

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting**  
**July 7, 2020**  
**Perry, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 7, 2020, at the Houston County Courthouse in Perry, Georgia, with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners Walker, Thomson, McMichael, and Robinson present. Also present were County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar, Director of Personnel Ken Carter, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, County Engineer Ronnie Heald, Dan Perdue, Intern Brock Woodard and Intern Carson Meilinger.

Commissioner Robinson gave the Invocation and then led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve the minutes from the June 16, 2020 and June 26, 2020 meetings.

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 superior to any action taken by the Board of Commissioners. 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 then presented Special Exception Applications #2358 thru #2364.

Mr. McMichael asked if Application #2361 for the Viasat telecommunications network would improve the internet service in the south end of the County. He recently heard from a citizen complaining about the lack of signal in her area.

Mr. Andrews replied that this equipment was designed to amplify or boost signals for those reasons.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that there are efforts underway in the State of Georgia to improve cellular and internet coverage throughout the state.

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

The applicant for Special Exception Application #2358 was not present, there was no opposition.

The applicant for Special Exception Application #2359 was not present, there was no opposition.

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The applicant for Special Exception Application #2360 was not present, there was no opposition

The applicant for Special Exception Application #2361 was not present, there was no opposition.

The applicant for Special Exception Application #2362 was not present, there was no opposition.

The applicant for Special Exception Application #2363 was not present, there was no opposition.

The applicant for Special Exception Application #2364 was not present, there was no opposition.

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

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the following applications to include any and all stipulations as noted on the Zoning & Appeals recommendation and Section 95 Requirements staff report:

Application #2358	Veronica Payne	Jewelry (Internet Sales)
Application #2359	Charlotte Hudlin	Cookie Baking
Application #2360	Sonja Cross	Hair Salon
Application #2361	Viasat Incorporated	Telecommunications Network
Application #2362	Darryl Thomas	Tomato Sales & Plant Nursery
Application #2363	Miliscent Turner	Photography
Application #2364	Katherine Guy	Event Coordinator

Mr. Walker presented a request from MIS Director Gail O'Quinn to fill the vacant Computer Network Technician position.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to approve the hiring of William Weaver for the vacant Computer Network Technician position in the MIS Department at a Grade 15-B effective July 8, 2020.

Mr. Walker presented a request from the Sheriff's Office to create a new school zone for the newly constructed Bonaire Primary School.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to approve the creation of a school speed zone for the new Bonaire Primary School located on Thompson Mill Road to be set at 30 mph during school hours from 7:30

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a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. from a point 1050 feet north of Lenox Drive to a point 1250 feet south of Lenox Drive or 0.44 miles in length. The Speed Limit Ordinance is hereby amended accordingly.

Mr. Thomson presented a request from the City of Warner Robins for annexation of property located at 700 Highway 96.

Chairman Stalnaker then pointed out that although there is not going to be a public hearing on this annexation request he wanted to allow any of the residents in attendance the opportunity to make comments before the Board considered any action. He presented a map of the property in question explaining that the 50.54 acres was a part of the Nixon property located in the southern most portion. The requested rezoning for R-2, R-3 and R-4 as part of the annexation request does not present an issue since it is compatible with the surrounding area. He emphatically stated that there is no conflict concerning this annexation request between the County and the City of Warner Robins. The City merely forwards the request to the County once an applicant submits their application and the County must then either concur or non-concur with the action. In recent discussions with Mayor Toms he seemed very understanding of the County's concerns. Shannon Ridge Drive terminates at the property in question and the developer has proposed to tie-in to that existing road as the primary ingress/egress. With the streets being 20 plus years old and the additional traffic that would be generated by the new development it is not a good idea to tie-in to this road even as a secondary access point. The six-inch water line serving the existing residential area is not adequate to also serve the new development. There would have to be a tie-in to the 24-inch water main on Houston Lake Road to serve the new development. He commented that he has heard from a lot of people voicing the same concerns. There really is no way for the Board to oppose the annexation since the application meets all the criteria and the zoning is compatible, but the County has no plans to allow access from Shannon Ridge Drive or to the existing six-inch water line. Chairman Stalnaker then asked if anyone in the audience would like to make comment on the annexation request.

Valerie Herman, 228 Mt. Zion Road, Bonaire submitted a petition with nearly 100 signatures of neighborhood residents asking the Board to suspend the annexation. She stated her concerns about the water consumption, drainage issues, a flawed traffic study completed during the pandemic while schools were out and many people were out of work, the wear and tear on the already 30-year old streets, the school-age children that would be added with new development to the already crowded Hilltop Elementary and Veterans High, that there are no sidewalks for safety and that several homes in the neighborhood already have experienced destroyed mailboxes from speeding drivers. She asked that the Board not allow a tie-in to Shannon Ridge Drive from the new development.

Teresa Grizzard, 108 Elmdale Drive, Bonaire stated that she had recently purchased her home and that she already felt that the streets were not safe to walk.

Bill Hrizuk, 201 Van Herrington Court, Bonaire stated that he owned the residence at 404 Doublegate Drive and was concerned that the application for annexation was not clearly stating that just 50 acres of a larger 180-acre tract was proposed. He also stated that there were multiple opportunities for access to this property that did not have to involve Shannon Ridge Drive.

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Tabitha Molloy, 713 Shannon Ridge Drive, Bonaire was concerned about the potential of increased traffic and for the safety of the children in the neighborhood. She also felt that the quality of education may suffer for those children if they must go to a more crowded school due to more residential development.

Chairman Stalnaker assured Ms. Molloy that the Houston County Board of Education takes these new developments into consideration when planning for the future.

Mr. Walker commented that the issues of traffic and safety are quality of life issues.

Ms. Robinson stated that there are definite concerns with the proposed annexation and that there are many other options for access available to the developer other than a tie-in to Shannon Ridge Drive.

Mr. McMichael agreed with both Mr. Walker and Ms. Robinson.

Mr. Thomson commented that any new development does not need to exacerbate the storm drainage problems that already exist in this area.

Chairman Stalnaker stated that although the Chairman does not get to vote unless it is as a tiebreaker that he is 100% in favor of the stipulations placed on the concurrence.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to concur with a City of Warner Robins annexation request for the property described as a 50.54-acre portion of Tax Parcel 000780 001000 located at 700 Highway 96 as shown on a zoning plat drawn by Story, Clarke & Associates and designated as Parcel 'Z', with the following stipulations:

- 1) That no street tie-in or access will be allowed from Shannon Ridge Drive into the rezoned property due to the increase in traffic across two unincorporated county residential roads that are not designed to service the substantial increase in traffic that would be generated by the increased density and the age of the roads.
- 2) No water service is available from the six-inch line at Shannon Ridge Drive due to the negative affect on the Shannon Ridge area.
- 3) Water service for the rezoned property will have to be run from the twenty-four-inch water main on Houston Lake Road.
- 4) The storm drainage associated with this property shall be mitigated so that storm drainage from the rezoned property will not flow onto the lots on Shannon Ridge Drive.
- 5) Any connection to the county water mains will be withheld unless each of these stipulations are met.

Mr. Thomson presented a request from the City of Perry for annexation of property located at 1999 Sam Nunn Blvd.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to concur with a City of Perry annexation request for the property described as:

A 0.24 -acre portion of Tax Parcel 000310 006000 located at 1999 Sam Nunn Blvd. as shown on a zoning plat drawn by Story, Clarke, & Associates as Parcel 'Z'.

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Mr. Thomson presented a request from Public Works staff to place a 4-way stop at the intersection of Lake Joy Road/Joy Drive & Hatcher Road.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve Public Works converting the existing 2-way stop control at the intersection of Lake Joy Road /Joy Drive & Hatcher Road to a 4-way stop control.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that this improvement has been considered for a long time and that he has asked Mr. Dunbar to ensure that the change is well advertised and properly signed.

Mr. Thomson presented a request from the Engineering Department to enter into a supplemental agreement for the Lake Joy Road SPLOST construction project.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve entering into a supplement agreement for additional design services with R.K. Shah & Associates on the Lake Joy Road 2012 SPLOST construction project increasing the current agreement from \$461,093.08 by \$76,924.62 to an amended total of \$538,017.70.

Ms. Robinson presented a proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Land Development Regulations for Houston County.

County Attorney Tom Hall explained that the intent of this amendment was to provide some local control for the County over solar energy systems or solar farms as they are usually called.

Chairman Stalnaker added that we have seen an increase in solar projects in the middle Georgia area.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to authorize the signing of an amendment to the Comprehensive Land Development Regulations for Houston County adding the following to the regulations:

Article XVIII Appendix A. Solar Energies Systems, subsection 18 to Section 71.1.3-Residential Districts; Uses Permitted by a Special Exception, and Subsection 6 to Section 73.2.2-Wholesale and Industrial District; Permitted Uses.

Ms. Robinson presented a request from the Superior Court Accountability Court to renew a contract with Empowered Living Counseling and Life Coaching, LLC.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing a contract for services with Empowered Living Counseling and Life Coaching, LLC to provide services for participants of the Houston County Accountability Court. The contract terms will be effective July 1, 2020 and terminate June 30, 2021.

Ms. Robinson presented a request for acceptance of the FY21 Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant and approval of a Memorandum of Understanding with Community Solutions, Inc.

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Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing all documents necessary to accept the 2021 Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant in the amount of \$272,000 which will provide funding for a local Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) program designed to serve youth in the community who would otherwise be committed to Georgia's Department of Juvenile Justice; and to sign the Service Contract and Memorandum of Understanding with Community Solutions, Inc.

