

## **WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

### **MINUTES FROM REGULAR MEETING HELD**

**JANUARY 5, 2009, AT 4:30 P.M.**

The White County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session at 4:30 P.M. in the Grand Jury Room of the White County Courthouse, Cleveland, Georgia. Present were: Chairman Travis C. Turner, Post 1 Commissioner Joe R. Campbell, Post 2 Commissioner Craig Bryant, County Manager Alton Brown, Chief Financial Officer Vickie Neikirk, HR Director Shanda Smallwood, and County Clerk Jean Welborn.

Chairman Turner called the meeting to order. After the pledge to the flag, Rev. Marc Turner brought the invocation.

Chairman Turner asked that everyone remember in prayer Michael Leahey and his family on the loss of a 32-year old son in a car accident. Chairman Turner also asked for prayer for the family of Rev. Asa Dorsey who passed away over the weekend and who was very influential in the ecumenical field in this area.

Chairman Turner asked for patience and assistance during the learning curve for his new position as Chairman.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, the minutes from the Regular Meeting held December 8, 2008 and Called Meeting of December 16, 2008 were unanimously adopted.

Chris Hollifield with Rushton & Company addressed the Commissioners on the results of the fy 2008 audit. Mr. Hollifield introduced Clay Pilgrim who worked with Mr. Hollifield on White County's audit. Mr. Hollifield was very complimentary of the financial staff and department heads on their job performance and their cooperation during the audit.

Mr. Hollifield went through a presentation, stating that they had issued a clean opinion; that they had looked at some areas that needed improvement, but there was nothing that would warrant anything less than a clean opinion.

Mr. Hollifield stated that the County had used some of the prior years' reserves to fund the budget; that the fund balance was now equivalent to about 2 ½ months of operation expenses; that this fund balance was a little below where he felt the County would want to be; that normally they like to see the fund balance to equal 3 to 4 months reserves of the annual 12-months expenditures; that in fy 2008, the County used, and budgeted to use, some of the prior year fund balance; that at the start of the year, the County had 3 to 4 months of the fund balance; that in fy 2007 the County also used some of the prior-year fund balance; that they needed to keep a close eye on these reserves.

Vickie Neikirk, Chief Financial Officer presented the County's Financial Report for November, 2008 (see attached). Teresa Stansel asked Ms. Neikirk where all the county funds were deposited. Ms. Neikirk stated that she would get a list to Ms. Stansel.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Chairman Turner, Commissioner Joe Campbell was unanimously elected as the Vice Chairman for the year 2009.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Bryant, the following Resolution was unanimously adopted:

**“WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2009- 1**

**A RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners wishes to amend the authorization for signatures on the accounts held by White County at Regions Bank of White County, Habersham Bank, Stephens Federal, Community Bank and Trust, United Community Bank, and Mountain Valley Community Bank;

**THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT:** The records of Regions Bank of White County, Habersham Bank, Stephens Federal, Community Bank and Trust, United Community Bank, and Mountain Valley Community Bank be amended to show that any Certificates of Deposit, withdrawals or checks written out of the Commission Accounts must bear signatures as follows:

1. On any payroll checks or on any payroll-related checks, any TWO of the following:

TRAVIS C. TURNER, COMMISSION CHAIRMAN;  
JOE R. CAMPBELL, POST 1 COMMISSIONER;  
CRAIG BRYANT, POST 2 COMMISSIONER;  
ALTON E. BROWN, COUNTY MANAGER; OR  
SHANDA SMALLWOOD, HR DIRECTOR;

2. On checks, other than payroll checks or payroll-related checks, in any amount, TWO of the following, with ONE signature being that of one of the County Commissioners:

TRAVIS C. TURNER, COMMISSION CHAIRMAN;  
JOE R. CAMPBELL, POST 1 COMMISSIONER;  
CRAIG BRYANT, POST 2 COMMISSIONER;  
ALTON E. BROWN, COUNTY MANAGER; OR  
SHANDA SMALLWOOD, HR DIRECTOR.

**IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED** that each of the above designees could affix his/her signature to such checks with a signature facsimile stamp, with each designee having the sole possession and control of his/her signature stamp.

Let the Clerk prepare an extract of these minutes for the records of Regions Bank of White County, Habersham Bank, Stephens Federal, Community Bank and Trust, United Community Bank, and Mountain Valley Community Bank.

**ADOPTED**, this 5<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2009.

s/Travis C. Turner  
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Travis C. Turner, Chairman

s/Joe R. Campbell  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe R. Campbell, Post 1

s/Craig Bryant  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Craig Bryant, Post 2

ATTEST:

s/Jean Welborn  
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Jean Welborn, County Clerk”

Upon motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, it was unanimously voted to award the bid on Fire Department hoses under the DHS/AFG grant to the lowest bidder, T & B Protection of Ellenwood, Georgia, for the amount of \$36,222.90, with the County's match being 10% of that amount.

The Board of Commissioners discussed the proposed relocation of the Mental Health Department from the Allen Mauney Community Center. Alton Brown stated that at the December 16, 2008 meeting, the former Chairman Nonnemaker unexpectedly proposed that the Tax Assessors' Office relocate from the Courthouse to those offices when vacated and that Mental Health use the small offices currently occupied by the DA's Office; that the then Chairman Nonnemaker later came by his office on December 23 and stated that he did not think that it was a good idea to split the Tax Assessors' Office from the Tax Commissioner's Office, especially when taking into consideration the lack of adequate parking at the Mauney Building. Mr. Brown stated that over the Holidays, he had received a call from one of the members of the Tax Assessors' Board who questioned the move. Mr. Brown stated that he suggested that under those circumstances, they get all department heads together to discuss this. The members of the Tax Assessor Board were present. Mr. Brown asked the Board of Tax Assessors what their recommendation would be. Mr. Payne, Chief Appraiser, stated that they wished to move to the Mauney Building; that they had outgrown their space in the Courthouse several years ago; that they had 900 square feet with 8 people in that space; that the proposed vacant space now occupied by the Mental Health Department had around 2,000 square feet; that they could talk privately with a tax payer if they had this additional space; that the new space would make a much better working environment.

Mr. Brown stated that his concern was with the citizens who would have to make two stops; that the parking situation would require some gravel to be spread in the open field and ask the employees to park in the gravel area.

Judge Barrett stated that it was logical to have the Tax Assessors' move because eventually they were wanting to make the present space a "Court" house: that Magistrate Judge Parks and her staff have to come into the courthouse through an open breeze way to go to the restroom; that this would give the Magistrate Court staff the office space now occupied by the Tax Assessors' Office.

Bryan Payne, Chief Appraiser, presented the Board of Commissioners with a proposed floor plan of the proposed use of the present Mental Health facilities (see copy attached).

Commissioner Campbell made a motion that once Charles Black Construction was finished with the renovations to the Courthouse, the DA's offices would move to their new facilities in the North alcove; that Mental Health would move to the existing DA's Office; that the Tax Assessors Office would move to the former Mental Health offices at the Mauney Building; that the Magistrate Court Offices would move into the vacated Tax Assessors' Offices; that Building Inspections could move into the vacated Magistrate Court's offices, which would save about \$11,000 per year on the rental of the present offices for building inspections. Commissioner Bryant seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Sheriff Walden stated that they needed to start advertising the change in location of the Tax Assessors' Office.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Bryant, **JAMES STATON** was unanimously re-appointed to a three-year term to expire December 31, 2011 on the **White County Tax Assessors' Board**.

The Board of Commissioners agreed that **Chairman Travis C. Turner** serve on the **White County Board of Health** until such time as he should appoint a designee for the position.

The Board of Commissioners agreed that they would interview the applicants for the Alcoholic Beverage Commission on Monday, January 12, 2009, beginning at 4:30 P.M.

The Board of Commissioners agreed that they would hold a planning work session on January 26, 2009, beginning at 4:30 P.M. at West Family Restaurant, Helen Highway, Cleveland, Georgia.

Minutes from Regular Meeting held January 5, 2009, Continued

The Board of Commissioners agreed to advertise for applicants to serve the balance of a term on the Board of Health created by the resignation of Carol Padgett. The Clerk, Jean Welborn, was asked to take care of this advertisement.

Teresa Stansel presented a prepared statement concerning her issue of unfair and unjust property tax assessments in White County (see copy attached). It was explained that the Tax Assessors' Office had to look at the sales in the prior year and stay within the State-mandated threshold of values in order to avoid paying a penalty to the State.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, the prepared forms for Alcoholic Beverage Ordinance, with changes suggested by David Syfan, were unanimously approved.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, the meeting was adjourned.

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Travis C. Turner, Chairman

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Joe R. Campbell, Post 1

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Craig Bryant, Post 2

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Jean Welborn, County Clerk