

Houston County Commissioners Meeting
June 18, 2019
Warner Robins, Georgia

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in regular called session at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 18, 2019, at the Houston County Annex in Warner Robins, Georgia, with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners Thomson, Walker, Robinson and McMichael present. Also present were Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar, Director of Personnel Ken Carter, Director of Purchasing Mark Baker, Fire / HEMA Chief Chris Stoner, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, Jim Taylor, James Erdmancyk, and Ansel Peck.

Commissioner Robinson led the audience in the Invocation.

Col. Katrina Stephens, US Air Force led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and briefed the Board on her 22-year military career. Col. Stephens currently is the 78th Air Base Wing vice commander at Robins AFB and has been here for one year. She began her service in 1996 as a ROTC graduate from Western Kentucky University and is a career personnel officer. She has commanded twice and served in several key staff positions at the headquarters and combatant command level. Some of her previous assignments took her to Los Angeles AFB, CA; Hanscom AFB, MA; Randolph AFB, TX; deployed to Iraq; Incirlik AB, Turkey; the Pentagon, Washington D.C.; Dyess AFB, TX; Bagram AB, Afghanistan; Patch Barracks in Stuttgart, Germany; Belgium; back to Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, TX; and finally, to Robins AFB. She related how much she appreciates this community that is so welcoming to the military as well as the leadership present in local government.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the minutes from the regular scheduled meeting of June 4, 2019.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve Friday, July 5, 2019 as a paid day off for Houston County employees. Shift workers scheduled to work those days will be given an additional day off, at a later date, with their department heads approval.

Mr. Walker presented a request from the City of Warner Robins for annexation of property located east of Butten Drive and west of Peach Blossom Road.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to concur with a City of Warner Robins annexation request for the property described as:

Property totaling 0.50 acres (a portion of Tax Parcel 000770 075000) located at Starlight Drive, east of Butten Drive and west of Peach Blossom Road.

Chairman Stalnaker asked Mr. Holland to ensure that the letter to the City of Warner Robins concurring with this annexation include a stipulation that the County will retain the business as a water customer.

Mr. Walker presented a Memorandum of Agreement with Houston Healthcare System, Inc., and Air Evac EMS, Inc.

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Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing the Memorandum of Agreement with Houston Healthcare System, Inc. and Air Evac EMS, Inc. concerning the construction of helipads and facilities for medical helicopter transport of patients.

Ms. Robinson presented a request from the Superior Court for approval of a grant awarded for the continuing operation of the Mental Health Accountability Court.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to approve the acceptance of the Mental Health Accountability Court grant (#J20-8-071) in the amount of \$176,903 from the State of Georgia – Criminal Justice Coordinating Council for the purposes of continuing the Mental Health Accountability Court. Of that \$176,903, Houston County's required match is \$17,690. Chairman Stalnaker is authorized to sign all grant documents.

Ms. Robinson presented four independent contractor agreements for local attorneys to provide defense of indigent persons in cases where the Houston County Public Defender's Office has declared a conflict of interest.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing independent contractor agreements for the purposes of providing defense of indigent persons in cases where the Houston County Public Defender's Office has declared a conflict of interest with David G. Daniell, Daniels Law (Ron Daniels), Jonathan Perry Waters and Jeffrey L. Grube effective July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

Ms. Robinson presented a proposal from International City Builders for the construction of the new Lake Joy Fire Station and Emergency Management facility.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to approve the acceptance of the \$2,500,000 Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) from International City Builders Construction Group of Macon on the Lake Joy Fire Station and Emergency Management facility construction project. Chairman Stalnaker is authorized to sign all necessary documents and contracts.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized Chief Stoner and the Fire Department personnel in attendance thanking them for their service to our community. He remarked that this will be the second new fire station to be constructed recently and this project also includes the addition of a new Emergency Management facility adjacent to the station. He thought that a groundbreaking ceremony might take place sometime after July 1st. The funding for this project comes largely from SPLOST but also from the Fire Fund reserves.

Mr. Thomson presented a request for an additional deputy to work at the Magistrate Court.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to approve the creation of one additional Deputy Sheriff (Grade 16) position under the direction of the Sheriff's Department to work in the Magistrate Court.

Mr. Thomson presented a change order on the Detention Center's boiler replacement project.

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Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing Change Order #1 with GHC Mechanical Services, Inc. of Macon on the Detention Center boiler replacement project increasing the current contract amount of \$56,257.72 by \$3,769.08. The amended total is \$60,026.80 with no increase in contract time.

Mr. Dunbar commented that this would be the final adjusting change order for this project.

Mr. Thomson presented a request to release Maintenance Bonds on The Bluff Section 5 of Riverbend Subdivision and Section 1 Phase 2A of McCarley Downs Subdivision.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to approve the release of the maintenance bond (State Bank Letter of Credit #6126121, Expires June 26, 2019) on The Bluff Section 5 of Riverbend Subdivision and to accept Coosa Drive, 2291 feet or 0.43 mile at a speed limit of 25 mph; and the release of the maintenance bond (SunMark Bank Letter of Credit #210230-7, Expires March 14, 2020) on Section 1 Phase 2A of McCarley Downs Subdivision and to accept Kyler Lane, 502 feet or 0.09 mile at a speed limit of 25 mph.

Mr. Thomson presented three Intergovernmental Agreements covering the 2019 municipal elections.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing an Intergovernmental Agreement (to include Amendment 1) with the City of Perry for the Houston County Board of Elections to conduct its municipal elections for the 2019 election year; and to sign an Intergovernmental Agreement with both the City of Centerville and the City of Warner Robins allowing their use of the State-owned Direct Recording Electronic (D.R.E.) units, Express Poll units, and Optical Scan (O.S.) voting equipment for the 2019 election year.

