moss stated that he had a list of several repairs that needed to be performed concerning Recreation facilities, and stated that he would like to urge the commission to put recreation as a top priority, stating that only 3.24% of the overall county budget was used to fund Recreation. Mr. Moss voiced his opinion that Recreation department employees deserve a Cost of Living Adjustment.

Mr. Moss stated that when he thought of recreation, he thought of the legends within the program, such as Jim Buck Goff and Richie DeMott. Again, Mr. Moss stated his belief that recreation should not be considered a low priority. In closing, Mr. Moss thanked the commission for their time.

Preston Jimmerson addressed the board, stating that he had recently spent a considerable amount of time with City Manager Mike Scott, County Administrator Chas Cannon, and Mr. Peek in order to ascertain accurate Parks and Recreation funding numbers. Mr. Jimmerson stated that he appreciated the commission's efforts to fully fund the Recreation program, but asked that the county explain an overall county tax digest increase of 16.12% since 2008. Mr. Jimmerson stated that \$681,000.00 was bare bones funding for the Parks and Recreation program, stating that stagnant funding would not maintain the same quality and standard that the Recreation program in Colquitt County is known for.

Mr. Jimmerson stated that he appreciated the efforts of Mr. Cannon in trying to form a new Joint Parks and Recreation agreement. In closing, Mr. Jimmerson urged the board to research the spending allocation of the 16.12% increase in the tax digest, and suggested not considering the Recreation department as the sole source of budget cuts.

Tom Kirbo addressed the board, specifically Mr. Cannon, expressing how proud and fortunate Colquitt County was to have one of their own citizens come back as County Administrator. Mr. Kirbo stated that when Mr. Cannon was called away on other job ventures, his first question about the potential location would be what it had to offer his family, specifically his children.

Mr. Kirbo stated that Moultrie was famous for family values, and stated his desire for Moultrie and Colquitt County to continue to grow. As a grandfather, Mr. Kirbo stated that he learned quickly that programs that are beneficial to children are also beneficial to the grandparents of those children. Mr. Kirbo suggested working towards enhancing the Recreation department, rather than cutting it.

At this time, Commissioner Nagy stated that one of Mr. Cannon's jobs as County Administrator was to research, in close detail, all aspects of county operations, from prisoner reimbursement, to ensuring compliance with Service Delivery Strategies. Commissioner Nagy stated that citizens should expect integrity in public officials, and spoke of priorities. Commissioner Nagy stated that he appreciated the concerns and opinions of the audience, but stressed that people need to understand that county employees have not had a Cost of Living Adjustment in 8 years. Commissioner Nagy stressed the importance of Public Safety, stating that the safety of the citizens of Colquitt County was the ultimate priority. Commissioner Nagy thanked Mr. Cannon for his efforts, and ensured that the City and

County would maintain a good working relationship, to include collaboration within the Parks and Recreation program.

Commissioner Hardin stated that he had been on the board for 10 years, and stated that the board has always maintained a good working relationship with other entities. As an individual that has personally coached youth in Colquitt County, Commissioner Hardin stated that when you consider Colquitt County, in his opinion, you could not find a better place to live. Commissioner Hardin stated that as one who was born and raised in Colquitt County, he was very proud of its heritage. He further stated that the county was constantly faced with issues, a more recent issue being extensive repair work needed at the Courthouse.

Commissioner Hardin commended Mr. Cannon on performing an excellent job as County Administrator, and urged all in attendance to call him with any questions or concerns. Commissioner Hardin noted that Colquitt County was ranked #13 in the state of Georgia as a prime location for a new business, and stated that industry was extremely important in order to maintain low property taxes and ease the burden on taxpayers. Commissioner Hardin stated that he genuinely believed Colquitt County was slated for substantial future growth.

James Tabor addressed the board, stating that Mr. Cannon and Commissioner Nagy were misled in their belief that county employees hadn't received any raises in the past few years. Mr. Tabor stated that he remembers two "bonuses" that were granted to county employees in the last several years. Mr. Tabor suggested setting the record straight that county employees had indeed received compensation.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry R. Clark
Chairman

Melissa Lawson
County Clerk

Approved: _____