

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
BIBB COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

November 3, 2009

The regular monthly meeting of the Bibb County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, November 3, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Boardroom at the Bibb County Courthouse.

Board Members present were Chairman Samuel F. Hart, Sr., Vice Chairman Joe O. Allen, Commissioner Elmo A. Richardson, Jr., Commissioner Bert Bivins, III and Commissioner Lonzy Edwards.

Staff in attendance was Virgil Adams, County Attorney; Sam Kitchens; Director of Building and Properties Doug Furney, Director of Lake Tobesofkee; Tony Rousey, Director of Information Technology; Deborah Martin, Director of Finance; Ken Sheets, Director of Engineering; Shelia Thurmond, Clerk of the Board, and Janice Ross, Administrative Assistant-Board of Commissioners.

News media in attendance: Mike Stucka of The Telegraph.

Major Fred Thornhill, Chaplain, The Salvation Army, rendered the Invocation.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Hart announced that today is Election Day and there's one issue on the ballot in Bibb County: The Bibb County School District Education Local Option Sales Tax (ELOST). The polls will be open until 7:00 p.m.

Chairman Hart announced that there will be a Called Board of Commissioners meeting on Thursday, November 5, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. for the purpose of making a decision on the report from Cooper Carry and Brittain Thompson Bray Brown Architects.

Chairman Hart announced that the Board of Commissioners will meet with the Bibb Legislative Delegation on Tuesday, November 10, 2009 at the Chamber of Commerce to present issues for consideration by the General Assembly during their 2010 legislative session.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Richardson, seconded by Commissioner Edwards and carried, the Minutes of the regular meeting on October 20, 2009 were approved as written.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Ronald Conners, Ph.D., addressed the Board regarding the location of the new Courthouse. Dr. Conners provided a handout to each member of the Board as well as the Clerk of the Board detailing his comments. He expressed opposition to the Oglethorpe Street location.

Mr. Mike Ford of NewTown Macon addressed the Board by first stating that he was a member of the Architectural Selection Committee for the new Courthouse. He commended the Board of the thorough way in which they approached the courthouse situation. He urged the Board to consider the Mulberry site.

Mr. Tony Long addressed the Board regarding the location of the new Courthouse. He stated that he preferred the Mulberry site and offered his support with helping pass the SPLOST for said purpose.

Ms. Linda McWilliams addressed the Board regarding illegal dumping and a problem with loose animals on her property. She lives on Irwinton Road. She also requested more Sheriff's protection in her neighborhood.

Ms. Amanda Smith thanked the Board for its promptness in looking into her problem and taking care of the situation of securing a home on Dellwood Drive.

Mr. Jim Wells addressed the Board by stating that he represents the BB&T Bank and the disposition of the potential acquisition of their building by Bibb County. He stated he thinks the consultants did a really good job and a fair job of evaluating all of the sites, and presenting their findings today. He stated his main problem is that they all cost \$80 -85 million dollars. He stated that we are in a bad economy, property taxes are going up, the cost of education is going up, it seems that we are facing a declining population, there's a problem with paying County employees fair and decent wages and benefits, there are storm water issues, quality of life issues, recreation and arts. He stated there is an obligation to address the Courthouse; an obligation to keep the public safe; to keep the judges in a safe environment. The question is how is the best way to do it? He stated for \$40 million they could have the BB&T building and 130,000 feet of judicial space renovated. He stated that he believes it would solve the problems of separation of prisoners, judges and the public which seems to be the highest of needs being faced with the new Courthouse.

Mr. Gene Dunwoody addressed the Board by stating that he attended the presentation by the architects earlier today and he thought it was a very thoughtful, well designed layout on all three sites and he appreciates the effort the Board went to in assigning that task to those individuals. He stated that he wanted to beg the Board to keep this courthouse on this property, whether it's here, BB&T (adding that Mr. Wells made some excellent comments) or on the adjacent site. He stated that he wanted to offer his full support, if the Board decides to do a SPLOST, to help with the campaign.

Ms. Tabitha Stanley addressed the Board by stating that they were representing Forest Place and Hawaiian Village, two trailer parks located off of Hawaiian Village Road. She stated they recently lost one of their neighbors. She recognized many of her neighbors in the audience and asked them to stand. She stated they reason they were present tonight is because they are deeply concerned about the lives of their family members. She two deaths have occurred on that road where the people were hit by cars. She stated the cars kept going because it is so dark on the road. She stated they are pleading for some help to get some lighting on that road

because it is pitch dark. She stated the bus route lets residents off on Eisenhower Parkway and it's about a mile and a half down the road to the trailer park which is hazardous at night. She stated the same is true for them having to catch the bus in the early morning hours when it is still dark. She stated their petition has more than 100 names of neighbors who have rallied together, prayed together and come together to ask the Board to help them in any way possible.

Chairman Hart requested the petition be left with the Clerk and stated that it would be referred to the Engineering/Public Works Committee as of tonight's meeting.

Mr. Gerald Stapleton addressed the Board by stating that he is also from the Hawaiian Village neighborhood. He stated he has called the Sheriff out there many times and it's done no good. He said the Sheriff's Office said they can stop people from speeding in that park. He stated the same person who ran over and killed a resident out there recently is still driving through the park like an idiot. He asked if he was going to be allowed to run over someone else. Mr. Stapleton called attention to a little toddler in the audience who is the offspring of the man recently run over and killed. He said something needs to be done fast and that lights need to be put in place out there. He stated he has been told the streets out there are not the County's problem, but he believes it is. He stated that the County comes out there and cut the grass. He stated the residents in his neighborhood are human and pay taxes too and he'd like to see some of his tax dollars go to work out there.

Chairman Hart reiterated that the petition would be referred to the Engineering/Public Works Committee tonight and he invited Mr. Stapleton to leave his contact information so that he can be notified when the matter will come before the board and the resolution of the same.

On another note, Mr. Stapleton stated that he would like to see the courthouse stay in its present location.

Ms. Monica Williams addressed the Board by stating that the night the man was recently killed in the Hawaiian Village area her fiancé was out walking at the same time and that he had seen him. She said that her fiancé heard what sounded like a thump, but thought nothing about it, assuming that the man he had seen earlier had gotten a ride from someone. She, too, stated that it is very dark out there and even high beam lights on cars don't help much. She stated there were speed signs out there. One says 15 mph and the other says 35 mph as you are coming out of the trailer park. She said, however, on the main road there are neither speed signs nor speed bumps and people drive like they don't care. She stated that it is obvious people coming in and out of the area are drinking and driving from the number of alcohol bottles littering the side of the roadway. She stated that was against the law. She, too, pleaded with the board to do something before another life is lost out there.

REFERRALS:

The following items were referred to the **Engineering/Public Works Committee:**

1. Agreement for Maintenance of Roadway Lighting Systems between Bibb County and Georgia Power Company for Interchange Lighting at I-75 and I-475 on the south side of Macon.
2. Correspondence from Brian and Rosalind Tucker, 101 Northlake Drive, Lizella, GA requesting assistance from the County in having a new sewer tap placed on their property in order to support a gravity system that will be put in place.

3. Petition from residents of Hawaiian Village Drive for the installation of street lights in their neighborhood.

RECORD AND INFORMATION:

1. Monthly departmental reports and agency activities received for record: Coroner; County Extension Service.
2. Correspondence from Governor Sonny Perdue announcing the award of a subgrant to the Macon-Bibb County Fire Department funded from the FY 2009 Homeland Security Grant Program in the amount of \$15,000.00 to enhance or sustain the department's capabilities in Hazardous Materials response.
3. Correspondence from Governor Sonny Perdue announcing the award of another subgrant to the Macon-Bibb County Fire Department funded from the FY 2009 Homeland Security Grant Program in the amount of \$23,000.00 to enhance or sustain the department's capabilities in the Georgia Search and Rescue (GSAR) program.
4. Correspondence from Governor Sonny Perdue announcing the award of a subgrant to the Bibb County Sheriff's Office from the FY 2009 Homeland Security Grant Program in the amount of \$11,908.00 to sustain the department's connectivity with the Georgia Terrorism Information Program (GTIP)
5. Correspondence from Commissioner Mike Beatty, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, congratulating Bibb County on the recent adoption of its Capital Improvements Element Annual Update. Accordingly, DCA is pleased to extend Bibb County's status as a Qualified Local Government until its next required submittal is due.
6. Correspondence from Mr. Ralph Nix, Middle Georgia Regional Commission, expressing sincere appreciation to the Board for the use of Lake Tobesofkee's facilities for the RC's Annual Meeting. He notes that Bibb County's generosity contributed to the success of the meeting and Steve Layson, Ken Sheets and the Tobesofkee staff was extremely helpful ensuring that the grounds were well manicured and the facility was accommodating to their guests.

ACTION:

1. Ratification of the following Resolutions of the Board of Commissioners:
 - congratulating Temple Beth Israel on their 150th Anniversary celebration held October 23 and 24, 2009;

On motion of Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Richardson and carried, the before mentioned resolution was ratified.

- expressing gratitude to Rev. Shannon Back and the Lizella Baptist Church for their hard work and diligence in their Community Clean up held on October 2 and 3, 2009;

On motion of Commissioner Allen, seconded by Commissioner Edwards and carried, the before mentioned resolution was ratified.

- paying tribute to Rev. Jacob Parker on his selection as the 2009 Earl T. Shinoster Freedom Fund Award winner on Sunday, October 25, 2009; and

On motion of Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Richardson and carried, the before mentioned resolution was ratified.

- recognizing and paying tribute to Mr. Willie (Bill) H. Odom, Jr. and Mr. Robert (Bob) J. Williams, the two living founders of Epsilon Beta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, for their 60 years of dedicated service to their fraternity and to their community.

On motion of Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Richardson and carried, the before mentioned resolution was ratified.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

ENGINEERING/PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE – Committee Chairman Allen reported the following:

1. The Committee recommends that GDOT be advised by a letter from the Chairman that the County desires to have high mast lighting at the I-75/Arkwright Road Interchange and that the City of Macon will reply regarding the I-75/Pierce Avenue Interchange.

On motion of Commissioner Allen and carried, the before mentioned recommendation was approved as presented.

2. The Committee recommends that the Chairman be authorized to sign the Request for Transfer of Retail Electric Service from Georgia Power Company and from Southern Rivers Energy regarding lighting of the I-75 / I-475 Interchange.

On motion of Commissioner Allen and carried, the before mentioned recommendation was approved as presented.

3. The Committee recommends that the request of the Macon Water Authority for an easement to construct a new storm drain structure at 827 Magnolia Drive be approved, subject to the conveyance being made by quit claim rather than fee simple title.

On motion of Commissioner Allen and carried, the before mentioned recommendation was approved as presented.

4. The Committee recommends approval of an ordinance to change the name of Frank C. Amerson, Jr. Parkway to "Frank Amerson Parkway".

On motion of Commissioner Allen and carried, the before mentioned recommendation was approved as presented.

5. The Committee recommends that the request of the Industrial Authority that the County refrain from granting easements or curb cuts on Frank Amerson Parkway to any third party property owners be approved and that the County Engineer bring any such requests back to the Committee.

On motion of Commissioner Allen and carried, the before mentioned recommendation was approved as presented.

TOBESOFKEE COMMITTEE – No Report.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND INFORMATION SERVICES COMMITTEE – No Report.

RISK MANAGEMENT/PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE – Committee Chairman Edwards reported the following.

1. With respect to the three claims presented, on advice of Counsel, the Committee recommends that claims be paid in an amount not to exceed \$4,500.

On motion of Commissioner Edwards and carried, the before mentioned recommendation was approved as presented.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE – Committee Chairman Bivins reported the following:

1. The Committee recommends authorizing the county attorney to draft a new ordinance to restrict signs on the right-of-way.

Commissioner Bivins reported that the committee voted to approve. The recommendation passed 4-1. Commissioner Bivins casting the dissenting vote.

PROPERTIES COMMITTEE – No Report.

MACON WATER AUTHORITY – No Report.

LAND BANK AUTHORITY – Commissioner Bivins reported that the Land Bank Authority is getting pretty busy with some of the things the Board is familiar with like the Macon Homes project.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT – Commissioner Bivins reported that they are still doing all they can to get the word out about the flu. He stated that he and Dr. Harvey have been trying to make the rounds on the talk shows and they'd like for anybody who has an organization of people that they can send a representative to talk with to let them know. He stated that the behavior of the public is really going to be critical as this season goes on. He stated he has been a lot of places

lately and one of the things they talk about is social isolation. He explained that is people separating themselves from each other, at this point, voluntarily. He stated that everywhere he goes, he is within ten feet of two or three people who are coughing. He stated that one of the main things they'd like to encourage people to do is if you have a cough or the flu, don't go out publicly to work or to school.

Commissioner Allen commended Commissioner Bivins for all of his efforts as it relates to getting the word out about the flu.

FINANCE, TAX AND REVENUE COMMITTEE – Committee Chairman Richardson reported the following:

1. The Committee recommends approval of a Supplemental Appropriation to the FY 2010 General Budget for transfer to the Group Insurance Fund to cover the cost of the screening for the wellness initiative that is part of the new Health Plan changes. The amount is not to exceed \$25,000.

On motion of Commissioner Richardson and carried, the before mentioned recommendation was approved as presented.

2. The Committee recommends approval of a Supplemental Appropriation to the FY 2010 General Budget in the amount of \$7,500. for labor to repair communications tower located in Lake Arrowhead area.

On motion of Commissioner Richardson and carried, the before mentioned recommendation was approved as presented.

3. The Committee recommends approval of a Supplemental Appropriation to the FY 2010 General Budget in the amount of \$2,541. to replace the 30-year State Band Bay Station (VHF Repeater System).

On motion of Commissioner Richardson and carried, the before mentioned recommendation was approved as presented.

LICENSE & TAX COMMITTEE – Committee Chairman Richardson reported the following:

1. The Committee recommends forgiveness of the pro-rated portion of taxes for the property purchased by Bibb County.

County Attorney Virgil Adams stated they might need to do an Amendment because they found out today there are some others that were in Center City's name that we're operating for the County so those need to be included as well. He said if the spirit of the motion would be that those also be included we'd have that on record.

On motion of Commissioner Richardson and carried, the before mentioned recommendation was approved as presented.

2. The Committee recommends approval of the Tax Abatement Schedule for Battle Lumber Company.

Commissioner Richardson stated this will create five new jobs.

On motion of Commissioner Richardson and carried, the before mentioned recommendation was approved as presented.

3. The Committee recommends approving the new (2009) alcoholic beverage licenses for the following establishments:
 - a. Jay Shree Maladi Ma, Inc. d/b/a Jaimin Food Mart located at 4017 Hartley Bridge Road
 - b. Holiday Inn located at 3953 River Place

On motion of Commissioner Richardson and carried, the before mentioned recommendation was approved as presented.

Commissioner Edwards stated there may be some folk here tonight who came out of interest or concern for the ordinance that there was some publicity on. He stated that matter had been deferred until the next meeting which is two weeks from now.

He stated there is some people here from the east side and he doesn't know if they have any issues or not because they didn't ask to speak but he wanted to acknowledge their presence.

PENSION BOARD – No Report.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – Chairman Hart reported the following:

1. Ratification of action of the Committee of the Whole recommending that the petition for registration of Dellwood Drive be approved and that said road be placed on the Official Road Register for maintenance by County Forces. The Committee further recommends that the Bank of America be notified and that the County will follow up with FDIC to place a lien on the property to pay for necessary punch list repairs.

On motion of Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Allen and carried, the before mentioned action was ratified by a 4-1 vote. Commissioner Bivins cast the dissenting vote.

Rev. Donald Bryant addressed the Board by stating that he pastors at the Swift Creek Baptist Church on Jeffersonville Road. He thanked the Board, again, for the support they have received in reviving the pride of the citizens in the east Macon area. He stated that it is a remote area and they have had several challenges from the industrial side and environmental side. He stated that they realize the landfill issue is still there; they realize the County has done a lot of work with that enforcing some of the environmental testing and reporting of that to the community and

so, he acknowledges that. He stated that the Community of Fall Line Preservation of which he is president wanted to make sure that they are recognizing the County's support, but they would like to stay abreast because they don't want to allow this to become a second time around. He stated the landfill is at a point where it has reached its capacity in some ways in height, depth and width and they have began to use certain strategies within the landfill to create an opportunity to add more of the same but to set it up in certain cells. He stated the odor is a signal that the vets or cells are open and left open for a period of time which allows a certain amount of evaporation. He stated that several of the churches in the area get together to clean up the highway to try to keep it halfway decent. He stated the trash trucks are not using their cover nets. He stated they will soon be doing some advertisement for that area to show the community some of the beauty for the people investing. He stated they are hoping to draw some more productive type businesses out in that area. He asked for the County's help on this while adding they will do their part to try to keep it clean. He stated as far as the landfill, they are going to need the County's help on that.

Rev. Bryant offered to do a video out there in that area and an effort to capture the trash flying off the trash truck as well as the vehicle insignia on the doors. He stated that this is happening late at night and he is not sure where the trucks come from but he said he would look into it. He stated he will do everything he can to bring the Board facts and tangible proof of what's going on out there.

Commissioner Edwards stated that the would also like to appreciatively acknowledge the visionary leadership of people like Rev. Ronald Toney for the good work he and his church are doing in a part of this community, the Bartlett Crossing area. He stated that he is developing a model that, hopefully, can be used in other parts of this community.

Chairman Hart stated that he and Commissioner Bivins attended an event in that community recently and he noted that Rev. Toney rebuilt his church in that area which sort of serves as the foundation for starting the rebuilding process in that community. Chairman Hart expressed appreciation to what Rev. Toney is doing.

NEW BUSINESS – None.

There being no further business and on motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Shelia Thurmond, CCC, Clerk of the Board