Mr. McMichael presented a request from Public Works staff to release maintenance bonds and acceptance of roadways for maintenance purposes.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to approve the release of the maintenance bond (Citizens Bank of Cochran Letter of Credit #3523311710-1 expiring September 10, 2020) for The Windmill at Mossy Lake Subdivision, Section 2, Phase 2 and to accept Mossy Lake Road for 0.30 miles at 25 mph; and the release of the maintenance bond (SunMark Bank Letter of Credit #534568 expiring August 16, 2020) for The Windmill at Mossy Lake Subdivision, Section 2, Phase 3 and to accept Mossy Lake Road for 0.40 miles at 25 mph and Old Windmill Road for 0.05 miles at 25 mph.

Mr. McMichael presented a request for approval of a change order on the Phase 6 Leachate Tank and Pond Construction project.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing the final adjusting change order on the Phase 6 Leachate Tank and Pond Construction project at the Landfill with Peed Bros, Inc. The change order will reduce the current contract price of \$2,065,214.10 by \$276.98 to a final contract total of \$2,064,937.12. There is no change in the contract time.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$5,206,219.29.

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

Pamela Yates, 119 S. Amanda Place, Warner Robins commented that she has served on the Library Board of Trustees for thirteen years and is also the charter president of the Friends of the Library. She wanted to thank Commissioner Walker and the Walker family for reducing the rent on the building during the pandemic that the Friends of the Library occupy. With the pandemic crisis hitting in March of this year, the Friends of the Library were unable to hold their annual book sale which is a huge fundraiser for the organization. They have donated over \$400,000 to the library system over the years and also utilize some of the money raised for operations. In appreciation, she presented Commissioner Walker and his family lifetime memberships to the organization. She also thanked Mr. Dunbar and his public works staff for assisting the Friends of the Library with the transport of the books for the sale each year.

Chairman Stalnaker said that both Jay and Mary Walker were retired educators and were great contributors, as were Jay's mother and father, to the library system. He thanked Ms. Yates for her service and commented that he had just received a thank you note from Library Director Sara Paulk thanking him and the Board for their support of the library system with no cuts to the FY21 funding for the library.

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Ms. Robinson, Mr. McMichael, and Mr. Thomson agreed that that Mr. Walker and his family were great assets to the library system and the Friends of the Library organization.

Mr. Walker expressed his appreciation to Ms. Yates for her comments.

Robbie Dunbar, Director of Operations, congratulated Ronnie Heald for his promotion to County Engineer. Mr. Heald has been an employee with the Engineering Department for fourteen years beginning as a civil engineer, then senior civil engineer and now has taken over the County Engineer position with Brian Jones becoming the water system engineer.

Chairman Stalnaker congratulated Ronnie on his achievement and lauded his work ethic.

Mr. Dunbar then introduced two engineering interns, Mr. Brock Woodard who is attending Georgia Southern for civil engineering and Mr. Carson Meilinger who is attending Georgia Tech for environmental engineering. Mr. Woodard is returning for his second year as an intern while Mr. Meilinger is here for the first time.

There being no further comments Chairman Stalnaker closed Public Comments and returned to the regular portion of the meeting.

Chairman Stalnaker closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened Commissioners Comments.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized Mr. Dan Perdue commenting that he looked forward to his service on the Board of Commissioners next year.

Mr. McMichael hoped that the residents of Doublegate subdivision understood the action including the stipulations that the Board took on the Warner Robins annexation request today.

Mr. Thomson thanked everyone for coming and congratulated Ronnie Heald on his promotion to County Engineer.

Ms. Robinson thanked everyone for attending and remarked that the concurrence with the Warner Robins annexation with those stipulations was the only real way for the Board to find a solution that addressed all the residents concerns.

Mr. Walker agreed that this was the best outcome possible on the annexation request and thanked everyone for coming.

Chairman Stalnaker announced that the next meeting would be on Tuesday, July 21st at the Warner Robins Annex building and asked the Board if they wanted to move the time from the regular 6:00 p.m. to either 4:30 or 5:00 p.m. It was the consensus of the Board to change the meeting to 5:00 p.m. He also commented that the Tuesday, August 4th meeting would be scheduled for 9:00 a.m. in the Jury Assembly Room of the courthouse in Perry if the room was available. He asked Lt. Spires to check on the availability of the room.

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Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to change the starting time of the Tuesday, July 21st Board meeting from 6:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Chairman Stalnaker thanked Lt. Spires for his service and reminded everyone once again to participate in, and to also promote, the 2020 Census.

Motion to Adjourn by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all, meeting adjourned.

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Barry Holland  
Director of Administration

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Chairman

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Commissioner

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