



Miller County

Board of Commissioners

179 S. Cuthbert St.

Colquitt, Ga 39837



REGULAR SESSION MEETING
10/11/2021, 6:00 P.M., Courthouse Courtroom
MINUTES

Present: Chairman Kreg Freeman, Vice-Chairman Ladon Calhoun, Commissioner Allen Worsley, and Commissioner Niki Nixon. Others Present: Faye Whittaker, Jajuan Bowen, Doug Cofty, Austin Lambert, Josh Suggs, Rodney Bryan, William Smith, Jarret Mock, Cody Hamilton.

Chairman Freeman calls the meeting to order. Regular session 09/13/2021 and called for a moment of silent prayer then the pledge of allegiance.

HOUSEKEEPING:

Chairman Freeman calls the meeting to order. Regular session 10/11/2021, Chairman Freeman asked William Smith to give the prayer. Chairman Freeman called for the pledge of allegiance.

Chairman Freeman called for the approval of the agenda Commissioner Worsley made motion to approve agenda, Vice Chairman Calhoun seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Chairman Freeman called for approval for the regular session minutes, Commissioner Nixon made the motion to approve, Seconded by Vice Chairman Calhoun, all in favor, motion carried.

Faye Whittaker advised Chairman Freeman that Winston Trively from Crooked Oak Golf Course wanted to make an appearance in reference to Grounds equipment and SPLOST. Chairman Freeman asked the board if that was ok to add to the agenda, Vice Chairman Calhoun made the motion to add, Commissioner Nixon seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

FINANCIALS:

Chairman Freeman called for approval on accounts payable, Commissioner Worsley made a motion to approve, Vice Chairman Calhoun seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Chairman Freeman called for a motion to approve financial reports, Vice Chairman Calhoun made a motion to approve with Commissioner Worsley seconding, motion carried.

APPEARANCES:

Winston Trively, Crooked Oak Golf Course – Gave an update on the golf course, stated there has been almost 40 inches of rain at golf course. He stated that had 19 greens that have been re-grassed, and 14 of 19 are in good shape. Mr. Trively stated the golfers who have played on the new greens love them and think they are heading towards better. He stated that he was there for SPLOST equipment today and presented the board a quote for 2 greens mowers. He stated he arrived at the golf course in 2006 and inherited 2 John Deere mowers that were purchased by the previous manager used. He then went on to stated that in 2011 they purchased 2 greens mowers from auction in Moultrie at a turf grass sale. Mr. Trively explained the importance of mowing the tees and greens with good equipment and stated he has held off on doing this as long as he could. He stated they need to move the current greens mowers to the tee boxes and purchase new greens mowers. Mr. Trively then asked if the board had any question. Chairman Freeman stated that he didn't know if the recreation SPLOST had enough to cover that amount and asked when he had to have the equipment. Mr. Trively stated that with the supply chain issues the mowers would be on a February delivery date. He stated that they could not operate the golf course on 1 green mower. He stated that the 2 mowers were vital to the operation. Chairman Freeman stated they needed to study on the matter, he stated the board needed time to look over it all. Vice Chairman Calhoun asked Winston when he needed the equipment and could he hold off until the next meeting. The board stated they were meeting next week and wanted until then to decide.

Electoral Board update – Judge Suggs. Judge Suggs just wanted to inform the board that the resolution was emailed to Doug Cofty so we can amend it to fit Miller County and have the county attorney look over it and get it submitted. He stated we needed to do all this by January.

OLD BUSINESS:

Commissioners Office move – Chairman Freeman asked Doug Cofty about the move, Doug stated he was working with Cody about moving the files and stuff up to a front room in the Family Resource Center and address the rest of it. Chairman Freeman stated we are going to get some prices on temporary walls and a window, we are getting everything together. Chairman Freeman Asked if there were any questions. Commissioner Worsley stated to get them out as quick as possible. Chairman Freeman then stated that they had a potential buyer for the Commissioners off and that advised the board to think of a figure. Commissioner Worsley asked what offer they have made, Chairman Freeman stated they haven't made an offer but wanted the building and he didn't feel it would fall through. Chairman Freeman stated they wanted it as is and they would do what needed to be done.

Sheriff's Department Lawsuit – OLD, Doug Cofty advised there is no new information on that.

