

Houston County Commissioners Meeting
April 6, 2021
Perry, Georgia

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday April 6, 2021, at the Houston County Courthouse in Perry, Georgia, with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners Byrd, Perdue, Robinson, and Walker present. Also present were County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar, Director of Purchasing Mark Baker, Director of Personnel Ken Carter, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, Fire/HEMA Chief Chris Stoner, Landfill Superintendent Terry Dietsch, 21st Century Partnership COO Dan Rhoades, Atlantic Coast Consulting Senior Consultant Murray Griffin, Georgia Power Area Manager Scott Cox, Flint Energies Director of Engineering and Operations Walker Fricks.

Commissioner Byrd gave the Invocation.

MSgt. Vernard Manis, USAF led the audience in the pledge of allegiance and detailed his 15-year military career. His first duty assignment was at Charleston in 2006 where he served for nine years in the supply field. In 2015 he went to Eielson AFB, Alaska for four years working in the supply field and then switching to equipment management. He was stationed at Robins AFB in 2019 where he serves as a Career Broadener in the 409th Supply Chain Management Squadron.

Chairman Stalnaker explained that the scheduled presentation from the Perdue Foundation to the Fire Department would be postponed until the next meeting due to a conflict in schedules.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized Georgia Power Area Manager Scott Cox along with lineman Brooks Brown and apprentice Matt Johnson; and Flint Energies Director of Engineering and Operations Walker Fricks along with linemen Jim Wright and Alec Mays to recognize the power companies' linemen for their efforts working as first responders during storms and other catastrophic events under dangerous conditions keeping the power on and protecting public safety. He first read and then presented both Flint and Georgia Power with a resolution proclaiming April 12, 2021 as Lineman Appreciation Day in Houston County. Each lineman shared stories or insights gained from their respective careers as linemen. Chairman Stalnaker also recognized Mr. Mike Brannen of Flint Energies who was in attendance as well.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve the minutes from the meeting of March 16, 2021.

Chairman Stalnaker asked for a motion to add Items 5A Fund Balance Assignments and 5B Salary and Compression Adjustments to the agenda.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to add Items 5A Fund Balance Assignments and 5B Salary and Compression Adjustments to the agenda.

County Attorney Tom Hall made a blanket statement for the benefit of all applicants for Special Exceptions for home occupations that even if the Board of Commissioners approves an application, neighborhood covenants may still impose certain restrictions upon or against home occupation businesses. These restrictive covenants are superior to any action taken by the Board of Commissioners. The actions taken by the Board will not change any provision within the covenant that prohibits any commercial or business activity.

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Tim Andrews presented Special Exception Applications #2455 thru #2460.

Chairman Stalnaker closed the regular portion and opened a Public Hearing.

Special Exception Application #2455 applicant was not present, there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2456 applicant was not present, there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2457 applicant was not present, there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2458 applicant was not present, there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2459 applicant was not present, there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2460 applicant was not present, there was no opposition.

There being no comments Chairman Stalnaker closed the Public Hearing and reopened the regular portion of the meeting.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve the following applications to include any and all stipulations as noted on the Zoning & Appeals recommendation and section 95 Requirements staff report:

Application #2455	David & Renee Lewis	Paint / Art Party
Application #2456	Varrick & Tamara Horton	Crafts / Embroidery (Internet Sales)
Application #2457	Lara West	Personal Training
Application #2458	Matthew Augburger	Cosmetic Renovation
Application #2459	Valerie Myers	Business Consulting
Application #2460	Jessica Fletcher	Hair Braiding

Mr. Andrews gave the applicants approved for a home occupation instruction on the next step of the process which is obtaining their occupational business license from the Commissioner's office.

Ms. Robinson presented a request for abandonment of right-of-way on the old portion of Hwy.96.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve the Board of Commissioners signing the Resolution and the Deed of Abandonment abandoning unimproved and unused sections of a county right-of-way described as follows:

All that tract or parcel of land, situate lying and being in Land Lot 53 of the Eleventh Land District of Houston County Georgia, being known and designated as Parcels 'D-1' and 'E-1' containing 1.309 acres, on a land survey done by Lee R. Jones dated December 31, 2000, G.R.L.S. No. 2680 and a copy of which is recorded in Plat Book 57, Page 32, in the Clerk's Office, Houston Superior Court. Said plat and the recorded copy thereof are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

This conveyance is subject to any easement for drainage or utilities presently existing within the above described property.

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Chairman Stalnaker commented that the ROW was not necessary for the future road widening of the old portion of Hwy. 96 and therefore was no longer needed.

Ms. Robinson presented a request for abandonment of right-of-way on the old portion of Hwy.96.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Walker to approve the Board of Commissioners signing the Resolution and the Deed of Abandonment abandoning an improved and unused section of a county right-of-way described as follows:

All that tract or parcel of land situate lying and being in Land Lot 53 and 76 of the Eleventh Land District of Houston County, Georgia, being known and designated as Parcel 'B' containing 1.495-acres, on a land survey done by Lee R. Jones dated December 31, 2000, G.R.L.S. No. 2680 and a copy of which is recorded in Plat Book 57, Page 32, in the Clerk's Office, Houston Superior Court. Said plat and the recorded copy thereof are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

This conveyance is subject to any easement for drainage or utilities presently existing within the above described property.

Upon voting Ms. Robinson, Mr. Walker and Mr. Byrd voted yes, Mr. Perdue abstained, motion approved.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that then Governor Perdue was very generous at the time having given the right-of-way for the potential widening of Hwy. 96. As with the previous request this ROW is no longer needed.

Ms. Robinson presented a request for abandonment of right-of-way on property located at 146 Mossland Drive.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Perdue and carried unanimously by all to approve the Board of Commissioners signing the Resolution and the Deed of Abandonment abandoning the 20' unopened right-of-way at 146 Mossland Drive, Perry, Georgia in the unincorporated area of Houston County described as follows:

All that tract or parcel of land, situate lying and being in Houston County, Georgia being known and designated as a 20' road between Lot 1 of Block "B" and Lot 14 of Block "A" of the J.H. Davis & Son Subdivision on a land survey which is recorded in Plat book 1, Page 216, in the Clerk's Office, Houston Superior Court. Said plat and the recorded copy thereof are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

This conveyance is subject to any easements for drainage or utilities presently existing within the above described property.

Ms. Robinson presented an Intergovernmental Memorandum of Agreement with the City of Perry for the Hwy 127 widening project.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Perdue and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing the Intergovernmental Memorandum of Agreement between the County and the City of Perry on the Highway 127 Widening project and the relocation of utilities.

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Mr. Walker presented a request for Fund Balance Assignments.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Perdue and carried unanimously by all to approve assigning FY20 Fund Balance as follows:

New Government Building (Housing the Board of Elections, County Agent, and NRCS)	\$1,500,000
Employee Health Insurance Benefits and/or Pension Contributions	\$ 400,000
Personnel Adjustments	\$3,000,000

Mr. Walker presented Salary and Compression Adjustments.

Chairman Stalnaker explained that due to budgetary constraints faced by Houston County that the employee merit steps were frozen on July 1, 2009 which has resulted in salary compression for long-term County employees. For the last three years, the Board has looked for opportunities to relieve some of the salary compression. After receiving the FY20 audit recently it presented an opportunity to relieve some of the salary compression. Should sustainable financial opportunities present themselves in the future to continue compression relief, merits, reclassifications and new positions all consideration will be given by this Board. He thanked Commissioner Walker, who has long served as the Commissioner assigned to oversee personnel-related issues, for his efforts toward this action. He thanked Commissioner Robinson, former Commissioners McMichael and Thomson, and newly elected Commissioners Byrd, and Perdue. He also thanked all employees and elected officials because each one contributed directly through their efforts during the year exercising proper budgetary management. He thanked Mr. Holland, Mr. Carter and Ms. Stalnaker for their efforts putting together this plan and for their work during the audit process.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve the implementation of the personnel changes as outlined in a memo from Director of Personnel Ken Carter effective the pay period beginning May 18, 2021 including a 3% salary adjustment for all full-time county employees, full-time employees of all constitutional officers who are eligible for adjustments, full-time county elected and appointed officials, and salary adjustments on supplements for all full-time state employees receiving county supplements. Employees employed full-time before 7/01/2016 with uninterrupted service who are eligible for step adjustments will receive a one-step compression, including those at the M-Step. Employees employed full-time before 7/01/2009 with uninterrupted service who are eligible for step adjustments will receive an additional one-step compression adjustment except any employee at the L-or M-Step will only be eligible for one compression adjustment. Regarding all compression adjustments, the department head or elected official must give approval based on the employee's performance. All constitutional officers and full-time county-elected and appointed officials will receive an increase which is equivalent to one-step. All Deputy Sheriffs who are at the entry level step 16-A and all Detention Officers who are post-certified with arrest powers who are at the entry level step 15-A and are not part of any group in the compression adjustment will be given a one-step adjustment due to certification. These are one-time pay and compression adjustments and the merit system will continue to be frozen.

