**Houston County Commissioners Meeting**

 **February 3, 2015**

 **Perry, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 3, 2015 at the Houston County Courthouse in Perry, Georgia with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners McMichael, Walker, Thomson and Robinson present. Also present were Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar, Human Resource Director Ken Carter, Purchasing Director Mark Baker, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, Houston County Library System Director Sara Paulk, Public and Community Relations Director for Flint Energies Jimmy Autry, Walton and Becky Wood and County Attorney Tom Hall.

Commissioner Thomson led the audience in the Invocation.

Former US Marine Corp Sergeant Mark Smith led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and then detailed his military career. He graduated from Central High School in Macon in 2004 and immediately enlisted in the Marine Corps. He related that his was a military family and that it felt like the right thing to do. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines as an infantryman. His first combat deployment was from March to October of 2005 to Fallujah, Iraq. His second combat deployment in 2006 was to Ramadi, Iraq where he was badly wounded in an IED explosion while dismounted on foot patrol clearing a building. The explosion severely damaged his left leg below the knee and it was eventually amputated to combat an infection that had set in and was spreading. After healing and then being fitted for a prosthetic leg at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington D.C., he realized that a lot of other soldiers were much worse off than he and that gave him the inspiration he needed to keep going. He was able to serve another six years with the Marines but not in the infantry. He became a small arms technician, but ultimately he wanted to deploy again and he got that chance in 2011 going to Afghanistan with the 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines. While not in a combat role, he was still in harm’s way. An IED exploded under a vehicle that he was traveling in while deployed. After returning to the U.S., a friend of his convinced him to apply for the Georgia State Patrol. Although admittedly concerned about his own ability to perform, he passed all physical agility tests required and became the first amputee to graduate from the school for state troopers. He now serves for the State Patrol at Post 15 in Perry. Trooper Smith was accompanied to the meeting by other members of the State Patrol including Post 15 Commander Crystal Zion. Chairman Stalnaker thanked all Troopers present for their service to community and State and remarked that the relationship between the State Patrol and all local law enforcement agencies was superb.

Chairman Stalnaker then recognized Ms. Becky Wood of the Houston County Library Board for her service to the community. After reading a proclamation of appreciation, he praised her commitment and selfless service to the library system and presented her with a key chain, a pen set, and a crystal cube depicting Houston County and the three cities of Centerville, Perry, and Warner Robins as small tokens of the County’s gratitude. Chairman Stalnaker then introduced Library Director Sara Paulk who presented Ms. Wood with three books that have been dedicated in memory of her service on the Board and will now be placed into circulation at all three branches of the library for patrons to enjoy. Ms. Wood thanked the Commissioners for the honor of serving on the Library Board.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of January 20, 2015.

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Special Exception Applications #1852 thru #1855 for home occupation businesses were presented by Tim Andrews. Mr. Andrews stated that all four applications comply with Section 95 of the Comprehensive Land Development Regulations and that the Board of Zoning & Appeals recommends unanimous approval of each application.

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. The Board of Commissioners does not enforce these covenants.

Commissioner Walker stated for the record that although he lives close to Mr. Ryan Walker, Application #1853, he is of no relation and has no interest in the business.

Chairman Stalnaker then opened a public hearing on applications #1852 thru #1855.

There was no opposition.

There being no further comments, the hearing was closed.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously to approve Special Exception Applications #1852 thru #1855 to include any and all stipulations as noted on the Zoning and Appeals recommendation and Section 95 requirements staff report.

Mr. Andrews informed each applicant that the next step in the process would be to obtain a business license through the Commissioner’s office at the Annex building on Carl Vinson Parkway.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously to approve hiring Ms. Sandra McLain for the vacant position of Personnel Office Assistant at a Grade 8-F.

Ken Carter briefed the Board on a proposed action to fill the vacant Roads Department Crew Supervisor position with a certified Detention Officer since this crew is comprised of Houston County Detention inmates. Chairman Stalnaker, Sheriff Talton, Major Everidge and Director of Operations Dunbar have met and collectively agreed that this is the best way to supervise inmates on work detail.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously to incorporate a Detention Officer in lieu of a Crew Supervisor in the Roads Department and to retitle the position as Detention Officer-Detail. Funding and position allotment will remain under the Roads Department. The position will be under the supervision of the Sheriff but get daily work assignments from the Roads Department. This action will be effective February 17, 2015.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously to approve the reappointment of Jim Newton to the Middle Georgia Regional Development Authority effective February 21, 2015. Mr. Thomson thanked Mr. Newton for his continued community service on not only this board but the Houston County Library Board as well.

Mr. McMichael explained that a bid award to Nextran Truck Center of Macon for a truck approved at the January 20th Board meeting will need to be voided since the vendor could not honor the bid price. The government price concession used by the vendor, and also the next two low bid vendors, expired between the bid submittal and the award. David Ragan Ford of Perry is the fourth low bid and can honor their price as stated.

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Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously to void the bid award to Nextran and the award be made to David Ragan Ford for one 2015 F-350 one-ton regular cab truck with a service body for use in the Public Buildings Department at a cost of $29,053.76 to be funded by SPLOST 2012.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously to approve the payment of bills totaling $2,367,842.34

Chairman Stalnaker then opened the meeting for public comments.

There being no public comments, the meeting was continued.

The Chairman then asked for comments from the Commissioners.

Mr. Walker commented that the Board was honored to have Trooper Smith lead us in the pledge of allegiance and share his experiences while serving in the Marines.

Mr. Thomson remarked that he was emotionally overwhelmed by Trooper Smith’s story.

Mr. McMichael remarked that Trooper Smith was a great American.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously to enter into Executive Session for Attorney/Client matters as allowed by O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(1).

Upon returning, Chairman Stalnaker reconvened the regular Board meeting with no action taken.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

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 Barry Holland Chairman

 Director of Administration

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 Commissioner

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