Chairman Freeman asked if the board looked over the information. Doug Cofty asked the Chairman if that was the new lawsuit, he stated yes. Chairman Freeman advised the board that there was nothing to act on tonight but to just be aware of the suit. Commissioner Worsley asked did we see that they had Scott Worsley still listed on the letter. Doug Cofty advised yes that they also had old commissioners listed but that it was a legitimate law firm but that there was a lot of typos and errors in the letter, advised he spoke with the sheriff about it already. Seems like the law firm rush the letter

but that it has been forwarded to ACCG. Chairman Freeman stated there was nothing to do with that now.

Fueling Station - Doug Cofty gave an update on the fueling station, advised that the fuel pumps and card reader had been installed today and that they would be coming back tomorrow to finish up. Doug advised that several companies were interested in providing the fuel and that we needed that this coming week. Doug then advised that he had quotes on the metal building that would be covering the fueling area. Chairman Freeman presented the 2 options for the building with recommendation to go with the sturdier building at 15,433.00. Chairman Freeman called for a motion to go with the heavier building, Commissioner Worsley made the motion with Vice Chairman Calhoun seconding it, all in favor, motion carried.

Arts Council – Chairman Freeman reminded the board of Krista Ticktin's presentation and stated they would give her a decision at this meeting. Chairman Freeman explained that the money would be used to help restore the apartments that were damaged during the hurricane. He advised it would be on a matching deal when they raised their part the county would give their amount. Commissioner Worsley asked where the money was coming from, Chairman Freeman stated it was some of the COVID money from ARPA. He asked if the board was ok with that and stated he couldn't remember if it was 70,000 or 75,000, Commissioner Worsley stated he thought it was 75,000.00. Vice Chairman Calhoun stated we need to make sure that is where the money goes and that it would only be paid out when they had the matching funds. Commissioner Worsley made the motion with Commissioner Nixon seconding it, all in favor, motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Purchasing and payables – Faye Whittaker, Finance Director addressed the board, Chairman Freeman asked Faye was this about the Sheriff's department, Ms. Whittaker answered yes. She then stated that most all the bills are now going over there, and commissioner office doesn't see them, she stated the main problem they are running into is that when they get the paperwork from the sheriff's department the check request will state a different date than when accounts payable receives them, she gave an example of one where the check request date was September 29 but it was not received at the commission office up until October 7th, she then states the invoice date was 8/24 so by the time she gets them its already going to be late. She presents another dated 8/12 and they received it from the sheriff's department the 19th, invoice date 7/29. Ms. Whittaker stated she has example after example. Chairman Freeman asked was it stamped with the check request and Ms. Whittaker stated it was written out. She stated that we are about to have some turn over because Jill the current accounts payable clerk is moving and that if the invoices are late, we will have to charge it back to the departments. She stated this past month one of the local vendors Moore's was paid for all the invoices from all the other departments but the sheriff's office because they didn't get them and that it even makes the vendors jobs harder because now, they are receiving multiple checks, she states she didn't know because most all of them do not come to the commissioner's office anymore.

Chairman Freeman stated they talked about that last month and where were they at with contacting the vendors and having them start sending back to the commission

office, Faye stated nothing was every decided by the board. Commissioner Nixon along with Commissioner Worsley stated we need to get something from the lawyer, Chairman Freeman stated he spoke with the county attorney who stated that we must do whatever we had to do to keep order in the office. Ms. Whittaker then stated we have got to come up with some type of payable system where if they are not turned in by the Friday before they will not be paid the following week because we may get a stack of 90 something pages at one time, it takes a while to get them entered, print the checks then get the checks signed. If we get them 5 days before they are due there is no way, it will be paid on time. And when we are audited and they look at just the check requests, it's going to look like they sent it in plenty of time, but it was sent several days later. She then brings up another example stating this one is dated 8/31 but we got it on September 9th, which it makes it look like we aren't doing our job. Chairman Freeman asked if we had email copies and he was told yes, we have email documentation.

Chairman Freeman then stated again what the county attorney told him; you all must do whatever you need to do to get business in order up there. He then stated that the attorney stated you could give the sheriff 1/12th of his budget each month but that there would be zero oversight and that is where we would be if we go that route. If we give him the money to pay the bills, you will not know what's going on, you will not get copies of itemized receipts if they go out of town that is where you are going to be with it. Commissioner Nixon asked so he would be paying his own bills if we did the 1/12th? Chairman Freeman stated that is right, it would be payroll, bills and even healthcare. That they would have to send us a check if we had to pay it out of ours that is not good. Vice Chairman Calhoun said that would be a big mess and Commissioner Nixon agreed that would be a problem. Commissioner Worsley stated he didn't see what the issue was down there, if it's being sent to the sheriff's department why can't they go ahead and forward it up here. Ms. Whittaker stated she was told that sometimes they are late is because they have to wait for the department head to sign, before they have had stamps, but she didn't know if they didn't want to do the stamps, she didn't know. Vice Chairman Calhoun asked even if we call the vendors and have them send them to us, Ms. Whittaker stated even if we do that, we are not supposed to pay them until the department head signs off on them, so we still have to send them over there and wait for the department head to sign off on them and send back, but at least we would know what bills are out there then. Chairman Freeman state we just need to have a sit-down meeting with him and tell him where we are at with this and what we want to do because if we have go that other route there's no oversight and we don't need that whatsoever.

Commissioner Worsley asked that if you give the department head that much money, they can spend the money however they want to. Vice Chairman Calhoun stated pretty much there isn't no oversight, he would be doing pretty good until about November then he would need some more money, he knows how that works. Commissioner Worsley stated he is just saying, you would hope that they would pay their bills, he then stated he isn't just talking about that department he is meaning any department. Chairman Freeman stated that no other departments in the county are running like that, that they are going by what we have been running on for the last 30 years. Jajuan Bowen asked to address the board, then stated that if you gave then money to departments like that your audit fees would go up. Ms. Whittaker stated she knows that at times it could their office that made the mistakes, everyone makes mistakes at times, but she doesn't like that it looks like it is being sent and we are just not paying them when we are not getting them 5 or 6 days after. Commissioner Worsley stated he agreed it doesn't look good on

the county if we are not paying the bills. Chairman Freeman again stated we just need to have a meeting with him and go from there. Commissioner Worsley stated he spoke to the Sheriff, and he said he didn't see a big deal about it. Chairman Freeman stated he agree about the credit card stuff to work with us but that isn't happening.

Delinquent Mobile Home Taxes – Doug Cofty stated that Jennifer had given him the information they requested, the packet contains both the ones that are still present and ones that have been moved. Chairman Freeman stated that she had it marked take offers or that they didn't get a permit to move it and was going to try to do collect it. He read the notes on the papers stated, Can file with magistrate. Judge Suggs stated there was a process for mobile homes, but he felt it could be. Vice Chairman Asked is there any way to find out who moved them or if it was a licensed person who moved them. The board reviewed the ones that were delinquent. Chairman Freeman asked Judge Suggs what exactly was the process, Judge Suggs stated that isn't something he deals with regularly and would have to check. Doug Cofty advised the board that Chief appraiser Cody Hamilton sent a text and stated he would be there in a few minutes to explain. Chairman Freeman stated ok, and they would move on and come back to it.

Employee Pay – ARPA Funds – Chairman Freeman stated that Jennifer the Tax Commissioner had a request for ARPA funds to pay employee pay. Chairman Freeman asked what it was about and Doug Cofty stated that on page 46 that was the list of counties that either decided to give the funds or declined. Doug stated that he spoke with Decatur County, and they would be voting on that tomorrow. He stated that is just something going around. He then advised the board that the Governor signed off to give all first responders such as Law enforcement, e911, EMS and Jail Officers \$1000.00 and \$300.00 to volunteer firefighters, so that maybe were this is coming from, and the board would have to vote to do it. Chairman Freeman asked was that money coming out of a different pool of money. Doug advised that the money the first responders were getting was from the states portion of ARPA. Faye Whittaker stated that if they choose to give it, it will come out of the county's ARPA. Chairman asked didn't the county already give them \$100.00 for something like this already last year, Ms. Whittaker stated that was extra for the Christmas bonus. Chairman Freeman asked was there a deadline for this, Doug stated no there wasn't and that he had spoken with Jennifer and told her that ACCG stated it was a good idea but recommended waiting until the county received the second half of the money and to use the first half for projects and such. Chairman Freeman asked the board if they wanted to table it, the board stated yes. Chairman Freeman stated they would table that and give it some thought.

DFAC Board Appointment – Chairman Freeman stated that there was a recommendation for the DFAC board the recommendation was to appoint Joan Simpson, Chairman asked the board did they want to go with that, Commissioner Worsley made the motion, Vice Chairman Calhoun seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Resolution for Southwest Georgia Regional Commission – Doug Cofty advised the board that is a resolution that is signed by each county annually. Chairman Freeman asked the board for permission to sign the resolution. Commissioner Worsley made motion, Vice Chairman Calhoun seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Recreation Board – Chairman Freeman stated that somethings came up at the last city council meeting and that it was tabled until the Chairman and Mayor could meet. Chairman stated there was a resolution drawn up several years ago but never got

adopted because the city that stated rec director answered to the board of commissioners, he stated that the county attorney was working on some things and modifying the resolution but that it needed to be tabled until the attorney could get things to them. The board agreed to table it.

Chairman Freeman stated he had 2 requests for road work, he stated one was on Mounty Olive Church Rd about a drain pipe, he stated he thought the road department had done work in that area and maybe there before, it was a while ago and didn't know if that was it or it got fixed. He stated that the other was on Newberry Chambers Road and that the board had talked about this situation before but could not remember who brought it up. The problem is there are trees down on private property that belongs to Bonnie Chambers, he asked did they recall. Commissioner Worsley stated he remembered something about ditches being stopped up, Chairman Freeman stated that he has gotten a complaint from someone who lives on the road and stated this year it is almost where they cannot get out in any direction. Chairman Freeman stated he didn't know if we needed to get an easement to be able to get on the property and remove the trees, he stated the resident said it was the trees that was blocking the natural movement of the water. Chairman Freeman stated it was talked about but didn't know who it was that brought it up. Commissioner Nixon stated she remembered that as well, Commissioner Worsley stated he thought it was Jerry Bush who brought it up when he was on the commission. Commissioner Worsley asked if there would be any issues, Chairman Freeman stated he did not know, we needed to get with EPD to find out. Vice Chairman asked is that something EMA Director Debbie Henry could go look at, Chairman Freeman stated he she can't go look at it unless someone made a request, whether it was the board or the resident. Chairman Freeman asked if Tim Fowler was still the EPD man and we needed to get up with him, he stated he would bring the map to Doug. Vice Chairman Calhoun asked was it right before you got to Ms. Bonnies, Commissioner Worsley stated yes. Vice Chairman Calhoun asked would she allow us to go onto her property, Commissioner Worsley stated he didn't know but that the board needs to make sure we dot all Is' and cross all Ts' to cover ourselves. The board discussed the ditches and trees that were down from hurricane Michael.

Chairman Freeman stated Cody Hamilton was present and they would go back to the Mobile home taxes, Chairman Freeman asked Cody is he would tell them what to do about the mobile homes. Cody stated the job duties were changed with the resolution not requiring decals. He stated that with doing away with the decals the board assessor does not have authority anymore. He stated several years ago the previous chief appraiser used to write all the citations and the sheriff was supposed to deliver them to the home owners, she stated none of the sheriffs wanted to do it so it fell to the way side and the only way to make them pay that was through to board of assessors issuing citations. Cody stated there is no permit required to move a mobile home outside of the county but there was a permit to move it within the county. Cody then discussed several mobile homes listed in the packet and stated there was one that he and Doug discussed last week and that the owner stated it was moved in 2018 but that it was here earlier this year. He stated the board of assessors was writing policy where the homeowner or property owner had to show proof the mobile home was removed before January 1st, proof of landfill permit, demo permit or something showing it was moved outside of the county because if the board assessor writes them off it is taking money that should have been collected by the tax commissioner out of the county. Commissioner Worsley asked Cody about a mobile home that was destroyed by the hurricane and shouldn't they have come up and told them it was destroyed, Cody stated

a lot had but he didn't know the one Commissioner Worsley was referencing. Cody stated if it was destroyed, the board of assessor's policy is to assess what is there at \$1.00 per sq. foot, he stated that policy was put into place because of state law where you have to have a value of anything in the county, so to be far they set \$1.00 per sq. ft. that can't be powered, a house that cannot be powered is also valued at \$1.00 per sq. ft. Commissioner Worsley asked is there anything we can do about this, Cody stated the Tax commissioner could do something if the homeowner was the landowner, in some counties they place the fees on the vehicle tag, He stated he didn't think the tax commissioner was willing to do that, but the commissioners could ask her. Cody stated there are some measures that she can take but not a lot.

Chairman Freeman stated that the tax commissioner had a note written on the pages that stated the county or the tax assessor could file with magistrate, Cody stated you could but not anymore. Chairman Freeman and Commissioner Worsley asked if the resolution was reversed would they have any teeth to do something, he stated the tax assessor would be able to issue citations again but that it would be up to the sheriff to serve them. Chairman Freeman stated and if he didn't, we would be right back in the same situation. Cody stated that they can write citations all day but if the sheriff didn't serve them there is nothing that they can do, the money would stay on the books and the tax commissioner would have to try to collect it. Chairman Freeman stated he isn't big on going back and reversing something if you aren't going to be able to do anything. The board stated there is a meeting Oct 20th and they would discuss it with the sheriff then decide.

Chairman Freeman asks for a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Worsley makes motion, Vice Chairman seconded, all in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned.