

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday, September 12, 2022, at 5:00 p.m., in the Courtroom 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; Ms. Myra Exum; and Mr. Willie Cody. Mr. Lee Larko was present via telephone. Others present were Mrs. Jessica McKinney, County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Ms. Kim Daniels, Human Resources; Mr. Jason Kemp, County Attorney; and various residents.

1. PUBLIC HEARINGS – NONE

2. CALL TO ORDER

Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance – Chairman called the Regular Meeting to order. Pastor Jim Pitt, Brooks County Ministerial Association, led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

Chairman called for a vote to amend the agenda to add Bid Opening for Dodd Road as item A under the Consent Agenda on the motion by Mrs. Exum, seconded by Mr. Maxwell. No action will be taken. Vote was unanimous.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On the motion by Mr. Cody, seconded by Mrs. Exum, the Board unanimously approved/accepted the following minutes:

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| A. Special Called Meeting/Work Session/Executive Session | July 27, 2022 |
| B. Regular Monthly Meeting | August 1, 2022 |
| C. Public Hearing | August 8, 2022 |
| D. Public Hearing | August 8, 2022 |
| E. Public Hearing/Special Called Meeting | August 17, 2022 |
| F. LOST Renegotiation/Special Called Meeting | August 23, 2022 |

4. INVITED GUESTS – (5 MINUTES)

A. Chairman Report – Board of Elections – Mr. Zurich DeShazor, Chairman, Board of Elections, reported activities in the Elections Office:

- Getting ready for November 2022 elections
- October 11, 2022 is the last day to register to vote; and mail in absentee ballots.
- Early voting begins October 17, 2022; ends November 4, 2022; early voting will be held on two Saturdays October 22nd and October 29, 2022. Early voting hours, including Saturday, will be from 8 am to 5 pm.
- Election Day is November 8, 2022, from 7 am to 7 pm.
- Volunteers are needed for Poll Workers, there needs to be 3 to 4 Poll Workers at each precinct; if there are not enough; the precinct may need to close.
- Elections Supervisor will put in the Quitman Free Press the Logistic Analyst within the next two weeks.

- New touch screens are coming from the State; will require 24 hours of training, 8 hours per day for three days; which they will get paid.
- Face Time will be available to talk to voters to see what is happening.

B. Chairman Report – Development Authority – Mrs. Stephanie Mata, Director of the Development Authority, appeared on behalf of the Chairman to provide the report.

- Provided a copy of the review from the Valdosta Daily Times of the South Georgia Studios premiere of 'The Buick Special'. The South Georgia Studios & Film Academy and Philantho Films' 2022 film camp premiered the summer short film at the Brooks County High School Performing Arts Center on August 30th.
- The Quarterly Meeting was held on September 9th; and continues to grow. The next meeting will be December 9, 2022.

5. **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES & DEPARTMENTS – (5 MINUTES)**

A. Fire Chief Catlett – Brooks County Fire Department – Chief Catlett provided the monthly report:

- There were 42 calls for service for the month of August.
- Fire Department now have two SCBA cylinder reservicing units.
- Training consisted of Standard Operating Procedure review, drivers training, and Hazmat for all career and volunteers.
- Continuing to pre-fire plan every business (63 out of 96 completed) in Brooks County; includes conducting fire safety inspection (42 out of 96 completed).
- Hose test completed; hydrant testing is 95 percent completed.
- Training completed by Fire Fighter Lanier and passed the Georgia Life Safety Educators course at the Georgia Fire Academy.
- Sgt. Kellogg completed and passed the State Fire Investigators course at the Georgia Fire Academy.
- Fire Fighter Gandy completed the GPTC Valdosta/Thomasville/Brooks County Joint Fire Fighter 1 course.

B. Matt Connolly – Road Department Superintendent – Provided report the monthly report for the Road Department:

- 238 roads graded; 8 driveways completed; 15 trees cut; 15 beavers eradicated; Side Arm mowed 19 roads.
- Cleared 15 pipes and ditches; replaced 16 signs; 18 911 calls; 7 calls to 811
- Obtained a quote for a Side Arm mower. There is a possibility the Mower Max may be bought back from the County. Will give contact information to Administrator to reach out to them.
- There were questions/concerns as to why some districts got more roads done than others. Mr. Larko stated he report roads and encourage his constituents to call.
- Mrs. Exum requested Mr. Connolly to start compiling a list of the top ten worst roads in Brooks County to be considered for the 2023 LMIG.

C. Jason Montesano – Inspections & Permits – Provided a copy of the report for August 2022:

- Performed 28 inspections; Issued 44 permits; total funds collected for the month, \$15,342.00.
- Stated he takes the job serious for Brooks County and the citizens.

D. Melissa Smith – Zoning/Code Enforcement – Provided a report for the month:

- Received 12 zoning applications; and two plats.
- Sent out 18 zoning violation letters to 15 citizens; performed 2 home inspections.
- Received receptive input from 8 of the 18 violations.
- Stated she is trying to make a difference which is her goal.

E. Wayne Waldron – Chief Tax Appraiser – Mr. Waldron reminded the Board of the expiring term of Mr. Melvin DeShazor on December 31, 2022. The appointment should be filled prior to January 2023. Mr. DeShazor is willing and eligible to accept another three-year term.

6. CONSENT AGENDA – Amended Item

A. Bid Opening – Dodd Road – one bid was received for Dodd Road from Mr. James Warren and Associates. The estimated cost is \$126,602.00 for culvert repair. The road has been stabilized by the Road Department, but it needs more done.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Clay Bank Subdivision – This item was on the agenda for August as to whether the County maintain the roads at Clay Bank Golf Club Subdivision. County Attorney advised the Board that right now they have no active obligation, but if we acquire an easement, it will be a continuing obligation. When started actively, others will follow, with due respect to the residents, this should be tabled for further discussion. Mrs. Exum agreed it should be tabled as well as Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Cody. Mr. Maxwell made the motion to table for further discussion, and the Chairman and Administrator will follow up with Mr. Steve Shierling, Mrs. Exum seconded. Vote was unanimous.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2021 LMIG & 2022 LMIG Bid Award – Two bids were received for the 2021 & 2022 LMIG Road Project List from The Scruggs Company and Reames & Sons. The bids were opened during the work session on September 1, 2022.

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| The Scruggs Company | \$2,991,232.70 |
| Reames & Sons | \$2,921,022.86 |

County Administrator has verified the amounts of the bids. The Board needs to identify the source of funding. County Attorney advised the Board they can award the bid; but will need to identify the funding source soon. Chairman recommended identifying the funding source during the work session later this month. Mrs. Exum made the motion to award the bid to Reames & Sons in the amount of \$2,921,022.86 with no contract issued

until the source of funding has been identified, Mr. Maxwell seconded. Vote was unanimous.

B. Parliamentary Procedure Ordinance – Vice Chairman, Mr. Maxwell, requested this item on the agenda to revisit and possibly amend regarding the Chairman voting on all motions. There has been confusion with statements and articles regarding the Chairman breaking the tie. The Chairman does not break the tie, the Chairman can vote. The Board elected to amend its Parliamentary Procedure Ordinance to permit the Chair of the Board to vote on all motions on November 5, 2018.

C. Loss of Sanitation Service Fees – Solid Waste Curbside Pickup – Administrator informed the Board of the loss of fees from the solid waste curbside pickup for homes being built or moved into the County after tax bills have been issued. The solid waste fee appears on the tax bill for property owners. According to the Tax Commissioner, bills can not be generated after the tax bills are issued. Property owners can possibly go as long as one year without paying the solid waste fee and creates a loss of revenue for the County. Administration asked Permits & Inspection, Zoning & Code Enforcement, Tax Commissioner; and Chief Tax Appraiser to get together and create a solution.

D. Fire Ordinance – Review (Lay on Table for 30 days) – Fire Chief Catlett prepared a Fire Ordinance for the Board review. Chief Catlett stated the ordinance is in line with Fire Safety Standards and insurance organizations. County Attorney will provide recommended edits and add an appeals section if it is not included. The Fire Ordinance was tabled for further legal review on the motion by Mrs. Exum; seconded by Mr. Cody. Vote was unanimous.

E. Farm Land Use Lease – Fritzke Farm Lease - Daniel Rowland & Franz Rowland appeared during the August 1, 2022 meeting regarding the county farm they are leasing on Old Madison Road, the Fritzke Farm. The farm lease is for three years and expires December 31, 2022. Mr. Franz Rowland stated the land is run down it needs lime and to be fertilized to keep the soil maintained; and they cannot do what they need to within the three-year lease. They are asking the Board to consider when the lease is up; to give them the opportunity to top the last bid. Chairman suggested that maybe the County Attorney can write something up. County Attorney, Jason Kemp, questioned how many years did they have in mind, or did they just want the right to outbid other bidders? County Attorney stated he will investigate the legalities and get back with the Board. Mr. Jason Kemp, County Attorney advised the Board he looked at the law, and there is a way to do it that is permitted by Georgia law. The current lease can be extended if the bid is certain, 5% increase higher than the bidder, first right of refusal or longer years. Mr. Maxwell made the motion to leave the lease as is, Mr. Cody seconded. Chairman called for the vote. Mr. Maxwell, Mrs. Exum, and Mr. Cody voted in favor. Chairman Folsom and Mr. Larko opposed. Vote was 3 to 2. Mrs. Exum stated to make sure land is preserved to benefit the County; put provisions in the contract. Mr. Maxwell suggested selling the property. The motion carried. After discussion, Chairman allowed a subsequent motion. Mrs. Exum amended the motion to put the Farm Lease

back on the agenda and revisit next month, Mr. Larko seconded. Vote was unanimous. County Attorney will prepare recommendations.

F. Brooks County Board of Tax Assessors – Board Appointment – Mr. Melvin DeShazor was re-appointed to the Board of Tax Assessors for another three-year term, expiring December 31, 2025, Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS – (5 MINUTES)

A. Harry Timmons – Concerns Regarding Roads, Vehicles, Zoning, BCSO, Blight Housing, etc. – Mr. Timmons requested an appearance to address the Board on issues regarding Augusta Road. He stated Augusta Road should not be paved until the problems are resolved. He complained that the Sheriff's Department has not issue any citations for speeding, some of the houses on the road are disgusting, there are abandoned blight houses and vehicles with trees growing out of them. Mr. Timmons emphasized fix the problems before fixing the road. He would like to see a line item budget. Complained that property values are going down; but taxes are going up. Stated he is hoping to hear from the Board or the County Clerk.

B. County Administrator Updates - None

C. Commissioners Notes/Comments

- **Lee Larko (District 1)** – No comments.
- **Patrick Folsom, Chairman (District 2)** – Reminded everyone to not drink and drive. He lost his best friend this week due to a drunk driver.
- **Willie Cody (District 3)** – No comments.
- **Myra Exum (District 4)** – No comments.
- **James Maxwell, Vice (District 5)** – No comments.

The Board closed the regular meeting to go into executive session at 7:23 pm on the motion by Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Cody seconded.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A.** Pending Litigation
- B.** Litigation & Claim
- C.** Personnel

The Board returned to the regular meeting at 8:51 pm on the motion by Chairman; seconded by Mr. Maxwell.

Ms. Exum made the motion to approve/authorize and pursue the settlement to settle the claim with EZ911 in the amount of \$11,148.20, ratify the Settlement Agreement and Release between Ryzylant, Inc. d/b/a EZ911, Inc.; Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Maxwell made the motion to adjourn regular meeting at 8:52 p.m.; Mr. Cody seconded.

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