



BALDWIN COUNTY REGULAR MEETING

August 06, 2024

1601 N Columbia St, Suite 220

6:00 PM

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

John Westmoreland
Kendrick Butts
Henry Craig
Emily Davis
Sammy Hall

OTHERS PRESENT

Brandon Palmer
Carlos Tobar
Dawn Hudson
Cindy Cunningham

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman John Westmoreland called the August 6, 2024 Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

INVOCATION

County Manager Carlos Tobar delivered the Invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Henry Craig led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENTATIONS

Mr. James Lunsford and Mr. Clarence Hall addressed the Board and expressed appreciation to the County for allowing the youth group, We Care, to use the gym at the Recreation Department for a free basketball camp. Mr. Lunsford stated approximately 60 kids participated in the program. Mr. Lunsford and Mr. Hall again thanked the County for making this possible.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2024 Public Hearing, the July 16, 2024 Regular Meeting, the July 16, Executive Session and the July 29, 2024 Called Meeting as presented. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

AMENDMENT TO AGENDA

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to amend the Agenda to allow the Coroner to address the Board. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Coroner John Gonzalez addressed Commissioners requesting authorization to hire one additional part-time deputy coroner. He stated the reason another deputy coroner is needed is due to the fact that all deputy coroners have fulltime jobs, and he would like to add someone that is retired to be on call. Mr. Gonzalez reported there will be no additional cost to County except for training, dues, and per call payment.

Commissioner Henry Craig expressed concern about the possible legislation that would set minimum salaries for coroners as well as provide them with benefits.

Commissioner Emily Davis made a motion to approve hiring an additional part time deputy coroner. Vice Chairman Kendrick Butts seconded the motion.

Commissioner Henry Craig stated if such legislation is approved, there will be additional costs to the County for salaries and benefits. Commissioner Hall suggested approval of the part time deputy coroner through December 31, 2024 at which time the matter would be re-evaluated in order to determine impact, if any, of possible legislation.

Commissioner Emily Davis amended her motion to state authorization for the hiring of a part time deputy coroner through December 31, 2024 and revisit the approval of the position every 30 days thereafter pending possible legislation related to Coroners. Vice Chairman Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE/FISCAL MATTERS

Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG)

County Manager Carlos Tobar reported the bid opening for the LMIG road paving project was held July 15th, and four bids were received. He presented a bid tabulation of proposals received. Mr. Tobar stated it is the recommendation of staff to award the bid to low bidder, Surface Masters in the amount of \$3,658,185.85.

Commissioner Sammy Hall stated since the company has never been used by the County previously and is not currently GDOT certified has the County checked all qualifications and references. County Manager Carlos Tobar responded GDOT certification is not a requirement in the bid specifications, and County staff did check qualifications, and the company has applied for GDOT certification. County Attorney Brandon Palmer stated the County went through the public bid process as required. Commissioner Sammy Hall recommended that future bid documents include the requirement to be GDOT certified

Vice Chairman Kendrick Butts made a motion to award the LMIG bid to Surface Masters in the amount of \$3,658,185.85 as presented. Commissioner Henry Craig seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation Grant Award

County Manager Carlos Tobar reported the Sheriff's Office has been awarded a Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation Grant Award in the amount of \$24,598.96. He stated the grant will be used to purchase four dive suits, four full face masks, four communication systems, one surface station and accessories for the department.

Fire Chief Victor Young stated the Sheriff's Office and Fire Department are working together to move forward with the dive team, and the grant award will allow the purchase of necessary gear to perform essential duties in cold water conditions as well as be able to communicate with surface support while performing underwater operations.

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to accept the grant award as presented. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Revisions to Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy for Transit Program

County Manager Carlos Tobar stated in order for the County to participate in the 5311 Transit Program, the County must adopt the federal Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy for Transit Program employees even though the County has its own Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy. He discussed changes to the drug and alcohol policy as required by the federal transit authority which included oral fluid specimen, conditions considered as test refusals, and pre-employment testing.

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to approve the revisions to the Transit Program Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy as presented. Vice Chairman Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Surplus Property 136 Felton Drive

County Manager Tobar and County Attorney Palmer reported on County surplus property located at 136 Felton Drive. Mr. Tobar stated nothing can be built on the lot, and the Health Department Environmental office has said it will not perk. He recommended the property be declared surplus property and sealed bids be solicited or a public action be held to sell the property.

County Attorney Brandon Palmer stated that State policy regulates this matter when you can't make independent use of the property.

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to declare the property at 136 Felton Drive as surplus property and to solicit sealed bids for the proper. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Henry Craig reported Commissioners held a Strategic Planning meeting and the Sheriff's crime center was the top priority as a result of the meeting. He stated he would like to ensure this is included in upcoming budget discussions.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business to come before the Board.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Carlos Tobar presented highlights of his report on County projects to include the following: some of the new signs have been installed at the Courthouse and the County is waiting on delivery of the last set of signs; HUD has approved the environmental document for the Memorial Library, and the County is waiting on release of funds; installation of new sound system in the Commission Chambers will be complete by the September 3rd meeting; staff registered for mandatory webinar on galvanized waterline replacement project; permit received and work has resumed on Log Cabin waterline replacement project; documents have been submitted to DNR on the Fishing Creek Trail project and engineer has begun work on bid documents; waiting to receive contract from Federal Highway Administration on Oconee Heights Streetscape Project; bid documents are approximately 75% complete for the Crime Center; bids will be opened on August 14th for the pump at the Golf Course; evaluation continuing on construction of pickleball courts; waiting on Georgia Soil and Water Authority permits on Harrisburg Park improvements; a scrap tire amnesty day will be held September 28th from 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Road Department, 311 Linda Drive; public meeting to be held with homeowners on Rocky Creek Court after we get engineering report and recommendations to look at options for this situation.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

The following citizens addressed the Board:

Tina Behne - 160 Pine Drive NE, stated the end of Pine Drive has become a dumping ground. She took pics and sent to County Manager. She requested signage to be placed there to deter illegal dumping.

Ed Powelski, 121 Tara Place, again discussed the water problem at 130 Tara Place. He stated he has heard nothing from County Engineer Wood. He presented a petition of residents in his neighborhood. He stated there are 57 homes there, and 37 additional homes are being proposed in the area. The residents do not want egress through Plantation Chase

Bobby Chester, 125 Muscadine Trail, speaking in support of Ed Powelski. He also does not want a lot more traffic in his neighborhood. Neighbors want another road to access those 37 homes.

Karley Lance, 131 Scarlett Way, Vice President of Plantation Chase Home Owners Association. The main concern is more traffic. She stated the HOA is asking that more options be looked at instead of putting access through private neighborhood.

She also stated she had been told that striping of roads in their neighborhood was at the top of the list. Now they are being told it is not necessary for roads to be striped since there are only certain number of houses.

William Mosley, 3694 Sussex Drive, expressed concern regarding property reassessments. He provided information on 2023 property sales and assessments. He stated neighborhoods not on the lake have much higher percentages of assessed value than actual sales price of property; where lake property is assessed at a much lower percentage of sales price; If proposed legislation is approved next year, there will be a cap at 3% which will have a large impact on tax collections.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Vice Chairman Kendrick Butts made a motion to adjourn into Executive Session at 7:05 p.m. to discuss property acquisition. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

RECONVENE REGULAR MEETING

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to reconvene the Regular Meeting at 7:40 p.m. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:40 p.m. Vice Chairman Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



John H. Westmoreland
Chairman



Cynthia K. Cunningham
County Clerk