Ms. Robinson commented that this was a long-time coming, very much needed and was glad the Board could do it.

Mr. Walker commented that it was something that the Board could do for the outstanding employees of the County as they serve our citizens every day.

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Mr. Perdue commented that he was glad the Board was able to do it due to the good management.

Mr. Byrd echoed those comments and was thankful for the service of the County employees operating an efficient government and for the senior leadership of the County to include the Chairman.

Mr. Perdue presented a request from the City of Perry for the Houston County Board of Elections to conduct their elections for the 2021 election year.

Motion by Mr. Perdue, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to authorize Chairman Stalnaker signing the Intergovernmental Agreement for Conduct of the City of Perry Elections for the 2021 election year expiring on December 31, 2021.

Chairman Stalnaker noted that the Board of Elections has conducted the City of Perry elections for quite some time. This past special election the County conducted the City of Warner Robins election for them at their request. His opinion is that the Board of Elections should handle all elections since they keep voter registration for all, as well as a multitude of other related items including maintaining the actual voting equipment necessary. He stated that Warner Robins was very pleased with the County administering their election and they look forward to continuing utilizing that service from the County in the future. These contracts allow the County staff some level of reimbursement for taking on those elections and the cities pick up the actual costs of them as well.

Mr. Perdue presented a request from the City of Perry for annexation of property located at 111 Hill Road.

Mr. Perdue made a motion to concur and then Mr. Perdue asked that the Board take any public comments on this request before voting. There were no public comments. Second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to concur with a revised City of Perry annexation request for a 5.67-acre portion of the property at 111 Hill Road, Tax Parcel 000580 034000, further described in an Annexation and Rezoning Plat for tract "B" for WCH Homes, drawn by McLeod Surveying, Marty McLeod, GRLS #2991.

Mr. Perdue presented a request from the City of Warner Robins for annexation of property located at 700 Hwy. 96.

Motion by Mr. Perdue, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to concur with a City of Warner Robins annexation request for the 1.121-acre portion of property located at 700 Hwy. 96 (Tax Parcel 000780 335000) as shown on a preliminary plat by David L. Hester, GRLS #3042 dated February 26, 2021 for McAllister's Deli.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that this parcel is adjacent to the Kroger shopping center.

Mr. Perdue presented a request from the City of Warner Robins for annexation of property located on Sullivan Road.

Mr. Perdue made a motion to concur and then asked that the Board take any public comments on this request.

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Carolette Redd, 135 Whitley Drive, stated that she is the administrator for the neighborhood watch for this area and that she and others are extremely concerned about this development potentially causing a major traffic hazard. There is an auto auction business just down the road that holds an auction every Tuesday morning that she felt contributed to a recent head-on collision resulting in a fatality. Northside Elementary School is adjacent to this property and has over 600 pre-k to fifth grade students enrolled and the traffic before and after school is already a problem to the point that residents have to use Fairground Road to enter and exit the neighborhood. Fellowship Baptist Church has such a large congregation that law enforcement has to direct traffic into and out of this facility when they hold services or events. The traffic on Dunbar Road is already too heavy and this development will not help to serve the residents of this area.

Chairman Stalnaker reiterated his previously stated position concerning these types of annexation and rezoning requests that come to the County Commission for concurrence or non-concurrence before the city has held any type of public hearing or taken action on the application themselves. State law dictates this procedure, so even though it is not the cities process, that creates the problem. It puts the County Commission in a difficult position where they are forced to take action even before the city's Planning and Zoning has heard the application. It would take legislative action by the General Assembly to change this procedure. Hopefully, the State will address this process to improve it in the future. He stated that he also is concerned with the traffic in this area, and although the property owner has the right to develop the property, it should not negatively impact the people who live adjacent to it. The County has owned the right of way for the road extension for many years and the property owner is proposing development on both sides of the right of way. There are unanswered questions as to who will build the Carl Vinson Parkway road extension and also who will provide water to the development.

Ms. Redd related that another concern of theirs is that the right of way for the Carl Vinson Parkway extension runs all the way to the Echeconnee Creek and what would development mean for the public waterways. She complained that the only reason they knew of the proposed annexation was from the city Planning and Zoning sign that was posted on the property four days ago. She indicated that she made inquiries of Warner Robins Planning and Zoning but has not received a reply.

Chairman Stalnaker replied that the only requirements under the law were that the sign be posted on the property and that the proper advertisement be run in the Houston Home Journal. He assumed that the city's requirements would mirror the County's under state law and asked Mr. Andrews to explain the County's regulations.

Mr. Andrews explained that under state requirements for public hearings local governments are required to advertise fourteen days prior to the public hearing in the legal organ of the County which is the Houston Home Journal.

Mr. Byrd thanked Ms. Redd and the others for being at the meeting and expressing their concerns. He shares some of the Chairman's frustration with this flawed process in that we are being asked to concur or not concur prior to public hearings being held by the government that will be accepting the annexation and zoning. Mr. Byrd confirmed with Mr. Andrews his understanding that the County was being asked to concur with the annexation of a one-acre parcel on Sullivan Road and that the zoning would change from County R-1 to Warner Robins R-3 and that it was contiguous to another 65-acre tract of land that is already zoned Warner Robins R-3.

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Mr. Andrews stated that he contacted his counterpart at the City of Warner Robins and that she had indicated that the developer's intent was to construct single-family detached houses on the 65 acres and that the reason for this one-acre tract annexation and rezoning was to make that larger property contiguous to Sullivan Road. The property has other frontage south of the school as well.

Ms. Redd indicated that the school has public sewer and that a water tower was nearby to the proposed development.

Chairman Stalnaker stated that in the future he would like to post a sign next to the cities sign that will advertise a public comment period at the next Commissioner's Board meeting concerning any proposed annexation. This would give the citizens of the unincorporated area an opportunity to let their views and concerns be known before the County must take any action. He asked for and received concurrence from the Board to follow this procedure in the future.

Mr. Perdue commented that he is equally frustrated with the process and felt that it was important to allow this public comment period. He then restated his motion to concur. Second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to concur with a City of Warner Robins request for annexation for a 1-acre property (Tax Parcel 000710 073000, Tract C-3 Land Lot 152, 5th Land District) located on Sullivan Road north of Northside Elementary School.

Ms. Robinson exited the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Perdue presented a request from the City of Warner Robins for annexation of property located north of Dunbar Road and west of the Carl Vinson Parkway Extension.

Mr. Perdue made a motion to non-concur and then asked that the Board take any public comments on this request.

Chairman Stalnaker explained that this tract of land is on the west side of the proposed Carl Vinson Parkway extension right of way abutting Heritage subdivision and that he has some grave concerns about this request since it would put commercial zoned property in the backyards of the R-1 Residential zoned subdivision properties.

Ms. Carollette Redd commented that they have the same type concerns with this request as with the previous request involving Sullivan Road.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that there is other commercially zoned property on the south side of Dunbar Road at its intersection with Carl Vinson Parkway. The concern about zoning this property commercial is not necessarily the frontage on Carl Vinson Parkway but rather has to do with the depth of the property which runs nearly the entire length of Heritage subdivision.

Mr. Perdue then restated his motion to non-concur with the request until these concerns could be addressed. Second by Mr. Byrd, after voting Mr. Perdue, Mr. Byrd and Mr. Walker voted to non-concur with a City of Warner Robins request for annexation for a 14.12-acre property (Tax Parcel 000710 23A000, Tract A, Land Lot 152, 5th Land District) located north of Dunbar Road and just west of the Carl Vinson Parkway Extension right-of-way adjacent to Heritage Subdivision. Motion carried.

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Chairman Stalnaker commented that he was certain these issues could be worked out but at the moment it is problematic.

Mr. Perdue presented a request from Public Works to extend three bonds.

Motion by Mr. Perdue, second by Mr. Walker to approve the extension of the cul-de-sac bond (Suntrust Letter of Credit #70003935 expiring April 10, 2021) and the extension of the maintenance bond (Suntrust Letter of Credit #70003936 expiring April 10, 2021) at Forestbrooke/Stratford Hills, Phase 2b for one year to give the developer an opportunity to perform the required work; and the extension of the Performance bond (OneSouth Bank Letter of Credit #41078 expiring April 6, 2021) at Southfield Plantation, Section 7 for six months to give the developer an opportunity to perform the required work. If the bond(s) are not extended by their respective expiration dates the County will draw the bond(s) and contract the work. Upon voting Mr. Perdue, Mr. Walker, and Mr. Byrd voted yes. Motion approved.

Mr. Byrd presented a request for reforestation of approximately 71.4 acres of Landfill property.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Perdue to approve the reforestation of 71.4 acres of Houston County Landfill property at a cost of \$245 per acre or an estimated total of \$17,493 by American Forest Management of Sandersville, Ga. This work will be paid for with Solid Waste Capital Funds. Upon voting Mr. Byrd, Mr. Perdue, and Mr. Walker voted yes. Motion approved.

Mr. Perdue remarked that this is good management and he thanked Mr. Dietsch and Mr. Dunbar.

Ms. Robinson re-entered the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

Mr. Byrd presented a request to renew a contract with Mid Georgia Trucking to haul leachate.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing a contract with Mid Georgia Trucking to haul and deliver leachate generated from the Houston County Landfill to a treatment facility at a rate of \$200 per load. Contract term is effective May 6, 2021 and expires on May 5, 2022.

Mr. Byrd presented a request for approval of a change order with Strack, Inc.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Perdue and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing change Order #1 (Final) with Strack, Inc. of Fairburn, GA decreasing the contract amount of \$3,507,138.33 to \$3,305,153.51.

Mr. Byrd presented a request for approval of a bid on a used 2017 Volvo A40G articulated dump truck.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve the purchase of one used 2014 Volvo A40G articulated dump truck for use at the Landfill from Ascendum Machinery of Macon for a total cost of \$175,000. Solid waste Capital funds will fund the balance of this equipment purchase after applying the \$145,000 insurance settlement.

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Mr. Byrd presented a request for approval of a bid on the Landfill Phase 6, Stage 1B cell construction project.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Perdue and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of the Landfill Phase 6, Stage 1B Cell Construction project to Peed Bros., Inc. of Butler, GA in the amount of \$3,940,246.20. Solid Waste Capital Funds will fund this project.

Mr. Byrd commented that Peed Bros. is a highly reputable company and that their bid came in significantly lower than the other three. He commended Mr. Dietsch and his group for working diligently on behalf of the taxpayers.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized Mr. Murray Griffin, Senior Consultant of Atlantic Coast Consulting, thanking him for his efforts on this project. Mr. Griffin stated that they hoped this cell would provide at least seven years of capacity for the Landfill. He stated that the timeline on this construction project was around one year.

Mr. Byrd presented a request for approval of a bid on two Ford F-150 ½-ton regular cab pick-up trucks.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of two Ford F-150 ½-ton regular cab pick-up trucks for use in the Water Department from Phil Brannen Ford of Perry at a unit cost of \$22,931 for a total cost of \$45,862. These vehicles will be paid for with Water Capital Funds.

Mr. Walker presented a request from Flint Electric Membership Corporation for approval of an underground right-of-way easement.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Perdue and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing the underground right-of-way easement with Flint Electric Membership Corporation as depicted on Exhibit A and as described on Exhibit B for the underground power line servicing the new Bear Branch Road Water Treatment Plant.

Mr. Walker presented a request from the Public Works staff for approval to enter into a professional services agreement with NBP Engineers.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve entering into a professional services agreement with NBP Engineers of Macon in the amount of \$11,000 to provide mechanical and electrical construction documents and for construction administration services on the Chilled Water Plant Upgrade project at the County Courthouse.

Mr. Walker presented a request from the City of Warner Robins for the installation of a master water meter.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve a request from the City of Warner Robins to include Vinings Village located at Russell Parkway and Houston Lake Road in the current water use agreement between the City of Warner Robins and Houston County. An eight-inch Master water meter will be installed for this location. Approval is contingent upon meeting the requirements of the Houston County Utility Accommodations, and upon the developer posting a bond covering 125% of construction cost for work performed on the Houston County Water System.

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Mr. Walker presented a request for approval of a change order on the Houston County Annex Access Control project.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Perdue and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing Change Order #1 on the Houston County Annex Access Control contract with ICB Construction Group of Macon increasing the contract price of \$94,523 by \$5,893 for a total contract price of \$100,416 to be paid for with HOST funds.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$3,376,781.09.

Chairman Stalnaker closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened Public Comments.

Roland Berry, 216 Spanish Trail, Kathleen thanked the Board for listening to and helping the people who spoke against the Dunbar Road annexation request. Chairman Stalnaker thanked Mr. Berry and commented that there may be a similar issue being addressed tonight at the City of Perry Planning & Zoning meeting concerning an annexation and zoning at the corner of Danny Carpenter and Sandefur Road. Mr. Berry stated that he did plan to attend that meeting and that he did not want a commercial retail business to be located on that parcel but would be alright with a professional office or something similar.

Scott Cox, Georgia Power Area Manager and current Chairman of the Perry Chamber of Commerce, reminded everyone that the Dogwood Festival would be held this weekend on Saturday, April 10th and Sunday April 11th at the Georgia National Fairgrounds. Although there are a few events being held Saturday night in downtown Perry, the festival is being held largely at the Fairgrounds rather than downtown due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Chairman Stalnaker thanked Mr. Cox for his service through Georgia Power and the Chamber of Commerce as well as his service as Chairman of the Houston County Development Authority.

Dan Rhoades, 21st Century Partnership COO, commented that he was honored to be able to attend the recent ribbon-cutting for Project Synergy named after Mr. Wayne Lowe. This is an amazing partnership that will benefit the County and Robins AFB building future workforce. A lot of high school students will have the opportunity to come out to Project Synergy to learn about the software development field. He thanked the Board for their support of this project as well as the Houston County Development Authority. At the federal level the administration is making some pretty good picks for posts. He expects that the budget will be pretty flat this year for the Department of Defense. The budget keeps getting pushed out having been originally expected in April but now has been pushed all the way to June. The 21st Century Partnership remains focused on the long-term viability of Robins AFB working to ensure the legacy missions that the base already has but also looking to ensure that we are prepared for future missions.

Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews remarked that he and his staff appreciate what the Board accomplished today addressing the compression issue among County employees.

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Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar also expressed his thanks for the hard work toward achieving this level of salary and compression adjustments and for holding the line on the County employees benefit package over the years. He also notified the Board that ICB Construction Group would begin work on the back-entry steps at the Annex building this coming Monday which means it will have to be closed to foot traffic for roughly thirty days. He asked that Mr. Holland help to get the word out to all affected employees.

Landfill Superintendent Terry Dietsch likewise thanked the Board for the salary and compression adjustments. He reminded everyone of the Tire Amnesty Event to be held this weekend which is a free tire recycling for all Houston County residents. There will be three locations including the Annex building parking lot, the Landfill, and at the Purchasing Department on Kings Chapel Road from the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Lastly, he thanked the Board for approving the purchase of the used articulated dump truck.

Director of Purchasing Mark Baker informed the Board that Sheridan Construction, our contractor building the new Houston County Government Building, would like to hold a "Topping Out" ceremony which is a builder's rite traditionally held when the last beam is placed atop a structure during its construction. The project is progressing nicely so far. Mr. Baker also gave a brief update on State Court Expansion project having just met with the contractor, ICB Construction Group, and JMA Architecture to discuss schedules moving forward. The contract is ready for the Chairman's signature which has already been approved at a GMP of \$18.3 million. The contractor, architect and County staff are still looking for other savings to this project.

There being no further comments Chairman Stalnaker closed the Public Comments portion of the meeting and reopened the regular portion of the meeting.

Chairman Stalnaker then closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened Commissioners Comments.

Mr. Byrd commented on the amount of hard work done on these agenda items before they come before the Board for consideration and thanked each staff member for their efforts. He remarked that roughly 100 days into his service on the Board that it was an honor to be in service to the citizens of Houston County. He encouraged one and all to consider getting vaccinated as soon as possible.

Mr. Perdue echoed Mr. Byrd's comments and sees lots of evidence of good management as it relates to County business. It is a reflection on the current and previous members of this Board as well as staff. It is an honor to be able to inherit this type of system that exhibits good and sound fiscal management.

Ms. Robinson thanked everybody for coming and apologized for having to step away from the meeting for a short while. She remarked that although she missed the vote on the Warner Robins annexation request on Carl Vinson Parkway and Dunbar Road, she agreed with the Board's decision to non-concur. She remarked that the salary and compression adjustments were an extremely big deal for the County that has taken a long time to work out a plan that was sustainable and affordable. She felt that our employees deserved the recognition and raise in pay to reward all their hard work.

Mr. Walker commented that getting vaccinated was one of the most important things you could do for your family, friends, and others. He thanked each and every employee for the outstanding work they do and was glad the Board was able to address the compression issues because our long-term employees make this County the great place to live that it is.

Chairman Stalnaker reminded everyone about the County's 200th anniversary as well as Robins AFB celebrating their 80th anniversary this year. There are some planned festivities for the first meeting in May with Mr. Byrd working with Community Planner Jake Cox and others on potential events. We plan on honoring this County for the remainder of the year. He also thanked MSgt. Manis for attending and speaking to the Board. He thanked Murray Griffin, Mr. Berry, Mr. Cox, Mr. Rhoades, the press from the Houston Home Journal and all others for coming and contributing to the meeting today.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Perdue, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all, meeting adjourned.

Barry Holland
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner