

**HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION**

June 5, 2012

7:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present: J. Harry Lange, Becky Langston, Joey M. Loudermilk, Jim Woods, Charles Wyatt.
Staff Present: Daniel B. Bridges, County Manager; John M. Taylor, County Attorney; Nancy D. McMichael,
County Clerk.

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Chairman Lange called the Regular Session to order.
2. **MINUTES.** The motion to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2012, Regular Session was made by Commissioner Loudermilk, seconded by Commissioner Langston, and passed unanimously.
3. **APPEARANCE OF CITIZENS**
 - A. **Thomas Vowell: Video Recording of Meetings.** Thomas Vowell, citizen who lives on West Pine Drive in Fortson, appeared before the Board and suggested that the Commissioners consider having their meeting video taped and posted on the County website so that people who can't attend meetings will know what is going on and get to know their commissioner. Chairman Lange thanked Mr. Vowell for his comments and said that the Board would take the matter into consideration. Commissioner Langston asked that the matter be researched to determine costs.
 - B. **Lynn Sanders: Video Recording of Meetings.** Lynn Sanders, citizen who lives on Dogwood Lane West in Fortson, appeared before the Board and said that video taping the meetings would be beneficial for the citizens.
 - C. **Jim Furin: Video Recording of Meetings.** Jim Furin, citizen who lives on Dogwood Lane West in Fortson, appeared before the Board and said that he agrees with what has been said and that video recording of meetings would benefit the County and its citizens. He said there are citizens willing to help in video recording, with the County providing the cameras and equipment; that the goal is not to cost the County more money.
4. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. **Hamilton Business Park.** Commissioner Wyatt said that a plat had been provided in the meeting packet showing the original acreage for Sturdi-Buildings, a company that will be moving its location to the Hamilton Business Park, and additional acreage (from where the Animal Shelter was formerly located) for a new approximate total of ±8.00 acres; and that because the property has been graded and the road and drive put in on the additional acreage, he would like the Board to transfer the extra acreage to the Development Authority to sell to Sturdi Buildings. He then made the motion to increase the acreage to ±8.00 acres and to transfer the property to the Development Authority to sell same to Sturdi-Buildings. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously. Danny Bridges, County Manager, said that the agreement with Sturdi-Buildings would also have to be amended to reflect the increased acreage.
 - B. **Power for Hamilton Business Park.** Commissioner Wyatt said that three-phase power is needed at the Hamilton Business Park for Sturdi-Buildings; that he understands Georgia Power has indicated the cost (to Sturdi-Buildings) could be up to \$23,000; and that because Diverse Power is on the boundary line of the park, there is a possibility that Diverse Power can put in the necessary power at no cost. He said he would let the Board know of the outcome at the June 19 meeting.
 - C. **Second Reading: Flood Damage Ordinance.** Chairman Lange said that this is the Second Reading of the Flood Damage Ordinance, which has been revised to show the correct dates of the revised FEMA flood maps and which the County is being mandated to approve. He asked for comments or questions. There being none, the motion to approve the Flood Damage Ordinance was made by Commissioner Wyatt, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.
5. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **Budget FY 12/13 Public Hearing II.** Chairman Lange called the Public Hearing to order. County Manager Danny Bridges explained the changes that had been made since the last Public Hearing. He also said that the Public Defenders Office recently advised of a 10% increase to which he responded with a request for justification and a review of the budget; that we have asked since the inception of the program to be part of the budget process,

which has not occurred; that the increase is not included in the proposed budget; and that if and when an explanation or justification is received, the Board may need to amend the budget. Chairman Lange asked for comments from those in attendance.

Martha Hartley, Probate Judge, said that the Public Defenders office provides a huge service in that someone from that office is in attendance each time she has court; that the person is very helpful to everyone; and that she would not like to see that assistance in jeopardy. She also commented that she would be willing to give up her microfilm reader in order to keep the Public Defender.

Lynn Sanders, citizen who lives on Dogwood Lane West in Fortson, appeared before the Board and thanked the Board for always keeping things "in the black".

Chairman Lange said that the County has done an excellent job of operating within its budget for the last 10 to 15 years and that we are a financially sound county. He said that due to the time, this discussion would continue following the scheduled Public Hearing.

6. **PUBLIC HEARING @ 7:30 PM**

- A. **Explanation of Procedures**. Chairman Lange explained the procedures involved with the Public Hearing.
- B. **Conflict of Interest Forms**. The Conflict of Interest forms were completed at the request of Chairman Lange.
- C. **Application of Shirley Elliott to rezone 1.28 acres of Land Lot 164, Land District 18, Map 80, Parcel 37, from C-4 (Highway Commercial) to R-1 (Single Family Residential); property located at 4970 Georgia Highway 85, Ellerslie**. Chairman Lange called the Public Hearing to order, read the specifics, and said that the Planning Commission and the Planning Staff had recommended approval with no conditions. Shirley Elliott, applicant, appeared before the Board and said that because there is no longer a commercial business on the property; that she has built a new home and in order to get it financed through a mortgage company, the property has to be residential. Chairman Lange asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of or in opposition to this rezoning. There being none, he asked Ms. Elliott for any closing comments. She had no other comments. There being no comments or questions from Commissioners, Chairman Lange closed the Public Hearing and asked for a motion. The motion to approve this rezoning was made by Commissioner Loudermilk, seconded by Commissioner Langston, and passed unanimously.

7. **NEW BUSINESS (CONTINUED)**

- A. **Budget FY 12/13 Public Hearing II (continued)**. Chairman Lange asked for comments on the proposed budget.

Lon Marlowe, citizen who lives at 19710 Georgia Highway 219 in West Point, appeared before the Board and said that he is requesting the County perform a study on its infrastructure, particularly water, which ends about two miles from his property. He said that when he built Oakhurst he was initially told he had to have fire sprinklers, but because he wasn't on County water, the cost would be astronomical; that in order to do catering for functions in Oakhurst, he contacted the Health Department and was told to contact EPD because he is on a well; and that he has a drip irrigation under the highway to his property on the other side and the line has a leak, and while he has the lake from which he can get water, lake water can't be used for drip irrigation. He said there is a big push in promoting agriculture and farming in the state, and providing the necessary infrastructure is vital. He said that if there is a need to extend the water line, how can it be done and the cost for same. In addition, he said that providing internet and telephone lines are vital today not only for farming and agriculture but for those many people who work out of their homes.

Chairman Lange said that water lines are looked at from time to time and that Mr. Marlowe's comments will be taken into consideration.

There being no further comments, Chairman Lange closed the Public Hearing.

- B. **Budget FY 12/13 Adoption**. The motion to approve the budgets (General Funds, Solid Waste, Water Works, Airport and Small Funds) was made by Commissioner Wyatt, seconded by Commissioner Langston, and passed unanimously.
- C. **Development Authority Budget FY 12/13**. Chairman Lange said that the Development Authority's budget is \$21,050, which is \$1,600 more than last year, due to advertising and website updates. Lynda Dawson, Chairman of the Development Authority, said that the

amount for advertising is never spent completely. Danny Bridges, County Manager, said that this budget is for funds in the Development Authority's account and which the Board must approve. Discussion included that the sign for the Northwest Harris Business Park was budgeted at \$10,000, but due to the efforts of Public Works and Facilities Maintenance crews, four signs will be completed for that amount; that the road work is proceeding, but due to the recent rain, it is delayed; that the Georgia State Economic Development will be taking a tour through the business park on June 26 and it would be nice to have the road and the signs completed. The motion to approve this budget was made by Commissioner Wyatt, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.

- D. **Health Insurance FY 12/13.** Danny Bridges, County Manager, said that the County requested proposals which resulted in a 17% increase with Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS), 18% from another company, and 21% from another company; that we reviewed the BCBS quote, increased the deductible to \$4,000 (from \$3,000), but the increase would also be picked up by the HRA so the employee would not see the increase, which reduced the increase to 5.3%; and that it is recommended that the County stay with BCBS, increase the deductible, increase the premium amount paid by employees by 5.3%, and stay with Greater Georgia Life for life and accidental death. He also reminded the Board that there is a second plan, which is no longer offered to new employees but is still in existence for a few employees, and said that there is no change in the premiums for vision and dental. The motion to approve continuing insurance with BCBS, increasing the deductible to \$4,000, picking up the additional \$1,000 by the HRA, increasing the premium paid by employees by 5.3%, and staying with Greater Georgia Life was made by Chairman Lange and seconded by Commissioner Loudermilk. Commissioner Wyatt questioned the 5.3% increase vs. the 3% salary increase, to which Mr. Bridges said that the insurance increase is only based on the premium the employee currently pays. The motion passed unanimously.
- E. **Reappointment to DFACS Board.** Due to the expiration of the term held by Charles Trammell on the DFACS Board, Commissioner Woods made the motion to reappoint Mr. Trammell to another term, which would expire June 30, 2017. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Loudermilk, and passed unanimously.
- F. **Requests for Tax Refund.** Chairman Lange read the Requests for Tax Refunds as follows:
- (1) **Beltran, Joaquin Maldonado** (2012). Refund amount of \$149.93 due to being entitled to receive on Disabled Veteran vehicle plate for which no ad valorem tax is paid. The Tax Commissioner agreed with the request.
 - (2) **Milner, James** (2012). Refund amount of \$227.50 due to being charged back taxes when previous owner did not change title or unregister vehicle. The Tax Commissioner agreed with the request
- The motion to approve the two refund requests was made by Commissioner Langston, seconded by Commissioner Wyatt, and passed unanimously.
- G. **Church Injunction.** Chairman Lange said that because this issue is part of an upcoming court case/lawsuit, the Board should not discuss same, and he tabled discussion until the June 19 meeting. Commissioner Wyatt expressed his displeasure at not being able to discuss the topic and indicated that there would not be a need to discuss it during the June 19 meeting.

8. **COUNTY MANAGER**

- A. **Corrections Officer and Crew Supervisor Positions.** Danny Bridges, County Manager, said the positions of Corrections Officer (in the Prison) and Crew Supervisor (in Public Works) have very similar qualifications, job requirements, and duties, but the pay grade for each have been different. He said that both the Prison Warden and the Public Works Director have indicated there are issues with employees wanting to move from one position to the other, mainly due to the pay difference, and they are requesting that the position of Crew Supervisor be changed to a Grade 23, which is the grade of a Corrections Officer, and with the same starting salary. He also said that no one currently in either position would be affected by the proposed change. Following a brief discussion, the motion to approve moving Crew Supervisor from Grade 28 to Grade 23 was made by Commissioner Loudermilk, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.
- B. **Replacement Vehicle for Prison Warden.** Danny Bridges, County Manager, said that the Warden's vehicle was totaled in April when it was hit by a vehicle owned and operated by a private citizen; that the citizen's insurance company paid the County \$8,665.25; that it is suggested that a Ford Expedition be purchased for the Warden; and that the new vehicle

will cost \$23,357.65 but with the insurance proceeds credited, the balance would be \$14,801.40, which would come from General Funds. The motion to approve the request was made by Commissioner Wyatt, seconded by Commissioner Loudermilk, and passed unanimously.

- C. **Railroad Recreation Trail Engineering Consultant.** Danny Bridges, County Manager, said that the County requested proposals from qualified engineering consultants in connection with moving forward with developing a portion of the Railroad Recreation Trail. The responses are as follows:

COMPANY	Bron Cleveland Assoc, Atlanta	Carter & Sloope, Macon	EMC Engineering Services, Macon	Farner Barley, West Point	G. Ben Turnipseed, Atlanta	Rochester & Assoc, Gainesville
Hourly Rates	\$90 - \$190	\$50 - \$160	\$55 - \$150	\$50 - \$140	\$65 - \$160	\$55 - \$190
Estimated Engineer Cost*	\$249,250	\$52,893 (9% of estimated construction cost)	\$61,496.76 (12% grant award)	\$167,890 (\$914,540 less \$746,650 est. construction cost)	\$99,830 (\$640,600 less \$540,770 est. construction cost)	\$95,000 to \$115,000

Mr. Bridges said that the recommendation is to award the project to Carter & Sloope not only for their lower rates and estimated cost, but for the vast knowledge of and familiarity with Harris County. The motion to award the project to Carter & Sloope was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Langston, and passed unanimously.

- D. **Bid Award: Fitness Equipment for Community Center.** Danny Bridges, County Manager, said that bids were received for various pieces of fitness for the Community Center. The bids were as follows:

ITEM	QTY	BSN	GOPHER
Table Tennis Table	2 ea	\$ 1,019.58	\$ 846.56
Treadmill, Commercial	3 ea	\$ 16,829.97	\$ 13,187.94
Elliptical, Light Commercial	3 ea	\$ 6,293.97	\$ 7,907.94
Exercise Bike, Commercial	2 ea	\$ 3,959.98	\$ 3,901.36
Recumbent Bike, Commercial	1 ea	\$ 2,349.99	\$ 2,155.98
Fitness, Multi Station	1 ea	\$ 3,507.99	\$ 3,828.58
Complete Volleyball System	2 sets	\$ 4,095.98	\$ 4,855.48
SUB-TOTAL		\$ 38,057.46	\$ 36,683.84
Delivery/Freight/S&H		\$ 725.00	\$ 2,518.79
TOTAL		\$ 38,782.46	\$ 39,202.63
Set-Up & Installation		\$ 3,365.00	not provided

Mr. Bridges said that the recommendation is to award the bid to BSN and in order to make sure the equipment is property set-up and installed, and it is also being requested that the cost for same be included, which would bring the total to \$41,147.46. He reminded the Board that the addition cost had not been included in the Community Center equipment needs and expenses the Board had approved several months ago. The motion to award the bid to BSN and to include the set-up and installation was made by Commissioner Langston, seconded by Commissioner Wyatt, and passed unanimously.

- E. **Bid Award: Safe Room for 9-1-1.** Danny Bridges, County Manager, said that once again, no bids were received for the Safe Room, and requested that he be allowed to contact appropriate companies and negotiate the purchase and installation for same. John Taylor, County Attorney, said that because the bid has been requested two times with no results, he does not see a problem making direct contact and purchase. Mr. Bridges said that he will advise the Board of the results regarding the Safe Room.
- F. **Refinancing of Water Bonds and Funding of Projects.** Danny Bridges, County Manager, said that the current water bonds are at 4.85% and by refinancing somewhere close to 2.46%, there would be a savings of approximately \$1.5 million over the life of the bonds; that it is being suggested that the bonds be refinanced through the Public Improvements Authority, which would not require a public referendum; that two large projects could be done at the Filter Plan to increase the output and make it a more efficient facility; that by extending the water line on Mt. Airy Road, it not only puts water further down the road, but puts water in an area where citizens are having a difficult time with water quality and getting water; that another project is to upgrade the water line on Highway 219 to give better fire protection and alleviate pressure problems; that the projects total around \$3.5 million; that the County could do about \$500,000 in labor, leaving about \$3 million to be borrowed; that there is GEFA money available at about 2%, which is better than going through bonds; and that by refinancing the bonds, borrowing \$3 million for the projects, the annual payments would be less than depreciation expense, which would mean a positive cash flow at the Water Works. He said it will take about five years to get all the projects

completed. The motion to move forward with the proposed refinancing and borrowing of additional funds was made by Commissioner Loudermilk, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.

- G. **Salary Increase: County Clerk & Facilities Maintenance Director**. Danny Bridges, County Manager, requested that the salaries of the County Clerk/Assistant County Manager (Nancy McMichael) and the Facilities Maintenance Director (Jamie Webb) be increased, effective July 1, by 10 percent. The motion to approve the request was made by Commissioner Wyatt, seconded by Commissioner Loudermilk, and passed unanimously.

9. **COUNTY ATTORNEY**

- A. **Fourth Amendment to County Manager Agreement**. John Taylor, County Attorney, said that during the last meeting, the Board approved an increase to the County Manager's salary, and that an amendment to his agreement has been drafted to reflect the increase, which is effective July 1, and he recommended approval of same. The motion to approve the agreement was made by Commissioner Loudermilk, seconded by Commissioners Langston, and passed unanimously. (Document can be found in "Contracts and Agreements" file as C&A #12-05.)

10. **ADJOURNMENT**. There being no further business, the motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Wyatt, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.

J. Harry Lange, Chairman

Attest:

Nancy D. McMichael, County Clerk