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**Houston County Commissioners Meeting**

**December 1, 2015**

**Perry, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 1, 2015 at the Houston County Courthouse in Perry, Georgia Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar, Director of Human Resources Ken Carter, Fire/HEMA Chief Jimmy Williams, Director of Purchasing Mark Baker, Chief Tax Appraiser James Moore, Probate Judge Janice Spires, Administrative Secretary Dawn Ramirez, Georgia Representative Shaw Blackmon, Houston County Development Authority Executive Director Angie Gheesling, Houston County Development Authority Chairman Mark Byrd, Warner Robins Councilman Tim Thomas, Warner Robins Councilwoman Carolyn Robbins, Warner Robins Redevelopment Agency Executive Director Gary Lee, GSP Sgt. Hamilton Halford, Flint Energies Senior VP Jimmy Autry, Walt and Becky Wood, Ansel Peck, James Erdmanczyk.

Commissioner Thomson led the audience in the Invocation.

CM Sgt. Eddie Ollie, USAF (ret.) led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and detailed his 30-year military career. He joined the service in May of 1966 and during that time he rose from the rank of E-1 all the way to E-9. His area of operation was aviation maintenance. He had many stateside assignments including Plattsburgh AFB, NY; Shaw AFB, SC; Langley AFB, VA; and overseas assignments in Korea and Japan. He remarked that his military service afforded him the opportunity to rise from a poor sharecropper’s background in Alabama with a ninth grade education to a Chief Master Sergeant in the Air Force. During his service he was able to continue his education and earned two degrees. After retiring in 1996, and then a brief one year stint working for a department store, he and his wife spent nearly fourteen years in Saudi Arabia where he worked for McDonnell Douglas Aerospace Company. He came to Houston County in 2010 to be near his ailing mother and wanting to be near a large base such as Robins.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized Representative Shaw Blackmon and read a resolution expressing the Board’s appreciation for his eight years of service on the Houston County Development Authority. Chairman Stalnaker thanked Rep. Blackmon for his friendship and then recognized Development Authority Chairman Mark Byrd who commented that Shaw has been a very valuable part of the Houston County economic development team. Rep. Blackmon commented that he was privileged and blessed to serve.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the meeting of November 17, 2015.

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. The 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.

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Mr. Tim Andrews, Chief Building Inspector, stated that all five applications comply with Section 95 of the Comprehensive Land Development Regulations and that the Board of Zoning & Appeals recommends unanimous approval of each application. Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously to approve Special Exception Applications #1919, #1921 thru #1925 for home occupation businesses that were presented by Mr. Andrews.

Mr. Thomson confirmed that there would be no auto parts stored on the property other than what would be inside the enclosed trailer used for the business.

Public Hearing:

Leroy Tolliver, Applicant for #1919, clarified that his address was actually 156 Wimberly Road not 164 as shown on the application. No other applicant had any additional information relevant to their respective applications.

Mr. Andrews gave each applicant approved for a home occupation instruction on the next step of the process which is obtaining their occupational business license from the Commissioner’s office.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously to approve the second reading presented by Attorney Tom Hall on a proposed amendment to the County Ordinances. This action would add a new section to Chapter 2, Article IV-Finance titled Sec. 2-283 Purchasing Card and Credit Card Ordinance for Houston County Elected Officials and Employees. The first reading was held at the regularly scheduled Board meeting November 17, 2015.

There were no questions from the Commissioners.

Public Hearing:

No comments for or against the amendment.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that this was a good law that will govern credit card use by elected officials. Mr. McMichael remarked that the law was necessary due to abuse of government issued credit cards by certain other Georgia counties but not in Houston. Chairman Stalnaker directed Director of Administration Barry Holland to notify all offices and staff of the new ordinance and to ensure that the proper agreements were signed for each user of the credit cards.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously to approve all Board Appointments. Airport Authority (Dr. Perry Melvin 1-01-16 thru 12-31-17 and Art MacDonald 1-01-16 thru 12-31-17). Board of Tax Assessors (Joyce Herndon 1-01-16 thru 12-31-18 and Brian Jones 1-01-16 thru 12-31-18). Houston County Development Authority (Crandle Bray 1-01-16 thru 12-31-21 and Neal Talton 1-01-16 thru 12-31-21). Board of Health (Archie Thompson 1-01-16 thru 12-31-21). Board of Adjustments & Appeals (Ronnie Blalock 1-01-16 thru 11-01-18 to fill the unexpired term of John Rood).

Mr. Walker expressed his thanks for each individual serving on the various boards. Chairman Stalnaker commented that the term lengths for the various boards differ because they are set by statute

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Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously to approve an additional day off New Year’s Eve for the County employees.

Chairman Stalnaker remarked that each County employee deserves this extra day off.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously to approve the Warner Robins annexation requests.

For owner of the property, Laverne Roquemore, at 1103 & 1105B Feagin Mill Road totaling .37 acres to obtain City water and sewer. Present zoning is County R-1; requested zoning upon annexation is Warner Robins R-1.

For Tereamore Development, LLC (Kanu Dodia) at the Southeast corner of Dunbar Reoad and Carl Vinson Parkway totaling 1.554 acres to obtain City water and sewer. Present zoning is County C-2; requested zoning upon annexation is Warner Robins C-2.

Houston County will retain water service for both properties.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Ms. Robins and carried unanimously to approve the 6th annual Road Race to Benefit Central GA Alzheimer’s Association. Request from Mr. John Rowlands, Race Director of the annual “Run 2 End Alzheimer’s at the Landing’s” (formerly called the Claxton Road Race) to benefit the Central Georgia Alzheimer’s Association, for approval on April 2, 2016 as the race date. The Statham’s Landing Homeowners’ Association and the owners of the Landing Pointe Shopping Center have approved the event and date already. Sheriff Talton and Chief Deputy Rape have been briefed and will lend their support to the event.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously to approve the Maintenance bond extension (Southfield Plantation). Section 5, Phase 2 of Southfield Plantation subdivision has been completed in accordance with the Comprehensive Land Development Regulations with the exception of some drainage work and permanent grassing. Engineering staff recommends a six month extension of the bond to give the developer time to establish a permanent stand of grass and complete any necessary drainage work.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously to approve the Department of Public Safety resolution. This resolution authorizes Houston County to enter into negotiations with the Department of Public Safety, and to enter into all agreements necessary with the Perry-Houston County Airport Authority, for the purposes of construction a hangar facility for use by the Aviation Division of Georgia State Patrol. Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously to approve the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP).

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At the September 1, 2015 meeting the Board awarded the construction management contract for the Perry-Houston County Airport improvements (T-Hanger & Georgia State Patrol Aviation Hanger) and new Fire Station #6 (Perdue) projects to International City Builders of Warner Robins with the CM fee set at 3.95% of the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP).

International City Builders as now submitted the GMP for all three buildings totaling $2,559,296. This breaks down as follows:

Fire Station #6 (Perdue) $1,100,004

GSP Aviation Hangar $ 909,996

T-Hangar $ 549,296

Chairman Stalnaker remarked that the fire station will be paid for with a combination of 2012 SPLOST funds and Fire Department reserves; the GSP aviation hangar with Board of Commissioners reserves; and the T-hangar with Board of Commissioners reserves with some level of participation from the City of Perry.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously to approve the bid (Old Hawkinsville Road / SR247 Intersection). Bids were solicited for the asphalt paving intersection improvements at Old Hawkinsville Road and SR 247. Three bids were received with Georgia Asphalt low bidder at $43,105.55. Engineering staff recommends award to Georgia Asphalt.

Chairman Stalnaker explained that the approval today is really a ratification of a decision made last week to perform this work and pave while the weather would still permit. Three Commissioners had verbally approved this bid last week.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by MR. Thomson and carried unanimously to approve the bid (Roads Excavator). Bids were solicited for one new excavator for use in the Roads Department. This piece of equipment will replace a 1994 Caterpillar 322L that is in non-operational condition. Five vendors responded. The Purchasing Department has reviewed the bids along with Public Works staff and recommends award to Flint Equipment of Macon on a John Deere model 300G LC at a purchase price of $237,430.033. Along with the unit price the true five year cost including the warranty, options, trade-in value, service and parts availability was considered.

Mr. Thomson commented that the higher buy-back offered on the John Deere machine was one of the main reasons that it was selected. TM remarked that there was one other lower bid than the John Deere but that overall it was the best bid considering the buy-back, the 5-year total cost, the trade-in value, and the service and parts availability.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously to approval the bid (Roads Trucks). Bids were solicited for three one ton crew cab trucks with flatbeds for use in the Roads Department with nine vendors responding. All three of these trucks are replacements for older vehicles. Although Wade Ford is the low bidder, Perry Ford’s bid is within the 3% local vendor preference. Purchasing recommends award to Perry Ford for a total of $83,864.19.

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Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously to approve the bid (HCSO / EOD K-9 Truck). Earlier this year the Sheriff’s Department applied for and received a State of Georgia EOD K-9 grant that would provide funds to replace the current bomb dog vehicle and related emergency equipment. Purchasing has solicited bids to replace the current Chevy Tahoe with a ¾ ton pick-up truck and ten vendors responded. Purchasing recommends award to low bidder Allan Vigil Ford at a cost of $26,994.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously to approve the bid (Water Dept. Trucks). Bids were solicited for one long bed and two short bed pick-up trucks for use in the Water Department. All three of these trucks are replacements for older vehicles. Nine vendors responded. Purchasing recommends award to low bidder Brannen Motors of Unadilla at a total cost of $60,902.44

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously to approve the bids (Fire Dept. Equipment). Bids were solicited for the provision of equipment packages for the two new fire trucks that are currently on order and due for delivery in the month of December. The equipment ranges from fire hoses, fittings thermal imaging cameras, emergency medical products, AEDs, SCBAs, and a variety of other necessary items to furnish the new trucks. After an extensive review by Fire Department personnel, Purchasing is recommending award to five different vendors. Each package totals $74,305.96 for a grand total of $148,611.92. A combination of SPLOST 2012 and Volunteer Fire Funds will be utilized to purchase this equipment.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized Chief Williams and praised the volunteers for their large contribution toward the cost of this equipment as the SPLOST funds were simply not adequate to provide for everything required.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously to approve the Tax Allocation District. The City of Warner Robins is creating a Tax Allocation District (TAD) to help revitalize the properties included in the specified TAD area. Houston County would freeze the county ad valorem real property taxes at the current levels for properties located in the TAD. Any increase in value due to new construction or rehabilitation of existing property in the TAD will result in the increase in tax revenue only being put in a special account to be spent solely for debt service or improvements to the TAD area. Both the Houston County Board of Commissioners and the Houston County Board of Education must approve before the TAD can be established.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized Warner Robins Councilman Tim Thomas who thanked the Board on behalf of the Mayor and Council for their support of the TAD. Chairman Stalnaker remarked that several years of effort has preceded the creation of this TAD. Each governmental entity will participate in the Special Fund Oversight Committee that will approve the expenditure or pledge of any funds. Chairman Stalnaker clarified that neither the County nor the Board of Education will bear any financial risk. He thanked Councilman Thomas for the City’s cooperation in coming to these terms.

Chairman Stalnaker then opened the floor to any comments concerning the TAD before the vote.

Mr. Walton Wood spoke against the TAD relating his concerns relative to the lack of input from the citizenry and the City’s questionable ability to oversee and maintain these possible future developments and the necessary improvements to existing infrastructure and schools that will result from them.

Mr. Ansel Peck spoke of the tremendous amount of growth and made this past year in both the County and the cities. He complimented both the Board of Education and the Health Department for their progress.

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Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously to approve the bills totaling $7,167,791.23. Mr. McMichael remarked that the bill total was much higher than normal due to the County making the annual pension plan contribution of approximately $4.8 million.

Public Comments:

Becky Wood, 426 Sandefur Road, Kathleen expressed her appreciation for the Board giving County employees an extra day off on New Year’s Eve. She commented that the staff always gives 100% effort and are very deserving of the extra time.

Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar thanked the Commissioners on behalf of the County employees for the extra day during the holidays. He also thanked them for being fiscally responsible by funding the County’s pension plan fully.

GSP Sgt. Hamilton Halford thanked the Board for their support of the improvements at the airport and remarked that the new GSP aviation hangar will benefit citizens throughout the South Georgia area.

Chief Jimmy Williams thanked the Board for the extra day off and also for their support of the new fire station project and the equipment packages for the new trucks. He also stated that he will be making a final site inspection of the two new fire trucks at Deep South Fire Trucks in Mississippi on December 9th thru the 11th. Delivery is scheduled for December 15th which is several weeks ahead of schedule. Chairman Stalnaker asked that the check for payment be readied since the Chief will hand over the check on the day of delivery. Chief Williams and Director of Administration Barry Holland indicated that the check was already in process for the December 15th billing cycle but that the check would not be handed over until after the Board met and approved the bills that evening.

Director of Human Resources Ken Carter thanked the Board for the extra day off commenting that each employee will enjoy that extra time with their families.

Gary Lee, 110 Granville Way, Warner Robins expressed his thanks for the Board’s participation in the Tax Allocation District and remarked that redevelopment of that area is vital.

Commissioners Comments:

Mr. Walker commented that the Perry-Houston County Airport is a valuable asset for the area. He also thanked Sgt. Halford for his efforts.

Mr. Thomson reminded everyone to vote in today’s senatorial election.

Mr. McMichael commented that he was pleased that the County’s pension plan was fully funded.

Chairman Stalnaker acknowledged the Landfill Superintendent and staff for the two perfect 100 scores on a recent EPD inspection. He then recognized Dawn Ramirez the new administrative secretary at the Commissioner’s office.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously to adjourn.

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