

**HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR SESSION**

February 20, 2024  
6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Rob Grant, Susan Andrews, Greg Gantt, Scott Lightsey, Bobby Irions. Staff Present: Randy Dowling, County Manager; Russell Britt, County Attorney (via telephone); Sherrail Jarrett, Elections Supervisor.

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 February 6, 2024 Appeal Hearing and Regular Session was made by Commissioner Irions, seconded by Vice-Chair Andrews, and passed unanimously.
4. **NEW BUSINESS**
  - A. **Jim Livingston - Executive Director, RVRC.** Jim Livingston, Executive Director of RVRC, provided the Board with an update of what the River Valley Regional Commission has been working on. He stated that they cover an area of sixteen counties. Mr. Livingston advised that they have several programs within the Area Agency on Aging including Seniors Farmers' Markets and the addition of a dementia care specialist, Robbie Monfort. He stated that the regional TSPLOST will have \$1.3 billion dollars of local investment into our road infrastructure which is being used including the widening of U.S. 27. Additionally, RVRC is working to help link the Dragonfly Trail Bicycle Network in Columbus to the Man O'War Trail and that this trail would rival the Silver Comet Trail. Mr. Livingston is proud to help facilitate broadband across the region and expects there to be \$87 million dollars of investment and said that if we have residents that are having issues with broadband that they need to be identified now; that the funding will be based upon a map being compiled by the FCC; that they have a planner on their staff that is focused on broadband; and that the County should identify where holes are in services.
  - B. **Sherrail Jarrett - Election Preparation and Processes.** Sherrail Jarrett, Elections Supervisor, addressed the Board and advised that so far in the Presidential Preference Primary that 69 people have voted and that early voting continues until March the 8th. Ms. Jarrett said that qualifying fees have been posted and advertised. She stated that there will also be a special election for House Seat 139 due to the passing of Representative Richard Smith and that the election will be on April 9th; that early voting will start on March 18th and continue through April 5th; and that the areas that will be voting will be Cataula, Ellerslie, and Waverly Hall. She advised that after that will be the general election for school board members and judges. Ms. Jarrett stated that they continue to register people to vote, remove people from the voter lists that have passed away and continue to have poll worker training.
  - C. **Appointment to the Harris County Board of Health.** Chairman Grant provided information related to the needed appointment to the Harris County Board of Health and stated that the appointment needs to be a physician actively practicing in Harris County and that Dr. Duraski would like to be reappointed. A motion to appoint Dr. Rod Duraski to the Harris County Board of Health for the term from January 1, 2024 until December 31, 2029 was made by Chairman Grant, seconded by Commissioner Irions, and passed unanimously.
  - D. **Request for Tax Refunds - Kenneth R. Stanley and Lula Jones.** Chairman Grant stated that tax refunds have been requested by Kenneth R. Stanley and Lula Jones related to Parcel 089-082 for which taxes have been paid on 2 acres but that the parcel is 1.05 acres and a new boundary survey has been completed showing the actual acreage. A motion to approve tax refunds to Kenneth R. Stanley and Lula Jones for 2021 in the amount of \$110.05, 2022 for \$106.02 and 2023 for \$106.02 was made by Commissioner Irions, seconded by Vice-Chair Andrews, and passed unanimously.

5. **COUNTY MANAGER**

- A. **Bid Award: LMIG Roads 2024.** County Manager Randy Dowling provided an overview of the agenda item related to the bid award for the 2024 Local Maintenance & Improvement Grant (LMIG) Resurfacing Program. Mr. Dowling advised that GDOT approved the submitted road; that bid specifications were developed, advertised, and distributed; and that the funds from GDOT in the amount of \$890,597.63 were received. On February 6, 2024, five (5) bids were received as follows:

Company	Bid Amount
Robinson Paving (Columbus, GA)	\$ 983,372.70
C.W. Matthews (Marietta, GA)	\$ 1,029,000.00
McLeroy (Zebulon, GA)	\$ 1,047,504.05
Atlanta Paving and Concrete (Peachtree Corners, GA)	\$ 1,221,073.00
Piedmont Paving (Newnan, GA)	\$ 1,249,903.00

He stated that the low bidder was Robinson Paving from Columbus with a bid of \$983,372.70. With the funds from GDOT in the amount of \$890,597.63, the state required 10% match (\$89,060.00) from TSPLOST, the total project budget is \$979,657.63 and that the remaining amount of \$3,715.07 needed to fully fund the project will also be funded by TSPLOST.

The motion to award the bid to Robinson Paving in the amount of \$983,372.70 for the resurfacing of Ripshin Road and authorize the County Manager and County Clerk to execute the necessary documents was made by Vice-Chair Andrews, seconded by Commissioner Gantt, and passed unanimously.

- B. **Acceptance of Federal Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Award.** County Manager Randy Dowling informed the Board that during the February 19, 2019 Board meeting that the Board authorized a competitive grant be submitted to the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA) for the acquisition of numerous generators for various County facilities, namely various Waterworks locations to have emergency power supply to continue to pump water in case of power outages. He stated that on February 6, 2024 the County received formal notification from GEMA that the County has been awarded a total of \$875,745.00 (\$656,809.00 Federal share and \$218,936.00 local share) to acquire and install seven fixed generators and one portable generator for the following locations: Barnes Mill Road Pump Station (portable), Harris County 911 Center, Harris County Jail, McKee Road Booster Pump Station, Mountain Hills Booster Pump Station, Raw Water Intake, Water Treatment Plant A, and Water Treatment Plant B. Mr. Dowling said that GEMA has agreed to extend the completion deadline for this project from September 1, 2024 until September 1, 2025 since the generators will need to go through a competitive bid process and delivery could take up to one year. He further advised that Carter & Sloope will administer this Federal grant, prepare bid specifications, and provide construction administration to ensure the generators are installed properly for a cost of \$68,500.00. Mr. Dowling advised that the grant will fund a total of \$41,701.00 for engineering services with the Federal share being \$31,275.75 (75%) and the local share being \$10,425.25 (25%) and that any cost above the total grant award of \$875,745.00 will be the responsibility of the County and that, if approved, that the costs will be placed in the upcoming FY 2024-2025 budget.

A motion to accept this grant and authorize the Chairman, County Manager, and County Clerk to execute all related documents was made by Chairman Grant, seconded by Commissioner Irions, and passed unanimously.

- C. **Project Updates.** Randy Dowling, County Manager, advised that this is the first Program of Work for this fiscal year and reviewed various projects as follows:
- (1) Employee Compensation and Classification Plan. This project is ongoing and should be finished this year and be implemented during FY 2024-2025.
  - (2) SPLOST Continuation. Election day is March 12, 2024 and early voting is happening now.
  - (3) RVRC Update of Comprehensive Plan. RVRC made a presentation this evening.

- (4) New GIS System. The RVRC is creating a GIS system for the County and the Board will received a presentation on Thursday, February 22, 2024 during the Planning Session.
- (5) LMIG Resurfacing. The Board awarded the bid this evening and the project should be complete by June 30th of this year.
- (6) New Public Works Facility. The project has begun and it is expected to be completed late this year.
- (7) Observation at Ellerslie Park. This project is being built right now and should be finished in the next 2 weeks.
- (8) Pine Mountain Valley Park. A concept plan is being developed and should be finished in the next 30-60 days.
- (9) Conduct Airport Open House. Annual open house will be held on May 4, 2024. This is a great annual event with airplane rides and music.
- (10) Phase II Courthouse Renovations. The Board will see the drawings of the three floors of the Courthouse at the Planning Session on February 22, 2024.

Discussion was held related to the numerous potholes that have popped up. County Manager Randy Dowling advised that the County is fixing the potholes that have occurred. He said that the County does not have the equipment in order to patch the numerous potholes that have occurred and is also utilizing a subcontractor. He advised that the Public Works Director plans to include items in the upcoming budget to be able to better take care of filling potholes as they occur.

6. **COUNTY ATTORNEY.**

- A. **Statewide Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement.** County Attorney Russell Britt advised that Harris County's current agreement with GEMA for statewide mutual aid and assistance in emergencies expires on March 1st of this year and that GEMA has provided a new agreement for consideration by the Board. A motion to approve the Statewide Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement with GEMA was made by Commissioner Irions, seconded by Chairman Grant, and passed unanimously.

Russell Britt, County Attorney, said that he had no additional business to come before the Board this evening.

7. **ADJOURNMENT.** There being no further business to discuss, the motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Irions, seconded by Vice-Chair Andrews, and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

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Rob Grant, Chairman

Attest:

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Andrea Dzioba, County Clerk