

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting**  
**August 16, 2022**  
**Warner Robins, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday August 16, 2022, at the Houston County Annex in Warner Robins, Georgia, with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners Byrd, Talton, and Walker present. Commissioner Robinson was absent being out of town. 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, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, Fire/EMA Chief Chris Stoner, Landfill Superintendent Terry Dietsch and Jacqueline Rozier.

Chairman Stalnaker led the audience in the Invocation and then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Byrd with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to approve the minutes from the meetings of July 20, 2022, 11:00 A.M., July 20, 2022, 6:00 P.M., July 28, 2022, 5:00 P.M. and August 2, 2022 regular meeting.

Chairman Stalnaker presented a motion to add agenda item number 7A which is an invoice from the Houston County Board of Education for partial payment on the Natatorium.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to approve adding agenda item number 7A to the August 16, 2022 Commission meeting agenda.

Mr. Talton presented a request from Purchasing Director Mark Baker to approve the award of a bid for the purchase of an Articulated Dump Truck for use by the Houston County Landfill.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Byrd with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to approve the award of one new 2022 John Deere 410P Articulated Dump Truck for use by the Houston County Landfill at a unit cost of \$450,696.92 with the option of a full warranty at a cost of \$89,395.00 from Flint Equipment Company of Macon, GA. The total cost of \$540,091.92 will be paid for by Solid Waste Capital Funds.

Commissioner Byrd commented that once again the bid process provided four quality bids with one notably lower bid saving the citizens of Houston County money.

Chairman Stalnaker agreed and was thankful the County received that many bids.

Mr. Talton presented a request from Purchasing Director Mark Baker to authorize the surplus of the landfill's 2013 Cat D7E WHA bulldozer to be replaced with a 2022 Cat D7 bulldozer

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Walker with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to approve the surplus of Houston County Landfill's 2013 Cat D7E WHA bulldozer and contracting with Ritchie Brothers for auction of used bulldozer.

Mr. Talton presented a request from the Engineering Department to release maintenance bond #GRGA51227 for Harley Farms South Subdivision, Phase 1 as the construction has been completed in accordance with "The Comprehensive Land Development Regulations for Houston County" and that four new roads be accepted and recorded for maintenance purposes and speed ordinances.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Byrd with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to approve the release of maintenance Bond #GRGA51227 for Harley Farms South Subdivision, Phase 1 and the acceptance of Ashley Nicole Ave, Foster Sydney Ct., Jeffery Thomas Dr. and Chelsa Leigh Ave for maintenance purposes and speed ordinances as shown below.

<b>Street Name</b>	<b>Street Length</b>	<b>Speed Limit</b>
Ashley Nicole Ave.	1,183 ft. or 0.22 mile	25 mph
Foster Sydney Ct.	414 ft. or 0.08 mile	25 mph
Jeffery Thomas Dr.	747 ft. or 0.14 mile	25 mph
Chelsa Leigh Ave.	420 ft. or 0.08 mile	25 mph

Chairman Stalnaker asked Director of Operations Brian Jones if everything was ok with the streets. Mr. Jones advised that he and Traffic Engineer Ken Robinson checked on the streets and found them to be in order.

Mr. Talton presented a Board appointment request.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Walker with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to approve the appointment of Zachary Ivester to the Planning and Zoning Board to fill the unexpired term of Tal Talton from 8/17/2022 thru 9/6/2024.

Chairman Stalnaker thanked Mr. Ivester for offering to serve on the Planning and Zoning Board and asked that he get with Mr. Tim Andrews for further training and information.

Mr. Byrd presented a contract revision with the Georgia Board of Regents regarding Houston County Extension Agent employees.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to authorize Chairman Stalnaker to sign a revised contract with the Georgia Board of Regents to pay costs of County Extension Agents' salary, retirement and Social Security/Medicare (excluding travel) on a quarterly basis.

At the June 7, 2022 meeting the Board of Commissioners approved Chairman Stalnaker signing an agreement with the Georgia Board of Regents to pay by invoice salaries, retirement and Social Security/Medicare for the County Extension Agents. The approved contract indicated that Houston County would be invoiced monthly and would include travel pay. Recently, the county was informed that the state should not have included travel cost in its contract and that the contract should be invoiced quarterly instead of monthly. Since the contract terms have been modified, Director of Personnel, Ken Carter, requested that the board authorize Chairman Stalnaker to sign a new contract reflecting these changes.

Chairman Stalnaker advised there is no increase or decrease to this budget.

Mr. Byrd presented a bid approval request for the Bear Branch Remote Well Addition.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Walker with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to approve the award of the Raw and Potable Water Mains for Bear Branch Remote Well Addition project to Pyles Plumbing & Utility Contractors, Inc. with an acceptance of alternate bid using Ductile Iron Pipe in the amount of \$308,288.00. This project is funded by water system capital funds.

Chairman Stalnaker asked Director of Operations Brian Jones how soon will work begin on this project. Mr. Jones said the pipe delivery would be approximately 8 weeks so construction would begin when the pipes are delivered, in about 8 weeks.

Mr. Byrd presented a personnel request from the Personnel Department.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Walker with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to approve the placement of Robbie Dunbar for the Director of Administration at Grade 39-H effective 8/22/22, Brian Jones for the Director of Operations at Grade 39-A effective 8/22/22 and Danyelle George for the Director of Finance at Grade 37-H effective 9/12/22 due to retirements and promotions creating several vacancies in senior level positions.

Commissioner Byrd remarked that very qualified people have retired and very qualified people have taken or will take those positions which is a testament to the culture that exists in this county government.

Mr. Byrd presented the added agenda item which was payment on the Natatorium by the County to the Houston County Board of Education.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to approve the payment of \$8,000,000 to the Houston County Board of Education for costs related to the construction of the Houston County Natatorium, the indoor swimming facility. This is a 2018 approved SPLOST project.

Chairman Stalnaker advised this project has been made possible through the cooperation among the three cities, the county and the Board of Education.

Mr. Walker presented a personnel request from the Houston County Landfill.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Byrd with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to hire Jason Murphy to fill a vacant Heavy Equipment Operator position at the landfill at a Grade 13-D effective August 22, 2022. Staff agrees that Mr. Murphy possesses the requisite qualifications and experience to qualify for the D-step.

Mr. Walker presented a personnel request from the Houston County Landfill.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Byrd with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to hire Jason Beckham to fill a vacant Heavy Equipment Operator position at the landfill at a Grade 13-C effective August 17, 2022. Staff agrees that Mr. Beckham possesses the requisite qualifications and experience to qualify for the C-step.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Talton with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$2,135,682.13.

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

Landfill Superintendent Terry Dietsch thanked the Board for their approval of the new bulldozer and mentioned it will really help his staff complete their duties at the landfill.

Jackie Rozier made comments about the cost of vehicles. She mentioned that Sheriff and Coroner SUV vehicles cost in the range of upper 30's to mid-40 thousand dollars but noted a recent purchase for a vehicle in the Commissioners Office cost in the upper 50 thousands. She questioned whether a less expensive alternative for this vehicle purchase in the Commissioners Office would have been a better option.

Ms. Rozier also had a question about the purchase and need of an armored vehicle for the Sheriffs Department.

Chairman Stalnaker advised that the armored vehicle was requested by Sheriff Talton and that these types of vehicles have been used in occurrences in Houston County during hostage and active shooter situations and will protect members of the Houston County Sheriffs Response Team who will utilize the vehicle. Chairman Stalnaker mentioned specifically an incident in Centerville where this type of vehicle was needed and utilized, being borrowed from the City of Warner Robins Police Department which has one. Chairman Stalnaker mentioned that both the Sheriff's Department and the Houston County District Attorney's Office is funding a portion of this vehicle purchase. Chairman Stalnaker further stated that if the purchase of this armored vehicle protected the life of even one law enforcement officer from being injured or killed, then the cost will be well worth it and suggested for Ms. Rozier to set an appointment with Sheriff Talton to discuss with him further his reasons why the purchase of this vehicle was made.

Commissioner Byrd further commented that use of forfeiture funds instead of SPLOST funds to help purchase this vehicle for the Sheriffs Department was a great investment and use of these resources. Commissioner Byrd further stated that this vehicle will protect the lives of our dedicated law enforcement professionals in Houston County.

Regarding Ms. Rozier's first question, Chairman Stalnaker said that SUV's are purchased for the Sheriff's Department for the room they provide for personnel and for equipment storage in the back. The prices of these vehicles is commiserate with the market for these vehicles which the costs of have gone up tremendously over the past few years.

Commissioner Walker commented that the bottom line is that we have to protect the public safety officials who protect us.

There being no further comments Chairman Stalnaker closed Public Comments and opened Commissioner's Comments.

Commissioner Walker thanked everyone for coming and commented that he is glad to live in Houston County and that we have fantastic employees here with the County.

Commissioner Talton commented that the decisions we make as a Board are intended to benefit the County as a whole, and not any one person or department.

Commissioner Byrd said that the cooperation evident in Houston County is one of the many aspects that makes Houston County special. The Natatorium is a perfect example of that along with cooperation among the law enforcement agencies in Houston County. Commissioner Byrd also mentioned that former County Attorney Mike Long was recognized with the Golden Eagle award at a recent Boy Scouts of America award ceremony for his outstanding service in our community.

Chairman Stalnaker mentioned that Thursday morning at 8:00 am there will be a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Houston County Natatorium, a facility that will be highly used and very much needed. Chairman Stalnaker also mentioned that construction for the new addition to the health department is underway with ground work and grading having started to get ready for vertical construction. Utilities have been moved and the project is well underway. Chairman Stalnaker next gave an update on the new fire station in Bonaire on Old Hwy. 96 across from Bonaire Elementary School which will also house an EMS vehicle for the hospital and a precinct for the Sheriff's Department. Groundbreaking for this facility is planned for sometime prior to the end of the year.

Purchasing Director Mark Baker advised that the GMP should be delivered within the next 30 days for this project.

Chairman Stalnaker also mentioned that an annexation request is forthcoming from the City of Centerville for property along Dunbar Road for a development of over 150 homes providing growth and housing on the north end of Houston County.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Walker with Commissioners Byrd, Talton and Walker voting yes. Meeting adjourned.

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Robbie Dunbar  
Director of Administration

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Chairman

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Commissioner

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Commissioner

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Commissioner

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Commissioner