

Houston County Commissioners Meeting
March 19, 2024
Warner Robins, Georgia

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at the Houston County Annex in Warner Robins, Georgia, with Chairman Perdue presiding and Commissioners Byrd, Gottwals, Robinson, and Talton present. County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Robbie Dunbar, and Director of Operations Brian Jones were also present.

Commissioner Robinson led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar gave the Invocation.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the minutes from the March 5, 2024 meeting.

County Attorney Tom Hall conducted a second reading of a proposed repeal of Section 14-1 of Chapter 14; Article I of the Houston County Code of Ordinances titled Board of Adjustment and Appeals.

The first reading of this proposed amendment to the Houston County Code of Ordinances was held at the March 5, 2024 meeting. Public notification of the proposed amendment was published in the Houston Home Journal legal section for three consecutive weeks. A copy of the proposed amendment was on file at the Superior Court Clerk's office for examination and inspection by the public.

Chairman Perdue closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened a Public Hearing.

There being no comments, Chairman Perdue closed the Public Hearing and reopened the regular portion of the meeting.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve an amendment to the Houston County Code of Ordinances to REPEAL Sec. 14-1 of the Houston County Code of Ordinances.

The section to be repealed reads as follows:

Sec. 14-1. - Board of adjustments and appeals.

There is hereby established a board of adjustments and appeals for the county. This board is to consist of one licensed architect, one engineer or general contractor and five other people involved in some capacity in the building business.

County Attorney Tom Hall conducted a second reading of a proposed amendment to Section 2-274(f) of the Houston County Code of Ordinances regarding Reserve Fund Policies.

The first reading of this proposed amendment to the Houston County Code of Ordinances was held at the March 5, 2024 meeting. Public notification of the proposed amendment was published in the Houston Home Journal legal section for three consecutive weeks. A copy of the proposed amendment was on file at the Superior Court Clerk's office for examination and inspection by the public.

Chairman Perdue closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened a Public Hearing.

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There being no comments Chairman Perdue closed the Public Hearing and reopened the regular portion of the meeting.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve an amendment to the Houston County Code of Ordinances Section 2-274(f) to increase the goal for the general fund reserve to at least six months of the general fund budget, instead of three months.

The amended Section 2-274(f) shall read as follows:

Sec. 2-274 – Reserve fund policies.

(f) The general fund may maintain all five classifications of fund balance. Houston County will strive to accumulate an unassigned general fund reserve at least equal to six months of the total general fund budget.

Mr. Byrd commented that this action was a strong and sound fiscal policy.

Chairman Perdue stated that property taxes take a few months to be collected and that by having these reserve funds the County will not have the need to take out tax anticipation notes.

Ms. Robinson presented a request for the use of county roads for the upcoming Annual “Run 2 End Alzheimer’s at the Landings” to benefit the Georgia Alzheimer’s Association.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the use of county roads for the upcoming Annual “Run 2 End Alzheimer’s at the Landings” to benefit the Georgia Alzheimer’s Association. This event will take place on Saturday, April 6, 2024. The Landing Pointe Plaza in Bonaire will serve as both the start and finish for the 5K and 10K runs. The Sheriff’s Department has agreed to help with traffic control.

Chairman Perdue thanked Mr. Rowlands for his efforts to support the Alzheimer’s Association through this race.

Mr. Talton presented a request for authorization to allow Chairman Perdue, Director of Administration Robbie Dunbar, and Chief Financial Officer Danyelle George to establish a deposit account with Morris Bank, in accordance with Houston County’s financial policies.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Gottwals to approve the establishment of a fixed term CD at Morris Bank for a term of 12 months at 5% in the amount of \$2,000,000.00. This investment will be purchased from the Water Fund – Renewal and Extension Investments. Upon voting Mr. Talton, Mr. Gottwals, and Ms. Robinson voted yes. Mr. Byrd abstained. Motion approved.

Chairman Perdue advised that the county had CD’s that were expiring at Bank of America, so the county is moving these funds over to Morris Bank and back into CDs.

Mr. Talton presented a request for approval of an Intergovernmental Memorandum of Agreement between the Houston County Board of Commissioners and the City of Warner Robins for the relocation of underground City utilities for the Elberta Road Widening Project Phase 2.

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Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve the signing of an Intergovernmental Memorandum of Agreement between the Houston County Board of Commissioners and the City of Warner Robins for the portion of the Project for City Utility Relocation for the Elberta Road Widening Project Phase 2.

Mr. Talton presented a request to enter an Option to Purchase with Garrette Martin Excavating & Hauling, Inc., for property located on Old Perry Road.

Chairman Perdue advised that Mr. Martin had previously agreed to a purchase price but that now this did not seem to be the case. He asked Director of Operations Brian Jones if he had heard back from Mr. Martin.

Mr. Jones stated that Mr. Martin was not prepared to sign the option to purchase agreement at this time.

Chairman Perdue commented that in light of this new information, tabling this agenda item would probably be the best course of action to take.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to table the signing of an Option to Purchase with Garrette Martin Excavating & Hauling, Inc., of Bonaire, Georgia, for purchase of property described below:

All that tract or parcel of land situate, lying and being in Land Lot 12 of the Eleventh (11th) Land District of Houston County, Georgia, being known and designated as Tract 1, containing 2.25 more or less acres, according to a plat of survey being of record in Plat Book 49, Page 40, Clerk's Office, Houston Superior Court. Said plat and the record thereof are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

Mr. Gottwals presented an amendment to a current contract between Correcthealth Houston, LLC, and the Houston County Sheriff's Office.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the signing of an amendment between the Correcthealth Houston, LLC of Atlanta, Georgia, and the Houston County Sheriff's Department. The amendment, for the term of March 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, will change the monthly rate to \$181,807.40 for a maximum of 600 inmates.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request to change the vacant Treatment Plant Lead Operator (#3053) to Lab Analyst II position (#3055) in the Water Department effective March 20, 2024.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the change to the Houston County Position Control Listing deleting the Treatment Plant Lead Operator (#3053) position and creating a Lab Analyst II position (#3055) effective March 20, 2024. Also, to give accounting approval to make any necessary changes.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request to fill the vacant Heavy Equipment Operator position at the Landfill.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve the hiring of Mr. Jamie Hernacki, to fill the vacant Heavy Equipment Operator position at the Landfill, at Grade 13 Step C effective March 19, 2024. Staff has reviewed his qualifications, and he does exceed the requirements of the C step.

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Chairman Perdue explained that hiring any employee beyond an A step requires approval by the Commissioners.

Mr. Byrd presented a request to release a letter of credit and accept a portion of a road for maintenance purposes.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the release of SunMark's Letter of Credit #132/516723800, upon expiration. Also, to accept the following road recorded for maintenance purposes (ref. PB 83/ PG 168):

Street Name	Street Length	Speed Limit
Old Windmill Road	1684 ft or 0.31 miles	25mph

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$2,428,603.46.

Chairman Perdue closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened Public Comments.

Mr. Jeffrey Light and Mr. Ed Fuller, of Brown Drive, both spoke about issues involving dirt bikes driving and racing up and down their road causing safety and noise issues. Both individuals said they had contacted the Sheriff's Office for assistance with these motorcyclists, and that the Sheriff's Office had sent deputies twice. They stated that with this being an ongoing problem they were reaching out to the Commissioners for help and assistance.

Chairman Perdue advised them to speak with Director of Administration Robbie Dunbar after the meeting to exchange information and that the Commissioners would assist in helping the residents of Brown Drive with this issue.

There being no further comments, Chairman Perdue closed the Public Comments portion of the meeting.

Chairman Perdue then opened the floor for Commissioner's Comments.

Mr. Byrd commented about the 2024 Southern Divisional Championship swim meet held at the Tommy Stalnaker Aquatic Center over the weekend, and how well attended the event was. He also said it was great to see all of those visitors coming into Houston County. He then mentioned the opening ceremonies of the Warner Robins American Little League season opening also held over the weekend. He also mentioned that Commissioner Talton was a coach with the Warner Robins American Little League.

Mr. Talton also commented on the Warner Robins Little League and the support it receives from the community. He also spoke on the fiscal stewardship of the County stating that it is due to the efforts and hard work of County staff.

Ms. Robinson thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She also thanked people for their involvement in the County and the matters before the board.

Mr. Gottwals expressed his appreciation to the staff for their work and involvement in developing these agendas for each Commissioners meeting. He then commented on the short meeting, saying that although short that much had been accomplished. He concluded his comments by mentioning that Good Friday and Easter were coming up and the message was not of just renewal or good things to come but of one specific person and what they had done.

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Chairman Perdue stated that the April Commissioners meeting dates were changed. He stated they had been pushed back a week due to Spring Break holidays, to allow staff to spend more time with their families. He announced the meeting dates as follows; April 9th at 9:00 am at the Perry Courthouse, and April 23rd at 5:00 pm at the Annex in Warner Robins. He next recognized March as being Women's History Month and commented on the impact and contributions that women have made in our country over the years. He also spoke about his Aunt Betty Griffin who was the first female commissioner in Houston County from 1980-1982, taking over the Commissioner seat for her husband Jimmy Griffin who passed away. He closed his comments by saying he was appreciative of all the women in his life who are in his family, those who are County employees and for the one who serves with him on the Board of Commissioners.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all. Meeting adjourned.

Robbie Dunbar
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner