

Houston County Commissioners Meeting December 5, 2023 Perry, Georgia

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session at 9:00 am on Tuesday, December 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, Director of Personnel Ken Carter, Utility Director Terry Dietsch, Director of Purchasing Vanessa Zimmerman, Fire/HEMA Chief Chris Stoner, Chief Financial Officer Danyelle George, Senior Accountant Will Davis, District Attorney William Kendall, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, Project Coordinator Jordan Kelley, Deputy Chief Appraiser Amanda Clark, and Administrative Secretary Dawn Wilkins .

Commissioner Gottwals gave the Invocation.

Commissioner Talton led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Colonel Lance Myerson, Deputy Commander, Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex spoke of his thirty-three-year military career. He spoke of being deployed many times during Desert Storm and the Global War on Terror, and being stationed at many different places throughout the United States and around the world. Col. Myerson also spoke of his wife of twenty-five years and his son who is enrolled in the Merchant Marine Academy. He commented that he and his wife are both excited to be stationed at Robins Air Force Base and living in Houston County.

Chairman Perdue and each of the Commissioners thanked Col Myerson for his service and for taking time to come and speak at the meeting.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the minutes from the November 21, 2023 meeting.

Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews presented Special Exception Applications #2723 through #2726 and #2728, #2729, #2731 and #2732.

Chairman Perdue closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened a Public Hearing.

Applicant #2723 was present and spoke about her business plan. There was no opposition.

Applicant #2724 was present, there was no opposition.

Applicant #2725 was present, there was no opposition.

Applicant #2726 was present, there was no opposition.

Applicant #2728 was present, there was no opposition.

Applicant #2729 was present, there was no opposition.

Applicant #2731 was present, there was no opposition.

Applicant #2732 was not present, there was no opposition.

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

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton, 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:

Application #2723	Leslie Taylor	Cleaning Business
Application #2724	Stacey Brantley	Crafts, Sewing & Alterations
Application #2725	Buffianna Morath	Independent Travel Agency
Application #2726	Tyler Martin	Lawn Care Business
Application #2728	Mike Thorn	Custom Lego Structures (Internet Sales)
Application #2729	Carol Norris	Consulting Business

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Application #2731	Berry Patch Farm	Products & Commodities Raised on the Premises
Application #2732	Reagan Warren	Cleaning Business

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 businesses. These restrictive covenants are not superseded by any action the Board of Commissioners takes. The actions taken by the Board will not change any provision within the covenant that prohibits any commercial or business activity.

Mr. Andrews advised the applicants approved on the next step in the process, which would be obtaining their business license through the Commissioner's office.

Mr. Byrd commented that he appreciated all the hard work the Zoning & Appeals Board did in making the recommendations, and the hard work of Houston County employees getting the recommendations to the Board. He finished by commenting on the number of new business licenses.

Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews presented Rezoning Application #2727.

Chairman Perdue closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened a Public Hearing.

Catherine S. Willis, of James Bates Brannan Groover LLP, representing the applicant, Heidelberg Materials Southeast Agg LLC, gave presentation paperwork to the Commissioners and spoke about the rezoning request.

Mr. Gottwals asked about the 9.3 acres and the condensing of the area.

Ms. Willis replied that the condensing would start with the removal of unused equipment.

Mr. Byrd thanked the applicant for presenting a thorough application.

Mr. Gottwals thanked the applicant for their plans to improve the exterior appearance of the site.

Chairman Perdue recognized Mr. Burnette and echoed Mr. Byrd's comment on the thorough application.

Without further comments, Chairman Perdue closed the Public Hearing and reopened the regular portion of the meeting.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve the following Rezoning Application as recommended by Houston County Planning Commission:

Application #2727 by Heidelberg Materials Southeast Agg LLC for property located on HWY 247 Rezoning from C-1 to M-2.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve the 2024 Commissioner's Meeting Schedule with the change in April and July to the second and fourth Tuesdays for the scheduled meeting due to holidays.

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Chairman Perdue commented that the changes in April and July were made due to holidays and that the three-week gap between meetings was shifted. He also commented that the changes would be posted and appropriately communicated with the public.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Talton and carried unanimously by all to approve the following Board Appointments:

Airport Authority: 12/31/23 – 12/30/25
Dr. Perry Melvin

Board of Tax Assessors:
William Fowler 12/31/23 – 12/30/26
Bill Phelps 12/31/23 – 12/30/26

Board of Health:
Dr. Larry Stewart 12/31/2023 -12/30/29
Dr. Bilal Khan to serve the unexpired term of Archie Thompson 12/5/2023 - 12/31/2027

Chairman Perdue commented that the Board appreciated the many years served by Mr. Thompson. He stated that Mr. Thompson had moved out of Houston County and could no longer serve on the Board but that he has been a significant asset to the Board of Health.

Ms. Robinson presented a request for approval of a prorated contract attorney agreement for Juvenile Court.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve the signing of a prorated independent contract attorney agreement with Genghis X. Shakhan in the amount of \$19,852.11 to be broken down as follows; \$2,352.13 for December 2023, \$2,916.67 for January, February, March, April, and May of 2024, and \$2,916.63 for June of 2024.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request from the District Attorney's Office to fill the vacant Assistant District Attorney position.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve hiring Justin Duane to fill the vacant Assistant District Attorney position at Grade 30 Step C effective December 6, 2023.

Chairman Perdue acknowledged District Attorney Kendall.

Mr. Kendall said he appreciated the cooperation with the Commission and was looking forward to backfilling Mr. Duane's position, who currently works in his office, with a state-funded position.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request to fill the vacant Senior Utility Service Worker position in the Water Department.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve hiring Joseph Hay to fill the vacant Senior Utility Service Worker position in the Water Department at a Grade 13 Step D effective December 6, 2023.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request for approval of a bid on equipment for the Detention Center.

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Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Talton and carried unanimously by all to approve the bid on one whole-body security scanning system from low bidder Tek84 in the amount of \$162,500 and an extended warranty for an additional \$8,900 bringing the total amount to \$171,400. This purchase will be paid from 2018 SPLOST.

Chairman Perdue commented that the Detention Center had wanted this item for a long time. He stated that it would go a long way in stopping contraband from getting into the Detention Center.

Mr. Talton presented a request for approval of a change order for the 2023 Spot Overlay Project.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve Change Order No. 1 for an increase in the contract price with Houston Asphalt Paving & Seal Coating of Macon, Georgia for work on the 2023 Spot Overlay project. This increase, in the amount of \$3,402.05, will raise the contracted price of \$130,395.10 to \$133,797.15. This increase will pay for additional quantities of asphalt used for Baker Road and County Road leveling. This increase will be funded by 2012 SPLOST.

Chairman Perdue said that on behalf of the employees and the engineering staff, he would like to tell the Commissioners how much they are appreciated for their cooperation in working to get these projects funded and allowing on-site decisions regarding the need for more work to be done.

Director of Operations Brian Jones stated that Public Work employees do appreciate how the Board works to help in getting these road projects done.

Mr. Talton presented a request for approval of the 2024 LMIG Road List.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the following proposed roads list for the 2024 LMIG:

Road Name	Beginning	Ending	Length (Miles)	Description of Work
Old Perry Road	Woodard Road	Bob White Road	0.71	Resurface/ Base Repair
Old Simmons Road	Simmons Road	Simmons Road	0.40	Resurface
Hiwassee Drive	Thompson Mill Rd.	2036 Hiwassee Dr.	0.52	Resurface
Audrey Way	Governors Walk	South of Leslie Dr.	0.57	Resurface
Green Street	Juniper Street	Taylor Street	0.47	Resurface
Bellflower Court	Willowgate Drive	Cul-de-sac	0.06	Resurface
Scarlet Drive	SR96	Twelve Oaks Dr.	0.61	Resurface
Mt. Zion Road	SR96	Willingham Dr.	0.65	Resurface
Amelia Drive #1	US41	Regetta Dr.	0.30	Mill/Resurface
Amelia Drive #2	Dora Lane	Amelia Dr	0.25	Mill/Resurface
Total Miles			4.54	

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Chairman Perdue explained that LMIG stood for Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant. He spoke about the partnership between Houston County, the surrounding communities, and GDOT. He said that with this partnership we leverage larger contracts for better pricing. He thanked engineering staff for the job they do appropriately evaluating roads to be considered.

Mr. Talton recognized all the staff involved and the hard work involved in making the list of roads.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$4,500,668.11.

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

Adam Watson inquired about the Adjustments & Appeals Board, and if it now had the required number of members.

Chairman Perdue stated that there were the correct number and that the board would be meeting this week.

Mr. Watson asked about the policy on retention of complaints about employees.

County Attorney Tom Hall replied that that most complaints come under the Transitory category and once they are handled, they are disposed of.

With no further comments, Chairman Perdue closed the Public Comments portion of the meeting and opened the floor for Commissioner Comments.

Mr. Gottwals commented that it had been another productive meeting with a lot of work being done in a short amount of time. He said it is the season of Advent and that with everyone singing Christmas carols we need to take the time to listen to the words and what they mean. He said that we need to sing with exuberance and celebrate Christ and Family. He finished by saying that Houston County is a special place, and that it is a good thing to celebrate the season with everyone.

Ms. Robinson thanked everyone for being at the meeting and all Houston County employees for all their hard work in getting things done. She finished by thanking the citizens for being members of the community.

Mr. Talton thanked everyone for being at the meeting and all Houston County employees for all their hard work. He spoke about the improvements being made in Houston County and the new businesses opening showing that Houston County is growing. He finished by thanking all the volunteers that agreed to serve on the boards.

Mr. Byrd recognized Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, thanking him for all his hard work. He commented on the body of work that Mr. Andrews does in his office and the high level of customer service it provides. He spoke about the ACCG Fall Session he was able to attend and how he always found them informative. He said when he leaves those sessions, he is always very grateful for Houston County and its employees, and the way Houston County conducts business. And although we may not have every answer to every question, we seem to stay a step or two ahead of other people and he is proud of that fact.

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Chairman Perdue stated that it had been a good meeting and despite the short meeting time there was a lot accomplished. He said he wanted to echo the comments of all the Commissioners. He also wanted to congratulate the Perry Panthers on their run for the State Championship and was looking forward to seeing the outcome of the State Championship game on December 12.

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

Robbie Dunbar
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner