

**HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION**

July 21, 2015

7:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present: J. Harry Lange, Joey Loudermilk, Martha Chewning, Becky Langston, Jim Woods. 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 asked Commissioner Loudermilk to lead those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance, and he complied.
3. **MINUTES.** The motion to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2015, Regular Session was made by Commissioner Loudermilk, seconded by Commissioner Chewning, and passed unanimously.
4. **APPEARANCE OF CITIZENS**
 - A. **Cathy Flournoy: Washington Road Paving Status.** Cathy Flournoy, citizen, was not present, but Chairman Lange said that everything is still on schedule and that a contract should be let on the project within the next two months.
5. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. **Financial Statement: May 2015.** Chairman Lange said that the motion to approve the May financial statement had been made during the July 7 meeting by Commissioner Woods and seconded by Commissioner Chewning, but tabled by Commissioner Langston due to questions. Greg Wood, County Manager, said that an explanation sheet had been provided regarding the questions, and that he wanted to further explain about Department 13 (9-1-1) because the expenses related to the hazard mitigation plan and the 9-1-1 vehicles will be reimbursed, eventually, by GEMA, which would balance out the budget. Following discussion, the motion to approve passed unanimously.
6. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **Westgate Circle & Westgate Drive: Acceptance Process.** Chairman Lange said that a petition to request acceptance of Westgate Circle and Westgate Drive, which are in Commissioner Chewning's district, had been received; that of the 34 property owners, 30 had signed the petition; that the Public Works Director has determined that it will cost approximately \$26,312.50 to bring the road up to standards for maintenance purposes; that it is estimated the legal costs will be approximately \$13,600 for a total estimated cost of \$39,912.50; and that it has been recommended that no additional right-of-way be obtained from property owners and to leave the road at its current width of 30 feet, which includes ditches. Following discussion, the motion to move forward with the acceptance process of Westgate Circle and Westgate Drive for maintenance purposes was made by Commissioner Chewning, seconded by Commissioner Langston, and passed unanimously. Chairman Lange said that the next step is to notify property owners of the estimated costs and their share of same, which will determine whether the process will continue to move forward.
 - B. **Requests for Tax Refund.** Chairman Lange said that tax refunds had been requested, as follows:
 - (1) **Roque, Joseph R.** Refund request in the amount of \$200.46 due to his being unaware taxes were due, and that the request is for penalty & interest only; that the Tax Commission agreed because Mr. Roque purchased his home in September 2014, the PT-61 was received October 10, 2014, and that while she is not sure a tax bill was sent after that, bills were sent out in June 2015; and that the Board of Tax Assessors disagreed in order to maintain equity among taxpayers because taxes were due whether or not a bill was sent. The motion to deny/disapprove the request was made by Commissioner Chewning and seconded by Chairman Lange. Following discussion, the motion failed by a vote of two in favor (Chewning, Lange) and three opposed (Langston, Loudermilk, Woods). The motion to approve the request was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Loudermilk, and passed with three in favor (Woods, Loudermilk, Langston) and two opposed (Chewning, Lange).

- (2) Steele, Kevin O. Refund request in the amount of \$273.36, which is the amount of the second penalty; that he paid a penalty one day after receiving a notice on February 24 and the amount on the notice was invalid by the time he received it (February 24), that because the penalty was valid only through February 20 according to the Tax Commissioners' office, a second penalty in the amount of \$273.36 was due, which he then paid; that the Tax Commissioner agreed with the request; and that the Board of Tax Assessors disagreed in order to maintain equity among taxpayers because taxes were due whether or not a bill was sent. Following discussion, the motion to approve the request was made by Commissioner Loudermilk, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.
 - (3) Teal, Thomas J. Refund requests in the amount of \$93.94 for 2014, \$96.34 for 2013, and \$92.65 for 2012, because taxes had been paid on two acres when he should have been taxed for 1.29 acres; and that both the Tax Commissioner and the Board of Tax Assessors agreed with the request. The motion to approve the request was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Chewing, and passed unanimously.
- C. **Appointment to Development Authority.** Chairman Lange said that Derek Williams had resigned from the Development Authority due to job relocation out of the County; that Mr. Williams' term expires December 31, 2015; and that Commissioner Woods had a nomination for replacing Mr. Williams. The motion to appoint David King to complete the term of Derek Williams was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Loudermilk, and passed unanimously.
- D. **Salary Survey/Job Description Proposal Award.** Chairman Lange said that four companies had responded to his request regarding having a salary survey, to include job descriptions, completed by December 31, 2015; that of the four, Carl Vinson Institute indicated they could not meet the December 31 deadline; that the other three companies indicated they could meet the deadline; that Condrey & Association, of Athens, GA, had quoted \$39,500 fixed cost; that Evergreen Solutions, LLC, of Tallahassee, FL, had quoted \$38,000 as a total, not to exceed, cost; and that Springsted, Inc., of Mechanicsville, VA, had quoted \$39,700 plus out of pocket expenses not to exceed \$4,650; that he talked to representatives with all three companies; that he checked the references of all three companies; and that in order to move forward with the survey, a decision needed to be made. Following discussion, which included that various Commissioners had reviewed the proposals in-depth and were leaning toward Springsted, the motion to award the proposal to Springsted, Inc., of Mechanicsville, VA, was made by Chairman Lange, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.
- E. **Airport: Corporate Hangars and Jumbo Hangar.** Chairman Lange said that the Airport Committee, during its last meeting on July 9, had voted to recommend that the County move forward with the construction of two corporate hangars and one jumbo T-Hangar; that Greg Wood, County Manager, had prepared a return on investment analysis regarding the construction of the corporate hangars for a ten-year period; that there would be additional costs related to construction (mobilization, erosion control, GAB, concrete, pavement marking, concrete pipe, etc.) totaling approximately \$314,000, for an approximate total cost of \$1.2 million. Discussion included that Chairman Lange and Mr. Wood would be meeting with Joe Rodgers and/or Callaway Gardens regarding the additional 1,000 feet necessary to extend the runway to 6,000 feet, which, in turn, would attract larger planes; that there are enough names on a waiting list to fill the Jumbo T-Hangar, which would have 10 units rather than 9; that the corporate hangar for Ben Baker, resident mechanic at the Airport, would allow Mr. Baker to take on more work, which, in turn, would result in an increase of sales tax; and that when Mr. Baker moves his business to his corporate hangar that would free up two units in the existing jumbo-T hangar that could then be leased to plane owners. Following discussion, the motion to proceed with two corporate hangars and one jumbo-T hangar (of 10 units) was made by Chairman Lange, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.
- F. **AWOS Update.** Greg Wood, County Manager, said that the AWOS should be in place by the end of next month, and that as a result, there would be more traffic and fuel sales because the AWOS will provide pilots a better picture of the weather for landing.
- G. **Airport Layout Plan & Runway Extension Flow Chart.** Chairman Lange said that a revised Airport layout plan and a runway extension flow chart had been distributed and that while no action is necessary at this time, he wanted the Board members to be aware of same. He then reviewed the various aspects of the proposed plan and chart.

H. **Columbus Chattahoochee Coalition Request**. Chairman Lange said that Gary Jones had appeared before the Board several meetings ago and requested the Board's support in fighting the proposed cuts to Fort Benning, which will impact not only Columbus but Harris County as well. He said that Mr. Jones has submitted a letter requesting the County commit to \$10,000 a year for four years. Following discussion, action was tabled until more information regarding the budget for the Coalition is obtained. Greg Wood, County Manager, is to contact Mr. Jones about the budget information.

7. **COUNTY MANAGER**

A. **Durapatcher for Public Works**. Greg Wood, County Manager, said that Public Works is in need of equipment in order to better respond to pothole issues; that two companies provided demonstrations regarding same; and that Mike Brown, Public Works Director, has indicated the Durapatcher is the preferred equipment. Mr. Wood said that because there is only one dealer in the region, this would be a sole-source purchase; that the cost for a new Durapatcher is \$65,560, but the County has an opportunity to purchase a demonstration model at a reduced cost of \$45,750, which would have the same warranty as the new model. Following discussion, action was tabled by Commissioner Langston to the August 4 meeting.

B. **SCADA System Update**. Greg Wood, County Manager, said that the new SCADA system will be going live starting Friday of this week and should be fully operational by next week; that the system uses the radio system to monitor all of the County's water wells, pump stations and water tanks; and that the time it takes for the system monitoring will be reduced from approximately two hours down to 45 seconds.

C. **Request for Executive Session**. Greg Wood, County Manager, requested an executive session for the purpose of discuss the acquisition or disposition of real estate.

8. **COUNTY ATTORNEY**

A. **Real Estate Acquisition of 1.96 Acres on Washington Road Status**. John Taylor, County Attorney, said that the acquisition of 1.96 acres on Washington Road had been completed last Friday; that all right of way deeds necessary for the paving of the road have been obtained; and that road survey plats and right of way deeds will soon be recorded.

B. **Real Estate Acquisition of 120 Acres Adjacent to Northwest Harris Business Park**. John Taylor, County Attorney, said that sales contract for the County to purchase 120 acres, at a cost of \$475,000, near the Northwest Harris Business Park from the N.A. Jones Estate has been executed by Robert Crowder, Executor for the Estate; that the sale is dependent upon a survey, which is currently underway, and the Phase I Environmental Assessment, which has been completed; that while the closing is scheduled for November 1, it could occur sooner; and that he recommends the Board approve the execution of the sales contract by the Chairman. The motion to approve the contract was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Chewning, and passed unanimously. (Document can be found in "Contracts & Agreements" file as C&A #15-17.)

9. **RECESS FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**. The motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing real estate acquisition or disposition was made by Chairman Lange at 8:15 PM, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.

10. **RESUME REGULAR SESSION & ADJOURNMENT**. There being no further business to discuss, the motion to go back into Regular Session and to adjourn the meeting was made by Chairman Lange, seconded by Commissioner Chewning, and passed unanimously.

J. Harry Lange, Chairman

Attest:

Nancy D. McMichael, County Clerk