

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting
February 7, 2023
Perry, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday February 7, 2023, at the Houston County Courthouse in Perry, Georgia, with Chairman Perdue presiding and Commissioners Byrd, Gottwals, Robinson, and Talton present. Also present were County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Robbie Dunbar, Director of Operations Brian Jones, Director of Personnel Ken Carter, Director of Purchasing Mark Baker, Community Planner Jake Cox, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, Fire/HEMA Chief Chris Stoner, Solid Waste Superintendent Terry Dietsch, District Attorney William Kendall.

Commissioner Gottwals led the Invocation.

Military speaker, Lt. Col. Gerry Thompson, who is the Commander of the 12th Airborne Command & Control Squadron at RAFB, spoke of his career. Lt. Col. Thompson, a native of Arkansas, enlisted in the USAF in 1995 out of high school and began his military career in weather forecasting with his first post in Germany. During his career he was stationed at various bases and locations with promotions and responsibilities increasing at each new move. Attending Officer Candidate School at Maxwell AFB, Lt. Col. Thompson began his career as an officer and deployed internationally on various occasions and began his administrative career as he increased in rank. Lt. Col. Thompson and his family came to Robins AFB in 2007 and began his flying career with the JSTARS platform and has risen to be the Commander of the 12th ACC Squadron at Robins. Lt. Col. Thompson, and his wife who is a teacher at Peach County High School, have two adult daughters.

John Trussell, a member of the Central GA Region of the Georgia Sons of the American Revolution, presented a commissioned painting of President George Washington visiting Savannah in 1791. The painting depicts not only President Washington, but also John Houstoun, former Governor of Georgia and Savannah mayor, whom Houston County is named after. Mr. Trussell gave a brief history of President Washington's visit to Savannah and Governor Houstoun and recognized members of the SAR (Sons of the American Revolution) and DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) who were present at the Board of Commissioners meeting as well.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the minutes from the meeting of January 17, 2023.

Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews presented Special Exception Applications #2653 - #2657.

County Attorney Tom Hall made a blanket statement for the benefit of all applicants for Special Exceptions for home occupations that even if the Board of Commissioners approves an application, neighborhood covenants may still impose certain restrictions upon or against home occupation businesses. These restrictive covenants are superior to any action taken by the Board of Commissioners. The actions taken by the Board will not change any provision within the covenant that prohibits any commercial or business activity.

Chairman Perdue opened a Public Hearing on the presented Special Exception Applications.

Special Exception Application #2653 was present, there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2654 was present, there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2655 was not present.

Special Exception Application #2656 was present, there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2657 was present, there was no opposition.

As there were no comments, Chairman Perdue closed the Public Hearing and reopened the regular portion of the meeting.

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Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Gottwals and carried unanimously by all to approve the following applications to include any and all stipulations as noted on the Zoning & Appeals recommendation and Section 95 Requirements staff report:

#2653	Elvin M. Cruz Melo	Taxi Service
#2654	Thomas & Kamerin Bazemore	Special Events Facility
#2656	Woon Pak	Sewing & Alterations
#2657	Frank Bragg	Clearing & Mulching

And to table application #2655, submitted by Candace Wilder, for a Vintage Furniture and Collections business.

Mr. Andrews advised all applicants on the next step in the process which would be obtaining their business licenses through the Commissioner's office.

Mr. Byrd presented the first amendment to the Ground Lease between the Board of Commissioners of Houston County and Central Georgia Soccer Association. This amendment will change the term of the lease to start February 7, 2023 and end February 7, 2035. Also, to amend it to have an automatic renewal of ten years with an eleven month notice to void the lease.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton and carried unanimously by all to approve the signing of First Amendment to Ground Lease with Central Georgia Soccer Association. This amendment will change the term of the lease and the automatic renewal.

Mr. Byrd recognized the CGSA for the work they do for the youth in Houston County and said his own son participated in the organization and said it allows the County to participate in recreation without having a recreation department.

Chairman Perdue mentioned this amendment was needed to increase the lease time so that the CGSA could apply and qualify for more grants based on this change.

Mr. Byrd acknowledged the City of Perry's reappointment of Mr. Geoff Burkart to the Perry-Houston County Airport Authority. The Board of Commissioners needs to take no action on the appointment since it is from the City of Perry.

Mr. Byrd presented a request from the Director of Finance, Danyelle George, for the creation of a new position of Senior Accountant in the Accounting Department. This position will be utilized for assisting with day-to-day activities, supervisory responsibilities, asset management, grants, budget, audits, SPLOST analytics and other tasks as assigned.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve adding the position of Senior Accountant to the Houston County Position Control Listing at a grade 28. Also, to give permission to the Director of Finance to make the necessary budget adjustments.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request from Flint Energies for an Easement to accommodate providing service to the Public Safety Complex under construction in Bonaire.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Perdue signing the overhead and underground right-of-way easement (Work Order #207024) with Flint Electric Membership Corporation as depicted on Exhibit "A" and as more particularly described on Exhibit "B" (property more commonly known as Tax Parcel 001250 114000) for the transmission and distribution of electric power to the new Public Safety Complex.

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Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve The following FY22 Budget Adjustments:

Special Revenue Funds

Increase Expenditures

District Attorney	Judicial Expenses	\$74,400
District Attorney	Transfers Out	\$356,000
Jail Inmate	Public Safety	\$13,000

Increase Revenues

District Attorney	Fines & Forfeitures	\$430,400
Jail Inmate	Fines & Forfeitures	\$13,000

General Fund

Increase Expenditures

Clerk of State Court Dues & Fees	(acct: 100-2300-52-3600)	\$6,500
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Increase Revenues

State Court	(acct: 100-0000-34-1103)	\$6,500
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Mr. Gottwals presented a request from the Purchasing Department for approval of a bid on two Schulte 10' rotary mowers from Atlantic & Southern, LLC of Tifton Georgia. The mowers were included in the current fiscal year budget along with a tandem dump truck totaling \$170,000 for all three vehicles. The dump truck will not be purchased, resulting in an underrun of \$112,178 for that budget item.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Talton and carried unanimously by all to approve the purchase of on two Schulte 10' rotary mowers from Atlantic & Southern, LLC of Tifton Georgia for a total price of \$57,822. This purchase will be paid from 2012 SPLOST funds.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request for approval of Chairman Perdue signing the warranty deed and any other legal paperwork related to the transfer of property to the City of Perry for a wastewater treatment facility, approved on January 4, 2022

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Perdue signing a warranty deed for property described as follows:

All that tract or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lots 3 and 40 of the Twelfth (12th) Land District, Houston County, Georgia and being Tract 1 containing 79.72 acres as more fully shown on plat of survey for the Board of Commissioners of Houston County, by Richard Strange, Georgia Registered Land Surveyor No. 3067, dated January 12, 2023, and a copy of which is recorded in Plat Book 84, Page 13, in the Clerk's Office, Houston Superior Court. Said plat and the recorded copy thereof are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

ALSO CONVEYED HEREWITH is a non-exclusive right of ingress and egress along the right of way of the private portion of A.E. Harris Road that traverses Grantor's property.

Mr. Byrd commented that this indeed is an example of cooperation between the City of Perry and Houston County. He explained that this will expand sewer for the City of Perry residents and improves county property.

Ms. Robinson presented a request from the Public Works Department for approval of a bid on the Water System Improvements to serve AE Harris Road, Phase 1. Proposals from five (5) contractors for the construction of the project were received. After evaluations by the Water Department, and its consulting engineers, Carter & Sloope, the recommendation is for approval of Pyles Plumbing & Utility Contractors, Inc. of Macon.

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Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Talton and carried unanimously by all to approve the bid of \$1,400,309.25 submitted by Pyles Plumbing & Utility Contractors, Inc. of Macon. This project will be paid for from Water System Capital Funds.

Mr. Byrd commented that the bid process realized a 46% savings for Houston County citizens.

Chairman Perdue thanked Carter and Sloope for their assistance with this bid process and resulting savings as well.

Ms. Robinson presented a request from the Houston County Magistrate Court for approval to renew a five-year contract with Judicial Alternatives of Georgia, Inc., to provide probation services. After review of the contract, the Magistrate Court and County Attorney recommend approval of the contract.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Gottwals and carried unanimously by all to approve the signing of the Probation Services Contract with Judicial Alternatives of Georgia, Inc. This contract will end September 30, 2027.

Ms. Robinson presented a request from the Juvenile Court for approval of an Independent Contractor Agreement with Glenda Harper. This contract is to provide legal representation to indigents appearing in Juvenile Court. The term of this contract will be February 13, 2023, through June 30, 2023.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve the signing of an Independent Contractor Services Contract with Glenda Harper to provide legal representation to indigents appearing in Juvenile Court.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Talton and carried unanimously by all to approve the reappointment of David Hulbert to the Land Bank for a term to begin 11/06/2022 and to end 11/05/2026.

Mr. Talton presented a request from the Houston County Fire Department for approval of three change orders on the two new custom pumpers approved at the November 1, 2022 Commissioner's meeting. These changes are necessary to assure functionality, longevity and enhance operator safety and came after a visit by fire department personnel, including Chief Stoner, to the manufacturer to evaluate various options and components on the trucks. The total of these changes is \$17,996, or \$8,998 per truck. By completing these changes during the pre-construction phase no additional time is added to the delivery.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Gottwals and carried unanimously by all to approve change orders #1, #2, #3 on the 2 new custom pumpers approved at the November 1, 2022 Houston County Board of Commissioners Meeting. This would increase the price of each truck by \$8,998, for a total of \$786,101 per truck. Funds for this purchase are being paid by Insurance Premium Tax Funds.

Mr. Talton presented a request from the Purchasing Department for approval of an increase of price on the purchase of one new excavator from Mason Tractor & Equipment Co. for use by the Road & Bridges Department. This price increase is a surcharge from the manufacturer. This purchase was approved at the April 5, 2022 Houston County Board of Commissioners meeting.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve the price increase of \$9,998.70, on the new excavator from Mason Tractor & Equipment Co. of McDonough, Georgia. This brings the total purchase price to \$118,939.15. This purchase will be paid from 2012 SPLOST funds.

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Chairman Perdue asked purchasing director Mark Baker about the lead time on this purchase.

Mr. Baker advised approximately 30 days.

Mr. Talton presented a Memorandum of Agreement that has been executed by each of the other entities and now requires County approval for the LMIG projects. As the next step in the process Houston County would bid all projects together and subsequently award to the lowest responsible bidder.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Perdue signing the Memorandum of Agreement with Byron, Centerville, Perry, and Warner Robins concerning the 2023 LMIG road resurfacing and repair projects.

Mr. Gottwals commented that this action is a true example of collaboration among the cities and county to even include the neighboring city of Byron.

Chairman Perdue said that with the County handling the LMIG, the taxpayers were the ultimate beneficiaries with lower costs and better deals.

Mr. Talton presented a request form the City of Perry for Deannexation of property located at 325 Airport Road, Perry, Georgia.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve a Resolution for Deannexation of Land for the de-annexation of the parcel of land located at 325 Airport Road and authorize the signing of the appropriate resolution to be sent to the City of Perry. The land is more particularly described as Tax Parcel #0P38A0 003000.

Mr. Talton thanked the Muse family for allowing this property to be annexed initially in order that the Northrop Tract of land could be contiguous to the Perry city limits.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$3,752,211.62.

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

As there were no comments Chairman Perdue closed Public Comments and reopened the regular portion of the meeting.

Chairman Perdue recognized Ms. Hill, staff member for Congressman Bishop's office.

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

Mr. Byrd expressed how glad he was to live in a community so rich in patriotism. He recognized Houston Health Care on the 50th Anniversary of the EMS system, and commented on the roundabout at SR 247 and SR 247 Spur on the increased safety and improved traffic flows at the confluence of these roads.

Mr. Talton thanked those for attending today's commissioners meeting and recognized and thanked Mr. John Trussell and the other SAR and DAR members for the gift they gave to the County and Houston County citizens.

Ms. Robinson thanked everyone for coming and commented on the very productive meeting. She also thanked Mr. Trussell for the gift of the painting. Ms. Robinson also commented about the increased amount of litter she is seeing on the sides of the roads lately and encouraged everyone not to throw trash out of their cars, and to not litter.

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Mr. Gottwals commented on the very special meeting we had and expressed how appreciative and grateful he was in living in a county such as Houston and what a blessing it is to be part of the Board of Commissioners.

Chairman Perdue agreed with the assessment made by Ms. Robinson about litter and said he had received several comments about litter. He stated he plans to endeavor getting crews out to work on this problem. Chairman Perdue expressed appreciation and thanks to John Trussell and the SAR and DAR community in Houston County for the framed portrait of President Washington and Governor John Houstouns' arrival in Savannah in 1791. He also expressed appreciation for the County staff who helped in moving the State Court and Solicitor's offices to Perry and notifying the public of the move. He said he has received positive comments and thanks, from the senior staff of those departments that had moved to Perry, on the work and help in making the move. He thanked the citizens of Houston County for making it possible for these offices to come to Perry which will ultimately improve the judicial system in Houston County.

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

Robbie Dunbar
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner