

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday, December 4, 2023, at 5:00 p.m., in the Commissioners Meeting Room at the Brooks County Administration Building, located at 610 South Highland Road, Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were: Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman; Mr. James Maxwell, Vice Chairman; Mr. Willie Cody; Mrs. Myra Exum, and Mr. Lee Larko. 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.

1. PUBLIC HEARING – (Sign-In Sheet) - Consideration for Abandonment of Charles Lane

The process to abandon Charles Lane is complete, the public notice has run in the Quitman Free Press, and property owners have been notified. A sign-in sheet is provided for those who would like to speak for or against the abandonment.

Ms. Phyllis Crosby, resident for abandonment, spoke in favor. Ms. Crosby stated that Mr. Chitty also lives on the road. Ms. Crosby stated she hopes the Board will approve the abandonment. There is a lot of traffic, and it is not a public road.

Chairman closed the public hearing at 5:09 pm.

2. CALL TO ORDER - Chairman called the regular meeting to order at 5:09 pm.

Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance – Pastor Steve Shierling, Brooks County Ministerial Association, led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

Mr. Maxwell requested an amendment to the agenda. Item A, Authorization for Administrator to Hire A Contractor was added under Consent Agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Maxwell, to give the County Administrator authorization to hire a contractor for three to four days a week to try and get some roads done, Mr. Cody seconded. Chairman called for the vote. Mrs. Exum and Mr. Larko opposed. Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Cody, and Chairman voted yes. The vote was 3 to 2.

On the recommendation of the County Administrator, the Board tabled Item E under New Business, DebrisTech – Contract Extension until the meeting on December 11, 2023, on the motion by Mr. Lako, seconded by Mr. Cody. The vote was unanimous.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On the motion by Mr. Cody, seconded by Mr. Larko, the Board unanimously approved the following minutes:

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| A. | Regular Monthly Meeting | November 6, 2023 |
| B. | Special Called Meeting | November 20, 2023 |
| C. | Special Called Meeting/Work Session | November 27, 2023 |

4. INVITED GUESTS – (5 MINUTES)

A. Kathy Shiver – Probate Judge – Resolution for Technology Fee for Probate Court – Judge Kathy Shiver, Probate Court, appeared to present the Resolution of the Brooks County Board of Commissioners Requesting Legislation to Provide for A Technology Fee for Probate Court; and For Other Related and Lawful Purposes for the Board's consideration of approval. By approving the Resolution, the Board supports the request and request that the members of our Legislative delegation propose such legislation in the 2024 session of the Georgia General Assembly. The Resolution would allow the Court to collect a technology fee (\$5.00) for the filing of each civil action and with the imposition of any criminal fine to provide for technology upgrades as needed. The fee will also help to curtail costs in the Probate Court budget. The Resolution is supported by Rep. John LaHood.

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

A. Brooks County Fire Department – Chief Weeks – Chief Weeks provided report for November 2023 for activities/projects with the Brooks County Fire Department:

- Responded to total of 59 calls for service, 26 medical calls, 7 canceled or no incident found, 3 structure fires, 3 vehicle fires, 5 grass or debris fires, 1 fire/smoke alarms, 1 cooking fire, 4 MVA with injuries and 9 MVA no injuries.
- **Training:** Live fire training, Thermal Imager training, 4 gas meter training, driver training and competencies training.
- **Update:** Has an estimate from Everetts Well Drilling & Service for building and installing fire department connections on new and existing irrigation wells. The estimated cost is approximately \$1,650.00 per connection. The Chief's plan is to have at least 25 connections spread throughout Brooks County to provide a water supply system for the fire department. There will be an additional cost of \$125.00 per connection to have signs for specific instructions for proper start up for each well.

B. Brooks County Road Depart – Amy Hart – Provided report for November 2023:

- Steady working with skeleton crew and getting roads passable.
- There was a total of 210 actions taken on roads in November. There were 89 roads for grading/ditching, installed/repared 11 culverts and driveways; cleaned out 9 pipes/outfalls; removed 3 trees, limbs, and logs, 22 beaver dams cleaned, repaired 14 potholes, replaced/installed 11 signs, used rock/clay/sand on 21 projects, and 30 other projects completed.

C. Brooks County 911/EMA – Director LaToya Hampton – Ms. Hampton provided an update for November 2023:

- Year to date there were 23,628 calls received, 1,596 calls in November.
- FEMA visited Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church on November 30, 2023 to take pictures and do measurements for repair.
- 270 addresses – 104 new and 166 fixed or added to the map.
- 20 Hazmat calls to date for the year.

- Continuing to gather volunteer hours information from citizens to be submitted to FEMA. The deadline is December 25, 2023; but my deadline is December 20, 2023.
- Healthcare Coalition meeting in Tifton for AAR due to the storm; and scheduling AAR with our County Administrator and other agencies to discuss measures for another event.
- All paperwork has been submitted to FEMA for reimbursement.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Hiring a Contractor for Roads – Mr. Maxwell requested this amendment item to be added for discussion regarding finding contractors to help with ditching and grading of the roads. Mr. Maxwell stated that he had spoken with James Warren about assisting with Brooks County roads, and the cost for three to four days a week. The County Administrator is authorized to spend up to \$20,000, and to give Ms. McKinney authorization to hire local contractors. Administrator McKinney can call contractors and give them the scope of work for the contractors to provide the cost. After further discussion, Mr. Maxwell made a motion to authorize the spend limit for County Administrator to take care of roads in deplorable condition, to bind Brooks County Commissioners, the Board is deeming the current road system an emergency to authorize the expenditure up to \$20,000, and designate funding source from Road Department budget, Mr. Larko seconded. Chairman called for the vote. Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Cody, Mr. Larko, and Chairman Folsom voted in favor. Mrs. Exum opposed. The vote was 4 to 1.

7. OLD BUSINESS - NONE

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Abandonment of Entirety of Charles Lane – The public hearing was held for the abandonment of the entirety of Charles Lane. There was no one that spoke in opposition to the abandonment. Mrs. Exum made the motion to approve the abandonment of the entirety of Charles Lane, Mr. Cody seconded. Mr. Maxwell had questions about the other property owner being locked in and how he would get out? Ms. Crosby stated she will have a remote to open the gate. Something needs to be worked out to put an easement in place. Chairman called for the vote. Mrs. Exum, Mr. Larko, Mr. Cody, and Chairman Folsom voted in favor. Mr. Maxwell opposed. The vote was 4 to 1.

B. Resolution for Technology Fee for Probate Court – The Board of Commissioners unanimously approved the Resolution of the Brooks County Board of Commissioners of Brooks County Requesting Local Legislation to Provide for a Technology Fee for Probate Court; and for other Related and Lawful Purposes presented by Probate Judge, Mrs. Kathy Shiver, on the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Cody.

C. Funding – Pavo Downtown Development Authority – This topic was requested to be placed on the agenda by Mr. Larko. Mr. Larko stated that Pavo Downtown Development Authority is recognized by the State; and has been given \$3,500.00 to revamp and rebuild downtown Pavo. He advised that Pavo is 30% in Brooks County; and is asking consideration to provide seed money to start the fund. The County Attorney commented that the Charter from the State needs to be looked at. If it is for citizens of Brooks County, it is ok, but not for outside of the County. Pavo will be asked to attend the next regular meeting on January 8, 2024, for further discussion and additional information. Mr. Larko made the motion to table this item until the January 8, 2024 meeting, and Mr. Cody seconded. The vote was unanimous.

D. Change Date for January 2024 Regular Meeting – From January 1, 2024 to January 8, 2024 – Mr. Larko made the motion, Mrs. Exum seconded, and unanimously approved changing the January 2024 regular meeting from January 1, 2024 to January 8, 2024.

E. DebrisTech – Contract Extension – This item was unanimously tabled until the Work Session on December 11, 2023, on the motion by Mr. Larko, and seconded by Mr. Cody.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS – (5 MINUTES) – NONE

10. ADMINISTRATION/ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATES

A. County Administrator Updates - None

B. Commissioners Notes/Comments

- **Lee Larko (District 1)** – No comment.
- **Patrick Folsom, Chairman (District 2)** – Wished happy holidays to everyone. Extended condolences to Ms. Sherry Davidson for the loss of her brother.
- **Willie Cody (District 3)** – Commented on getting started on the roads.
- **Myra Exum (District 4)** – No comment.
- **James Maxwell, Vice Chairman (District 5)** – No comment.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION - NONE

12. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Maxwell made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:04 p.m.; Mr. Larko seconded.

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