

WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2015 AT 4:30 P.M.

The White County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting on Monday, November 2, 2015 at 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room at the White County Administration Building. Present at the meeting were: Chairman Travis Turner, Commissioner Terry Goodger, Commissioner Lyn Holcomb, Commissioner Edwin Nix, Commissioner Craig Bryant, County Manager Michael Melton, County Attorney Bill House, Finance Director Vicki Mays, and County Clerk Shanda Murphy.

Chairman Turner called the meeting to order.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Mr. Dean Dyer provided the invocation.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Goodger there was a unanimous vote to adopt the minutes of the October 5, 2015 Regular Meeting and the October 26, 2015 Work Session and Called Meeting (including Executive Session Minutes).

Mr. George Wetzel of the National Weather Service presented the John Campanius Holm Award to Mr. Dean Dyer, honoring Mr. Dyer's volunteering as a National Weather Service Cooperative Observer for over 25 years. Ms. Bonnie Dyer, Dean Dyer's wife, was also honored for her years of service and support.

Upon presentation of proclamation to Ms. Sue Thompson, November 8-14 was designated as Family Week in White County.

Upon presentation of proclamation to Ms. Jessica Barrett, November 2015 was designated as Prematurity Awareness Month in White County.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Goodger, seconded by Commissioner Holcomb there was a unanimous vote to approve the following consent agenda:

- Approval of the 2016 grant application (for \$359,412.00 in funding) to the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) for the Appalachian Regional Drug Enforcement Office (ARDEO);
- Approval of an agreement wherein White County will serve as the agent in the purchase of a 2016 Ford Transit van for the White County Honor Guard according to terms of said agreement;
- Approval of 2014 SPLOST funding in the amount of \$20,500.00 for the purchase of a 2015 Dodge Grand Caravan for the White County Senior Center; and
- Approval of 2014 SPLOST Funding in the amount of \$5,753.00 for the equipping of the Coroner's transport vehicle.

-End of Consent Agenda-

Mr. Tom O'Bryant reviewed that the Alcohol Beverage Commission (ABC) had considered and denied Bill & Sherri Stephens' retail package alcohol license for Nana's Farmer's Market for the second time on October 22, 2015. Mr. O'Bryant stated that Mr. & Mrs. Stephens had submitted a complete application, however the ABC had once again denied this based on the business being in violation of the sign ordinance and continued complaints about the businesses by other nearby business owners.

Mr. Stephens spoke on behalf of Nana's Farmer's Market in bringing his appeal to the Board of Commissioners. He committed to following the alcohol ordinance if issued a license and commented that others in the area were also in violation of the sign ordinance. He spoke of the process he had been through up until this point and the money he had invested. Mr. Bryan Cantrell, a neighboring resident to the business, spoke in support of the Stephens / Nana's Farmer's Market.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Holcomb there was vote to overturn the denial by the Alcohol Beverage Commission (ABC) and grant the appeal for a retail package alcohol license to Bill and Sherri Stephens – Nana's Farmer's Market – contingent upon the business coming into compliant with the county sign ordinance within 60 days. Mr. Melton was assigned as the contact to meet with Mr. Stephens regarding requirements of the ordinance and to verify his compliance within the 60 days – with the remedy for any continued violation of the sign ordinance being revocation of the alcohol license by the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Nix stated that if there are others who are in violation of the sign ordinance – those violations need to be addressed and if the sign ordinance itself is the problem, the Board of Commissioners need to make the necessary revisions to the ordinance.

In considering Mr. Neil McLean's (on behalf of the Long Ridge Homeowner's Association) request for \$7,000.00 in repairs, for a damage claim in 2014, and a \$1,200.00 annual fee for the county's use of Daybreak Road in order to access emergency communication facilities – the Board discussed conflicting accounts of whether the county's contractor caused the damage being referenced, the occasional basis of the county's access of the tower site, and why the county would be assessed \$1,200.00 when a homeowner pays \$125 per year and a vacant lot owner pays \$100 per year.

Mr. Melton and Mr. David Murphy, Director of Public Safety, confirmed they had met with the county's contractor and he had explained that he had not caused the referenced damage. It was also discussed that this claim was in excess of the 12 month limit for filing a claim with the county – based on state law. Mr. Murphy stated that he had been dealing with the issues of access on Daybreak Road for ten (10) years and although the decision is in the Board's hands he does look forward to having a resolution to the matter. Commissioner Nix reminded the Board that the County does not own the property where the tower is located – the space is leased from Windstream, and other carriers are not paying for access to Daybreak Road.

November 2, 2015 – Regular Meeting Minutes (continued)

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Goodger, seconded by Commissioner Bryant there was a unanimous vote to deny the request made by Mr. McLean for damages (\$7,000.00) and annual access fee (\$1,200.00) related to the County's use of Daybreak Road to access emergency communication facilities.

Chairman Turner asked that Mr. Melton and Mr. Murphy meet with Mr. McLean and the contractor who did the work on the tower referenced in 2014 – in order to clear up the conflicting accounts of how and when the damage occurred.

Chairman Turner stated that preliminary results of the FY 2015 audit indicated that the Board would be able to move forward with pay adjustments before the end of the 2015 calendar year. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Holcomb there was a unanimous vote to implement the following longevity pay adjustment for county employees:

“Effective Date: 12/01/2015

Employees With Less Than 5 Years Of Continuous Service As Of 12/01/2015 Will Receive A 2.5% (1 Step) Pay Increase To Be Effective 12/01/2015.

Employees With 5 Or More Years Of Continuous Service As Of 12/01/2015 Will Receive A 5.0% (2 Step) Pay Increase To Be Effective 12/01/2015.

Employees Earning \$60,000.00 Or More Annually Will Be Capped At A 2.5% (1 Step) Increase Regardless Of Years Of Service.

Staff Is Researching Options For Longevity Based Pay Program In The Future – To Be Presented To The Board Within The Next 90 Days.

Approximate Cost For The Remainder Of The FY 16 Budget:

\$170,000.00 (6 Months)

\$340,000.00 (12 Months)”.

Chairman Turner stated that this action was possible, due to most departments staying well below their approved budgets during the last fiscal year.

Commissioner Nix stated that the County spends a lot of money “certifying” many different positions and that it is very costly to the County when those certified employees leave employment early on.

Sheriff Neal Walden expressed his appreciation to the Board for the pay increase they were providing to the employees.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Holcomb, seconded by Commissioner Nix there was a unanimous vote to approve the award documents for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant through the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in the amount of \$94,640.00 (requiring a 20% minimum local match of \$23,660.00) for construction of 3.25 miles of multi-

November 2, 2015 – Regular Meeting Minutes (continued)

use trails with informational kiosk and trailhead signage at Yonah Preserve – total project \$118,300.00.

Chairman Turner stated that SORBA (Southern Off Road Bicycling Association) would be partnering with the County on the project for the recreational trails at Yonah Preserve.

Ms. Vicki Mays, Finance Director, presented the monthly financial status report (see attached).

Mr. Melton stated that the Board of Commissioners were aware that the County was in the process of updating the comprehensive plan and part of updating the comp plan was the review and updating of the Service Delivery Strategy with the cities of Helen and Cleveland. He stated that the update would be due in February 2016 – all of which is required by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) in order for the County to maintain qualified local government status.

Chairman Turner asked that Mr. Melton provide the Board with a copy of the current Service Delivery Strategy and that this item be placed on the November Work Session Agenda.

Chairman Turner opened the floor for public participation.

Ms. Linda Doll with “Friends of the White County Libraries” expressed appreciation to the Board of Commissioners for their commitment of funding to the White County Library. She stated that “Friends” had raised over \$12,000.00 for the libraries in the past 18 months.

Ms. Teresa Stansel spoke about her property being wrongfully zoned residential as opposed to agriculture. She complained of her and other women who had filed remonstrance are, not receiving a response from the Board of Commissioners.

Chairman Turner asked that Ms. Murphy contact Ms. Stansel and arrange a date / time to meet with Mr. Melton in order to review the matters of concern to Ms. Stansel. He also asked Mr. Melton to make available the paperwork needed to reclassify Ms. Stansel’s property to Ms. Stansel.

Ms. Cindy Bailey, President of the White County Chamber of Commerce, thanked the Board of Commissioners for their support of the Chamber of Commerce. She briefed the Commissioners on various advertising / marketing campaigns in progress.

Ms. Barbara Gray asked the Board of Commissioners if any of her constitutional rights would be taken away if she changed her property from residential classification to agriculture classification.

Ms. Gray was asked to provide Mr. Melton with her contact information in order that he could provide her with the needed information on classification.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Nix, seconded by Commissioner Bryant there was a unanimous vote to enter into Executive Session in order to discuss personnel.

November 2, 2015 – Regular Meeting Minutes (continued)

-See Attached Closed Meeting Affidavit-

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Nix there was a unanimous vote to exit Executive Session.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Holcomb, seconded by Commissioner Nix there was a unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting.

The minutes of the November 2, 2015 Regular Meeting are hereby approved as stated this 7TH day of December, 2015.

WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

s/Travis C. Turner

Travis C. Turner, Chairman

s/Terry D. Goodger

Terry D. Goodger, District 1

s/Lyn Holcomb

Lyn Holcomb, District 2

s/Edwin Nix

Edwin Nix, District 3

s/Craig Bryant

Craig Bryant, District 4

s/Shanda Murphy

Shanda Murphy, County Clerk