

Houston County Commissioners Meeting
January 9, 2018
Perry, Georgia

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday January 9, 2018 at the Houston County Courthouse in Perry, Georgia with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners Walker, Robinson, Thomson, and McMichael present. Also present were County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar, Fire/HEMA Chief Jimmy Williams, Director of Personnel Ken Carter, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, Director of Purchasing Mark Baker, Corporal Chris Stoner, Water Superintendent Dan Walker, Flint Energies VP of Cooperative Communications Marian McLemore, Ansel Peck, 21st Century Partnership Director of Strategy Dan Rhoades, GA Power Area Manager Scott Cox, Deborah Cox, and Walton & Becky Wood.

Commissioner Robinson gave the invocation.

SSgt. George Horne, US Army (ret.) led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and then detailed his 20-year military career. Enlisting at the age of seventeen he trained as an infantryman and served many duty assignments including Germany, Panama, Korea, Hawaii, Kansas, New York, and finally Fort Benning, GA. He spoke of the teamwork and dedication required while serving our country in the military and then thanked the Board for their service to the community.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve the minutes from the meeting of December 19, 2017.

Mr. Walker presented a request for approval from Fire/HEMA Chief Williams to promote Corporal Stoner to the position of Assistant Fire Chief / Training Officer at a Grade 21-C due to his experience and longevity with the department. Staff concurs that Mr. Stoner has the necessary experience to qualify for the C-step.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the promotion of Corporal Christopher Stoner to the vacant position of Assistant Fire Chief / Training Officer at a Grade 21-C effective January 16, 2018.

Mr. Walker presented a request from Landfill Superintendent Terry Dietsch to hire Michael Ray for the vacant Heavy Equipment Operator position at a Grade 13-C based on his experience. Staff concurs that Mr. Ray has the necessary experience to qualify for the C-step.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the hiring of Mr. Michael Ray for the vacant Heavy Equipment Operator position at the Landfill at a Grade 13-C effective January 10, 2018.

Continued from Page 1415

Ms. Robinson presented a request from the City of Warner Robins for annexation of a 0.97-acre tract located at Feagin Mill Road, south of Bellemeade Circle adjacent to the church's property at 1322 Feagin Mill Road. Property is currently zoned County R-AG and proposed zoning upon annexation is Warner Robins R-AG. The property is proposed for the future site of a drainage pond expansion.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to concur with a City of Warner Robins annexation request for the property described as:

A 0.97-acre portion of property located at Feagin Mill Road, south of Bellemeade Circle, Tax Parcel #000770 093000; also known as Parcel B according to a plat of survey drawn by Story, Clarke & Associates entitled "Survey for City of Warner Robins, dated October 6, 2017. The church will remain a county water customer.

Ms. Robinson presented an agreement with the City of Perry and a private conservancy group to share the costs of the conceptual design work to plan a multi-use trail project between downtown Perry and Big Indian Creek. Atlantic Coast Consulting has submitted a proposal for this design work that can then be utilized to proceed with further planning, property acquisition, detailed design, permitting, and construction of the proposed trail.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing a professional services agreement with Atlantic Coast Consulting, Inc. of Savannah for development of the Big Indian Nature Trail conceptual design. Total contract amount will not exceed \$50,000 and will be shared in thirds by Houston County, the City of Perry and a private nature conservancy group.

Mr. Thomson presented an agreement with Tyler Technologies concerning the State Court Software as a Service and Professional Services Agreement (known as Odyssey) essentially ratifying the original agreement signed by Judge Ashford and naming the County as the owner.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to authorize Chairman Stalnaker signing the ratification agreement with Tyler Technologies, Inc. concerning the State Court Odyssey Software as a Service and Professional Services Agreement originally executed by Judge Ashford. All terms and conditions as well as the fee structure from the original agreement remain unchanged.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that a meeting with Tyler Technologies was recently held for the purposes of discussing problems encountered with the implementation of the software. Tyler Technologies management has indicated that the issues will be addressed and is currently working toward resolution. This agreement is the first step toward rectifying some of those issues by naming the Board of Commissioners as the owner on the contract.

Continued on Page 1417

Continued from Page 1416

Mr. Thomson presented candidates for Board Appointments.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to approve the re-appointment of the following:

Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council
LaVonne Harn 01/09/2018 to 06/30/2020

And, the appointment for the unexpired term of Joe Brownlee of the following:

Houston County Development Authority
Scott Cox 01/09/2018 to 12/31/2020

Mr. Walker thanked Ms. Harn for her many years of service on the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council.

Mr. Thomson presented a change order on the 2017 LMIG project that adds the repair, resurfacing and restriping of Bear Branch Road from Perry city limits to Houston Lake Road (0.24 miles). Staff recommends approval of the change order which will increase Georgia Asphalt's original contract by \$45,000 to a new contract price of \$1,114,528.20

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing Change Order #1 with Georgia Asphalt of Juliette, GA on the 2017 LMIG project. The original contract price of \$1,069,528.20 will increase by \$45,000 to a new total of \$1,114,528.20 with a 62 day increase in contract time.

Chairman Stalnaker explained that Bear Branch Road was not originally scheduled to be overlaid in the 2017 LMIG program and that the \$45,000 was the County's portion with the City of Perry responsible for the rest.

Mr. McMichael presented a request from Utilities Superintendent Dan Walker for approval of an upgrade to the Water Department meter reading hardware and software as well as establishing a radio-read program.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing the Meter Reading Hardware & Software Upgrade contract with Sensus of Suwanee, Ga in the amount of \$129,472.90. Water Department capital funds will pay for the upgrade.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that this will establish a radio-read program on selected highly travelled and difficult to read routes which will improve both the

Continued on Page 1418

Continued from Page 1417

efficiency and the safety for the employee. He further explained that to do so county-wide on the nineteen to twenty thousand existing meters would be more than an \$8,000,000 investment which is not feasible.

Utilities Superintendent Dan Walker stated that it would take approximately 60 to 90 days to complete this work.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$2,932,498.63.

Chairman Stalnaker reminded everyone that the next scheduled Board meeting would be on Tuesday, January 23rd at 6:00 pm at the County Annex building in Warner Robins.

Chairman Stalnaker opened the meeting for Public Comments.

Chief Williams introduced Chris Stoner who is being promoted from his current position in the Fire Department as Corporal to the vacant Assistant Fire Chief's position. Chief Williams stated that Chris has proven himself as capable and knowledgeable and believes he is a young man that can help the department move forward.

Chris thanked Chief Williams and the Board for the opportunity to serve.

Chief Williams also briefed the Board on the one major total-loss structure fire that occurred over the holidays.

Director of Purchasing Mark Baker briefed the Board on the status of the Fire Department ladder truck saying that the specs were altogether and were ready to put out for bid. He expected a bid approval request to come to the Board at the second meeting in February.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that this truck would have a long lead time since it was built to order. He also stated that in the next few months the design work for the proposed new stations in the Bonaire and the Lake Joy areas would begin.

Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar commented that Mr. Ray was being hired at the Landfill to fill the Heavy Equipment Operator position vacated by Juan Torres due to his recent retirement. He also stated that Mr. Ray is the brother of a current County employee and the County will benefit from his past experience.

Georgia Power Area Manager Scott Cox stated that he will be replacing Mr. Joe Brownlee on the Development Authority and is excited to serve on behalf of his employer Georgia Power. He gave a brief history of his professional background and introduced his wife Deborah who was also in attendance.

Continued on page 1419

Continued from page 1418

Flint Energies VP of Cooperative Communications Marian McLemore thanked the Board for the relationship that Flint enjoys with the County.

Ansel Peck expressed his gratitude and thanks to both Flint Energies and Georgia Power for its community involvement through each of their representatives. He remarked that 2017 was a good year for the County and thanked the Board, department heads and employees for their hard work and service.

21st Century Partnership Director of Strategy Dan Rhoades briefed the Board regarding the federal budget and its current deadline of January 19th.

There being no further comments the meeting continued.

Chairman Stalnaker opened the meeting for Commissioners Comments.

Mr. Walker thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and expressed his appreciation for all County employees, department heads, elected officials and constitutional officers.

Mr. McMichael remarked that the County's FY17 audit was recently completed and that it was squeaky clean indicating the great financial shape of the County.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that he plans to cover the results of the audit in greater detail at an upcoming Board meeting.

Mr. Thomson wished everyone a happy new year.

Ms. Robinson thanked everyone for coming and participating in the meeting and wished everyone a happy new year.

Chairman Stalnaker remarked that he recently had an opportunity, along with Commissioners Robinson and Thomson, to attend the Phoenix Health Center Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) open house. After experiencing some difficulties during the past year with the CSU it appears that the interim director, Beth Ragan of Middle Flint Behavioral Healthcare, has helped to turn the organization around.

Commissioner Robinson, who served on the Phoenix Center Community Service Board in the recent past, related that the center had experienced considerable difficulties adjusting to the transition to a fee for services model, but has come a long way since the State of Georgia stepped in last year and appointed Ms. Ragan as interim director. She explained that the Phoenix Center CSU serves the needs of adults who are in immediate need of mental health intervention not only in Houston but in Peach and Crawford counties as well.

Continued on page 1420

Continued from page 1419

Commissioner Thomson commented that Ms. Ragan has indeed righted the ship and that the Phoenix Center CSU is a great asset to the community.

Chairman Stalnaker thanked both Commissioner Robinson and Commissioner Thomson for their engagement with the issues that the center has been dealing with.

Motion to Adjourn by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all. Meeting adjourned.

Barry Holland
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner