

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday, August 2, 2021 at 5:00 p.m., in the Court Room located at the Brooks County Courthouse, located at 100 East Screven Street, Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were: Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman; Mr. James Maxwell, Vice Chairman; Mr. Willie Cody; and Ms. Myra Exum. Others present were: Mrs. Jessica McKinney, County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Ms. Kim Daniels, Human Resources; Mr. James Burchett, County Attorney; and various residents.

**Public Hearings – Kick-off Public Hearing – 2021 Update to the Joint Comprehensive Plan for Brooks County, Morven, Pavo, Barwick and City of Quitman** - The Kick-off Public Hearing for the Comprehensive Plan was presented by Mr. James Horton, Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC). Sign in Sheet was provided.

Mr. Horton presented information regarding the 2021 Update for the Comprehensive Plan, which is updated every 5 years. The Plan includes input from Brooks County, Morven, Pavo, Barwick and City of Quitman. It is not only for officials; but the public as well to address needs on transportation, preservation, growth; economic benefit for future need and grow of resources; Broad Band element; and community work program; etc. He expressed how extremely important it is for the public to participate; to address their concerns. No one had questions; handouts were provided.

There will be a series of 3 workshops covering the plan; all will be scheduled on the first Tuesday 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. The workshop schedule for now; unless a change has to be made is:

Tuesday	September 7, 2021
Tuesday	October 5, 2021
Tuesday	November 2, 2021

The Transmittal is scheduled for March 7, 2022; and will be completed and adopted by June 30, 2022.

The public hearing closed at 5:23 p.m. and went into the regular meeting.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance** – Chairman called the Regular Meeting to order; and asked Mr. P. D. Duncan to lead all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

On the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Ms. Exum, the Board approved the agenda for August 2, 2021. Vote was unanimous.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

On the motion by Ms. Exum, seconded by Mr. Cody, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the following meetings:

- Regular Monthly Meeting July 12, 2021
- Executive Session July 12, 2021
- Special Called & Work Session July 27, 2021

#### **4. APPEARANCES**

**A. P. D. Duncan – Present Gift and Thanks to Board of Commissioners and Administrator** – Mr. P. D. Duncan submitted a request to appear to mainly thank the Commissioners and Staff for assisting with the flag program; which was a huge success. He stated he has received comments, phone calls on the success. Last year there were 129 flags on the Courthouse grounds, next year he wants to put flags all around the Courthouse. There were 300 flags placed at grave site. Mr. Duncan thanked the Board; and presented the Board and Staff a flag as appreciation.

#### **5. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Alcohol Referendum** – Mr. Maxwell requested this item be placed on the agenda for discussion. He inquired to County Attorney if there is still time to prepare the Referendum and place on the ballot November 2021. County Attorney, Mr. James Burchett, informed the Board a Resolution or Ordinance can be done to place the Referendum on the ballot for the next election. The Board can sponsor a Resolution/Ordinance; upon adoption/approval, the Referendum can be placed on the ballot. Or you will need a Petition signed by 20% of the voters for a Referendum to get on November 2021 ballot. If the Referendum passes, it will be for Brooks County only. County Attorney stated that one Commissioner can sponsor; and voted on by the Board. The City of Quitman would have to act and go through same process.

**B. Edward Jones CDs - Discussion** – Mr. Brewer Bentley, Financial Advisor, Edward Jones Investments, provided a letter updating the funds invested by Brooks County. The CDs have an increase of 6% across the respective accounts; General Fund, Fire Fee Fund, Property Account; and Contingency Fund. The gain totals \$492,869 across these accounts. Presently, there is \$564,581.25 in cash.

Mr. Brewer provided options as to how the Board would like to handle the gain across these accounts. 1) Purchase Treasury notes shorter in duration or Certificates of Deposit that are shorter in duration to ensure the gain is retained. 2) Can research for more that offer more of a parody and achieve more gain. 3) Use what is needed for capital expenditures and ladder the dollar amount.

**C. Senior Center Updates** – Administrator updated the Board on the preparation of the re-opening of the Senior Center; which is projected for September 1, 2021. Administrator and County Clerk did an assessment two weeks ago to determine what is needed. The Center will be painted, needs more storage space; and set up for social distancing. The funds are approved in the FY22 budget.

**D. Fire Department Updates** – Administrator updated the Board on the Brooks County Fire Department.

a. State Review – The State did a review of the Department; and there were significant findings. There were no Pump test records; not enough certified Fire Fighters; only 12 Fire Fighters in Brooks County can suppress. One engine is required per fire station. Administrator has 30 days to submit an Action Plan to the State.

b. ISO Needs/Concerns – The findings from the State may affect the ISO rating for Brooks County.

c. Volunteers Pay Program – Encouraging Volunteer Fire Fighters to get training, check trucks, engine; and maintain health of department. For those contributing to the pension, will get reimbursed if they meet all training hours, get certification, etc.

d. Arrival of New Fire Apparatus' – Two new Fire Trucks were delivered to the Jackson Road Fire Station today, August 2, 2021.

**E. Vehicle Auction/Donation** – Administrator requested Board approval to begin the process for an auction/donation of vehicles. There are several vehicles down that are inoperable; and Ms. McKinney would like permission to sell or put the vehicles up for auction. There are vehicles down and not in service at the Road Department, Administration Building, and in the City at the Fire Department. County Attorney advised to get inventory before the Board vote; and make a decision.

**F. Commissioners Half Day Workshop** – Administrator reminded Commissioners to consider dates to get on the calendar for a half day workshop. The workshop will include: TSPLOST Discretionary/Project Spend; Fire Department/Stations, CID Building, Animal Control; Administration Building, Washington Street Gym; and the Maintenance Shop. The projects need to be prioritized up to five projects on a list; and once those are completed; proceed with five more projects.

**G. Contracting to Cut Limbs on Roads** – Mr. Maxwell requested this be placed on agenda for discussion. He has received complaints from farmers having problems with limbs on the roads.

**H. Grady EMS Contract** - Grady EMS Renewal Contract – County Attorney advised the Board he had completed changes to the Grady EMS Contract for Emergency Medical Services. Grady is requesting \$475,000 per year. The changes were addressed by Grady EMS; the cost has been reduced to \$450,000 per year due to the Board providing housing at no cost to them. Grady will provide records to Administrator each month. The contract begins August 1, 2021. County Attorney advised the Board they need a motion to add Grady EMS Contract to the agenda under New Business; since they tabled at the last meeting. The motion was made by Mr. Maxwell, Ms. Exum seconded to remove Grady EMS from being tabled; and added to the agenda under New Business. Vote was unanimous.

**6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. Grady EMS Renewal Contract** – The motion was made by Mr. Maxwell, Ms. Exum seconded, to remove Grady EMS from being tabled; and added to the agenda under New Business. Vote was unanimous.

**B. Farmers Market** – Administration advised the Board the work has begun on the Farmers Market. The Farmers Market is not being used to allow opportunity for improvements. The Market is owned by both the County and City. Administrator has spoken with the Mayor to see if there are any improvements they may want to add; and she advised she will place on their agenda to discuss with Council at their next meeting.

**7. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR NOTES/COMMENTS**

Administrator presented each Commissioner with a picture of the newly renovated Courthouse that was taken by Mr. Blanton as an appreciation for the time and dedication they put into the renovations. The original ribbon from the ribbon cutting was attached.

**8. EXECUTIVE SESSION – NONE**

**9. Commissioners Notes/Comments**

- **Patrick Folsom, District 2** – Mr. Folsom stated he would let Mr. Jim Owens use his time to give an update on Road Department. Mr. Owens stated there has been lots of rain; and keeping the department busy dealing with sand, rock, clay; and failing pipes. Busy keeping roads up with all the rain; working with farmers; and cutting overhead limbs. Commented he appreciates the support of Board and community.
- **Willie Cody, District 3** – Thanked Mr. Owens and the department for their work and dedication.
- **Myra Exum, District 4** – Reminded of meeting in September is on Labor Day; and regular meeting will be the following Monday.
- **James Maxwell, District 5** – Commented he follows what Mr. Cody stated; thanked Mr. Owens and the department for their work and dedication.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Maxwell made the motion to adjourn regular meeting at 6:27 p.m.; Ms. Exum seconded.

Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman  
Ms. Jessica J. McKinney, County Administrator  
Ms. Patricia A. Williams, Clerk