

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting**  
**September 5, 2023**  
**Perry, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session at 9:00 am on Tuesday, September 5, 2023, at the Houston County Courthouse in Perry, GA, with Chairman Perdue presiding and Commissioners Byrd, Gottwals, Robinson, and Talton present. Also present were County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Robbie Dunbar, Director of Operations Brian Jones, Utility Director Terry Dietsch, Director of Purchasing Vanessa Zimmerman, Chief Financial Officer Danyelle George, Senior Accountant Will Davis, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, and Administrative Secretary Dawn Wilkins.

Mr. Talton gave the invocation and then led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Capt. Jesse Stokes, Operations Officer for the Defense Logistics Agency, Aviation, spoke of his military career. He served in Germany, Europe, the Middle East and Africa. He began his career as an enlisted member of the Air Force and is now an Operations Officer for the Defense Logistics Agency. Capt. Stokes spoke of Christy, his wife of 18 years, and his three children and how happy they were to be stationed here in Houston County. Capt. Stokes stated that when presented with a list of possible bases, he and his family chose Robins Air Force Base due to being close to his and his wife's hometown of Pensacola, Florida. They have enjoyed the excellent school system and sports programs offered here. He finished by saying that Logistics is a good example of the relationship between the military and strategic civilian partners.

Chairman Perdue thanked Capt. Stokes for being at the meeting, his service to the Air Force, and his commitment to our Country.

Mr. Byrd thanked Capt. Stokes for his service and coming to the Commissioner's meeting to discuss his career. He commented that a LRO and Commissioner's job has much in common.

Mr. Talton thanked Capt. Stokes for his service and stated that the way he spoke about his job showed that he enjoyed what he did. He finished by saying that Capt. Stokes' comments about the County showed that the Commissioners were doing their jobs.

Ms. Robinson thanked Capt. Stokes for making Houston County his home. She also stated that his comments about Houston County showed evidence of what the Commission strives to do.

Mr. Gottwals thanked Capt. Stokes for his service and quoted General Patton as saying, "No Army is better than its soldiers." He finished by thanking Capt. Stokes for his involvement in the community.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd, to approve the minutes from the August 15, 2023, Special Called Meetings at 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. and the regularly scheduled meeting at 5:00 p.m. Upon voting, Ms. Robinson, Mr. Byrd, and Mr. Gottwals voted yes; Mr. Talton abstained as he was not present at the meetings. Motion approved.

Director of Administration Robbie Dunbar gave the first reading of a new Alcohol License for Saira LLC. The second reading and public hearing will be held at the September 19, 2023, meeting, after which action may be taken.

Chairman Perdue asked the citizens present if there were any public comments on the first reading. As there were no comments, the meeting continued.

Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews presented Special Exception Applications #2708 - #2710 and #2712 - #2715.

## Houston County Commissioners Meeting Continued from Page 277

Chairman Perdue opened a Public Hearing.

Applicant #2708 was present; there was no opposition.  
 Applicant #2709 was present; there was no opposition.  
 Applicant #2710 was present; there was no opposition.  
 Applicant #2712 was present; there was no opposition.  
 Applicant #2713 was not present; there was no opposition.  
 Applicant #2714 was present; there was no opposition.  
 Applicant #2715 was present; there was no opposition.

As there were no comments, Chairman Perdue closed the Public Hearing and reopened the regular portion of the meeting.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Gottwals and carried unanimously by all to approve the following Special Exception Applications to include any and all stipulations as noted on the Zoning & Appeals recommendation and Section 95 Requirements staff report:

#2708	Carolyn Demonfort	Bookkeeping Business
#2709	Dustin Long	Trucking Business
#2710	Michelle Kerns	Baking and Candy Business
#2712	Julie Franklin	Clothing & Accessories (Internet Sales)
#2713	Stephen Murosky	Italian Ice Cart Business
#2714	Addison Harris	Electrical Contractor Business
#2715	Joseph Richardson	Consulting Business

Mr. Andrews advised all applicants on the next step in the process: obtaining their business licenses through the Commissioner's office.

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 possibly more stringent than any action the Board of Commissioners took and may still be enforced. The actions taken by the Board will not change any provision within the covenant that prohibits any commercial or business activity.

Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews presented Rezoning Application #2711.

Chairman Perdue opened a Public Hearing.

As there were no comments, Chairman Perdue closed the Public Hearing and reopened the regular portion of the meeting.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the rezoning application #2711 as recommended by the Houston County Planning Commission:

# 2711	WCH Homes	Rezoning from R-AG to R-1
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Mr. Talton presented a request from the City of Perry for the deannexation of property located at 120 Sparrow Street.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to concur with the City of Perry deannexation request for property located at 120 Sparrow Street, also known as Tax Parcel # OP41AO 243000. The property is currently zoned City of Perry R-AG, and the proposed zoning is County R-AG.

Houston County Commissioners Meeting Continued from Page 278

County Attorney Tom Hall conducted the first reading of a proposed amendment to the Houston County Code of Ordinances. The proposed amendment would remove and replace the current Sec. 2-555 of Chapter 2, Article III, Division 9 titled Development Authority. The replacement of this paragraph is necessary to update the Houston County Code of Ordinances regarding the number of term years for Development Authority Board Members to comply with O.C.G.A. § 36-62-4(a). This amendment will not apply to board members currently serving on the Development Authority. The amendment will only apply to board members appointed or reappointed after the amendment is heard and approved by the Board of Commissioners. A second reading and public hearing will be held at the September 19, 2023, meeting, after which action may be taken.

County Attorney Tom Hall conducted the first reading of a proposed amendment to the Houston County Code of Ordinances. The proposed amendment would add a paragraph to the code concerning the County's purchases for the county road systems. The paragraph would be added to Chapter 2, Article V Purchase of Materials and Services. A second reading and public hearing will be held at the September 19, 2023 meeting, after which action may be taken.

County Attorney Tom Hall conducted the first reading of a proposed amendment to the Regulations for Access Management and Encroachment Control, Chapter 3 – Commercial Driveways, Sec. 3A – When are Permits Required, as adopted in the Code of Ordinances, Houston County, Georgia at Chapter 54, Article IV, Sec. 54-90. The proposed amendment would add an exception clause to Paragraph 3A-6 of the Regulations for Access Management and Encroachment Control. A second reading and public hearing will be held at the September 19, 2023 meeting, after which action may be taken.

Mr. Byrd presented a request for a distribution from line item # 7 of the ARPA Budget Plan, Non-Profit Organizations Revenue Support.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve the issue of funds from the Non-Profit Organizations Revenue Support line item of ARPA Funds to *Rebuilding Together Warner Robins* in the amount of \$35,000.

Ms. Joanne Alford-Robinette of Rebuilding Together Warner Robins thanked the board, saying the funds will go a long way to help low-income families in Houston County.

Mr. Byrd presented a request for approval to enter into a service agreement for consulting services regarding selecting banking service providers.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve signing an agreement with Davenport Public Finance of Richmond, Virginia, not exceeding \$25,000 for services in seeking banking service providers. This agreement will be paid for by the Accounting Professional Service Fund.

Chairman Perdue summarized the company's services regarding creating RFPs and selecting banks for the best service and most efficient operations. He also said he looked forward to updating the County's banking capabilities.

Mr. Byrd presented a request from the Accounting Department for approval of a contract to upgrade the County's Financial Management Software.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the signing of a contract with Tyler Technologies of Plano, Texas, for Governmental Financial Accounting Software for an estimated implementation fee of \$347,253 and an annual maintenance cost of \$216,990. The timeline for completion of this project is 6-18 months. The funding for this project will be shared by the Accounting Professional Service Fund and the Utilities Professional Services Fund.

## Houston County Commissioners Meeting Continued from Page 279

Chairman Perdue stated that the new financial management process is expected to be in use by the next fiscal year for the finance department and the following fiscal year for the Utilities Department. He also stated that this would help both employees and the citizens of Houston County.

Mr. Byrd presented a request from the Public Works Department for approval of a bid on a GPS-guided Machine Control System for the Landfill.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of the bid for a GPS-guided Machine Control System for the Landfill to Roper Laser Company Inc. of Marietta, Georgia in the amount of \$158,305.40. This purchase will be paid from Landfill Funds.

Chairman Perdue stated that this system will help equipment operators increase the efficiency and use of cells at the landfill. He said that other users have seen as much as a 40% increase in density and that while we have good compaction densities currently, he hopes that the County will see an improvement. He also said the rovers will help with road projects and the Water and Utilities Departments.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request from the Public Works Department for approval of the final adjusting change order on the Houston Lake Remote Well 16" Raw Water Main Extension Project.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the final adjusting change order on the Houston Lake Remote Well 16" Raw Water Main Extension Project, reducing the total by \$42,155. This will adjust the total amount from \$988,979.30 to \$946,824.30.

Mr. Talton commented that this was the first time he had seen a reduction change order.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request from Public Works for approval of a bid on the Spot Overlay Road Repair Project.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of the bid on the Spot Overlay Road Repair Project to Houston Asphalt Paving of Macon, Georgia, in the amount of \$130,395.50. This project will be funded by 2012 SPLOST.

Chairman Perdue stated that the Engineering staff was pleased to see Houston Asphalt Paving bid on this project.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request to change a bid approval from December 20, 2022, for the purchase of five 2023 Ford F-150 Crew Cab trucks for use by the Warrants Division of the Sheriff's Department at \$41,162.00 each from Phil Brannen Ford. The new bid from Jeff Smith Chrysler Dodge for an additional \$4,838.00 each is for currently available vehicles.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the purchase of the five 2023 Ford F-150 Crew Cab Trucks from Jeff Smith Chrysler Dodge Jeep of Perry for an additional \$4,838 per truck over the original approved price, bringing the total to \$46,000 per truck or a total cost of \$230,000. This purchase will be funded by 2018 SPLOST.

Chairman Perdue commented that we are doing one of these change requests every month, which shows how times have changed. He also stated he appreciates the effort that Purchasing puts into finding the available vehicles.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to table the quote from CNP Technologies, LLC., of Charlotte, North Carolina, in the amount of \$72,826.50, to give time for further review of the contract.

Houston County Commissioners Meeting Continued from Page 280

Chairman Perdue commented that he appreciates all the hard work County Attorney Tom Hall does in reviewing all the contracts to keep the County on the right track.

Ms. Robinson presented a request for approval of a bid on ten (10) new 2023 Ford Explorer PPVs. These vehicles will be used by the Patrol Division of the Sheriff's Department and the Detention Center.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of a bid on ten new 2023 Ford Explorer PPVs for use by the Patrol Division of the Sheriff's Department and the Detention Center to Phil Brannen Ford of Perry, GA in the amount of \$47,500 each, or a total of \$475,000. This purchase is to be funded from 2018 SPLOST.

Ms. Robinson presented a request for approval of a quote on one 2023 Chevrolet Traverse from Five Star Chevrolet in Warner Robins. This vehicle is for use in the Sheriff's Department.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve the purchase of one 2023 Chevrolet Traverse from Five Star Chevrolet in Warner Robins for the purchase price of \$41,590. This purchase will be funded from 2018 SPLOST.

Chairman Perdue again stated that he appreciated all the hard work Purchasing puts into finding the vehicles for the County.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$6,706,715.25.

Chairman Perdue closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened Public Comments, stating that Public Comments would be limited to three minutes per individual speaking today.

Mr. Adam Watson spoke about wanting a meeting with Chairman Perdue, Commissioner Talton, County Attorney Tom Hall, and Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews. He talked about wanting to discuss County Ordinances and how they affect his recent request for Building Inspection.

Chairman Perdue replied that he would have his secretary set up the meeting and let Mr. Watson know what day and time.

Ms. Meg Mehserle handed out information packets and spoke about election integrity in Georgia.

J. Sara Paulk, Director of Houston County Public Library, spoke about an upcoming program to encourage reading 1,000 books to children before they enter kindergarten. She also spoke of the many services the Houston County Public Libraries provided.

Without further comments, Chairman Perdue closed the Public Comments portion of the meeting and opened the floor for Commissioner Comments.

Ms. Robinson thanked everyone for being there. She stated that it had been a great meeting, and she was glad to be able to represent the people of Houston County.

Mr. Byrd agreed that it had been a great meeting. He commented that many of the items on the agenda involved technology, which would make the County more efficient in operating. He also thanked the Director of Purchasing, Vanessa Zimmerman, for all her hard work.

Houston County Commissioners Meeting Continued from Page 281

Mr. Talton thanked Ms. Paulk for being there and keeping the Board updated on projects at the library. He said he was glad to see the ARPA funds being used wisely. He finished by saying that SPLOST paid for many of the purchases approved.

Mr. Gottwals commented that with the three weeks between meetings, he had missed serving and that it was good to be back. He commented that he enjoyed the good weather over Labor Day weekend.

Chairman Perdue stated that much good work had been done at the meeting. On his first day, he asked people to look for ways to use technology, not to replace labor but to make work more efficient. He stated that he was excited about the new creative ways technology will be used for banking, accounting, billing, and the new GPS system at the Landfill.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Gottwals, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all. Meeting adjourned.

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Robbie Dunbar  
Director of Administration

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Chairman

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Commissioner

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