

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday, January 4, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. in the Commissioners Meeting Room located at the Brooks County Office Building. Commissioners present were: Mr. S. L. Jones, Chairman; Mr. Claude Butler, Vice Chairman; Mr. James Maxwell; Mr. Howard Lawson; and Mr. David Ragsdale. Others present were: Mr. Robert O'Barr, County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Mr. Vann Parrott, County Attorney; Mr. Ed Johnson, Special Projects Coordinator; Mr. Mark Deatcher, Road Superintendent; Mr. Ben DeVane, County Engineer; and various residents.

Call to Order/Prayer & Pledge

Chairman called meeting to order and asked Mr. Ragsdale to lead all in attendance in Prayer and in pledge of allegiance.

Select Chairman and Vice Chair

Chairman turned meeting over to County Attorney. Mr. Parrott opened the floor for nominations for Chairman. Mr. Lawson nominated Mr. Jones for Chairman, Mr. Maxwell seconded. County Attorney asked for discussion or additional nominees, there were none. Mr. Parrott called for the vote, vote was unanimous. Mr. Jones will serve as Chairman for 2010.

County Attorney opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chairman. Mr. Maxwell nominated Mr. Butler for Vice Chairman, Mr. Lawson seconded. County Attorney asked for discussion or additional nominees, there were none. Mr. Parrott called for the vote, vote was unanimous. Mr. Butler will serve as Vice Chairman for 2010. County Attorney turned meeting back to Chairman.

Amendments to Agenda

On motion by Mr. Ragsdale, seconded by Mr. Butler, the Board unanimously approved amending the agenda to include under New Business:

- b. Tax Commissioner request to write off tax bills
- c. Clerk of Court new software contract
- d. Board Appointments
- e. Establish position at County
- f. Authorization for asphalt

Under old business: b. Invoice follow-up on Rec Dept.; and under Appearances: f. Kennedy Hill Road.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Lawson made a motion to approve the following minutes with corrections, Mr. Butler seconded. Vote was unanimous.

Monthly Workshop and Regular Monthly Meeting	December 7 , 2009
Workshop & Special Called Meeting	December 17, 2009

Public Hearing - Re-zoning Request

An application to re-zone 43.4861 acres out of 133 acres from A-G (Agriculture Use) to WLI (Wholesale Light Industrial) was submitted Ms. Julie Connell as Authorized Agent for Edison Renterias. Subject property is located on the west side of Madison Highway (Hwy 333) and on the east side of Empress Road. Property is currently undeveloped and applicant intends to develop property in phases with a number of uses. Applicant will be required to plant a six foot wide buffer and screening the entire length of the property abutting property to east (Empress Road) as per section 3.16 and 3.18 of the Zoning Ordinance. Staff found request consistent with the development patterns in the area and recommended approval with the condition that all access be limited to Highway 333. Planning Commission met at their regular scheduled meeting on December 22, 2009 and voted unanimously to approve the request to re-zone with condition all access be limited to Highway 333.

Several residents were present; and Chairman asked if any one wanted to speak in favor of re-zoning. Mr. Ben DeVane stated Brooks County need jobs; and if it can be done to satisfaction of all parties, Board should approve. He further stated it is an opportunity for jobs, payroll, tax base, and will be good for community.

Mr. Glenn Shea stated he will install wells as soon as permits come in; and it will be good for taxes. Mr. Larry Cunningham stated he supports recommendation of Planning Commission under conditions for buffer; and he appreciates Board's time and support. Mr. Don Thompson supports re-zoning under buffer conditions.

Ms. Julie Connell stated jobs are needed; and it is an opportunity for careers, not just jobs; and will not effect creeks, streams or rivers.

Mr. Doyle Weltzbarker, Water Council, stated he is for jobs but opposes to water leaving the County.

County Attorney commented the challenge for the Board is the appropriate land use and if change is consistent with the request.

On motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Ragsdale, the Board went out of Public Hearing and back to regular meeting at 6:21 p.m. Mr. Maxwell made a motion to go with Planning Commission recommendation to re-zone 43.4861 acres out of 133 acres from A-G (Agriculture Use) to WLI (Wholesale Light Industrial) for Edison Renterias to develop property in phases with a number of uses. Vote was unanimous. Chairman asked County Attorney to read Letter of Intent submitted by Ms. Julie Connell, Authorized Agent for Edison Renterias.

Appearances

a. Gene Palmer - Request to Waive Solid Waste Fee From Tax Bill

Mr. Palmer stated he had no garbage pick up for last three years, and was charged. He requested the Board remove garbage fees due to not having a garbage can and no garbage pick up for last three years. He has paid his property taxes in full, but has an outstanding balance of \$408.00 for garbage fees. He has not paid fees for 2008 and 2009; he requested Board's assistance to waive fees. Tax Commissioner would not waive fees; and directed him to the Board. Ms. Dukes will work with him to pay delinquent fees. After discussion, Mr. Ragsdale made a motion to uphold Tax Commissioner decision and not waive fees for 2008 and 2009. Vote was unanimous.

Sex Offender Registrar - Sheriff's Department

During last month's meeting, Sheriff Mike Dewey requested the Board transfer salary line item from Jail Operations to Law Administration to fund a new position for Sex Offender Registrar. The Board tabled this issue to get additional information and possibly set up a workshop for discussion. Sheriff Dewey presented Ms. Tonia Welch, Sheriff's Association, to further clarify the need for the new position. After lengthy discussion, on motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Butler, Board tabled the issue until budget process for FY 2011. Vote was unanimous.

Mt. Carmel Church Road

Residents on Mt. Carmel Church Road submitted a signed Road Request Petition signifying their willingness to give right-of-way for the road through their land for improvement. Board asked Road Superintendent and Special Projects Coordinator to go out and look at road, make suggestions and bring back to the Board.

Kennedy Hill Road

Mr. Lawson made a motion authorizing Mr. Ben DeVane to look at the road, come up with plan; and bring back to the Board, Mr. Butler seconded. Vote was unanimous.

Matt Elsberry - Band Width Upgrade

Mr. Elsberry, IT Total Solutions, Network Administrator for Sheriff's Department, appeared on behalf of Sheriff's Department to request funds to upgrade band width for internet use. The cost would be \$1,000.00 per month for next six months, totaling \$6,000.00 to come from contingency fund. He stated Board could place funds in budget for next year. Board thanked Mr. Elsberry for appearing, but advised the Sheriff should be one to request funds, not a vendor. Mr. Elsberry stated Sheriff Dewey asked him to appear due to fact he does not know much about computers.

Vance Roberts - Regional Commission IT Support

County Administrator asked Mr. Roberts to appear to present to Board information technology services provided by Southern Georgia Regional Commission, formerly South Georgia RDC. Their Information Technology (IT) Services Program assists area officials and staff in managing their local governments by providing electronic data processing and other information handling related services. They offer: data processing, custom software, utility billing, general accounting, payroll, tax digest, tag assessment, jury selection, police & sheriff booking, purchase order system, network services, internet, web services, pc support, and more. Board authorized County Administrator to handle the IT issue and decide what County needs.

Old Business

a. County Extension Agent Assisting Thomas County

County Administrator received letter from Mr. Ken Lewis, Southwest District Extension Director, University of Georgia Cooperative Extension, regarding assignment of Johnny Whiddon as temporary Acting Thomas County Extension Coordinator. Mr. Lewis appointed Mr. Whiddon as temporary acting CEC due to his experience and skills. Mr. Lewis met with Thomas County Commissioners and made the appropriate agreements and arrangements. The letter stated it was Mr. Lewis' understanding that Mr. Whiddon met with the Board and sought approval before he accepted this assignment, but he did not, and that's the problem the Board had with the matter. Board discussed Mr. Whiddon being required to use personal auto for travel to Thomas County.

New Business

a) Pineridge Heights Bid Opening

Two bids for Pineridge Heights Subdivision were opened December 21, 2009 at 3:30 p.m. at the Brooks County Office Building, County Administrator Office, in the presence of County Clerk, Special Projects Coordinator, and Ben DeVane.

1. Reames \$78,000.00 (\$20.00 per ton)
2. Scruggs 3900 tons of GDOT grade limerock base @ \$14.50 per ton (totals \$56,550.00)

On motion by Mr. Butler, seconded by Mr. Maxwell, Board unanimously awarded bid for Pineridge Heights Subdivision project to The Scruggs Company.

b) Tax Commissioner - Insolvent Tax List

The following accounts are personal property bills that are insolvent/uncollectible:

1. Herman Allen - 2003 - 2005 \$609.23
A delapidated house only that was built on property owned by his brother. Brother did not want responsibility of paying taxes on house that does not belong to him, so house alone was given an account. Tax Assessors' Office deleted from the digest in 2006. Nothing to tax.
2. Blanches Flower Shop - 2004 - 2006 \$786.90
Joseph Brown owned Blanches during this time. The bill is for his inventory. Can not collect from Blanches Flower Shop. Nothing to tax.
3. Berlie B. Ives d/b/a Custom Park Homes, LLC - 2006 \$4,457.30
Custom Park Homes, LLC went out of business 2006. This is for inventory. Custom Park Homes, LLC does not exist anymore. Can not file against Mr. Ives personally because it was incorporated.

Tax Commissioner needs Board approval to write the bills off. Total amount requested to be written off is \$5,853.43 including interest and penalties. Actual amount written off digest is \$3,914.76. These accounts are insolvent and should come off the digest. On motion by Mr. Lawson, seconded by Mr. Butler, Board unanimously approved request of Tax Commissioner to write off tax bills on the personal property bills that are insolvent/uncollectible in total amount of \$5,853.43 including interest and penalties, actual amount off the digest is \$3,914.76..

c) Clerk of Court - New Software

Clerk of Superior Court, Ms. Ginger Shiver, presented to County Administrator a copy of Georgia Data Corporation Service Agreement for Board approval. Apparently, the former software company, Mainstream, is no longer in business. The new company, Georgia Data Corporation, will provide service at same price as previous software company, \$650.00 per month. County Attorney had not reviewed contract. On motion by Mr. Butler, seconded by Mr. Lawson, Board unanimously accepted Georgia Data Corporation Service Agreement to provide new software service to Clerk of Superior Court subject to County Attorney's approval. County Attorney stated the Arbitration section should be omitted; and termination of agreement should change from 30 days to 60 days.

d) Approval of Asphalt for Pineridge Heights

On motion by Mr. Butler, seconded by Mr. Maxwell, Board authorized County Engineer to draw up specs for bids on the asphalt for paving Pineridge Heights Subdivision. Vote was unanimous.

e) Establish Full Time Position Law Administration Office

On motion by Mr. Ragsdale, seconded by Mr. Butler, Board approved the part time position in the Law Administration Office to change to a full time position for Ms. Betty Harrell.

County Administrator Comments

a) DCA - Community of Opportunity

Department of Community Affairs will re-start the Communities of Opportunity (Co-Op) in February 2010. As part of the initiative, their staff will conduct a number of meetings in the community over next several months. Attendance is strongly encouraged as input is extremely important in creating Community Improvement Strategy. In addition to local government participation, other key stakeholders from county are invited to attend each meeting. Incentives for local involvement will include a \$5,000.00 grant to be matched by the community - 50% cash and 50% in-kind.

b) Georgia County Internship Program (GCIP)

ACCG, in partnership with the Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education, developed an internship program devoted to recruiting college students to participate in county internships. The internship program is open to undergraduate and graduate students from

a variety of educational backgrounds. By providing information on the skill set and educational backgrounds that is preferred, they help find interns that are interested in that type of work. The internship can be at no cost to the County. County Administrator will complete Georgia County Internship Program Application and return by January 26, 2010.

c) Census Update

Board discussed what they can do to help get information out to the public regarding the census and make sure everyone completes and return the forms.

Board Appointments for 2010

Chairman asked if there are any changes/corrections to Board current appointments, there were none. On motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Butler, the Board unanimously approved Board appointments to remain the same for 2010 as were for 2009.

Boards/Committees

Brooks County Library Board	Mr. Claude Butler
Brooks County Airport Authority	Mr. S. L. Jones
Brooks County Board of Health	Mr. James Maxwell
Council on Aging	Mr. David Ragsdale
Coastal Plain Area, EOA	Mr. James Maxwell
Chamber of Commerce	Mr. Howard Lawson
Regional Development Center Board	Mr. Howard Lawson/O'Barr
Dept. of Family & Children Services	Mr. James Maxwell
Mid South RC&D Council	Mr. David Ragsdale
	Mr. Johnny Whiddon(At-Large)

Building Assignments

County Office Building	Mr. S. L. Jones
Agriculture Building/Annex	Mr. Howard Lawson
Courthouse	Mr. David Ragsdale
Sheriff's Department	Mr. James Maxwell
Road Department	Mr. Claude Butler

Other Appointments for 2010:

County Attorney	Mr. Vann Parrott
County Auditor	Mr. Gary Zeigler
County Engineer	Mr. Ben DeVane
Assistant County Engineer	Mr. Mark DeVane

On motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Butler, the Board adjourned regular monthly meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Mr. S. L. Jones, Chairman
Mr. Robert D. O'Barr, County Administrator
Ms. Patricia A. Williams, County Clerk

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for a Special Called Meeting on Friday, January 22, 2010 at 8:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Meeting Room located at the Brooks County Office Building. Commissioners present were: Mr. S. L. Jones, Chairman; Mr. Claude Butler, Vice Chairman; Mr. Howard Lawson; and Mr. David Ragsdale. Mr. James Maxwell was not present. Others present were: Mr. Robert O'Barr, County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Mr. Vann Parrott, County Attorney; and Mr. Mark Deatcher, Road Superintendent.

Call to Order/Prayer & Pledge

Chairman called meeting to order.

Amendments to Agenda

On motion by Mr. Butler, seconded by Mr. Lawson, the Board unanimously approved amending the agenda to include Volunteer Fire Department at Dixie.

Re-organization of Road Department

County Administrator presented a flow chart for re-organization of the Road Department.

Mr. O'Barr proposed eliminating current part-time positions, and create part-time in Road Department for 32 hours per week under supervision of Road Superintendent. This would also include placing Special Projects Coordinator, Mr. Ed Johnson, in Road Department as a part-time Foreman. The change will provide more utilization of equipment and keep it running for maximum use of leased equipment. Special Projects Coordinator will maintain office in Administration Building and coordinate daily activities with Public Works Director. Public Works Director will hire three part-time employees to assist Special Projects Coordinator or for roads as needed. Public Works Director and Special Projects Coordinator will coordinate on all leased equipment. On motion by Mr. Butler, seconded by Mr. Ragsdale, Board unanimously approved Road Department Flow Chart (see attachment), change Special Projects Coordinator title to Part Time Foreman, terminate part-time employees at close of Pineridge Heights, and at end of 60 days run ad for part-time positions.

Board requested Public Works Director to provide a priority list for road equipment needed in the Road Department. Board discussed leasing a Savannah Motor Grader. After discussion, Mr. Ragsdale made a motion to lease a Savannah Motor Grader for six months, if cost is to high, bring back to the Board.

IT Support - Sheriff's Office

Brooks County Sheriff's Office IT Support provider is in transition, transferring from Total IT Solutions to Southern Georgia Regional Commission. Administrator expressed his concerns of system being frozen, due to password not been turned over to Sheriff's Office. County Attorney recommended all equipment remains until it can be determined who owns it. The information contained on the systems belong to the County; and IT Total Solutions will be required to transfer information to another vendor.

Volunteer Fire Department - Dixie

On motion by Mr. Ragsdale, seconded by Mr. Butler, Board authorized County Administrator to check with Reames and Son to see if they would pave a front bay at the Fire Department on Dixie Road while they are working on LARP project.

On motion by Mr. Butler, seconded by Mr. Ragsdale, the Board adjourned the special called meeting at 9:20 a.m.

Mr. S. L. Jones, Chairman

Mr. Robert D. O'Barr, County Administrator

Ms. Patricia A. Williams, County Clerk