

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Regular Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, August 7, 2024, at 5:00 p.m., in the Commissioners Meeting Room, located 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; Mrs. Myra Exum; Mr. Willie Cody; and Mr. Lee Larko. Others present were Mr. Randall Dowling, Interim County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Ms. Kim Daniels, Human Resources, Mr. Jason Kemp, County Attorney; and various residents.

1. PUBLIC HEARING – NONE

2. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman called the meeting to order.

Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Cody led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Maxwell made the motion to approve the following minutes, seconded by Mrs. Exum, the vote carried unanimously.

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|---------------------------------|---------------|
| A. Regular Monthly Meeting | July 1, 2024 |
| B. Executive Session | July 1, 2024 |
| C. Special Called/ Work Session | July 22, 2024 |

4. INVITED GUESTS – (5 MINUTES)

A. Kenneth Lowery – Epidemiologist - Georgia Department of Public Health – Mr. Lowery was not present.

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

A. Emily Brown – Director of EMS and Trauma – Ms. Brown provided an update for EMS services for July 2024:

- Total number of 911 responses were 252.
- Total number of 911 transports 159.
- Total number of Mutual Aid Responses: 5
- Total number of Mutual Aid Requests: 13
- Total number of Standby Events: 5 (fires)
- Patient destinations: SGMC 102, Brooks County Hospital 44, Archbold 33.
- Gross 911 Charges Bill: \$137,036.00 and 911 Charge Collections: \$13,414.00
- Payor mix: HMO 34.79%, Medicare 25.71%, Self-pay 21.05%
- Paramedics: 9, EMT/EMTAs: 4, Vacancies: 8, Current # in Hiring Process: 3
- Performed community outreach and education: July 4th Community Event, Brooks County Fire Department – Medical Education/Protocols (Stocked Medical Bags Provided), Brooks County School System – Active Shooter Training, and also Stop the Bleed Training (Kits Provided).

B. Development Authority – Jerome Tucker - Interim Director – Mr. Tucker stated he is not replacing anyone but serving as the Interim Director for the Development Authority. There has been one meeting held since he has been on board. He is providing accountability, planning, and collaboration. Mr. Tucker has met with the Airport Authority, City Manager, and Brooks County's Interim Administrator. He wants to develop a strategic plan for Brooks County and become one team, making sure infrastructure is in place. Mr. Tucker stated he is committing his service to Brooks County and expects the same.

C. Brooks County Fire Department Report – Chief Weeks – Chief Weeks provided an update on activities for the Fire Department for July 2024:

- Responded to total of 65 calls for service.
- One structure fire, four vehicle fires, four brush fires, two fire alarms, zero controlled burns, four other calls.
- Responded to 17 medical calls, eight vehicle accidents, two extrications, 13 calls were cancelled, or nothing found, and seven trees down.
- **Structure Fires:** There was moderate damage to the structure at 2815 Dewey Road, it was confined to the living room, but most of the contents were saved.
- **Training:** Firefighter 1 Training, active shooter training with multiple agencies, live fire training with multiple agencies.
- **Quitman Fire:** Chief Demps has given us the okay to use Quitman's hydrants when we need to refill our trucks.
- **Colquitt EMC Donation:** We have received all the items that were ordered except the upgraded radios. They should be in this month.
- **Budget:** Waiting on approval.
- We have three recruits that will be taking their Firefighter 1 test on August 9th at Lowndes County Fire Rescue headquarters. The following week we will be testing their skills at Brooks County Fire headquarters.

D. Brooks County Public Works Department Report – Project Manager -Kyle Christian Kyle Christian, Project Manager, reported for July 2024:

- Received 175 work orders and completed over 200 work orders.
- **District 1:** Graded roads, added material where it was needed to fix washouts, cleaned ditches and culverts, installed driveway pipes, and installed new road signs. Hauled over 20 loads of sand off Tallokas Road and was able to reuse throughout the district and county.
- **District 2:** Built up roads, graded, cleaned ditches and culverts, installed cross drains. Hauled 10 loads of sand off Wheeler and Empress Road and used it for shoulder repairs along Empress Road, Hadley Circle, and added to other slick roads.
- **District 3:** Built up roads, graded cleaned ditches and culverts. Hauled 20 loads of dirt off Dixie Barwick and Price Road and reused it throughout the district to build up roads and fix slick spots.

- **District 4:** Major past due work in District 4. But pleased that were able to clean ditches and culverts in all of Fawn Heights, Shady Acres, and Jamar. We continue to build, grade, and add material to roads.
- **District 5:** Pothole and sign repair, shoulder repairs, two major emergency undermined cross drains on Dodd Road. Cleaned ditches, culverts, and removed debris. Also added material to washouts and slick roads.

