

WORKSHOP SESSION
TIFT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 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, June 2, 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 and Sherry Miley. Commissioner Jones was out of town.

Public Comments:

The County Manager stated that the Board had request staff to the drainage basin in South Tifton that also included McInnis Mills Subdivision after the recent floods. Stacy Watkins, Engineer has looked into the drainage mill and he is present to give the Board and residents an update. Mr. Watkins stated that there is about 4,000 acres in this drainage basin that drains down through South Tifton over to Kell Road. He explained that there is no short term solution from an engineering stand point to alleviate flooding issues. From a long term solution stand point it will require extensive hydrological studies on this drainage basin. It will most like require EPD permitting, Army Corp of Engineering clearance and possibly U. S Fish and Wildlife Service approval and multiple pieces of property will have to be acquired. This will or could take several years and will be very costly just for the study and the acquisition of property. It could cost in excess of \$100,000 in engineering fees alone. He recommends first contacting FEMA to see exactly what they have and this will give us a little better idea of what to expect cost wise. We need to look at the FEMA maps; they more than likely have some data that we can begin with.

Scott Bowers then told the Board that he has been looking at this situation from mitigation stand point. He has talked with numerous representatives from GEMA and FEMA and there is no quick fix. He explained that there is a property buy out grant program that is available to the homeowners if they are interested. The homeowner would have to do this on their own; they would be given fair market value for their home and it could take up to 12 months or longer. It is a grant; no guarantee. The government would then be responsible for the property, nothing could ever be built there again; it would be maintained as green space. Short term, he has researched the Flood Insurance Program and has found that this insurance is available to anyone in the County whether you are in a flood zone or not. He gave the audience handouts about the buyout program and the flood insurance.

Jackie Gurz stated here is still a lot of trash out there on the properties. They would at least like someone from the county to come clean up some of the debris. There is still a lot of standing water. There are doors and all kinds of debris in the ditches.

Gene Carter, 36 Stirling Road addressed the County Manager with the flooding issues. He has lived out there for 9 years and proud to say he loves out there. As far as he is concerned it is worth the money to spend on this subdivision because it is a nice friendly neighborhood. He has had Code Enforcement folks out there and they have walked the property and everything bottlenecks behind his property. He further explained some of the things that had been going on out there with the floods, ditches and etc. They all have been asking for help for years and nobody seems to want to help them with the drainage problems. He has talked to everyone he knows. It is simply a problem that needs to be fixed.

Ed Revills, owns property on the Westside of McInnis Mills Subdivision and addressed the Board with the question of whether or not you can build in wetlands in the State of Georgia. The County Attorney responded to his question by saying there are EPD restrictions that control that. You can build but there are many things that determine that.

Stacy Watkins advised that with clearing live streams, the Georgia EPD has a unit assigned to this particular issue and you would have to apply for a variance to go in and clean out the ditch or disturb the land, you have to develop a plan then they will take it under consideration; it would be an EPD decision to allow it or not.

Mendy Palmer, 5 Tweetside Way spoke concerning the flooding. Her home did not get flooded but it came very close. She lives in fear of flooding because her husband is a paraplegic and she worries about getting him out if something does happen. They all have constant septic tank problems and have since the subdivision has been built.

Lloyd Copeland, resident from Brookfield state that he sympathizes with all the folks in the subdivision. His brother owns a shop; down the road from there and there have been many times he had to get irrigation pipe and pump the water out of his shop. He finally eliminated his problems by drain tiling his property which cost him \$30,000 to get this fixed and these folks are correct, it will happen again.

The County Manager advised Ms. Palmer in regard to her question concerning septic tanks that that is governed by the Tift County Board of Health which is a State Agency. We as the County have no control over those issues.

Carolyn Abell, 1802 Regent Road, addressed the Board concerning four (4) roads in Fox Hills she recently discussed with them, which are Hyde Park Lane, Abby Lane, Coventry and Regent Road. The April flooding caused severe damage to these roads. She stated that Hyde Park has been repaired and looks and travels much better than it did but nothing has been done on the other three roads. Jason Jordan, Projects Manager advised Ms. Abell that the pipe has been ordered for Abby Lane and should be installed by the end of the week. The paving bid was awarded to Scruggs Company on Coventry and Regent Road and weather permitting they will be paved this week.

Randy Sellars, resident at McInnis Mills addressed the Board and stated that telling the people in the subdivision or anybody in Tift County that they can purchase flood insurance is not a solution to the problem. There are many people that cannot afford flood insurance.

Beth Sellars, resident at McInnis Mills addressed the issue of the flood insurance that it is an added burden to these families. We are asking for your help and nothing has been done to even help clean up the mess out there.

The Chairman advised this group that we are doing all we can do and we are working on the problem but we cannot solve it over night, we cannot perform miracles.

The County Manager advised that the County has not for one minute put this situation on the back burner. We have been working with FEMA and GEMA every day. We have the, engineers and staff all looking at this situation and are doing all we are being allowed to do and will continue to try and find mitigation solutions and keep the residents updated.

Appointments: None

Public Hearings:

A. Presentation of 2009-2010 Proposed Operating Budget: The County Manager advised that the Board will hold the required Public Hearing on the 2009-2010 Operating Budget and will hear any public comments.

B. TC-SE-09-09: Petition from Michael and Molinda Wise for a Special Exception to locate a Manufactured Home in R-8 Zoning district at 35 Pecan Street on part of parcel T033 312 subject to plat approval and subject to plat approval and subject to (a) approval of a 72 square feet variance from the 800 square feet minimum floor area requirement or (b) addition of 72 square feet living area to the Manufactured Home within 6 months: Carl Fortson gave the nature of the request and the staff report. It comes to the Board with an approval from Planning and Zoning subject to plat approval and subject to (a) approval of a 72 square feet variance from the 800 square feet minimum floor area requirement or (b) addition of 72 square feet living area to the manufactured home within 6 months.

Items to be discussed for Regular Session on June 8, 2009:

C. Set the Tentative Millage rate for Tift County for 2009: The County Manager advised that there will be no increase in the Millage Rate and that the budget has been balanced without an increase.

D. Re-appointment of Laverne Land to the Tift County Board of Elections and Registration: The County Clerk advised that a letter had been received from Jean Edwards, Election Supervisor stating the recommendation of the Board of Elections is to reappoint Laverne land for another 4 year term which would expires in July 2013.

E. Re-appointment of Jo Griffeth, Dotty Royal and Eunice Mixon to the Tifton-Tift County Library Board: The County Clerk included for the Board's review documentation where the Library Board had changed their bylaws to allow for four three year terms rather than three that was previously in place. The recommendation of the Library Board is to reappoint Jo Griffeth, Dotty Royal and Eunice Mixon to serve another three year term as they all have expressed a desire to continue serving. If reappointed, their terms would expire June 2012.

F. Re-appointment of H. C. Medford to the Tift County Board of Family & Children Services: A letter has been received from the Director of Family & Children Services stating their Board recommends the reappointment of H. C. Medford who has expressed a desire to continue serving for another five year term expires June 2014.

G. Withdraw appointment of Jonathan Garvey to the Tifton-Tift County Planning & Zoning Board: The County Clerk advised the Board at a previous meeting Jonathan Garvey was appointed to the Planning and Zoning Board to replace the position held by Donna Miller. Since then, we have learned that this position is a City appointment and therefore for the record the appointment of Jonathan Garvey needs to be withdrawn. The Clerk advised that this application has been sent to the City for consideration of appointment.

H. Appointment to the Tifton-Tift County Zoning Board of Appeals: The County Clerk advised that since the resignation of Cal McMillan, there is a vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals. She has one application for the Board's consideration to appoint from Tony McBrayer.

I. Award bid for the purchase of a Sloper/Motorgrader for the Road Department: Richard Burr, Public Works Director has solicited bids for a new motorgrader. We are exercising our buy back on a motorgrader

purchased five years ago. The road Department is recommending the caterpillar motorgrader to keep our fleet uniform as it relates to the manufacture. The price difference is the caterpillar and the John Deere machine is minimal. This is a budgeted item.

J. Award bid for the purchase of a Mower for the Road Department: Richard Burr, Public Works Director has solicited bids for a new bat wing mower. Two bids were received with Stafford being the low bid in the amount of \$12,484. It is the recommendation to accept the low bid from Stafford. This is a budgeted item.

K. Award bid for the purchase of a Backhoe for the Road Department: Richard Burr, Public Works Director has solicited bids for a new backhoe which is a budgeted item. It is the recommendation of staff to accept the low bid from Stafford Equipment in the amount of \$71,516. Mr. Burr is also requesting permission to trade in the 1994 410D John Deere Backhoe.

L. Award bid for Bleachers for the Tift County Recreation Department: Craig Sowell, Recreation Director solicited bids for new bleachers to be put on the newly constructed soccer fields. Bids were received and opened at the designated time. It is the recommendation from staff to accept the low bid from Outdoor Aluminum in the amount of \$25,478. This is for 6 sets of 5 row 27 foot bleachers and the installation.

M. Appointment to Athletic Advisory Committee from May 2009 Meeting: Craig Sowell advised that this was a tabled item from the previous meeting. The other two applicants that were considered by the Athletic Advisory Board are included in the packets. It is still the recommendation of the Athletic Advisory Committee to appoint Jeff Robbins for a 3 year term to expire May 2012.

N. Award bid for Auditor: Leigh Jordan, Finance Director advised that she had solicited bids and has prepared a bid sheet from the three firms that responded. The low bid is from Mauldin and Jenks in the amount of \$46,000 for all three years. Staffs recommends accepting the low bid and continue the County's audit with Mauldin and Jenkins.

O. Award bid for Water Heater for the Jail Complex to be paid from Jail Construction Fund: The water heater that services the intake and administrative areas of the jail is beyond repair. Bids were sent out and we only received two responses that could actually meet the specs. Staff recommends accepting the low bid from Ken Clary & Company in the amount of \$7,840. Another company will have to do the installation of the water heater which is Central Plumbing in the amount of \$939.27 making the total of the transaction \$8,779.27 to be paid from the Jail Construction Fund.

P. Authorizing the Chairman to endorse State Rental Lease Agreements: Leigh Jordan, Finance Director reported that it is time to renew the leases with State Agencies for Fiscal Year 2010. There are not changes in the leases. Staff recommends the Chairman be authorized to sign the renewal rental lease with the Department of Veteran Service, Department of Public Safety and the Department of Juvenile Justice.

Q. Weather Radio Grant: Scot Bowers, E-911 Director advised the Board of this Weather Radio Grant and the goal of this project is to save lives and reduce injuries from severe weather events. The grant amount is \$13,323.80 and the money will be used to purchase weather radios for citizens and the labor of staff to program the radios for the citizens.

R. Renewal of Detail Work Agreement with the Georgia Department of Corrections: The Board was advised that this is a budgeted item in the amount of \$39,500. This is the renewal lease with the Department of Corrections for another year. The service they have provided has been an asset to Tift County and staff recommends authorizing the Chairman to sign the renewal lease for another year.

The Board agreed to place items D, E, F, G, H, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q and R on the Consent Agenda for the Regular Meeting.

County Manager Items:

- Requested two additions to the Regular Agenda:
 - (S) Request from the Tax Commissioner to remove properties from the Tax Digest
 - (T) Designation of an agent authorized to deal with FEMA & GEMA as it relates to financial assistance
- Requested an Executive Session for Legal and Personnel

Commissioners Comments:

Commissioner Chevers thanked Officer Hyman and other leaders that came out for the first meeting of the Crime Summit. She reminded everyone of the Clean Up on Hill Avenue this Saturday at 8 AM.

Commissioner Miley thanked the Road Department for the recent repairs on Sutton Road.

Vice Chairman Rigdon thanked everyone for their concerns during his recent illness and stated it was good to be back.

Commissioner Setters stated he had the opportunity to ride with the Tifton County Sheriff's Officers this past weekend and stated it is an experience that you will never forget. They do a fine job.

Executive Session: Motion was made by Commissioner Chevers to go into Executive Session for legal, and personnel seconded by Commissioner Hester. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Commissioner Hester to close Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Setters. Motion carried unanimously.

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

absent
Commissioner C. Michael Jones, District 6

ATTEST:

County Clerk