

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting
September 1, 2020
Perry, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday September 1, 2020, at the Houston County Courthouse in Perry, Georgia, with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners Walker, Thomson, McMichael, and Robinson present. Also present were County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar, Director of Personnel Ken Carter, Director of Purchasing Mark Baker, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, Landfill Superintendent Terry Dietsch, Major Alan Everidge, Major Dave Carrick, Mark Byrd, Murray Griffin, Robert Brown and Walton and Becky Wood.

Commissioner Thomson gave the Invocation.

Capt. William Stephenson, USAF led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and then detailed his 6-year military career. Born in Raleigh, NC, he attended North Carolina State and worked as a firefighter in the Raleigh-Durham area. He joined the Air Force in 2014 and his first duty assignment was at Robins AFB for nearly three years. He is a Logistics Readiness Officer and has spent time in vehicle maintenance, fuels management and providing logistical and transportation support working with the B-2, A-10 and T-38 weapons systems. In 2017 he was stationed at Whiteman AFB, MO and then came back to Robins AFB in July of 2019. He is a Career Broadening Officer in the Logistics Career Broadening Program currently. He thanked the Board and the community for their support of the military.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve the minutes from the meeting of August 18, 2020.

Chairman Stalnaker asked for a motion to add the emergency purchase of a vehicle for the Sheriff's Department to the agenda as Item #9.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to add the emergency purchase of a vehicle for the Sheriff's Department to the agenda as Item #9.

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.

Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews presented Special Exception Applications #2374 and #2375.

Chairman Stalnaker Closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened a Public Hearing.

Special Exception Application #2374 the applicant was present, there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2375 the applicant was not present there was no opposition.

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

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

Application #2374	Mary Singleton	Special Events Facility
Application #2375	Jenni Blackmon	Women's & Children's Clothing (Online)

Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews presented Special Exception Applications #2377 thru #2381 and #2384 thru #2389.

Chairman Stalnaker Closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened a Public Hearing.

Special Exception Application #2377 the applicant was not present. Application is recommended to be tabled and sent back to Zoning & Appeals.

Special Exception Application #2378 the applicant was not present there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2379 the applicant was not present there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2380 the applicant was not present there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2381 was withdrawn before meeting.

Special Exception Application #2384 the applicant was not present there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2385 the applicant was not present. Application is recommended to be tabled and sent back to Zoning & Appeals.

Special Exception Application #2386 the applicant was not present there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2387 the applicant was not present there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2388 the applicant was not present there was no opposition.

Special Exception Application #2389 the applicant was not present there was no opposition.

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

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to table the following applications and send back to Zoning & Appeals for reconsideration:

Application #2377	Mallory Greathouse	Photography
Application #2385	Michael Rountree	Woodworking

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

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Application #2378	Corey & Angela Underwood	Lawn Care
Application #2379	Tim & Angela Reynolds	Handyman / Lawn Care
Application #2380	Alan & Demetria Bennett	Mental Health Services
Application #2384	Terry Hamilton	Vending Machines
Application #2386	Terry Hamilton	Men's Beard Products
Application #2387	Daysi Gutierrez	Women's Clothing
Application #2388	James & Georgette Williams	Mobile Food Truck
Application #2389	Andrew Dixon	Handmade Crafts-Online

Tim Andrews stated for the record that although there were two applications for rezoning for properties off Hwy. 96 at the old Waterford South Golf Club that were submitted and advertised, both were withdrawn before the Planning & Zoning hearing and therefore there is no action required by the Board. Chairman Stalnaker commented that he had met with the owner of these properties and clarified that no access through the neighboring River West subdivision would be allowed.

Mr. Walker presented a request from Sheriff's Department to fill the soon to be vacant Jail Administrator position at the Detention Facility.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to approve the hiring of David Carrick for the Jail Administrator position (Major) at a Grade 27-J effective September 2, 2020.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized Maj. Alan Everidge and thanked him for his many years of service to the Houston County Sheriff's Department and our community.

Maj. Everidge introduced David Carrick who is coming back from retirement after serving more than 20 years under Sheriff Talton in nearly every role at the detention center including the Chief Detention Officer (second in command). Maj. Everidge expressed every confidence in Maj. Carrick since he already knows the job and is ready to work.

Maj. Carrick said that he is looking forward to getting back to work.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to approve the following reappointments:

Planning & Zoning Board:	Dr. Steve Holcomb	9/07/2020 thru 9/06/2024
	Danny Carpenter	9/07/2020 thru 9/06/2024

Mr. Thomson presented a request from the Board of Elections to hire poll workers for the upcoming General Election.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the hiring of poll workers for the upcoming November 3, 2020 General Election as outlined in a memorandum from Election Supervisor Debra Presswood dated August 17, 2020.

Chairman Stalnaker remarked that the workload for the Board of Elections staff has remained heavy in preparation for the coming election.

Mr. Thomson presented a request to enter into a professional services agreement for the new State Court Expansion construction project.

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Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve entering into a professional services agreement with Total Systems Commissioning, Inc. of Atlanta in the amount of \$53,900 for the building commissioning services on the new State Court Expansion project.

Chairman Stalnaker remarked that he initially had some reservations about the commissioning services but after some research and discussions he believes it will be money well-spent and also that the commissioning agents actually work for the County and not for the architect or general contractor.

Mr. McMichael presented a request for approval of a bid on the Bear Branch Water Supply and treatment Facility construction project.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of the Bear Branch Water Supply and Treatment Facility construction project to P.F. Moon and Company, Inc. of West Point, GA in the amount of \$5,253,000. Water Capital Funds will fund this project.

Chairman Stalnaker noted that he was very proud that this new plant was being funded through the Water Fund reserves and not by borrowing money.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$3,674,129.58.

Mr. McMichael presented a request for an emergency purchase of a Houston County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division vehicle.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of one new 2020 Ford Explorer PPV for use in the Houston County Sheriff's Department-Patrol Division from Phil Brannen Ford of Perry at a cost of \$37,216.

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

Senior Consultant Murray Griffin of Atlantic Coast Consulting expressed his appreciation to the Board for the continued opportunity to work for Houston County as its Landfill consultant.

Chairman Stalnaker thanked Mr. Griffin and Mr. Robert Brown, CFO and VP of Engineering Services, who was also in attendance and commented that the monthly Landfill reports that he receives from Mr. Dietsch and his staff are very good economic indicators as are the monthly SPLOST reports.

Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews gave the Board an update on the issue of whether multiple home occupations at the same residence should be allowed. None of the cities appear to have restrictions on multiple home occupations at the same residence. At their August 24th meeting the Zoning and Appeals Board delayed discussion of the same due to the Chairman's absence. The issue will be taken up at their next meeting on September 28th.

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County Attorney Tom Hall briefed the Board on a proposed amendment to the Solid Waste ordinance and asked them to review the document. Mr. Dunbar and Mr. Dietsch will brief the board on the details at the next Board meeting.

Chairman Stalnaker asked Mr. Dunbar to bring pictures as examples of non-compliant curbside waste piles and remarked that there will have to be advertising, a first and second reading and, finally, a public hearing on the proposed amendment before the Board could consider a vote on adoption.

There being no further comments Chairman Stalnaker closed the Public Comments portion of the meeting and reopened the regular meeting.

Chairman Stalnaker asked everyone to support a constitutional amendment that will be on the November 3rd ballot that would prevent the State of Georgia from diverting hazardous waste and landfill clean-up trust funds from their intended purpose of cleaning up tire dumps, landfills and hazardous waste sites. For years, the State has been diverting most of those funds generated by the fees to their General Fund to fill holes in the State's budget caused by other shortfalls in revenue. Under the current state constitution, the governor and General Assembly can say fees go to one thing and then spend it on another. This amendment would stop that from happening.

He also briefed the Board on a change of meeting time for the second meeting of the month that has been proposed to him by Commissioner Robinson. After polling the Board, the consensus was that a change from 6:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. for the remaining evening meetings in the calendar year would be acceptable.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to change the start times of the monthly Board of Commissioners evening meeting from 6:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. beginning in the month of September and ending in the month of December 2020.

Chairman Stalnaker asked Mr. Holland to ensure that the appropriate advertising and change to the County's website reflected this change.

Lastly, he announced that the grand opening ceremony for the James W. Williams Jr. Fire & Emergency Management Complex, the new Lake Joy fire station and EMA headquarters, would be held on Saturday, September 26th at 10:00 a.m. at the site located at 100 Chief Williams Drive off of Lake Joy Road. The event is being held on Saturday so that Chief Williams' family could attend the ceremony.

Mr. Thomson thanked everyone for coming and encouraged everyone to support the amendment concerning the Landfill fees.

Mr. McMichael echoed Mr. Thomson's comments and asked why the County had to pay 'drinking water fees' and to whom did the revenues accrue.

Chairman Stalnaker answered that the fees were paid to cover testing of the drinking water from the County's water treatment plants and that the State of Georgia received the revenues from the fees.

Ms. Robinson likewise thanked everyone for coming.

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Mr. Walker thanked everyone for attending and reminded everyone to be safe.

There being no further comments Chairman Stalnaker closed the Commissioners Comments portion of the meeting.

Motion to Adjourn by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all, meeting adjourned.

Barry Holland
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner