

HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION

April 18, 2023

6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Rob Grant, Susan Andrews, Greg Gantt, Bobby Irions. Staff Present: Randy Dowling, County Manager; Russell Britt, County Attorney; Clint Chastain, Chief Financial Officer; Andrea Dzioba, County Clerk.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Grant called the Regular Session to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. **INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Vice-Chair Andrews gave the invocation. Chairman Grant led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **MINUTES** The motion to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2023 Regular Session was made by Vice-Chair Andrews, seconded by Commissioner Irions, and passed unanimously.
4. **APPEARANCE OF CITIZENS**
 - A. **Dr. Asanté Hilts - Valley Healthcare System.** Dr. Asanté Hilts, the new incoming CEO for Valley Healthcare System informed the Board that their clinic in Fortson is now open every week day instead of once per month. Additionally, she informed the Board that they have a mobile unit in Waverly Hall every Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in order to provide services to the community.
 - B. **David Hawkins - Mike Tracy Pavilion Addition.** David Hawkins, Executive Vice President of Freeman & Associates, Inc., informed the Board that he was there to get an update on his proposed project since he last addressed them. He would like to add 2 bays and add concrete under the 2 added bays and the 3 bays that do not currently have concrete. He reiterated what the Skills USA Challenge was and informed them that he expects there to be 15+ counties participating in November with over 250 students involved. He stated that the County would need to pay an in-kind amount of \$170,000.00 and that he would like it to be a design-build project. Mr. Hawkins wanted to know what he needed to do to get to the next step and get the \$170,000.00 commitment. County Manager Randy Dowling stated that the County could not just approve this project for a private company and it was a legal issue. County Attorney Russell Britt stated that the project would have to go out on bid due to Public Works Construction law. County Manager Randy Dowling stated that the location is County property and, if the County would like this to be a County project, we would have to go through the design and bid process. Vice-Chair Andrews requested that a plan be brought forward so that the Board would have an idea of what direction the Board would like to go regarding this proposed project.
5. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **Financial Statement - February 2023.** Clint Chastain, Chief Financial Officer, was available to answer any questions. Commissioner Gantt asked about building permit fee revenue and how it was at 96% of budget already since the building permit volume was down. Clint Chastain advised that volume was down but that there had been two substantial projects and Impact 360 that generated significant revenue. The motion to approve the Financial Statements for February 2023 was made by Chairman Grant, seconded by Vice-Chair Andrews, and passed unanimously.
6. **COUNTY MANAGER**
 - A. **Application for 2023 LMIG Safety Action Program Grant .** County Manager Randy Dowling advised the Board that the County received a grant notification from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) notifying the County that grant funds are available for installation of low-cost safety improvements such as road signs and markings, center line and shoulder rumble strips, flashing beacons, guardrails, and minor shoulder widening. He advised that the Public Works Department would like to apply for funding using this grant to re-mark thirty (30) County roads' centerlines and edge lines at an estimated total cost of \$199,000.00 (\$179,100 would be GDOT funds and \$19,900 would be County funds). The motion to approve the application for the 2023 LMIG Safety Action Program Grant was made by Vice-Chair Andrews, seconded by Commissioner Lightsey, and passed unanimously.

- B. **Bid Award: Airport Runway Lighting, Airfield Signage, and Wind Cone.** County Manager Randy Dowling introduced the agenda item to the Board and advised that Phil Eberly with Lead Edge was available to respond to any questions. Mr. Dowling advised that the bid was prepared and advertised. On March 29, 2023, only one bid was received as follows:

Company	Bid Amount
Trinity Electrical Services, Inc. (Baxley, GA)	\$ 550,060.00

The low bidder was Trinity Electrical Services, Inc. with a total bid of \$550,060.00. In response to questions, Mr. Eberly advised that there were only three contractors in the state that perform this work. The motion to award the bid to Trinity Electrical Services, Inc. to Trinity Electrical Services, Inc. For the rehabilitation of the Airport's runway lighting, airfield signage, and wind cone was made by Chairman Grant, seconded by Commissioner Lightsey, and passed unanimously.

- C. **Project Updates.** Randy Dowling, County Manager, reviewed various projects, as follows:

- (1) Man O' War Railroad Recreation Trail, Phase VI. The last portion of Phase VI should be complete this month.
- (2) New Fire Training Facility. The contract documents have been completed and exchanged.
- (3) Airport Runway Lighting. The bid for this project was awarded this evening.
- (4) Airport Open House. The Airport Open House will be held on May 20, 2023.
- (5) New Water Works Administrative Office. This project should be finished in June and the building occupied by July.
- (6) Courthouse Renovations, Phase I. This project is going well and is approximately 50% complete.
- (7) Tire Amnesty Days. A State tire grant was received and Tire Amnesty Days will be held on June 10, 2023 and June 17, 2023 at the Transfer Station.

7. **COUNTY ATTORNEY**

- A. **Opioid Settlement Agreements: Teva, Allergan, CVS, Walgreens, and Walmart.** County Attorney Russell Britt advised that as previously mentioned that the County has an opportunity to be part of the new National Opioid Settlements with Teva, Allergan, CVS, Walgreens, and Walmart regarding opioid remediation. He further stated that the Chairman has electronically executed the Participation Forms and the ratification of same is necessary. The motion to ratify the approval of inclusion in the Settlements and execution of the Participation Forms was made by Commissioner Irions, seconded by Commissioner Lightsey, and passed unanimously.

- B. **REQUEST FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION.** County Attorney Russell Britt requested an Executive Session for the purpose of discussion of litigation and real estate.

8. **RECESS FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION.** Chairman Grant made the motion to go into Executive Session for litigation and real estate at 6:59 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Irions and passed unanimously.
9. **RESUME REGULAR SESSION.** The motion to go back into Regular Session was made at 7:31 p.m. by Commissioner Irions, seconded by Commissioner Lightsey, and passed unanimously.

10. **COUNTY ATTORNEY (cont'd)**

A. **Letter from Sheriff Mike Jolley**. County Attorney Russell Britt advised that a letter was received from Sheriff Mike Jolley dated April 12, 2023 where the Sheriff requested that the County Attorney initiate a writ of mandamus against the Board of Commissioners on his behalf as the Sheriff of Harris County. Mr. Britt advised that that would create a conflict of interest as he can not represent both entities. Mr. Britt has informed Sheriff Jolley of the conflict and his anticipated counsel confirmed that the letter provided is a formal request for independent counsel pursuant to O.C.G.A. §45-9-21. Mr. Britt has determined a conflict of interest does exist. He further advised that a motion and second and approval is needed to allow the Sheriff to obtain independent counsel to be paid at the same hourly rate as the County Attorney. A motion to allow the Sheriff to obtain independent counsel to be paid at the same hourly rate as the County Attorney for purposes of this request was made by Chairman Grant, seconded by Vice-Chair Andrews, and passed unanimously.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**. There being no further business to discuss, the motion to adjourn was made by Vice-Chair Andrews, seconded by Chairman Grant, and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Rob Grant, Chairman

Attest:

Andrea Dzioba, County Clerk