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**Houston County Commissioners Meeting**

**March 3, 2015**

**Perry, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 3, 2015 at the Houston County Courthouse in Perry, Georgia with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners McMichael, Walker, and Robinson present. Commissioner Thomson was absent due to illness. Also present were Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar, HEMA/Fire Chief Jimmy Williams, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, Chief Tax Appraiser James Moore, Captain Beth Shafer, Walton Wood and County Attorney Tom Hall.

Chairman Stalnaker led the audience in the Invocation.

Former US Air Force Technical Sergeant Ron Brainard led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and then detailed his 20 year military career. He grew up in rural Ohio where there was basically no police presence. He stated that he had a desire early on to be in the law enforcement field. Signing up for the delayed enlistment program at 16, he joined the Air Force at 17. Although his desire was to serve either in Ohio or Florida, his first duty assignment was in the Panama Canal Zone. He then went to Myrtle Beach Air Base where he met his wife of 32 years. They have three children. Although he trained for the Special Forces Para Rescue team, he ultimately found that he was prone to both being seasick and airsick and ultimately was eliminated based on his swim time. He went on to serve as a cook at a California hospital, but eventually wound up in the law enforcement field with the Security Police. He spent time as an investigator working with the Joint Drug Enforcement Team (JDET) and even worked an undercover assignment for a year at Travis AFB. He then spent eight years as an OSI (Office of Special Investigations) agent. Eventually he came back to the Security Police and was assigned to Robins AFB in 1993. After retiring from the service in 2000, he spent eight years with the Perry Police Department and then came to work for the Houston County Sheriff’s Department in 2008. He now serves as a Lieutenant in the Houston County Detention Center.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried to approve the minutes of February 17, 2015. Upon voting, Mr. McMichael, Mr. Walker and Ms. Robinson voted yes. Motion carried.

Chairman Stalnaker explained the process that will be followed for presenting each special exception application and also explained that the approval of an application did not mean a change in zoning. 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.

Special Exception Applications #1856 thru #1861 for home occupation businesses were presented by Tim Andrews. Mr. Andrews stated that applications #1856, #1857, #1858, #1860 and #1861 comply with Section 95 of the Comprehensive Land Development Regulations and that the Board of Zoning & Appeals recommends approval of each application. Application #1859 however does not meet several requirements of Section 95 and the Zoning & Appeals Board recommends unanimous denial. There were no questions from the Board.

Chairman Stalnaker then opened a public hearing on applications #1856, #1857 and #1858. Each applicant was present but had nothing further to add. There was no opposition.

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Application #1859

In favor: Applicant Rickie Lewis stated that he is a disabled veteran himself and is the Director for We Care Family Services. He explained that he is motivated to help serve other disabled veterans through his 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. He presented a sketch of a driveway design that he felt would alleviate concerns that residents had concerning vehicles backing into Knodishall Drive and stated that he would operate a van to transport the care home residents to appointments. He explained that the Veteran’s Administration would inspect the home prior to the placement of anyone in the home. He felt that both the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Fair Housing Act would allow him to operate the home in a neighborhood.

Chairman Stalnaker asked Mr. Lewis if he had any experience in the field and what the square footage was for the house. Mr. Lewis indicated that his only experience was helping to care for his father years ago. He also indicated that the home was approximately 1500 to 1800 square feet and had five bedrooms. Chairman Stalnaker asked if he had approval from the VA at this time. Mr. Lewis replied that he did not have their approval but that the VA would inspect the home at a later time.

Mr. McMichael stated that he is sympathetic with Mr. Lewis’ cause, but was concerned about his lack of experience in the field. He also expressed concerns about the necessary modifications to the home that would likely be required by the VA.

Ms. Robinson questioned whether the entire home would be used to accommodate the veterans.

Mr. Walker asked Mr. Lewis if he planned on having any employees. He stated that it would be himself and that his two daughters would come in to relieve him at times. Mr. Walker also asked how many bathrooms were in the home. Mr. Lewis replied that there were two but that he had plans to add a third.

Chairman Stalnaker asked the applicant how long he had owned the home. Mr. Lewis replied that he purchased the home approximately 60 days ago.

In Opposition:

William Edmonds, 414 Knodishall Drive, Warner Robins spoke against the application stating that he is a veteran himself but does not feel that the house is adequate nor is the applicant qualified as a healthcare professional. He stated that the house is actually listed as having only three bedrooms and two bathrooms. He had concerns about the size of the house, the kitchen, the septic system, and traffic.

Mr. Walker stated that as a former resident in that neighborhood he is very familiar with the area and the traffic issues.

John Daniels, 100 Winship Drive, Warner Robins stated that he is not opposed to the concept but rather objects to the care home being located in a residential neighborhood. He felt that the home was purchased for business purposes rather than a residence.

Rachel Anderson, 104 Winship Drive, Warner Robins stated that she has worked in a care home herself and she was worried about security for both the veterans themselves as well as residents of the neighborhood. She felt that the applicant’s heart was in the right place but that he did not possess the skills to run a care home.

David Thomas Harbuck, 101 Winship Drive, Warner Robins presented the Board with a printed history of vehicular accidents that have occurred over the years. Mr. Harbuck has been a resident in the neighborhood for 55 years and was very concerned about the increased traffic. He stated that he would welcome Mr. Lewis as a neighbor but only if his residence was a family home.

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Applications #1860 and #1861: Both applicant were present but had nothing to add. There was no opposition.

There being no further comments, the hearing was closed.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried to approve Special Exception Applications #1856 with the condition to allow an 8 ft. x 26 ft. enclosed trailer to be stored in the rear yard; Application #1857; Application #1858; Application #1860; and Application #1861 subject to no storage or delivery of materials to the residence. Upon voting, Mr. McMichael, Ms. Robinson and Mr. Walker voted yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried to deny Application #1859 due to non-compliance with Sections 95.1.3 and 95.1.4 of the Houston County Comprehensive Land Development Regulations. Upon voting, Mr. McMichael, Mr. Walker and Ms. Robinson voted yes to deny. Motion carried.

After the motion and vote, 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 Ms. Robinson and carried to approve the incorporation of a Detention Officer (Grade 15) in lieu of the Inventory/Warehouse Clerk in the Purchasing Department and to retitle the position as Detention Officer-Warehouse Detail. Funding and postion allotment will remain under the Purchasing Department. The position will be under the supervision of the Sheriff but get daily work assignments from the Purchasing Department. This action will be effective March 10, 2015. Upon voting, Mr. Walker, Ms. Robinson and Mr. McMichael voted yes to approve. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. McMichael and carried to approve the purchase of a one-time annuity in the amount of $12,297.55 from Aetna to provide a one-time COLA of 2% for nine former employees who retired from Houston County under the GA-3635 retirement plan. These employees will receive a retroactive lump sum payment equal to 2% of their current benefit for the months of January, February and March of 2015; and thereafter, a monthly benefit including the 2% increase beginning April 1, 2015. Upon voting, Mr. Walker, Mr. McMichael and Ms. Robinson voted yes to approve. Motion carried.

Mr. Walker explained that the County had failed to include these former employees who are under an old retirement plan through Aetna on the January 1st 2% COLA for retirees. Chairman Stalnaker commented that this will be the first time a COLA has been given on the pension benefit of these former employees under the Aetna plan. Only nine individuals remain on that plan and one of them recently brought the oversight to our attention.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried to approve Chairman Stalnaker to sign a resolution amending and restating Houston County’s Defined Benefit Pension Plan documents, in accordance with the 2014 ACCG “Model Plan” and to sign a power of attorney (Form 2848) authorizing ACCG’s attorney to file said plan documents with the IRS. Upon voting, Mr. Walker, Ms. Robinson and Mr. McMichael voted yes to approve. Motion carried.

Chairman Stalnaker asked Mr. Walker to comment on the state of the County’s retirement plan. Mr. Walker stated that our plan is in great shape and fully funded.

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Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Walker and carried to approve Chairman Stalnaker to sign an Intergovernmental Contract with the City of Warner Robins to cover half the cost of the Moody Road inmate detail from the McEver Probation Detention Center for April through June 2015 at a prorated $7,500; and $30,000 annually thereafter until terminated by one or both entities. Upon voting, Ms. Robinson, Mr. Walker and Mr. McMichael voted yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried to approve the transfer of ownership through a limited warranty deed from the Houston County Board of Commissioners to the City of Warner Robins all that tract or parcel of land situate, lying and being in Land Lots 94 and 99 of the Tenth Land District of Houston County, Georgia, being known and designated as that certain 18.567 acres as shown on plat of survey for Jaros Development, LLC prepared by Scarborough Land Surveys, Inc. on August 16, 2004, a copy of said plat being of record in Map Book 64, Page 13, Clerk’s Office, Houston Superior Court. The said plat and the record thereof are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes. Upon voting, Ms. Robinson, Mr. McMichael and Mr. Walker voted yes. Motion carried.

Also conveyed herewith:

All that tract or parcel of land situate, lying and being in land lots 94 and 99 of the Tenth Land District of Houston County, Georgia, being known and designated as Parcel “B”containing 15.296 acres as shown on plat of survey of Parcels “A”, “B”, “C” and “K”, prepared by Scarborough Land Surveys, Inc., a copy of said plat being of record in Map Book 63, Page 78, Clerk’s Office, Houston Superior Court. The said plat and the record thereof are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

Further conveyed herewith:

All that tract or parcel of land situate, lying and being in Land Lot 188 of the Tenth Land District of Houston County, Georgia, being known and designated as that certain 8.00 acres as shown on plat of survey for Houston County Board of Commissioners, prepared by Waddle & Company on April 9, 2003, a copy of said plat being of record in Plat Book 60, Page 139, Clerk’s Office, Houston Superior Court. The said plat and the record thereof are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried to approve the rescindment of final adjusting change Order #5 dated February 10, 2015 with Georgia Asphalt, Inc. on the Corder Road Widening project. Upon voting, Ms. Robinson, Mr. McMichael and Mr. Walker voted yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried to approve Chairman Stalnaker to sign the Consent and Agreement regarding the assignment by Mid-Georgia CoGen, LP of the Water Supply Agreement to its lender as collateral for the financing of the facility. Upon voting, Mr. McMichael, Mr. Walker and Ms. Robinson voted yes. Motion carried.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that this consent and agreement does not change the original agreement or water rates, but that there likely will be an adjustment soon in the rate Mid-GA CoGen is paying since it is slightly under our current commercial rate.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried to approve the award of the Detention Center roof repair (Project #14HCC001RP041) to McCallum Metal Works, Inc. of Macon in the amount of $76,758. This project is funded by the 2012 SPLOST. Upon voting, Mr. McMichael, Ms. Robinson and Mr. Walker voted yes. Motion carried.

Mr. Walker asked the Chairman if he was concerned about the wide spread in the bid numbers between the four contractors. Chairman Stalnaker explained that the two low bids were very close and that we had a very experienced consultant, Edifice Consulting, that has had very positive prior dealings with the low bidder.

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Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried to approve the award of Phase 2 of the Juvenile Justice building leak repairs to International City Builders of Warner Robins in the amount of $65,875. This project is funded by the 2012 SPLOST. Upon voting, Mr. McMichael, Mr. Walker and Ms. Robinson voted yes. Motion carried.

Chairman Stalnaker remarked that the Phase 1 repairs performed by International City Builders in 2013 were very successful and that this Phase 2 project will continue that same process in other areas of the building.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried to approve the payment of bills totaling $2,554,361.18. Upon voting, Mr. McMichael, Ms. Robinson and Mr. Walker voted yes. Motion carried.

Chairman Stalnaker then opened the meeting for public comments.

Chief Williams reminded everyone of the pending time change (Sunday, March 8th, 2:00 a.m.). He explained that Daylight Savings Time is an excellent opportunity to change the batteries twice a year in both smoke detectors and weather radios. He also asked that proper care be taken when disposing of all old batteries.

There being no further public comments, the meeting was continued.

The Chairman then asked for comments from the Commissioners.

Chairman Stalnaker asked for thoughts and prayers for Becky Woods’ mother, Ms. Lucille Hammock, who is still in the hospital. The other Commissioners all expressed their well wishes for Ms. Hammock.

Mr. Walker wished Mr. Thomson a speedy recovery from his illness.

Chairman Stalnaker remarked that Ms. Robinson will celebrate her birthday on March 24th, wished her a happy birthday, and presented her with a small gift.

There being no further comments, the meeting was continued.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried to adjourn the meeting. Upon voting, Mr. McMichael, Mr. Walker and Ms. Robinson voted yes. Motion carried.

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 Director of Administration

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