We had a great month and were able to get a lot of work done. We will continue to keep Brooks County beautiful one road at a time

6. CONSENT AGENDA - NONE

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Declaration of Surplus – Interim Administrator, Mr. Randy Dowling, provided the final list of vehicles and equipment that is no longer of use to the county and needs to be declared as surplus property. There is a total of 82 vehicles and equipment, 18 at the Administration Building, 41 at the Sheriff's Department, 16 confiscated vehicles, and 7 at the Road Department. Staff recommends the Board declare these items as surplus county property, authorize their disposal through an online auction conducted by Auctiontime.com, and authorize the Chairman, Interim County Administrator, and County Clerk to execute all related documents. The online auction is scheduled to occur during August. The Board unanimously authorized the vehicles and equipment as surplus county property, their disposal through an online auction, and authorized the Chairman, Interim County Administrator, and County Clerk to execute all related documents, on a motion by Mr. Larko, and seconded by Mr. Maxwell.

B. Acoustic for Ag Building – Board discussed options for acoustic at the Ag Building. Need something on the wall and/or ceiling to enhance the sound and develop a solution for the sound. Will work with designer to come up with a solution. A line item for this project will be included in the FY2024-2025 budget.

C. Animal Services Update – County Attorney, Mr. Jason Kemp, informed the Board he has prepared an ordinance based on recommendations from the Board and the Sheriff. Mr. Kemp stated he will attend Council meetings with the cities this month along with the Chairman and Sheriff Dewey to offer participation in an IGA with the County. It will be less costly if we do not do an RFP. Animal services will be included in the FY2024-2025 budget.

D. Paving Project at Ag Building – The Board discussed the paving project for the parking lot at the Ag Building. The three light poles have finally been removed. Funds will be included in the FY2024-2025 budget for the paving project.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. New National Opioids Settlement – Kroger – MOU – Acknowledgement & Agreement – A new proposed national opioids settlement has been reached with Kroger and Georgia is participating in the Kroger settlement. A Participation Form and Memorandum of Understanding has been provided to be executed by the Chairman, and submitted on or before August 12, 2024, to be considered for initial participation calculations and payment eligibility. The vote carried to approve/authorize participation in the Kroger settlement and for Chairman to execute the related documents on the motion by Mrs. Exum, seconded by Mr. Larko.

B. VC3 – IT Contract – The Board discussed the current contract for IT services with VC3. Mr. Larko stated he has not had any glowing reviews from departments and it maybe in our best interest for staff to pull out of the contract. Mrs. Exum commented that need to find out if we can legally get out of the contract with no cost.

C. Renewal of Copiers – Colson – Mr. Maxwell made the motion to renew the contract/lease for copiers with Colson Business Systems for the Extension Office, CID Front Office, the Back Workroom, and for the Fire Department HQ Office, Mr. Cody seconded. The vote carried unanimously.

D. Change Meeting Date Due to the Labor Day Holiday – The motion carried unanimously to change the regular meeting date to Tuesday, September 3, 2024 due to the Labor Day Holiday being on Monday, September 2, 2024, Mr. Maxwell made the motion and Mr. Larko seconded.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS – (5 MINUTES)

A. Ms. Melanie Bishop – Removal of Homestead Exemption in Error – Ms. Bishop requested to appear to discuss removal in error of her homestead exemption. She provided copies and the County Attorney will review the documents.

B. Jacey Huffman – Animal Control in the County – Ms. Huffman requested appearance to discuss animal control. She informed the Board of cats being mauled by dogs in her area. She has called the Sheriff's Department but was advised nothing they can do. Ms. Huffman was pleased to hear of the county's initiative and progress with animal services in the county.

10. ADMINISTRATION/ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATES

A. County Administration Updates - The proposed FY2024-2025 annual budget has been completed. Mr. Dowling reviewed the proposed budget with the Board. The proposed budget will be submitted to the Board on August 12, 2024. An advertisement in the QFP notifying the public that the proposed budget is available for review and the date and time of the budget public hearing on August 26, 2024, at 6:00 pm to obtain citizen comments. The final adoption of the proposed budget will be the end of August.

The county's all-fund proposed budget for FY2024-2025 totals \$29,486,173.00, contains a 4% cost-of-living allowance beginning January 1, 2025, and a 45% increase in employee health care cost. The budget does not contain a property tax increase and assumes the property tax millage rate will not be rolled back. The General Fund was balanced using \$1,531,429.00 from General Fund reserves.

B. Commissioners Notes/Comments

- **Lee Larko (District 1)** – No comment.
- **Patrick Folsom, Chairman (District 2)** – Thanked the First Responders during the storm.
- **Willie Cody (District 3)** – No comment.
- **Myra Exum (District 4)** – Reminded everyone that school is back in and to watch out for students and buses.
- **James Maxwell, Vice (District 5)** – No comment.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION – The Board closed the regular meeting to go into executive session at 6:39pm, on the motion by Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Larko seconded.

A. Litigation – County Attorney updated the Board on pending litigations.

B. Real Estate – No action taken.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Maxwell moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:12 pm; Mr. Cody seconded.

Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman
Mr. Randall Dowling, Interim County Administrator
Patricia A. Williams, County Clerk