

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday, December 7, 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, County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Ms. Kim Daniels, Human Resources; Mr. Jason Kemp, County Attorney; and various residents.

### **Public Hearing – Azalea City Ministry-Lydia’s House-Special Exception**

- Ms. Sherry Davidson, SGRC, via telephone, presented a petition by Azalea City Ministry, (Lydia’s House) for a Special Exception to establish a dormitory for women that are court ordered to reside on the property. The applicants have owned the property since 2017. The property is 5.8 acres with two existing manufactured homes on the property which is within the Agricultural zoning district located at 1554 Butler Road in Dixie, GA in unincorporated Brooks County. Planning Commission approved the petition during their meeting held on November 24, 2020. On November 2, 2020, Board of Commissioners approved the court ordered rehab with the following conditions:
  - 1) Must have a minimum of 3 acres.
  - 2) Limit the amount of participants to ten (10).
  - 3) Must have proper signage depicting its use.
  - 4) Must have property completely fenced.
  - 5) Must follow all local, state and federal guidelines.

Chairman asked if any one present was against the special exception; there were none. Chairman closed the public hearing at 5:11 p.m.

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman called the Regular Meeting to order. Pastor Jarriel led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

### **2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

On the motion by Mr. Folsom, seconded by Mr. Cody, the Board unanimously approved to amend the agenda to add to New Business item 6B(a) Road Department Consultant/Inspections. Vote was unanimous. Mr. Cody made a motion to approve the agenda, Mr. Folsom seconded. Vote was unanimous.

### **3. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES/DEPARTMENTS**

**A.** 911/EMA – Mike Smith – Report on COVID-19 Activities and Current State of County – Reported as of today there are 625 total cases, 26 deaths, and the numbers are rising. He advised the Board we need to do more and enforce what we are currently doing. County Attorney will provide what is permissible by law for the County.

- Update on Use of RAVE with the Community – Provided information on the usage of RAVE, the mobile alert system, and more individuals are signing up for it. It was mentioned that a public service message could go out on RAVE about COVID-19.

**B.** **Fire Department – Chief Smith** – Reported number of 911 calls have gone up. Responded to a fire; saved the house. Assisted City of Quitman with mutual aid. Performing maintenance

on the burn building. New volunteer class will start January 2021. Met with GDOT on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, discussed adding a light on 333.

**C. Road Department – Jim Owens**

**i. Road Maintenance Updates** – Side arm is tentatively working. Employees are mowing ahead of new mowing crew; removed trees off a road. Rosa Lane needs to be re-designed. Has performed 22 inspections, two left, since the start as Building Inspector.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

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

- Regular Monthly Meeting November 2, 2020
- Special Called Meeting & Workshop November 24, 2020

**5. APPEARANCES**

**A. Stephanie Mata – Development Authority – Development Authority & Joint Development Authority Appointments** – Ms. Mata provided names of candidates for appointments to the Development Authority and the Joint Development Authority. There are two vacancies for the Development Authority, one for District 5 and District 6.

**D. Carol Taylor – Wreaths Across America - DAR** – Ms. Taylor submitted a request to appear to get approval to hold a brief ceremony and place wreaths on the Courthouse square to honor fallen Veterans on December 20<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. The ceremony is sponsored by the Daughters of American Revolution (DAR). Ms. Taylor could not be present; and asked Mr. Folsom to present the request on her behalf. On the motion by Mr. Folsom, seconded by Ms. Exum, the Board unanimously approved Ms. Taylor's request to hold a brief ceremony December 20<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. on the Courthouse square to place wreaths in honor of fallen Veterans.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Status/Hiring of Open Positions:**

**a. Road Department** - Chairman stated he did not want to fill those positions at this time; and they would look at in 2021. Ms. Exum inquired why we would not hire; we need to hire and fill those positions. Chairman, Mr. Folsom, and Mr. Cody stated Mr. Owens, Road Consultant/Building Inspector is doing a great job; and why hire someone that would have to be trained. Mr. Rowe commented that he did not have a problem with Mr. Owens serving as Consultant/Building Inspector but could hire someone that could be trained by Mr. Owens. Mr. Rowe made the motion to hire Road Superintendent to work with Mr. Owens and be trained for next six months, Ms. Exum seconded. Chairman called for the vote. Mr. Rowe and Ms. Exum voted yes. Mr. Cody and Mr. Folsom voted no. Chairman voted yes. Vote was 3 to 2.

**b. Zoning/Inspections** - Mr. Folsom motioned to table the hiring of a Zoning/Building Inspector, Mr. Cody seconded. Chairman called for the vote. Mr. Rowe and Ms. Exum voted no. Mr. Cody and Mr. Folsom voted yes. Chairman voted yes. Vote was 3 to 2.

**B. Contract Renewals:**

**a. Road Department Consultant (Term 12/31/2020)** - Mr. Folsom made the motion to extend the contract for Road Department Consultant for six months from January 1, 2021 until June 1, 2021; seconded by Mr. Cody. Chairman called for discussion, Mr. Rowe stated to extend the contract for three months; but hire a Road Superintendent to be trained by Mr. Owens for those three months. Chairman called for the vote. Mr. Folsom, Mr. Cody voted yes. Ms. Exum, Mr. Rowe voted no. Chairman voted yes. Vote was 3 to 2.

- b. **Excellence Exceeded (Term 12/31/2020)**
  - i. **Extend six months**
    - 1. **Admin Building RFP and start phase/TSPLOST Completion (OR)**
    - 2. **Establish a per project retainment**

Chairman stated did not feel need to extend contract another six months; but hire on as needed basis; and that the County Attorney can assist as needed. Ms. Exum stated there are projects that need to be completed according to the list of projects upon hiring Scott Johnson, Excellence Exceeded. County Administrator commented there are other projects, TSPLOST List, Fire Department review plan/strategy for future growth, Administration Building and the funding, how much the County wants to spend and how to spend; and that Mr. Johnson has stated those projects could be completed within the next six months. Ms. McKinney further stated it would cost much more to hire on as needed basis; we would be charged by the hour, as now we pay a monthly fee of \$5,000 and is getting more than what the contract calls for. After lengthy discussion, Mr. Folsom motioned to not extend the contract with Excellence Exceeded for another six months; but on as needed basis for whatever projects the Board want; Mr. Cody seconded. Chairman called for the vote. Mr. Folsom, Mr. Cody voted yes. Ms. Exum, Mr. Rowe voted no. Chairman voted yes. Vote was 3 to 2.

**C. RFP Bid Reviews/Discussion**

a. **Workers' Compensation (Released to Local Organ)** – The RFP for Workers' Comp has been released to Quitman Free Press; and bids will be received until 5:00 p.m. December 11, 2020.

b. **Fire Department Turnout Gear (Open Bid)** – Two proposals were submitted for Turnout Gear for the Fire Department:

- 1. NAFECO \$40,539.00
- 2. Georgia Fire & Rescue Supply \$39,894.90

The Board unanimously accepted the bid from NAFECO in amount of \$40,539.00 on the motion by Mr. Folsom, seconded by Mr. Cody.

c. **Fire Department Modular Build (No Bids Received/Request Waiver of Procurement Policy)** – No bids were received. County Administrator requested approval of waiver of Procurement Policy to do a targeted RFP. Mr. Folsom made the motion to waive the County's Procurement Policy to conduct a targeted RFP, Mr. Rowe seconded. Vote was unanimous.

**D. FY2021 LMIG Application – Due February 1, 2021** – Administration received notice the FY2021 LMIG Application is due February 1, 2021. The Board will need to meet to prepare a list of roads to be submitted to GDOT.

**7. Unfinished Business**

**A. Appointments – Development Authority Board & Joint Development Authority** – Motion was made by Mr. Folsom to appoint Erin McKenzie, District 6, to the Development Authority Board, Mr. Cody seconded. The term is for four years; and will expire December 31, 2021.

Mr. Cody made the motion to appoint State Representative, John LaHood, to District 5, to serve on the Development Authority Board for a four-year term, Mr. Rowe seconded. The term will expire December 31, 2020.

**Appointments Joint Development Authority** – Motion was made by Mr. Cody to appoint Dr. Rose Horne to the Joint Development Authority; Mr. Folsom seconded. Vote was unanimous. Mr. Rowe motioned to appoint Donald Turner to the Joint Development Authority, Mr. Folsom seconded. Vote was unanimous.

**B. Deed of Open Space Conservation Easement** – County Attorney presented the Deed of Open Space Conservation Easement for the Quitman II Solar, LLC. during the November regular meeting; the Board approved the Deed as to form until an actual description of property can be attached; and afterwards it will be given to the Board for ratification. County Attorney presented the Deed of Open Space for the Chairman's signature.

**C. Designate Funding for ROW Contract – Excess Funds** – Due to the new Right of Way (ROW) contract with R & G Tree Service, LLC being over the budgeted amount, \$160,000, the Board needs to designate the funding source before the contract can be ratified. The awarded contract is for \$205,718.40; difference of \$45,718.40 from the amount budgeted. Mr. Folsom made the motion to fund the excess funds for the ROW contract with R & G Tree Service, LLC from the Discretionary TSPLOST fund in the amount of \$45,718.40, Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous.

**D. Ratification of ROW Contract with R & G Tree Service, LLC** – The ROW contract with R & G Tree Service, LLC was ratified; and the name amended to match the name on the Secretary of State, R & G Tree Service, LLC, on the motion by Mr. Folsom; seconded by Mr. Cody. Vote was unanimous.

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

**A. Appointment – Code Enforcement for Zoning** – Mr. Cody made a motion to appoint Ms. Sherry Davidson, SGRC, as the Code Enforcement for Zoning. After discussion on whether or not this is a paid position by the County or if will be included in services we currently receive from SGRC, Mr. Cody retracted his motion. Mr. Folsom made the motion to table this item for further clarification of funding, Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous.

#### **9. CALENDAR ITEMS TO NOTE** - None

#### **Commissioners Notes/Comments**

- **Rhett Rowe - District 1** – Commented he hope everyone had a good Thanksgiving; wished everyone a Merry Christmas; and advised to stay safe.
- **Patrick Folsom, District 2** – Inquired as to how the Holiday/Employee Appreciation Dinner will be handled due to cancellation by Chairman of event being held at the Oasis Venue due to rising of COVID-19.
- **Willie Cody, District 3** – Appreciated everyone's hard work.
- **Myra Exum, District 4** – Wished everyone a Merry Christmas; and hope to have a better year.
- **James Maxwell, District 5** – Thanked everyone for coming out. Thanked Departments and Department Heads for their hard work.

Mr. Folsom made the motion to go out of regular meeting and into executive session at 7:39 p.m.; Mr. Cody seconded.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**A. Land Purchase Closing Update** – No action was taken. Mr. Cody made the motion to go out of executive session and return to the regular meeting at 7:49 p.m.; Mr. Folsom seconded.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Cody made the motion to adjourn regular meeting at 7:50 p.m.; Mr. Folsom seconded.

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