

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday, August 3, 2020 at 5:00 p.m., in the Auditorium at the Brooks County Ag/Extension Building located at 400 East Courtland Avenue, Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were: Mr. James Maxwell, Chairman; Mr. Patrick Folsom, Vice Chairman; Mr. Willie Cody; Ms. Myra Exum; and Mr. Rhett Rowe. Others present were: Ms. Jessica McKinney, Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Mr. James Burchett, County Attorney; and various residents.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Folsom led all in attendance in prayer.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

On the motion by Mr. Folsom, seconded by Mr. Cody, the Board unanimously approved to amend the agenda to remove item 7A, under item 7, Unfinished Business, (Road Department/Sheriff Vehicle Bids for Purchase.

Mr. Cody motioned to approve the agenda for August 3, 2020 with removal of item 7A, under Unfinished Business, Ms. Exum seconded. Vote was unanimous.

**3. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES/DEPARTMENTS**

**A. Development/Zoning – Sherry Davidson – Refuge of Hope** – Ms. Sherry Davidson, Senior Planner, SGRC, updated the Board on the zoning application for a half-way house for women. At the time of the application, there were certain requirements that needed to be completed/corrected. County Administrator and Building Inspector met with the Applicant; and advised of the requirements to bring into compliance. The Applicant's attorney has contacted Ms. Davidson stating his client' application was turned down. Ms. Davidson advised that the application has not be turned down; but an ad needs to run in the local newspaper for six to eight months; must be 6 inches; and on the front page. Applicant has listed the facility, Lydia's House, on a website with Dixie, GA listed as the location.

**B. Mike Smith, EMA Director – Report on COVID-19 Activities and Current State of County** – Mr. Smith reported the numbers change daily. The numbers announced are numbers that have been tested, not positive. The cases are up; the number of deaths are down. There have been 836 tests done, 344 tested positive; 115 active cases; and 15 deaths.

**C. Jim Owens – Road Department Consultant – Updates on Road Work/Closures, Bridges Upkeep** – Reported they have been working on a lot of wash outs; some on the weekend. He further stated they are doing best they can with a decreased crew.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

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

- SPLOST Workshop – July 8, 2020

- Regular Monthly Meeting
- 2021 SPLOST Negotiation

July 13, 2020  
July 16, 2020

## **5. APPEARANCES**

**A. Lois Moon – Courthouse Confederate Obelisk (pillar) Removal** – Ms. Moon requested to appear to discuss removal/relocation of the Confederate Obelisk on Courthouse grounds. Information regarding the history on slavery and the civil war was provided in a hand-out. She asked the questions: How does it look to the rest of the world? How does Brooks County look? The discussion asked the Board to consider moving forward by opening dialogue to the Governor and State Representative to take it away; and if the Board has no words or will not vote; consider forming a committee.

County Administrator thanked Ms. Moon; and commended her for courage to appear. Ms. McKinney informed Ms. Moon by reading the Georgia Code 50-30-1 which clarifies that any Confederate Obelisk cannot be moved. County Attorney confirmed what Ms. McKinney read and stated the Board cannot overstep; it would be a conflict of law.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Right of Way Mowing RFP Bid Opening** – Request for Proposal (RFP) has been prepared and put out to bid in accordance to our Purchasing Policy. It has been advertised; and closed on July 31, 2020. Two bids were received:

1. Green Maintenance and Cleaning, Inc., Lake City, FL submitted a proposed bid in the amount of \$97,544.82, 3 cycles per year; includes trimming; and have acquired Performance and Payment Bonds.

2. R & G Tree Service & Land Maintenance, Quitman, GA, submitted the amount of \$171,432.00 for 3 cycles per year; does not include trimming; and did not include any information of acquiring Performance and Payment Bonds.

Ms. Exum inquired to the owner, Mr. Becton, as to why the bid from R & G was so much higher. She stated Brooks County likes to keep business local; but there was a big difference between the two bids. Ms. Exum made the motion to accept the bid from Green Maintenance and Cleaning, Inc. for \$97,544.82, Mr. Rowe seconded. After discussion, Ms. Exum amended her motion to accept the bid from Green Maintenance and Cleaning, Inc. for \$97,544.82; and waive the 3 bid requirement, Mr. Rowe seconded. Vote was unanimous.

## **7. Unfinished Business**

**A. Road Department/Sheriff Vehicle Bids for Purchase – Removed from agenda.**

**B. Elections Board Member Appointment** – The Board did not take any action on this item. At the next regular meeting the Board will appoint someone to the Elections Board.

**C. Haddock Road** – County Attorney advised the Board of the process related to Haddock Road. The Haddock Road issue is a two-part process. First, the County must abandon the old section of the Haddock Road right of way. The second part, is to exchange the old right of way for the new right of way via conveyance. Property owners need to be notified, Notice of Abandonment run in Quitman Free Press once a week for two weeks; hold a public hearing on the Abandonment of roadway. On the motion by Mr. Cody, seconded by Mr. Rowe, the Board unanimously approve to move forward with the abandonment process for Haddock Road. Mr. Folsom recused himself from voting.

**D. East Brooks Contract** – There have been ongoing negotiations regarding East Brooks contract. County Attorney has prepared a contract for Board review. The contract establishes a fire fee for service for the unincorporated areas of Brooks County, to include East Brooks and Briggs Fire District. The recommendation for the service fee is a starting point of \$10,000 per year; based on previous expenditures. Ms. Exum made the motion to offer the contract with a service fee of \$10,000 per year to East Brooks Fire Department, Mr. Folsom seconded. Vote was unanimous.

## **8. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR NOTES/COMMENTS**

**Ag/Extension Design Build** - Contract with Barker has been signed and the kick-off meeting completed. Anticipating ground breaking in roughly 8 weeks.

**Courthouse Renovations** – Contract with McCall signed and kick-off meeting completed. Anticipating renovations to begin in roughly 4-5 weeks.

**USDA Lease Search** – Expression of interest letter has been resubmitted, waiting on details of the new RFP.

**LMIG** – Publication Notification submitted to QFP on July 10, 2020.

**SPLOST** – Publication Notification submitted to Elections on July 30, 2020. Submitted to QFP on July 31, 2020.

**Millage Rate** – Adoption Notification submitted to QFP on July 31, 2020.

## **9. CALENDAR ITEMS TO NOTE**

**August 13, 2020** - Millage Adoption Hearing at 5:15 p.m.

**September 14, 2020** – September Monthly Meeting

**October 12, 2020** – (Pending all continues to go well up to this date) – County Administrator's Maternity Leave begins (10-12 weeks)

Regular Monthly Meeting

August 3, 2020

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### **Commissioners Notes/Comments**

- **Rhett Rowe - District 1** – Thanked everyone for attending.
- **Patrick Folsom, District 2** – Thanked employees for job well done.
- **Willie Cody, District 3** – Thanked the Road Department and everybody; appreciates what they are doing.
- **Myra Exum, District 4** – No comment.
- **James Maxwell, District 5** – Thanked everyone for coming out.

### **10. ADJOURNMENT –**

Mr. Rowe made the motion to adjourn regular meeting at 6:30 p.m.; Ms. Exum seconded.

Mr. James Maxwell, Chairman  
Ms. Jessica McKinney, Administrator  
Ms. Patricia A. Williams, Clerk