

Houston County Commissioners Meeting

Perry, Georgia | March 5, 2024 | 9:00 A.M.

Call to Order

Invocation – Commissioner Robinson

Pledge of Allegiance – Commissioner Gottwals

Military Speaker – MSgt. Danielle Larios

*Command Chief Master Sergeant, Air Force Reserve Command; Program Manager,
Development & Training Flight*

Approval of Minutes from February 20, 2024 meeting

New Business

- 1. Public Hearing on Special Exception Application – Commissioner Gottwals**
- 2. Second Reading (No Thru Trucks List) – Commissioner Gottwals**
- 3. First Reading (Board of Adjustment and Appeals) – County Attorney Tom Hall**
- 4. First Reading (Reserve Fund Policies) – County Attorney Tom Hall**
- 5. Letter of Support (Ocmulgee Mounds National Park and Preserve legislation) – Commissioner Byrd**
- 6. Contract Renewal (Mid Georgia Trucking) – Commissioner Byrd**
- 7. Bid Approval (2024 Ford F450) – Commissioner Talton**
- 8. Bid Approval (Big Tex Trailer) – Commissioner Talton**
- 9. Culvert Replacement (Old Vienna Road) – Commissioner Talton**
- 10. Bank Services Recommendation – Commissioner Robinson**
- 11. Voting Delegate (Georgia Opioid Settlement) – Commissioner Robinson**
- 12. Approval of Bills – Commissioner Robinson**

Public Comments

Commissioner Comments

Motion for Adjournment

1. Public Hearing on Special Exception Application – Commissioner Gottwals

			Recommendation	Vote
#2738	Justin & Christin Key	Landscaping Business	Approval	Unanimous
#2742	Miranda Stewart	Special Events Facility	Denied	Unanimous
#2744	Gwendolyn Stovall	Virtual Assistant & Real Estate Transaction Coordinator	Approval	Unanimous
#2745	Jennifer Bell	Glamping & Party Rental Supply	Approval	Unanimous
#2746	Samantha Lineberger	Sales of Products & Commodities Raised on Premises	Approval	Unanimous
#2747	Jonathan & Jessica Adams	Dog Grooming Business	Approval	Unanimous
#2749	Walter Zellner Jr. & Rhonda Zellner	Education Consulting & Tutoring	Approval	Unanimous

Motion by _____, second by _____ and carried _____ to

approve disapprove table

the following Special Exception Applications to include any and all stipulations as noted on the Zoning & Appeals recommendation and Section 95 Requirements staff report:

#2738	Justin & Christin Key	Landscaping Business
#2744	Gwendolyn Stovall	Virtual Assistant & Real Estate Transaction Coordinator
#2745	Jennifer Bell	Glamping & Party Rental Supply
#2746	Samantha Lineberger	Sales of Products & Commodities Raised on Premises
#2747	Jonathan & Jessica Adams	Dog Grooming Business
#2749	Walter Zellner Jr. & Rhonda Zellner	Education Consulting & Tutoring

And also:

Motion by _____, second by _____ and carried _____ to

approve disapprove table

the following Special Exception Applications:

#2742	Miranda Stewart	Special Events Facility
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2. Second Reading (No Thru Trucks List) – Commissioner Gottwals

County Attorney Tom Hall will conduct a second reading of a proposed amendment to the Houston County Code of Ordinances, followed by a public hearing. The proposed amendment will amend Section 62-56 by adding Old Hawkinsville Road to the list of roads where through truck traffic is prohibited.

The proposed amendment was advertised in the Houston Home Journal for three consecutive weeks, and a copy was available for public inspection at the Superior Court Clerk's Office. The first reading of this proposed amendment to the Houston County Code of Ordinances was held at the February 20, 2024 Houston County Board of Commissioners meeting.

Motion by _____, second by _____ and carried _____ to

approve

disapprove

table

authorize

the amendment to Section 62-56 of the Houston County Code of Ordinances to add Old Hawkinsville Road to the list of roads where truck traffic is prohibited.

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND
THE HOUSTON COUNTY
CODE OF ORDINANCES**

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Houston County Public Works Department with the support of the Houston County Sheriff's Office to add Old Hawkinsville Road to the list of county roads designated in Article III, Section 62-56 as roads where through truck traffic is prohibited.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Houston County as follows:

That the Code of Ordinances, Houston County, Georgia, Section 62-56 is hereby amended by the addition of Old Hawkinsville Road, the section shall now read as follows:

Sec. 62-56. – Applicable Roads.

Bear Branch Road
Old Hawkinsville Road

SO APPROVED, this 5th day of March, 2024, by the Board of Commissioners of Houston County, Georgia.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF HOUSTON COUNTY**

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

3. First Reading (Board of Adjustment and Appeals) – County Attorney Tom Hall

County Attorney Tom Hall will conduct the first reading of a repeal of Section 14-1 of Chapter 14, Article I of the Houston County Code of Ordinances titled Board of Adjustment and Appeals. This action is necessary because the Board adopted Article III – Building Inspection Department Administration; Division 4 – Construction Board of Adjustment and Appeals; Sec. 14-111 titled Appointment, which redefined the establishment of the Construction Board of Adjustment and Appeals, effectively replacing Sec. 14-1. This action will update the Houston County Code of Ordinances to reflect the current definition.

A second reading and public hearing will be held at the March 19, 2024 meeting, after which action may be taken.

**AMENDMENT TO
CODE OF ORDINANCES
HOUSTON COUNTY, GEORGIA
REPEAL SECTION 14-1**

WHEREAS, it came to the attention of the Board of Commissioners of Houston County that Chapter 14; Article I; Sec. 14-1, titled Board of Adjustments and Appeals of the Code of Ordinances, Houston County, Georgia was replaced by Chapter 14; Article III; Division 4; Sec. 14-111 titled Appointments of the Code of Ordinances, Houston County, Georgia.

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Houston County wants to repeal Section 14-1 in order to reflect the replacement of said section with Sec. 14-111.

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Houston County as follows:

Sec. 14-1 titled Board of Adjustments and Appeals of Chapter 14 titled Buildings and Building Regulations; Article I titled In General, is hereby **REPEALED**.

The section to be repealed read as follows:

Sec. 14-1. - Board of adjustments and appeals.

There is hereby established a board of adjustments and appeals for the county. This board is to consist of one licensed architect, one engineer or general contractor and five other people involved in some capacity in the building business.

4. First Reading (Reserve Fund Policies) – County Attorney Tom Hall

County Attorney, Tom Hall will conduct the first reading of a proposed amendment to Section 2-274(f) of the Houston County Code of Ordinances regarding Capital Budget Policies. The proposed amendment will increase the unassigned general fund reserve accumulation for the County to strive for being at least equal to six months instead of three months of the total general fund budget.

A second reading and public hearing will be held at the March 19, 2024 meeting, after which action may be taken.

**AMENDMENT TO CODE
SECTION 2-274(f)
CODE OF ORDINANCES
HOUSTON COUNTY, GEORGIA**

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Houston County as follows:

That the Code of Ordinances, Houston County, Georgia, Section 2-274(f) is hereby amended by increasing the unassigned general fund reserve accumulation for the County to strive for from at least equal to three months to at least equal to **six** months of the total general fund budget, the section shall now read as follows:

Sec. 2-274. – Reserve fund policies.

- (f) The general fund may maintain all five classifications of fund balance. Houston County will strive to accumulate an unassigned general fund reserve at least equal to six months of the total general fund budget.

SO APPROVED, this 19th day of March 2024, by the Board of Commissioners of Houston County, Georgia.

5. Letter of Support (Ocmulgee Mounds National Park and Preserve legislation) – Commissioner Byrd

This request is for a letter of support for the Ocmulgee Mounds National Park and Preserve legislation. The national park and preserve legislation is progressing through the federal process, and the Ocmulgee National Park & Preserve Initiative is asking for letters of support to be included in the introduction package.

Motion by _____, second by _____ and carried _____ to

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a letter of support for the Ocmulgee Mounds National Park and Preserve legislation.

E X E C U T I V E S U M M A R Y

DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH

An Economic Analysis of the Proposed Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve



Middle Georgia grassroots organizations have proposed the creation of an Ocmulgee National Park & Preserve that would consolidate the Ocmulgee National Monument with other public lands along the Ocmulgee River between Macon and Hawkinsville. To evaluate this proposal’s potential economic effects, a study was commissioned by National Parks Conservation Association, funded in part by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

Economists at the University of Tennessee Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics used the IMPLAN economic model to generate growth projections over a 15-year period comparing a hypothetical “National Park & Preserve” against a “No National Park & Preserve” scenario. Their findings indicate that, if created by Congress, an Ocmulgee National Park & Preserve could have significant impact on the regional economy. *(See below.)*

A National Park & Preserve could lead to a

six-fold increase in visitation within 15 years and add \$206.7 million in annual economic activity, defining a new trajectory for middle Georgia. The majority of this economic activity—about 90 percent—would come from increases in visitor spending associated with a number of key activities: heritage tourism, bicycling, paddling, camping, fishing, wildlife watching, hiking, hunting, and horseback riding. Business sectors most likely to expand or multiply within the local economy include restaurants, hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, vacation rentals, campgrounds, sporting goods outfitters, retailers, and tours/outing services.

The Ocmulgee Heritage Trail and Ocmulgee River Water Trail have even greater potential than currently recognized to be integral to a National Park & Preserve and serve as primary drivers of recreation-based economic activity. Macon and middle Georgia also possess several additional, often-underappreciated features that could add up to a suite of unmatched educational, recreational, and

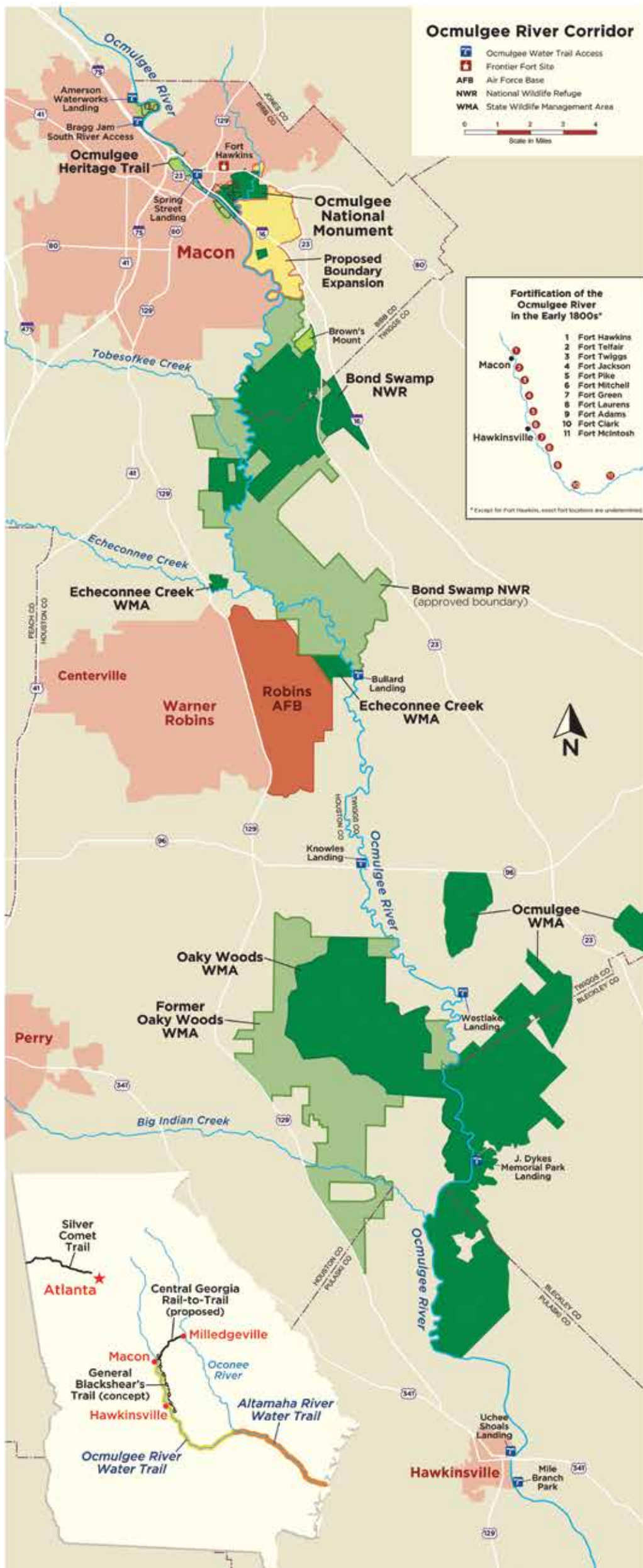
heritage tourism attractions coalescing around an Ocmulgee National Park & Preserve.

A growing body of research demonstrates that gateway communities near protected public lands, such as national parks, can cultivate competitive economic advantages over similar communities without such features. The key is to begin forging a long-term regional vision and to start systematically working toward it. Although creating a fully realized Ocmulgee National Park & Preserve could take a number of years, active and engaged communities can energize the process and hasten implementation. Nationwide, those gateway communities that actively promote, treasure, and cultivate their national parks and public lands reap the greatest benefits from them.

Top: Wetlands behind Great Temple Mound
 ©Hao Chen (Above L-R): Two Wood Storks, Ocmulgee National Monument ©Dan Vickers Alligator on a log ©Sharman Ayoub Ocmulgee River paddler ©Julian Buckmaster

Key Findings	Most Likely Growth Scenario with an Ocmulgee National Park & Preserve*	No Ocmulgee National Park & Preserve Scenario**	The Difference = Projected Annual Economic Gains from an Ocmulgee National Park & Preserve
Year 15 Projections (2016–2031)			
Annual Visitation	1,374,653	207,607	+ 1,167,046
Total Annual Economic Activity	\$233.4 million	\$26.7 million	+ \$206.7 million
Annual Labor Income	\$86.7 million	\$10.2 million	+ \$76.5 million
Annual Tax Revenue	\$33.5 million	\$3.7 million	+ \$29.8 million
Annual Jobs Supported	3,171	357	+ 2,814

* The National Park & Preserve concept would unite and link the Ocmulgee National Monument, Bond Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, and the Oaky Woods, Ocmulgee, and Echeconnee Creek State Wildlife Management Areas. (See reverse side for map.)
 ** Under a No Park & Preserve scenario, the existing public lands would continue to operate separately.



Special thanks to Beverly Blake, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, numerous community, government, NGO, and business leaders across middle Georgia who provided invaluable information and insight for this report and the underlying economic impact analysis.

Ocmulgee National Monument Economic Impacts in 2015

Visitors:	155,387
Visitor Spending:	\$8.8 million
Jobs:	151
Labor Income:	\$3.4 million
Total Economic Activity:	\$10.8 million

For more detail about the economic analysis and references to information sources used in this report, download the full report and the companion technical study at: www.npca.org/ocmulgeereport

For more information, contact:
Chris Watson, Ph.D.
Senior Program Manager

NPCA, Southeast Regional Office
706 Walnut Street • Suite 200
Knoxville, TN 37902
865-329-2424, ext.24
865-292-8811 (cell)
cwatson@npca.org

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6. Contract Renewal (Mid Georgia Trucking) – Commissioner Byrd

This request is for renewal of a hauling contract with Mid Georgia Trucking to haul leachate for the landfill. The current contract expires on April 6, 2024, and staff recommend a one-year renewal.

Motion by _____, second by _____ and carried _____ to

approve

disapprove

table

authorize

the one-year renewal of a hauling contract with Mid Georgia Trucking, of Lithonia, Georgia. All terms of the current contract will be extended for the renewal period of one year.



Houston County Public Works

Memorandum

Office

2018 Kings Chapel Road
Perry, Georgia 31069
478-987-4280
FAX 478-988-8007

Brian Jones, PE
Director of Operations

Nancy Lancaster
Office Manager

Michael Phillips
Facilities Superintendent

Christopher Stoner
Fire Chief/ EMA Director

Ronnie Heald, PLS
County Engineer

Travis McLendon
Roads Superintendent

Terry Dietsch
Utility Director

To: Houston County Board of Commissioners

From: Terry Dietsch, Utility Director *TJD BJ*

Date: February 16, 2024

CC: Brian Jones, Director of Operations
Jeff Smith, Solid Waste Superintendent

Re: Leachate Hauling Contract

Public Works staff recommends a one-year extension to the leachate hauling contract with Mid Georgia Trucking. Mid Georgia Trucking is agreeable to the terms of the current contract for another year. The County's Attorney office has reviewed the contract. This contract is vital to the operation of the Landfill and maintaining environmental compliance. Thank you for your consideration.

7. Bid Approval (2024 Ford F450) – Commissioner Talton

This request is for the approval of a bid on one New 2024 Ford F450 with a Reading Service Body to be used by the Water Department.

Motion by _____, second by _____ and carried _____ to

approve

disapprove

table

authorize

the approval of a bid on one New 2024 Ford F450 with a Reading Service Body to be used by the Water Department from Phil Brannen Ford of Perry, GA in the amount of \$78,700. This purchase will be funded by Water Department Capital Funds.



**HOUSTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PURCHASING DEPARTMENT**

2020 KINGS CHAPEL ROAD • PERRY, GEORGIA 31069-2828
(478) 218-4800 • FACSIMILE (478) 218-4805

VANESSA ZIMMERMAN
DIRECTOR OF PURCHASING

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Houston County Board of Commissioners
FROM: Vanessa Zimmerman
CC: Robbie Dunbar
DATE: February 26, 2024
SUBJECT: Purchase of a New 2024 Ford F450 with a Reading Service Body

The Purchasing Department solicited prices for One (1) New 2024 Ford F450 with a Reading Service Body to be used by the Water Department.

The Purchasing Department recommends that the Houston County Board of Commissioners purchase the vehicle from Phil Brannen Ford of Perry, GA, who provided a bid price of \$78,700.00. The unit will be charged to 505-11.7500.

Company

Bid Amount

Phil Brannen Ford	\$78,700.00
Brannen Ford of Unadilla	\$82,600.00
Hardy Family Ford	\$84,250.00

8. Bid Approval (Big Tex Trailer) – Commissioner Talton

This request for approval of a bid is on a Big Tex Trailer to accompany the New 2024 Ford F450 with a Reading Service Body.

Motion by _____, second by _____ and carried _____ to

approve

disapprove

table

authorize

the bid on a Big Tex Trailer to accompany the New 2024 Ford F450 with a Reading Service Body, from Trax & Trailers of Perry, GA in the amount of \$19,960. This purchase will be funded by Water Department Capital Funds.



**HOUSTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PURCHASING DEPARTMENT**

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(478) 218-4800 • FACSIMILE (478) 218-4805

VANESSA ZIMMERMAN
DIRECTOR OF PURCHASING

MEMORANDUM

To: Houston County Board of Commissioners
FROM: Vanessa Zimmerman
CC: Robbie Dunbar
DATE: February 26, 2024
SUBJECT: Purchase of a Trailer to Accompany the New 2024 Ford F450 with a Reading Service Body

The Public Works Department solicited prices for One (1) New BigTex Trailer in February 2024 to be used with a New 2024 Ford F450 with a Reading Service Body by the Water Department.

The Purchasing Department recommends that the Houston County Board of Commissioners purchase the trailer from Trax & Trailers in Perry, GA, who provided a bid price of \$19,960.00. The unit will be charged to 505-11.7500.

Company

Bid Amount

Trax & Trailers	\$19,960.00 (within local 3% \$19,361.20)
All American Trailer Connection	\$19,600.00 + cost of pick up from Florida
BigTex Trailer World, Inc Cordele, GA	\$25,428.50
BigTex Trailer World, Inc McDonough, GA	\$25,798.62

9. Culvert Replacement (Old Vienna Road) – Commissioner Talton

During the recent heavy rainfall, the culverts near the intersection of US 41 on Old Vienna Road failed, necessitating the closure of the road. This request is for approval of a bid to replace those culverts on Old Vienna Road. Staff recommend awarding the bid to low bidder John R. Walker Inc.

Motion by _____, second by _____ and carried _____ to

approve

disapprove

table

authorize

the award of the bid on culvert replacement on Old Vienna Road to John R. Walker Inc. of Macon, Georgia, in the amount of \$286,556. This project is funded by 2012 SPLOST.



Houston County Public Works

Office

2018 Kings Chapel Road
Perry, Georgia 31069
478-987-4280
FAX 478-988-8007

Brian Jones, PE
Director of Operations

Nancy Lancaster
Office Manager

Michael Phillips
Facilities Superintendent

Christopher Stoner
Fire Chief/ EMA Director

Ronnie Heald, PLS
County Engineer

Travis McLendon
Roads Superintendent

Terry Dietsch
Utility Director

MEMORANDUM

To: Houston County Board of Commissioners

From: Brian Jones, Director of Operations *BJ*

Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024

CC: Travis McLendon, Roads & Bridges Superintendent

RE: Replacement of Culverts on Old Vienna Road

On February 12th, Houston County experienced heavy rainfall that exceeded 25-year rainfall intensities in areas. On Old Vienna Road, near the intersection of US 41, one of two culverts failed necessitating the closure of the road. Public Works solicited bids from contractors to replace both culverts (72" and 84" corrugated metal pipes to be replaced with reinforced concrete pipe) on Thursday February 8, 2024. The results are listed below.

Bidder	Bid Amount
John R. Walker, Inc.	\$286,556.00
JWS, LLC	\$354,546.00
LeClay Construction, Inc.	No Bid
Griffin Grading & Concrete, LLC	No Bid

Public Works staff recommends awarding the work to **John R. Walker, Inc.**, for **\$286,556.00** as the lowest responsive bid.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

10. Bank Services Recommendation – Commissioner Robinson

The Accounting Department, along with our consultant, Davenport & Company, reviewed options to meet our banking service requirements. After reviewing the proposals received, and interviewing a selection of financial institutions, staff and Davenport & Company believe the selected bank best meets our banking needs and recommend approval of their proposal.

Motion by _____, second by _____ and carried _____ to

approve

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the acceptance of the selected bank's proposal for treasury services as recommended by staff and consultant. Also, for the signing of all documents necessary for this acceptance.

11. Voting Delegate (Georgia Opioid Settlement) – Commissioner Robinson

The State of Georgia entered a Settlement Agreement with manufacturers and distributors of opioids that will bring payments of \$638 million to Georgia over 18 years. Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities Commissioner Kevin Tanner is the Trustee of these funds. The State’s share of the settlement funds is 75% (\$479 million) and will be put into a state-administered trust. Forty percent of the State’s share of funds (\$191.6 million) must be spent on a regional basis. Commissioner Tanner asked the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) to coordinate the role that Participating Local Governments will play with respect to the distribution of these regional funds.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the State of Georgia and Participating Local Governments requires the creation of the Georgia Opioid Settlement Advisory Commission (GOSAC) and Regional Advisory Councils (RACs), which will help to direct regional funding allocations. Three GOSAC members, representing local interests, and the RAC members for each region must be approved by the Participating Local Governments, which are defined as the litigating and non-litigating parties listed in the nationwide settlement agreements. This request is to select a voting delegate for Houston County

Motion by _____, second by _____ and carried _____ to

approve

disapprove

table

authorize

the selection of Director of Administration, Robbie Dunbar, as a voting delegate for the Georgia Opioid Settlement Advisory Commission (GOSAC) and Regional Advisory Councils (RACs).

12. Approval of Bills – Commissioner Robinson

Summary of bills by fund:

General Fund (100)	\$1,450,988.43
Drug Abuse Treatment & Educ (212)	\$2,646.52
Emergency 911 Telephone Fund (215)	\$71,891.40
American Rescue Plan Act (230)	\$87,983.71
Fire District Fund (270)	\$114,359.32
2006 SPLOST Fund (320)	\$1,520.60
2012 SPLOST Fund (320)	\$138,080.61
2018 SPLOST Fund (320)	\$1,054,065.29
Water Fund (505)	\$221,510.10
Solid Waste Fund (540)	\$306,936.43
Total	\$3,449,982.41

Motion by _____, second by _____ and carried _____ to

approve

disapprove

table

authorize

the payment of the bills totaling **\$3,449,982.41**