

**HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION**

May 5, 2015

7:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present: J. Harry Lange, Martha Chewning, Becky Langston, Jim Woods. Commissioner Absent: Joey Loudermilk. Staff Present: Greg Wood, County Manager; John Taylor, County Attorney; Nancy D. McMichael, County Clerk.

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Chairman Lange called the Regular Session to order.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** Chairman Lange led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **MINUTES.** The motion to approve the minutes of the April 21, 2015, Regular Session was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Chairman Lange, and passed unanimously.
4. **APPEARANCE OF CITIZENS**
 - A. **Cathy Flourney: Washington Road Status.** Cathy Flourney, citizen who lives on Washington Road, appeared before the Board and said that 27 of the 30 right-of-way deeds have been returned; that she is pleased with the information she has been provided and the progress being made; thanked the Board for what they do; and asked for a timeline as to the paving of the road. In response, Greg Wood, County Manager, said that following receipt of the deeds, a final engineering survey has to be done, the work has to be bid out, and that we are looking at least 90 days to paving.
5. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. **Computers for Sheriff's Vehicles.** Chairman Lange said that action had been tabled from the last meeting pending determination as to where the funds for paying for the computers and installation would come. Greg Wood, County Manager, said that in 2012 the Board approved using funds from the drug abuse treatment fund to purchase a vehicle and the necessary equipment for same, which to him, appeared to set a precedent. John Taylor, County Attorney, said that because of that, it would appear the funds could be used to pay for the computers. Commissioner Chewning pointed out that state law regarding the use of the drug abuse treatment funds was specific as to their use and that the computers did not appear to meet the specificity of the law. Mr. Wood then suggested that the General Funds be reduced by the amount necessary to pay for the computers (\$109,477), then take funds from the Jail Funds to replace the funds taken from the General Fund. Commissioner Langston disagreed with that suggestion. Discussion included that the Sheriff could possibly take the funds from one of his accounts (commissary, phone, seizure and/or confiscated) to pay for the computers; that the DARE fund has not been in existence for quite some time (at least since 2006); and that a determination is necessary regarding funding. Action was tabled to the May 19 meeting.
 - B. **SPLOST Update.** In response to a question from Commissioner Langston as to why the SPLOST update, which was to be on this agenda, was not on the agenda, Greg Wood, County Manager, said that he and Paul Glick, Finance Officer, are working on trying to get definite numbers before bringing the information back to the Board. Chairman Lange said that he would be meeting with Mr. Glick this week about the matter.
 - C. **Cemetery Meeting.** In response to a question from Commissioner Langston as to why the meeting regarding the back section of the Hamilton Cemetery had not been arranged or taken place, Greg Wood, County Manager, said that he was waiting to hear back from the registered agent (Don Newberry) of the Hamilton Cemetery Association. Discussion included that there is a group of individuals wanting to take care of the back part of the cemetery; that they have been waiting for a definite answer from the Board for quite some time; and that if the registered agent can be reached or did not want to attend the meeting, then contact should be made with the other members of the Association; and that the delay on the part of the Association should not delay a meeting of the County Manager, Chairman, Commissioner Chewning, and Hamilton Council persons from taking place.
6. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **Intergovernmental Agreement with Shiloh: Elections.** John Taylor, County Attorney, said that Shiloh had requested an agreement for the County to conduct its elections; that the Shiloh Council had approved the agreement, which had been drafted based on similar

documents with Hamilton, Pine Mountain and Waverly Hall; and that it is recommended for approval. Following discussion, the motion to approve the agreement was made by Chairman Lange, seconded by Commissioner Langston, and passed unanimously. (Document can be found in "Contracts & Agreements" as C&A #15-12.)

7. **PUBLIC HEARINGS @ 7:30 PM**

- A. **Explanation of Public Hearings.** Chairman Lange explained the public hearing procedures.
- B. **Conflict of Interest Forms.** The Conflict of Interest forms were completed at the request of Chairman Lange.
- C. **Application of Verizon Wireless, c/o Baker Donelson, for a Special Use Permit for the construction of a cell tower in Land Lot 35, Land District 3, Map 039, Parcel 014; property located at 12290 GA Highway 18, Pine Mountain.** Chairman Lange called the Public Hearing to order, read the specifics of the application, and said that the applicant had requested withdrawal of the application; and that because the request had been made after the application had been advertised the Board would only act on the request to withdraw. He closed the Public Hearing and asked for a motion on the request to withdraw. The motion to approve the request to withdraw was made by Commissioner Langston, seconded by Commissioner Chewning, and passed unanimously.
- D. **Application of John and Carol Knox to rezone 5.66 acres in Land Lot 163, Land District 21, Map 058, Parcel 034, from A-1 (Agricultural/Forestry) to C-4 (Highway Commercial); present use storage; proposed use office for lawn service; property located at former Mead Wood Yard on Pleasant Grove Road, Hamilton.** Chairman Lange called the Public Hearing to order, read the specifics of the application, and said that the Planning Commission had recommended approval with three conditions (1) it be only for a lawn service business; (2) the existing tree buffer is to remain on the eastern and north-east sides of the property; and (3) signage is limited to one 64 square foot (double-faced) sign no more than 8' in height with external illumination only (if at all) and one wall sign that will not exceed 25% of the area of the wall on which the sign is placed up to a maximum of 100 square feet, passed unanimously. John and Carol Knox, applicants, appeared before the Board and said that they have owned the property for several years; that a neighbor, Mark Harris, wants to buy the property in order to locate a lawn service on same; that they would like to sell the property to Mr. Harris for that purpose; and that they have no objections to the conditions recommended by the Planning Commission. Mark Harris, appeared before the Board, and said that he plans to construct a building on the property in which he will store his equipment and did not object to the conditions. In response to questions, Mr. Harris said that he does not intend to park any vehicles or equipment outside the structure. There being no further comments or questions, Chairman Lange asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the application. There being none, he asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition to the application. There being none, he closed the Public Hearing. There was discussion regarding the three conditions recommended by the Planning Commission and Commissioner Woods recommended a fourth condition to limit the parking of vehicles and equipment outside the structure to no more than 72 hours. The motion to approve the rezoning application to C-4 with four conditions: (1) only for a lawn service business; (2) the existing tree buffer is to remain on the eastern and north-east sides of the property; (3) signage is limited to one 64 square foot (double-faced) sign no more than 8' in height with external illumination only (if at all) and one wall sign that will not exceed 25% of the area of the wall on which the sign is placed up to a maximum of 100 square feet; and (4) limit the parking of any vehicles or equipment outside the structure to no more than 72 hours, was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Chewning, and passed unanimously.

8. **NEW BUSINESS (CONTINUED)**

- B. **Audit FYE June 30, 2014.** Jay Pease and Steven Voynich of Robinson Grimes, appeared before the Board and reviewed the audit, which is late due to delays by the former Finance Officer in providing the information necessary for the audit. Mr. Pease said that there are a couple of items pending inclusion in the audit, but that they should not result in any changes to financial information; and that the County is in good financial standing. He recommended the Board approve the audit. In response to a question from Chairman Lange, John Taylor, County Attorney, said that should the additional information result in changed financial information, the Board could re-approve the completed document. The motion to approve the Audit for FYE June 30, 2014, was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Chewning, and passed unanimously.

- C. **Renaming of Georgia Highway 354.** Chairman Lange said that with the State of Georgia turning over a portion of Georgia Highway 354 to the County the renaming of that portion; that it has been recommended the section from the ramp leading up to Georgia Highway 190 and going under the bridge of Georgia Highway 190 to the sharp right-hand turn be renamed Kings Gap Road, and that the section from the sharp turn to Georgia Highway 116 in Pine Mountain Valley be renamed “C Street”, which was the original name of that section of road.

Bobby Haralson, citizen, appeared before the Board and said that he and many others are in agreement with the renaming of the road as described.

The motion to rename Georgia Highway 354 as described and to post the renamed sections with “no thru trucks” signs was made by Commissioner Chewning, seconded by Chairman Lange, and passed unanimously.

- D. **Georgia Highway 116.** Bobby Haralson (continuing his comments from the preceding subject) said that Georgia Highway 116 is in bad condition and needs resurfacing. He gave the history of how and when the road was initially paved. Even though the County does not maintain State roads, Chairman Lange asked Greg Wood, County Manager, to have the Public Works Director look at the road to determine if there are conditions that need to be addressed.
- E. **Intersection of Georgia Highway 116 with US Highway 27.** Bobby Haralson (continuing his comments from the preceding subjects) said that when the State realigned the section of Georgia Highway 116 in front of the Health Department, right of way maps were recorded, and at least one shows property lines reflecting State right of way that may lead to a better location of Highway 116 with Highway 27, and he wanted to keep this topic in front of the Board.

9. **COUNTY MANAGER**

- A. **Water Works Drop Box.** Greg Wood, County Manager, said that because the Water Works office is fenced in and is inaccessible to the public after hours and on weekends, plans are underway to have a drop box installed at the Commissioners’ office for customers to drop off their payments after hours and on weekends, and that a notice will be posted to indicate that accounts will not be credited until the next business day. There were no objections.
- B. **Economic Development Academy.** Greg Wood, County Manager, announced that he and Tracie Hadaway, County Planner, had “graduated” from the most recent Economic Development Academy, which took place once a month over a four-month period.

10. **COUNTY ATTORNEY.** John Taylor, County Attorney, said he had no business to discuss with the Board this evening.

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

J. Harry Lange, Chairman

Attest:

Nancy D. McMichael, County Clerk