

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Monthly Work Session and Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday, May 7, 2018 at 5:00 p.m., in the Commissioners Meeting Room located at the Brooks County Office Building. Commissioners present were: Ms. Myra Exum, Chairperson; Mr. Joe Wingate, Vice Chairman; Mr. S. L. Jones; Mr. James Maxwell and Mr. Willie Cody. Others present were: Mr. Justin DeVane, County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; and various residents.

Chair Exum called the Public Hearing to order. Sign-in sheet was provided. (See attached).

PUBLIC HEARING – Special Exception Request – John Stephen Abbott – Administration received an application for Special Exception for a parcel of land on Gornto Cemetery Road owned by John Stephen Abbott. Mr. Abbott is requesting to establish a shooting reserve on the 66-acre tract that is currently zoned Agricultural. The parcel will be used for skeet shoots, cookouts, and events and be able to host guests overnight if they so choose. Mr. Abbott has already constructed some of the facilities on the property. The Brooks County Planning and Zoning Commission voted to approve this request, but added the following restrictions to the approval for the Board's consideration based upon the Regional Commission and the neighboring property owner's concerns. Skeet shooting will be allowed Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; bird hunts between Monday through Sunday between 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Ms. Sherry Davidson, Senior Planner, Regional Commission, presented the application to the Board. Ms. Davidson stated the Planning Commission approved the application during their meeting on April 23, 2018 with conditions. Staff recommended approval of the application by John Stephen Abbott to establish a shooting preserve/venue on a 66-acre property located on Gornto Cemetery Road.

Ms. Exum inquired if anyone present wanted to speak for or against the request. Several residents spoke in favor of the request; including Mr. Abbott. Ms. Elisha Abbott stated she feels they have been respectful of neighbors. Ms. Alice Hayes commented she had no problem with the shooting preserve and there are no automatic rifles being used; and to close at 6 pm is not useful for the business.

Ms. Stacey Williams also stated she has no problem; and the gun shots neighbors are hearing is not Mr. Abbott's. Ms. Mable DeWitt stated she hear shots and they are not from a shotgun; and feels Mr. Abbott is getting blamed for what is not his. Mr. Mike Fisette stated Brooks County needs business; place for events; and Mr. Abbott conducts his business professionally. He also feels the continuous shooting he hears is not in the shooting preserve direction.

Several residents spoke against the application request stating the shooting is annoying at night and disturbing to neighbors. Ms. Wise commented the shots are coming from

the shoot area; but not sure if they are from Mr. Abbott. She also stated the gunshots put stress on the animals. Ms. Ava Best stated she would like a little quiet now and then; she hears shots all day long; but not sure who is doing the shooting.

Ms. Exum closed the public hearing at 5:38 p.m. to go into the work session.

WORK SESSION – Chair Exum called Work Session to order.

Reports from Committees/Departments

- A. Ben DeVane – County Surveyor/Engineer** – Updated the Board on projects:
- 2017 LMIG is complete; has been reviewed and approved by County Engineer for payment; working on breakdown of cost for Auditor.
 - Preliminary 2018 LMIG is being prepared.
- B. JJ Allen – Road Superintendent** – Superintendent presented report to Board:
- Has completed ¾ of the grass cutting; and is on schedule.
 - Having a little down time due to being so dry for mowing.
 - Repairing pot holes; unclogging drainage; and cleaning up old buildings at the Road Department site.
 - A motor grader is down; could have gotten \$30,000 for trade-in; but not only valued at \$5100.

Stephanie Hollifield, Extension Office, introduced the intern from UGA, Ms. Kelly Paulk, from Turner County; who will be working with her this summer.

Chair closed Work Session to go into the Regular Meeting at 5:54 p.m.

1. Call to Order – Ms. Exum called meeting to order.

A. Prayer & Pledge – Mr. Joe Wingate led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda

A. May 7, 2018 Regular Monthly Meeting – Mr. Cody made a motion to approve the agenda Mr. Maxwell seconded. Vote was unanimous.

3. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Cody, seconded by Mr. Wingate, the Board unanimously approved the following minutes and to be amend the minutes in regards to the property sell to state: "The Board authorizes the Chair to execute documents regarding the surplus property land sell".

A. Monthly Work Session & Regular Meeting April 2, 2018

4. Appearances

A. Ronald Bryant (Courtland Church of Christ) – Use of Facilities Request (Courthouse) - Administration received an application for use of the Courthouse Grounds from Mr. Ronald Bryant, representing the Courtland Avenue Church of Christ for permission to use the Courthouse Grounds on May 12, 2018 for a Community Day Event including bounce houses, free hot dogs, hamburgers, and drinks. The event is scheduled to be held from 11am to 3pm. Mr. Cody made the motion to approve the request for use of Courthouse Grounds on May 12, 2018 for a Community Day Event to be held from 11am to 3pm; Mr. Maxwell seconded. Vote was unanimous.

B. Jay Green (The Power Center) – Use of Facilities Request (Courthouse) - Administration received an application for use of the Courthouse Grounds from Mr. Jay Green, representing The Power Center for permission to use the Courthouse Grounds on June 16, 2018 for a Father's Day Event. The event is scheduled to be held from 10am to 2pm. Mr. Green was not present. The request to use Courthouse Grounds on June 16, 2018 from 10 am to 2pm for a Father's Day Event was approved on the motion by Mr. Maxwell; seconded by Mr. Wingate. Vote was unanimous.

C. Zurich DeShazor (Brooks County NAACP) – Use of Facilities Request (Courthouse) Administration received an application for use of the Courthouse Grounds from Mr. Zurich DeShazor, representing the Brooks County NAACP, for permission to use the Courthouse Grounds on September 1st, 2018 for a fund raiser for their youth program. The group has held this event several times over the past few years and holds a car show on the grounds during the event. The event is scheduled to last six hours. The Board has approved this request the past several years. Mr. Maxwell motioned to approve the request to use facilities at Courthouse on September 1, 2018 for six hours for their youth program; and seconded by Mr. Cody. Vote was unanimous.

5. New Business

A. Special Exception Request – John Stephen Abbott - On the motion by Mr. Maxwell; seconded by Mr. Wingate, the Board unanimously approved the request by Mr. John Stephen Abbott for a special exception to establish a shooting preserve/venue on 66 acres of property within the Agricultural Zoning District, located on Gornto Road Cemetery in unincorporated Brooks County, and the hours of operation for skeet shoots and bird hunting is to be regulated by the Brooks County Noise Ordinance.

Sheriff Mike Dewey stated to the attendees that there has been no violation of the County's Noise Ordinance; as long as the hours of operation is not beyond 11pm. He emphasized that when shots are heard after 11pm; immediately call 911 and a Deputy will come to check it out.

B. Resolution Regarding County Interest in the Jackson Road Forestry Building

Administration was contacted by the Georgia Forestry Commission regarding the County's ongoing interest in acquiring the Forestry Building on Jackson Road. The Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) Board has approved the transfer of the property to the County, it has to go to the State properties Commission for their meeting in June for their approval. That board has requested a resolution from the County that we will accept the building, and will secure the bond debt on the facility, which at this time was between 15,000 to \$20,000. Administrator has prepared a resolution for the Board's review. GFC did not provide much insight into what wording or conditions the resolution needed to contain, so I have prepared one based upon our conversation with GFC and myself. Mr. Wingate made the motion to approve the Resolution regarding the County's interest in the Jackson Road Forestry Building; Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous.

C. Georgia DOT 5311 Procurement Policies and Procedures -

Administration was instructed by Georgia DOT that to continue the 5311 Transit Program, the County would need to prepare and adopt a Brooks County Transit Plan Procurement Manual for the 5311 program. County Clerk, Patricia Williams, has prepared a manual for the Board's consideration. On the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Cody, the Board unanimously approved the GDOT 5311 Procurement Policies and Procedures for Brooks County Transit System.

D. Sheriff's Request for Additional SROs at Brooks County Schools –

Sheriff Dewey submitted a request to discuss with the Board its consideration of adding three additional SRO officers to the County's FY2019 Budget with the School System this year. The Board Of Education (BOE) has expressed a concern on adding additional officers to every facility, the High School, Middle School, Quitman Elementary, North Brooks Elementary and the Delta Center School. Currently the BOE and the County split the cost 50/50 for two SROs stationed at the Middle and High School campuses. This request would put one officer in each facility. Currently, the School and the County split approximately \$100,000 a year for SROs operations. Additional officers would increase this cost about \$50,000 per officer, not including costs of provide equipment and vehicles. The Sheriff is requesting the Board's input before appearing to the School Board on May 8th.

Sheriff Dewey stated to the Board he had spoken with the Superintendent of Brooks County Schools; and was advised that they are willing to add only one additional SRO. He is meeting with the School Board to get more information and a better understanding of what they want; he will come back to report the Board.

6. Unfinished Business - None

7. County Administrator Notes/Comments

A. County Employee Health Insurance Renewal - Administration received a quote from Holwell and Fletcher regarding the County's packaged Health Insurance and Employee Benefits. This year, the County's employee health insurance quote was only a 4% increase of the previous year. Additionally, we received word that employee dental and vision should see decreases this year to those premiums. Due to the fact that this is a very favorable renewal, and would allow the County to go ahead and begin renewals towards the end of May instead of mid-June, Administration recommends the Board accept the 4% increase from Cigna for the FY2019 year. On the motion by Mr. Wingate, seconded by Mr. Cody, the Board unanimously approved the FY2018-2019 Health Insurance Renewal from Holwell & Fletcher with a 4% increase.

8. Commissioners Notes/Comments

A. Joe Wingate - District 1 – Commented on the TSPLOST having a positive impact for the community; and advised to visit website from information. TSPLOST will be on the ballot for the May 22, 2018 election

B. S. L. Jones, District 2 – No comment.

C. Willie Cody, District 3 – No comment.

D. Myra Exum, District 4 – No comment.

E. James Maxwell, District 5 – No comment.

9. Executive Session – None

10. Adjournment - Mr. Wingate made the motion to adjourn regular meeting at 6:28 p.m.; Mr. Maxwell seconded.

Ms. Myra Exum, Chair

Mr. Justin DeVane, Administrator

Ms. Patricia A. Williams, Clerk