Mr. McMichael presented a request for approval of a bid for the gasoline and diesel fuel requirements for the July 1, 2019 thru June 30, 2020 time period.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of a bid for gasoline and diesel fuel requirements covering the period beginning July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 to Campbell Oil Co. of Elizabeth Town, NC at -.0634 and -.0226 OPIS markup for gasoline and diesel fuel, respectively.

Mr. McMichael presented a request to replace a vehicle in the Fire Department fleet.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of one new 2020 Chevrolet Tahoe SUV pursuit vehicle for use in the Fire Department from state-wide contract holder Hardy Chevrolet in the amount of \$38,287.

Mr. McMichael presented a request for a new vehicle for the District Attorney's office.

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Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of one new 2019 GMC Acadia SLE for use in the District Attorney's office from Hamby Automotive Network of Perry for \$32,104. District Attorney Hartwig will reimburse the County for the entire amount from forfeiture funds.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$1,022,828.10.

Chairman Stalnaker then presented the proposed FY20 budget and remarked that although it was a tough budget to prepare that we are very fortunate to be in the sound fiscal position that we are in and thanked the constitutional officers, elected officials, department heads and employees for the current FY19 budget management. Initial budget requests indicated that the budget was approximately \$2 million out of balance which is not uncommon. He related that although there is very little in new revenue, the County is in sound financial shape with no general obligation debt and has maintained its fund balance. The SPLOST funds continue to shoulder the burden of capital projects, vehicles and equipment needs throughout the County. We will not use prior year General Fund Balance to balance the FY20 budget since we expect to be within our total budget expenditures and meet our revenue projections. The Chairman indicated that the General Fund proposed budget totals \$59,224,495, as compared to the amended FY19 budget of \$57,488,944, and projects no millage rate increase (remaining at 9.935 mills) for residents. The Fire millage is also projected to remain at the current level of 1.117 mills. The millage rate has remained at 9.95 mills or less for ten years and the Fire Tax has remained at 1.18 mills or less for thirteen years. This is a proposed balanced budget with no anticipated millage rate increase. He reminded everyone that Houston County relies upon property taxes for most of its General Fund revenues and commended Tax Commissioner Mark Kushinka for the fantastic job that he and his staff perform every year. The proposed budget includes a contingency of approximately \$1.54 million before any salary adjustment. This amount is needed for unanticipated emergencies; some fall back should the tax digest return less than anticipated.

The budget does include a two percent salary adjustment for employees which will be effective on the payroll period beginning July 2nd; however, merit and longevity pay increases will remain suspended for all County employees. Cost savings realized through excellent budget management by department heads, elected officials, constitutional officers and employees was significant in being able to provide the pay increase. It costs approximately \$575,000 for a 2% pay increase in the General Fund. The County will continue to look for sustainable opportunities for additional employees and compression reduction in salaries.

He then gave a detailed presentation highlighting the General Fund Budget, as well as the various enterprise and special revenue funds. The total proposed budget of \$129,616,302 is broken down as \$59,224,495 General Fund; \$4,429,706 E911 Fund; \$2,689,713 Fire District Fund; \$33,928,315 SPLOST Fund; \$7,180,500 Water Fund; \$8,513,573 Solid Waste Fund; \$13,145,000 Internal Service Fund; and \$505,000 Special Revenue Funds.

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Chairman Stalnaker once again thanked all employees, department directors, elected officials and constitutional officers for doing their part. Without cooperation and support from each we would not have reached this balanced budget for FY20. He thanked Director of Personnel Ken Carter, Director of Administration Barry Holland and all other staff members for their hard work during the long budget process. He then opened the floor for comments from the Commissioners.

Mr. Thomson remarked that he appreciated the Chairman for his leadership and thanked Mr. Holland.

Ms. Robinson thanked everyone involved for all the hard work and remarked that she was glad that the Board could provide a 2% pay increase for employees.

Mr. Walker echoed both Mr. Thomson and Ms. Robinson's comments thanking the Chairman especially for his leadership.

Mr. McMichael thanked the taxpayers for their part in funding this proposed budget and thanked the Chairman for his leadership as well.

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

Director of Personnel Ken Carter thanked the Board for the salary adjustment and for maintaining the employee benefits package. He felt that Houston ranked at the top as compared to most other counties in the state.

Direction of Operations Robbie Dunbar also thanked the Board for the salary adjustment on behalf of his employees and for the additional holiday on July 5th. He commended them for holding the line on employee benefits and for fully funding our pension plan.

Chairman Stalnaker closed the public hearing on the FY20 budget and announced that the FY20 budget adoption would take place on June 25th at 4:00 p.m. at a special-called meeting at the Commissioner's Board Room in the Annex building at 200 Carl Vinson Parkway, Warner Robins at which time the Board would also consider any end of year bills for payment.

Chairman Stalnaker closed the regular meeting and opened the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

There being no comments Chairman Stalnaker closed the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

Chairman Stalnaker then opened Commissioners Comments portion of the meeting.

Mr. McMichael thanked everyone for coming.

Mr. Thomson thanked Mr. Dunbar, Chief Stoner and the Fire Department personnel in attendance for coming.

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Ms. Robinson thanked everyone for coming and thanked the Chairman for his leadership during the budget process.

Mr. Walker thanked the Chairman for his leadership.

Chairman Stalnaker thanked everyone for attending.

There being no further comments Chairman Stalnaker closed the Commissioners Comment portion of the meeting.

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

Barry Holland
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner