

**WORKSHOP SESSION
TIFT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2009 (6:30 p.m.)**

The scheduled Workshop Session of the Tift County Board of Commissioners was called to order by Chairman Grady Thompson on Tuesday, August 4, 2009, at 6:30 p.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the Administrative Building. Members of the Commission present including Chairman Thompson were Vice Chairman Buck Rigdon and Commissioners Donnie Hester, Melissa Chevers, Robert Setters, Sherry Miley and Mike Jones.

Public Comments:

Mrs. Harrington, a property owner in Tift County but a resident of Decatur addressed the Board. Her mother lives in Tift County. She stated that Tifton and Tift County's motto and advertisement is that it is suppose to be one of the cleanest small cities in the USA and she is representing a part of the community that would like to be involved in this and given the opportunity to have input for the growth and Economic Development of the city and county. This group has a voice and they want to be heard. She referenced the recent flooding and would like to know what the County is going to do and what are the future plans. They would like to be informed. Health issues and safety issues have arisen because of this. Commissioner Hester responded to her concerning the flood issues. They are concerned about the ditch behind the property that gets stopped up and does not allow the water to flow properly. The ditch has been looked at extensively, some things cannot be done there but we are trying to prevent some of the water through that ditch. The water moves down in this area and up under I-75. Mr. Carter stated that the problem we're having is that the interstate is working like a bottleneck. It allows water to move too quickly on one side and not quickly enough on the other. We have engineers looking at the drainage basin and we are trying to formulate a plan. There is no quick fix. Mrs. Harrington's property was not damaged too badly but her mother's was and she is not back in her home yet. Somewhere between the good and the bad, we need to find a solution Mrs. Harrington stated.

Mrs. Essie Bell, 2109 South Central Avenue addressed the Board with the same issues stating she has not been able to get back in her home yet. She felt so alone without a man on her side when the water was running through her house but she thanks God, she does have a man, Him, on her side. She stated there is water coming in the area from three sides. I lost quite a bit, not everything and she thanks God for that. FEMA has helped but it was not enough. Where are all the engineers everybody keeps talking about, they are suppose to know what to do.

Lloyd Copeland, stated he worked with Mrs. Bell for many years and if she comes up here and says she needs help, she needs it and some kind of arrangements should be made to assist her. He then said he would like to make two suggestions to the Commissioners. 1) He would like to see the Planning and Zoning Board abolished and done totally away with because the make recommendations on cases for ya'll and then when it gets here ya'll do the opposite and it does nothing but cause trouble and confusion. He has seen this happen time after time. He would like to see the 3 acre rule for a home done away with. He rides the county roads and he sees double wide after double wide going in and it is not on the 3 acre rule. Why have a rule if you are not going to abide by it for all. 2) He then stated that under the Public Comment Section of the Agenda, he was told by a Commissioner that questions would not be answered during that time; comments are just accepted from citizens. He stated he has seen the direct opposite of that tonight so lets' have it one way or the other.

Rudolph Mason, 19th Street stated he has addressed the Board about the lot next to his property. It is all grown up and he has been trying to get it cleaned up ever since he has lived there for 50 years. Commissioner Hester responded back to him on the cleanup process. Commissioner Hester and Mr. Carter will be in touch with him concerning this matter.

Georgia Houston, 17 ½ Street addressed an issue of a grown up lot next door to her. She said she has been begging for someone to clean this up. Neighbors have been cleaning up lots in the area but we are old and we need some help with this, she stated.

A Pastor from Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church was here and spoke to the Board on behalf of all these citizens that have just spoken to the Board. We have talked about ditches and other important issues and we don't need to just talk about them, we need to address them and move forward.

Appointments:

1. Mr. Kelvin Jackson addressed a recreation issue with the Board. There is some in justice going on involving the Recreation Board. This particular issue was heard before that Board. In 2008, he was a coach for recreation ball but there are problems with the referees. There is no discussion of men anymore, just if some referee hears something he thinks he doesn't like, he just simply throws a coach out of the game. He talked to Eric Bozeman with the recreation department and he told him to come to the Athletic Advisory Board meeting and we will get this straight. Mr. Jackson went there and waited for an hour or longer and left. They never called him. He went back to another meeting and still had not been heard and the he gets a letter that he has been suspended from coaching for a year and ban from recreational property. This is an in justice. Mr. Carter advised that he had checked into this, he has not had the opportunity for whatever reason, but will check into this further, look at the by-laws and we will follow protocol and give Mr. Jackson his right

to be heard.

Public Hearings: None

Items to be discussed for Regular Session on August 10, 2009:

A. Reverse 911: E-911 Director, Scott Bowers addressed this issue with the Board. He stated that the current alert system in his opinion is not serving its purposes. Referring to the flooding in recent months as an example he told the Board it took around four hours to contact and alert Tift County residents. He has done some research and is recommending the County switch to a reverse system called Code Red. This system partners with the National Weather Service. Jennifer LeCates with Code Red was present and advised the Board that this system will send out alerts in case of severe thunderstorm, tornado or flood warning in the projected area of the event and would be able to reach every number in the database within roughly 15 minutes. The new system will replace the old alert hardware but will not replace the emergency sirens currently in place. The sirens will not shut down but this system will become a catch all for weather and emergency alerts. Siren coverage is limited to a one mile radius. The four new sirens that were recently put in place were put in areas where there would be a lot of people outdoors or in areas where many people may not have phones to receive emergency phone alerts. The current system cost around \$7,000 but we were charged around \$11,000 each time the system was used. The Code Red System will be very cost effective with an initial cost of \$22,500 with an annual maintenance fee after the first year.

B. CAD Contract: Scott Bowers told the Board that our CAD System is under maintenance contract which is presently through a third party. We are now able to get the maintenance contract directly with the CAD System and eliminate the middle person which will save the County approximately \$22,000. Staff recommends contracting the maintenance through CAD System.

C. Move September Regular Meeting Date from Monday, September 7th to Tuesday, September 8th: The County Clerk advised the Board that the Regular Meeting for September falls on a Holiday and recommends moving the meeting from Monday to Tuesday, September 8th.

D. Approve Beer & Wine License for Charles Hughes for 4-H's Country Store in Chula: The County Clerk advised that the application has been completed by Mr. Hughes. He has been fingerprinted and a Criminal History run and his application has been approved by Sheriff Vowell.

E. Appointment to the Keep Tift Beautiful Board: The County Clerk advised that there is a County Seat on the Keep Tift Beautiful Board vacant and she has received an application from Tammy Burgess expressing a desire to serve on this Board.

F. ACCG Loss Control & Safety Discount Program: The County Clerk advised the Board that ACCG offers a Loss control Safety Incentive Discount Program to receive a 7.5% discount on the county's Workers Comp Premium. The guidelines and other criteria have been met by the County staff. The Chairman will need to be authorized to sign the verification form.

G. Renovations to Restrooms at E. B. Hamilton and Lighting Project: Jason Jordan addressed this issue stating the restrooms are extremely out dated. The plans are to replace restroom partitions, install HVAC Units, tile the wall and install epoxy floor material. The upgrades were approved in SPLOST IV. We have currently collected \$774,218 in the recreation account. We currently owe \$551,236 on the lighting project note at E. B. Hamilton. If we pay this note off we would have a balance of \$222,981 left. The restroom upgrades would cost \$85,000. This has been discussed with the County Manager and the Finance Director and this is a recommendation from staff that we proceed in the above stated manner. Commissioner Jones asked some questions about the funds interest and etc. The Finance Director had stepped out and the County manger advised that staff will get answers to these questions and report back.

H. Department of Justice Grant to purchase a backup for the 800 MHz Radio System: Tifton and Tift County has been awarded \$178,436 for various public safety projects and the County's portion is \$54,771. Tift County intends on purchasing equipment needed to have a backup for the 800 MHz System.

I. Health Insurance Bid: Staff recently issued RFQ's to sixteen insurance agents requesting qualifications for insurance brokerage services. Two firms responded which were Shaw Hankins, current broker and Partners Benefit Group. Both firms would broker identical services for county employees from Blue Cross Blue Shield. It is the option of the Board to choose which brokerage firm will provide the benefit services. The insurance would not be affected. It comes down to who can provide the best services and maintenance of the account. Scott Hankins was present and answered some questions from Commissioners as far as benefit coverage relating to dental and vision. We are currently in an ACCG Pool. Mr. Carter advised that staff could not say enough about Shaw Hankins and the way they have handled our account. The rates are going to be the same; it boils down to a service issue. Mr. Hill was not present at this meeting. It was the understanding of staff that both brokers were going to be here. This is a 9 months enrollment because it is being changed through ACCG to run as our Fiscal year so we will re-visit this again in May 2010. For an October start date, we will have to have open enrollment in place in September to take care of the premiums through payroll.

J. Change Order on the CDBG Grant for Hill Avenue, Wilton Avenue & Scott Circle: During the construction of this project we had several problems that we had address. The quantities over ran by \$9,954 and we had a change order of \$28,728. Staff is requesting approval to pay for the over run and change order out of SPLOST IV.

The Board agreed to place items C, D, F and J on the Consent Agenda for the Regular Meeting.

County Manager Items:

- Addressed the request from DFACS to reconsider the \$15,000 that was taken out of the budget stating he met with them and they advised that the biggest portion was going to salary supplements. Now they are telling us this money will be used only for the Foster Care Program. We recommend that if the funds are reinstated that we do it under a Memorandum of Understanding that these funds will be used for children in Tift County only under the Foster Care Program. The Board agreed to add this to the Regular Agenda for consideration.

Commissioners Comments:

Commissioner Hester apologized for being a little arrogant and he might have stepped out of line some during the public comment section. He would like for the county Manager to look into the possibility of adopting some sort of Resolution like the City did allowing golf carts and ATV's on public roads.

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Setters, seconded by Commissioner Chevers. Motion carried.

Executive Session: None

Chairman Grady Thompson, District 7

Vice Chairman Fred W. (Buck) Rigdon, District 5

Commissioner Donnie Hester, District 1

Commissioner Melissa Chevers, District 2

Commissioner Robert Setters, District 3

Commissioner Sherry Miley, District 4

ATTEST:

Commissioner C. Michael Jones, District 6

County Clerk