

Houston County Commissioners Meeting
July 19, 2022
Warner Robins, Georgia

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday July 19, 2022, at the Houston County Annex in Warner Robins, Georgia, with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners Byrd, Robinson, Talton, and Walker present. Also present were Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar, Director of Personnel Ken Carter, Chief Magistrate Angela Sammons, Landfill Superintendent Terry Dietsch, Director of Purchasing Mark Baker, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, MIS Director Gail O'Quinn, MIS Network Administrator James Faulkner, MIS Senior Operator Christine Pate, Fire/HEMA Chief Chris Stoner, Coroner James Williams, Community Planner Jake Cox, Capt. Mikki Quinones, Chairman-Elect Dan Perdue, Shane Gottwals, Walton & Becky Wood, Jacqueline Rozier, Jeanne & Dennis Moyer, Meg Mehserle.

Commissioner Talton led the audience in the Invocation and then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized MIS Director Gail O'Quinn for her 25-year service and Robert Leverett and Angela Allen for their 30-year service anniversaries with the County presenting each with a certificate of achievement, a service pin, and a gift from the Board and citizens. Each Commissioner thanked all for their exemplary service to the County and our community. Kimberly Joseph of the E911 department also reached her 30-year service anniversary but was unable to attend. Chairman Stalnaker explained that earlier in the day the Board recognized employees who had reached their 15-, 20- and 25-year service anniversaries at a separate gathering.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized Jeanne and Dennis Moyer of Waste Management on the occasion of her retirement. Ms. Moyer has been serving the citizens of Houston County since curbside garbage service began in 1997 twenty-five years ago. Her husband Dennis, also in attendance, was also employed by Waste Management for many years. The Chairman, each commissioner, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar, and Landfill Superintendent Terry Dietsch all expressed their appreciation for her long-standing service to our community. Ms. Moyer introduced her husband, several other family members, and two co-workers who attended the meeting.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton and carried unanimously by all to approve the minutes from the meeting of July 5, 2022.

Mr. Talton presented a request from Facilities Superintendent Michael Phillips to enter into a contract with Hays Services, LLC.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve entering into a contract with Hays Service, LLC of Macon for maintenance on the Courthouse chillers at an annual cost of \$10,810. The contract will expire on 6/30/2024.

Mr. Walker presented a request to defund two positions at the Landfill and create two Heavy Equipment Operator positions.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the defunding of one Equipment Operator position (Grade 10-A) and one Scale Operator position (Grade 8-A) at the Landfill; and the creation of two Heavy Equipment Operator positions (Grade 13-A).

Chairman Stalnaker pointed out that the Landfill is giving up two positions for this reorganization and the move will be a wash in funds in the overall budget.

Mr. Walker presented a request for approval to purchase a vehicle for the County Coroner.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of one new 2022 Chevrolet Tahoe to Brannen Motor Company of Unadilla for use by the County Coroner in the amount of \$41,800. SPLOST 2018 will fund this vehicle purchase.

Ms. Robinson presented a request for approval of a Justice for Children grant for the Juvenile Court.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing all documents necessary to accept \$9,980.20 of COVID-19 Grant Funds provided by the Department of Health and Human Services, the Administration for Children and Families to the Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Georgia Court Improvement Program.

Ms. Robinson presented a request for approval of a change order on the Health Department Addition and Renovation project.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Talton and carried unanimously by all to approve Change Order #1 with ICB Construction Group on the Health Department Addition and Renovation project increasing the original contract of \$5,700,000 by \$37,683.55 for an amended total of \$5,737,683.55. There is no change in contract time.

Mr. Byrd presented a request for approval to write-off uncollected debt for the Water System, Waste Collection and Solid Waste Disposal.

Mr. Byrd commented that these bad debt percentages are truly remarkable and commended County staff and each department for their collection efforts. The water system was 2/10's of one percent, only a half of one percent on waste collection, and zero on waste disposal.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the FY2022 Water Fund debt write-off of \$17,526.14 (\$17,356.14 for the water system and \$170.00 for stormwater management); the Waste Collection (Sanitation) debt write-off totaling \$16,601.02 (\$10,750.55 for routes 10 thru 80 and \$5,850.47 for route 90). The Solid Waste Disposal (Landfill) has no debt to write-off.

Chairman Stalnaker agreed with Mr. Byrd as staff members of each department have been very dedicated in going after this debt. He also reiterated that efforts would continue to collect this bad debt. Most of the time, these bad debts belong to customers who have moved away, and it is hard to locate them. He commended Mr. Dietsch on his efforts obtaining zero bad debt on the waste disposal side commenting that although he does not have as many customers at the Landfill as the water system and the collections department that is an unbelievable accomplishment.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$2,513,630.36.

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

Director of Purchasing Mark Baker commented that this was Mr. Holland's last regular Board meeting and wanted to comment.

Chairman Stalnaker agreed that it would be appropriate but asked Mr. Baker to wait until later in the meeting to make his comments.

Marilu Cowan, 137 Bear Lake Drive, Warner Robins commented that her neighborhood has had many recent complaints about fireworks creating a nuisance, disturbing pets, sleep patterns and other things. She had concerns that people were willfully violating both state law and County ordinance by setting off fireworks on days and at times that were not allowed. She also commented that many veterans have a hard time with the unexpected loud noises. She felt that the retail outlets selling fireworks should be made to post notices concerning the local and state regulations.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that fireworks have been a problem for law enforcement, E911 personnel, and the Fire Department. The State of Georgia has basically taken control out of the local governments' hands and our local ordinance basically mirrors state law.

County Attorney Tom Hall clarified that the state law actually does say the public can shoot consumer fireworks from 10:00 a.m. up to and including 11:59 p.m. on any day, but they did allow local governments to use a local noise ordinance to limit the ability to do that between 9:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m. Houston County has done that. A good way to approach this would be for Ms. Cowan to have dialogue with the state legislators to discuss the issue because any real change would have to come from the state level.

Capt. Quinones, E911 Director, commented that the 911 center has call stats available that may help in that regard and that the worst times are of course on July 4th and at New Year's.

Chief Stoner commented that the Fire Department does receive a lot of calls especially during the dry season when the grass is brown and rooftops are dry because they represent potential fire hazards when fireworks are used.

Houston County Commissioners Meeting Continued from Page 90

Chief Chris Stoner thanked the Board for the employee recognition program that recognizes long-term employees for their years of service. He commented that one such employee of the Roads Department, Robbie Leverett, who was recognized for his 30-years of service also has recently become a volunteer firefighter with the department.

Coroner James Williams thanked the Chairman, Board members, and staff for the support he has received since taking office in March.

Chairman Stalnaker thanked Mr. Williams for his dedicated service to the County.

There being no further comments Chairman Stalnaker closed Public Comments and opened Commissioner's Comments.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that this is the final regularly scheduled Board meeting that Mr. Holland will be present due to his pending retirement next week. He has been with the County for 22 years, first as Purchasing Agent for twelve years and then as Director of Administration for the last ten years. He commended Mr. Holland for being a dedicated employee who will be missed. There will be a small drop-in reception for him next week at 3:00 p.m. or 3:30 p.m. Friday, July 29th. Chairman Stalnaker thanked Mr. Holland for his service to the County and his loyalty to the Board.

Mr. Walker remarked that it is a red-letter day when we can recognize the outstanding employees of Houston County who go about the business of the County every day. He thanked Mr. Holland for his service saying he was very knowledgeable, attentive to detail, and helpful to all the citizens of Houston County. He wished him well in his retirement and thanked him for his friendship.

Ms. Robinson thanked Mr. Holland remarking that it is a very important job and that he does it well. She wished him well in his retirement also.

Mr. Talton thanked all the dedicated and passionate employees who make up this County stating that it was they who inspired him to run for the County Commission. He thanked Mr. Holland for his service to the County always having seen him as a man of integrity and honesty.

Mr. Byrd thanked Mr. Holland remarking that he is a dedicated employee meaning that he is dedicated to the citizens of Houston County as well as the employees. He called him a very disciplined leader who goes about his job with a great attention to detail.

Tom Hall commended Mr. Holland for the knowledge that he brings to his position and his even temperament.

Mark Baker commented that Mr. Holland hired him to be the County's Purchasing Agent ten years ago as he was retiring from service at the City of Warner Robins. He thanked Mr. Holland for being a really good boss. He remarked that Mr. Dunbar will make a very good replacement and looked forward to working together going forward.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that Mr. Dunbar's temperament is very similar to Mr. Holland's, and he will step in and do a good job.

Houston County Commissioners Meeting Continued from Page 91

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all.
Meeting adjourned.

Barry Holland
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner