

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for a Special Called Meeting/Work Session Monday, February 26, 2024, at 5:15 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, Mrs. Myra Exum; Mr. Willie Cody; and Mr. Larko. Others present were Ms. Jessica McKinney, County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams; County Clerk; Ms. Kim Daniels; and Mr. Jason Kemp, County Attorney, and various residents.

SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman called the meeting to order.

A. PRAYER/PLEDGE – Chairman led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

B. EMS Services – 5 Minutes – The county will be putting the EMS service out to bid due to Grady EMS not renewing their contract. Interested providers who have an interest in bidding or submitting a quote for services appeared to express their interest and to discuss their services and experience.

a. Southern Regional EMS (Tommy Willis, Owner) – Mr. Tommy Willis and Grant Barker, MD, President presented their services. Southern Regional Emergency Medical Services provides excellent emergency services and ground level transportation to patients in the Southeastern USA. Mr. Willis stated he has been in medical services for 48 years, and 20 years in Brooks County as a former EMS services provider for Brooks County. He stated that he has a genuine interest in the service provided in the county, he has family here. Dr. Barker stated that as President and medical director of the organization, he can assure the county it will be run with the utmost integrity and excellence in care. He has an EMS background in transporting, providing service and personal touch and he hopes to serve the citizens of Brooks County. Mr. Willis and Dr. Barker thanked the Board for taking the time to consider the potential opportunity for Southern Regional EMS to provide emergency services to citizens of Brooks County.

b. AmeriMed (Rick Huskey, VP Operations) – Mr. James presented an overview summary for 911 Emergency Ambulance Services. The company was founded in June 2011 by Dixon Marlow and located in Buford, GA. AmeriMed has a partnership approach to system design and operational plan which provides full transparency of system development model, financial plan, and operating results. Their Executive/Operational Leadership Experience has 40 years combined experience with high performance 911 ambulance/fire service and public and private emergency medical services. They are a premier provider of ambulance services in six States. Their clinical training, protocols, and quality include corporate medical director, active local medical director, pre-hire testing and comprehensive orientation program, community involvement, injury protection. The company is professional, mission and purpose driven, experienced, expertise and understanding of needs, has resources, capability,

willingness, and a transparent partnership approach to service. Mr. James thanked the Board for the potential opportunity to present their interest in serving Brooks County.

c. AmeriPro (Dave Sanford, Director/Ethan Grey, Director of Operations) – Mr. Ethan Grey, Director of Operations presented their interest in providing emergency medical services to Brooks County. The office is in Dunwoody, GA. AmeriPro EMS is a leader in emergency medical services, is excited to propose a pioneering partnership with Brooks County. Their vision is to revolutionize emergency transport and care coordination, ensuring rapid and efficient patient services. As a duly licensed Emergency Medical Service provider in the State of Georgia, they are familiar with and compliant with all state regulations, ensuring the highest standard of medical service provision. The team understands the importance of performance metrics, and pledges to meet the stipulated 90 per cent response time and all other criteria specified. AmeriPro prides itself on transparency and will provide all requisite operational data, ensuring the Board is always informed. Their proposal will demonstrate how Ameripro can provide all provisions regarding insurance, requisite meetings, staffing, ambulance fees, and more, as specified in your RFP. Understanding the gravity of this responsibility, they pledge their full commitment to Brooks County. Mr. Grey stated that they are looking forward to the opportunity to collaborate with Brooks County Board of Commissioners to ensure the highest level of emergency medical care for the community.

d. Gold Star (Charles Proctor, Owner) – Gold Star EMS has been in operation for over 14 years. Their headquarters and fleet maintenance facility are in Albany, GA, employ nearly 200 EMS staff, 6 mechanics, over 40 vehicles, offices located across 10 counties and serve more than 50 healthcare facilities, 20 of which are area hospitals in over 30 counties in South Georgia alone. Gold Star is an emergency and non-emergency EMS provider. Have been operating non-emergency in Brooks County since 2010, usually one or two units per day. All 911 units to stay in Brooks County 911 obligated operations never non-emergency. The County Commission will make a choice on how all units are deployed/mutual aid. Provide non-emergent transport for Archbold Brooks Hospital with non-911 units. Gold Star operates their own certified EMR and EMT courses to maintain staffing levels, has its own in-house billing and collections department. All 911 Ambulances can be wrapped as Brooks County EMS.

e. South Georgia Health (aka SGMC) (Emily Brown, EMS Director/Mr. Dean, CEO) – Ms. Emily Brown presented their interest to offer partnership to provide emergency medical services to Brooks County. Ms. Brown stated that since 1972, South Georgia Medical Center Health EMS has provided exceptional care through our Emergency Medical Services agency. SGMC Health is a regional referral hospital, designated Level III Trauma Center, provider of state of the art cardiac and neurological care, as well as obstetrical, vascular, cardiothoracic, general, and orthopedic surgeries. Brooks County will have access to all benefits offered, not just EMS. They have non-emergency ambulances and a robust command staff. They are proud to be a community partner for all regions they serve; and continue their partnership commitments every day. Ms. Brown expressed the appreciation of the opportunity for collaboration and would be

proud to serve with a highly professional, trained, and compassionate team. Mr. Randy Smith also commented that SGM Health EMS exists to serve people, neighbors and share resources.

C. Topics for Motion/Discussion

a. EMS Services – Mr. Daniel Warren, Regional EMS was present to answer questions from the Board regarding the Licensure/Zoning process to put the EMS service out to bid. Mr. Warren advised that Brooks County can apply on their own or through a contractor. An EMS provider must be designated before the Zone process, the Zone designated before the License process; and have an agreement with an agency in place. County Administrator and County Attorney stated they are working on the RFP to release by Friday. After discussion, Mrs. Exum made a motion to release the RFP immediately, seconded by Mr. Larko. The vote was unanimously approved.

b. Road Department Contract – County Attorney, Mr. Jason Kemp, presented a redlined draft copy of the contract with edits for Road Department services between Brooks County and James Warren and Associates, Inc.

The redlined draft edits of the contract:

Term. The term shall commence on the effective date and continue until June 30, 2026, unless earlier terminated. Attorney Kemp advised that the contract can be terminated anytime if issues cannot be remedied.

Staffing. Contractor shall employ a staff of sufficient numbers to perform all its obligations hereunder to Brooks County's satisfaction. Contractor shall use its best efforts to remain fully staffed during the term of this Agreement. Contractor will notify Brooks County in writing immediately when staffing is insufficient to perform all its obligations in this Agreement.

Contractor Duties. Section e. xxi. Contractor agrees compensation for emergency work during a state of emergency only when federal or state dollars are received by Brooks County.

Section e. xxii. Contractor shall respond to after hour and weekend complaints within a reasonable time of receiving the call, and Contractor can determine a call is non-emergent. Such calls can wait until the next business day for a response.

Mr. Maxwell made the motion to approve the redlined edits of the Road Department Contract, as amended by the Contractor, James Warren and Associations, Inc., Mr. Cody seconded. Chairman called for the vote. Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Cody, and Chairman voted in favor. Mrs. Exum and Mr. Larko opposed; the vote was 3 to 2.

c. Idalia Open Invoice Funding – Administrator McKinney advised the Board of two invoices remaining after the Idalia Hurricane with DebrisTech and SDR. The administrator invited AMB Health Financial Services Representatives, who appeared on Special Called/Work Session

behalf of Mr. Brewer Bentley, to provide the Board information on the options of paying the invoices in full. Brooks County has used the available cash for the CDs to pay a portion to SDR; and now they are requesting the balance. Mr. Bentley had previously discussed with the County Administrator about borrowing from the county CDs. This option would be simple, will be no risk, and at very low interest rate, 6.5%, which is 25% less than the prime rate; and the County investments will stay in place. After further discussion, Mr. Maxwell made the motion to authorize Administrator McKinney to proceed with the debt obligation against the county investments and not to exceed the amount of the invoices, Mr. Larko seconded. The vote was unanimous.

d. Commissioner Pay – Amended Item – Mr. Larko stated that Legislature has authorized a \$2,000 increase for Commissioner Pay; but he would like to reduce his pay to \$1,550 per month; currently, his pay is \$1,486 a month. Mr. Larko agreed to his commissioner pay of \$1,486 a month until December 2024. The Board unanimously approved Mr. Larko's request to reduce his commissioner pay to \$1,486 per month until December 2024 then set his monthly commissioner pay to \$1,550 per month beginning January 2025 on the motion by Mr. Larko, seconded by Mrs. Exum.

D. Topics for Discussion

a. Brooks County Jail Renovation/Rebuild – Sheriff Mike Dewey presented pictures to the Board of the problems/issues in need of repairing. The major issues are lighting, rust, and plumbing. Discussion began on how to start the process, what needs to be done first, and funding. We will look at SPLOST accounts and see what is available. The Board requested the Sheriff to get new quotes, because the current ones are old and prices may have changed, to see what we are up against.

b. CID Renovation – Sheriff Dewey reported that the mold fumigation is complete and has been primed to begin painting. Again, the topic of funding was discussed. There is structural damage to the floor. Mr. Hockenberry has submitted a quote to replace the wall, repair the roof between the first and second floor is \$95,000, and the AC is \$35,000, totaling \$130,000.

c. GMC Architectural Firm – The Board discussed the funds that have been allocated to GMC Architectural Firm (\$69,000 from ARPA funds) to design an administration and if this is something the Board wants to do now, due to other buildings currently in need of improvements/repairs. After discussion, upon the recommendation from Mrs. Exum, the Board agreed to reallocate the funds for GMC Architectural Firm to renovate the CID Building.

d. Solar Moratorium – The Board discussed putting a solar moratorium in place to give them extra time to look into it, gather more information to decide the next step. Conducting a Town Hall Meeting was discussed to give citizens the opportunity to present what their issues are; and the industry opportunity to justify. This topic will be added to the agenda for March 4, 2024, regular meeting.

2. WORK SESSION

A. Regular Meeting Agenda Review – March 4, 2024 – The Board reviewed/discussed the agenda for the upcoming meeting.

Invited Guest: Add Julie Swann – Camellia Show Report

New Business additions:

- Reallocation of funds for Cid renovation.
- Solar Moratorium
- Acoustics for Ag Building – sound panels

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION – The Board went into executive session at 7:32 pm on a motion by Mr. Maxwell, and Mr. Larko seconded.

A. Personnel

4. ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned at 8:02 pm, on the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Cody.

Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman

Ms. Jessica McKinney, County Administrator

Ms. Patricia A. Williams, County Clerk