

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for a Public Hearing/Special Called Meeting/Work Session Monday, August 26, 2024, at 4:15 p.m., at the Brooks County Administrative Building, in the Commissioners Meeting Room, located at 610 South Highland Road, Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were: Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman, Mr. James Maxwell, Vice Chairman, Mr. Willie Cody; and Mr. Larko. Mrs. Myra Exum was not present. Others present were Mr. Randall Dowling, Interim Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Ms. Kim Daniels, Human Resources; and Mr. Jason Kemp, County Attorney, and various residents.

**PUBLIC HEARING** – Proposed FY2024-2025 Budget – Chairman called the public hearing to order.

**A. Prayer/Pledge** - Mr. Cody led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

A Sign-in Sheet was provided for those who wish to speak. Mr. Chad Arrendale stated he had reviewed the budget and had questions regarding the Governing Body and why the budget increased. Interim Administrator, Mr. Dowling, explained that the previous budget for the Governing Body did not include the County Clerk, since the Clerk works for the Board, her position was moved causing an increase which includes salary, benefits for retirement, and health insurance. Mr. Arrendale commented on the budget of the Road Department for labor only and the County provides the equipment.

Mrs. Natalie Singletary approached the Board to request funds from ARPA for \$54,900 for two years for community pantries.

Mr. Gregg Squires commented on the Road Department and the contract with James Warren, whom he stated during his research there was no experience found that qualifies him for the contract. He further stated that the Board should terminate the contract.

Mrs. Peggy Howard also emphasized roads and their condition. Inquired if the Auditor is included in the budget? She hopes the hiring of a County Administrator and Finance Director will solve some problems. She stated the proposed budget is the most impressive budget she has seen. Mrs. Howard also inquired about IT services for the County.

Ms. Kristin Hanna, Boys & Girls Club, introduced herself as the Director since May, but has been with the Boys & Girls Club for 10 years. She asked the Board to consider an increase in their budget up to \$150,000 to \$175,000 to allow sustainable growth because they are assuming a lot of cost.

Mr. Josh Simpson asked about county liability regarding vehicles being damaged due to condition of roads. He stated that he scrapes roads to assist citizens in getting out to travel.

## **SPECIAL CALLED MEETING**

Mr. Larko motioned to amend the agenda to remove item C(a) under Topic for Discussion Honnie Korngold and add to the agenda for September 3, 2024, Mr. Cody seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Maxwell amended the agenda on motion to add ARPA under Topics for Motion/Discussion item B(c), the motion carried by Mr. Cody's second.

### **B. Topics for Motion/Discussion**

#### **a. Set/Approve the Millage Rate**

**Board of Education – Adopt/Approve – Resolution to Adopt Combined Millage Rate – Brooks County & Board of Education** – Chairman read the Resolution to adopt the combined millage rates. Mr. Maxwell motioned to increase the millage rate for the Development Authority from .300 mills to .500 mills, Mr. Cody seconded. Chairman called for discussion. Mr. Larko questioned the increase and why an increase now. After further discussion, Chairman called for vote. Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Cody, and Chairman voted in favor. Mr. Larko opposed. The vote was 3 to 1.

Mr. Maxwell motioned to adopt the combined millage rates, Brooks County 12.475 mills for unincorporated area and 14.278 mills for incorporated areas of Brooks County, Board of Education millage rate of 12.954 mills, Briggs Fire District 0.00 mills, and Development Authority .500 mills. The combined millage rate for Brooks County is set to 25.929 mills for unincorporated area and 27.732 mills for the incorporated area of Brooks County. Mr. Cody seconded. Mr. Larko stated that he did not agree with the millage rate and things are not appropriate. The vote was 3 to 1, Mr. Larko opposed.

#### **b. Set/Approve Fees – Solid Waste and Fire Fee**

The Board set the Solid Waste fees at the same rate as last year \$216.00 on a motion by Mr. Larko to accept the same fee of \$216.00, Mr. Maxwell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Fire Fee – The County Attorney and Chief Tax Appraiser, Mr. Wayne Waldron, have been working together to revamp the fire fee and asked it to be postponed until all the details are worked out. This item was tabled to be placed on the September 3<sup>rd</sup> agenda.

**c. ARPA Funds Request** – This item was tabled on the motion by Mr. Larko to table and place on the September 3<sup>rd</sup> agenda, Mr. Maxwell seconded.

### **C. Topics for Discussion**

**a. Honnie Korngold – Concerns – Development Authority – Industrial Park** – This topic was moved to the September 3<sup>rd</sup> agenda due to Ms. Korngold being ill.

**b. Guard Rail Project – Troupeville Road – Place on a Change Order** – Per Mr. Nick Clar, Engineer, he is proposing to place this project on a Change Order.

**c. Animal Services – Update** – County Attorney has prepared a rough draft of a proposed Ordinance. Chairman, Sheriff Dewey, and Attorney Kemp attended meetings of the municipalities, City of Quitman, City of Morven, City of Barwick, and City of Pavo to discuss animal services. The Board discussed scheduling a work session to review the ordinance and get input.

**d. IT Contract Services – VC3** – County Attorney advised the Board they have grounds to terminate the contract for cause, and they cannot appropriate the funds for services. Interim Administrator, Mr. Dowling, stated they can create an IT Department, hire an IT Manager and after a year the Manager can hire a technician. Mr. Larko made the motion to terminate VC3 services and create a new department. After discussion, Mr. Larko rescinded his motion; and made a motion to terminate VC3 contract for services, Mr. Cody seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

**e. Administrator Report – Interim Administrator – Randy Dowling** – Mr. Dowling reported he has prepared the FY2024-2025 proposed annual budget, conducted a budget work session on August 7<sup>th</sup> to review the proposed budget. Conducted the state required public hearing on August 26<sup>th</sup>.

The Tax Commissioner prepared the 2024 property tax millage rate forms/calculations, and the Board held the first and second millage rate public hearings on August 7<sup>th</sup>, and the third on August 19<sup>th</sup>.

Prepared job announcements for County Administrator and Finance Director positions and posted/sent out. First review of resumes was July 18, 2024. Targeting a specific County Administrator candidate for a possible interview and preparing an agreement for a specific Finance Director candidate.

Organized an online vehicle/equipment auction of surplus, about 82 pieces have been identified and previously declared surplus by the Board. Preparing a list of vehicles and equipment currently in use in all departments to have an up-to-date listing and update the vehicle insurance policy.

Working with CKH to close out the books for FYE 2024, complete software conversion from Smart Fusion to Edmunds, and begin the annual audit.

## **2. WORK SESSION**

**A. Regular Meeting Agenda Review – September 3, 2024** – The Board reviewed/discussed the agenda for the upcoming meeting.

Following items were added to the agenda:

### **Invited Guests – Honnie Korngold**

Public Hearing/Special Called/Work Session

August 26, 2024

Page 3 of 4

## **Reports from Committees & Departments – Attorney Kemp – Facility Use Agreement**

The work session/special called was closed for executive session at 6:38pm on a motion by Mr. Larko and seconded by Mr. Cody.

### **3. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Litigation**

The County Attorney updated the Board on pending litigation. No action was taken.

The Board went out of executive session at 7:05pm, on the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Larko.

### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

The Board adjourned at 7:06pm, on the motion by Mr. Larko, seconded by Mr. Cody.

Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman

Mr. Randall Dowling, Interim County Administrator

Ms. Patricia A. Williams, County Clerk