

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting
November 16, 2021
Warner Robins, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday November 16, 2021, at the Houston County Annex in Warner Robins, Georgia, with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners Byrd, Perdue, Robinson, and Walker present. Also present were County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar, Director of Purchasing Mark Baker, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, Walton and Becky Wood.

Commissioner Byrd led the audience in the Invocation and then the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve the minutes from the meeting of November 2, 2021.

Chairman Stalnaker asked for a motion to add the execution of a contract amendment and the payment of an invoice to the agenda concerning the State Court Expansion Project.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve adding the execution of a contract amendment and the payment of an invoice to the agenda concerning the State Court Expansion Project.

Chairman Stalnaker asked for a motion to add to the executive session discussion for real estate matters per O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(1).

Motion by Mr. Perdue, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to add to the executive session discussion for real estate matters per O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(1).

County Engineer Ronnie Heald is requesting permission to hire Chad Foreman to fill the vacant Civil Engineer position at a Grade 25-C. Staff agrees that Mr. Foreman possesses the requisite qualifications and experience to qualify for the C-step.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to hire Chad Foreman to fill the vacant Civil Engineer position at a Grade 25-C.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve the following board re-appointments:

Airport Authority	Dr. Perry Melvin	1/01/22 thru 12/31/23
Board of Tax Assessors	Joyce Herndon	1/01/22 thru 12/31/24
	Brian Jones	1/01/22 thru 12/31/24
Board of Health	Archie Thompson	1/01/22 thru 12/31/27
Board of Elections	John Applegate	1/01/22 thru 12/31/22

Chairman Stalnaker clarified that Mr. Applegate was the Republican Party's appointment to the Board of Elections for the coming year. The Board simply confirms the appointment.

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The Engineering Department has requested approval to enter into a professional agreement with Robinson Paving Company to grade the County's existing detention pond at the courthouse to accommodate the new State Court Expansion project. Robinson Paving agrees to grade the pond to a certain contour line and retrofit the outlet device in exchange for the dirt which will be used on several ongoing county road improvement projects.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Perdue and carried unanimously by all to approve Chairman Stalnaker entering into a professional services agreement with Robinson Paving Company for the grading of the County's detention pond at the courthouse site in Perry.

Chairman Stalnaker remarked that this agreement is to the mutual benefit of the County and the contractor as they get the dirt they need, and we get the detention pond dug out.

Motion by Mr. Perdue, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to authorize Chairman Stalnaker signing Change Order #1 (Final) with C.W. Matthews Contracting Co., Inc. on the Thompson Mill Road Widening Project increasing the contract amount from \$2,500,580.66 by \$91,434.43 for a total amended contract of \$2,592,015.09. There is no increase in contract time.

Mr. Byrd commented that the improvements accomplished on Thompson Mill Road has helped the school traffic flow to function fantastically.

Motion by Mr. Perdue, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to authorize Chairman Stalnaker signing Change Order #1 (Final) on the 2021 Spot Overlay Project with Benchmark Paving, LLC increasing the contract amount from \$107,390.70 by \$7,473.94 for a total amended contract of \$114,864.64. There is no increase in contract time.

The City of Centerville has a need for our surplus vacuum truck. Mayor Harley has officially requested the County consider the donation of this truck for use in their Public Works Department.

Motion by Mr. Perdue, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve the donation and transfer of a 1998 Vac-Con Vacuum Truck (VIN 1HTGCADTOXH625335 / Maint. #3401 / Asset #2013060001) to the City of Centerville.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that the City of Centerville had recently agreed to transfer an acre of land on Dunbar Road to locate a remote well for the County's water system. That transfer of land and this donation of a surplus truck that the city has a need for demonstrates a great level of cooperation between governments.

The City of Warner Robins has requested an extension of the system off an existing master meter that was permitted by the County in August of 2018 to temporarily serve the Hollandia Greenhouse located in the Warner Robins / Peach County Industrial Park.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Perdue and carried unanimously by all to approve a request from the City of Warner Robins to extend the system off an existing and previously permitted master meter to temporarily serve Pete's Hollandia Greenhouse located in the Warner Robins / Peach County Industrial Park.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that it took a few months to get clarification on the intensity of the lighting that would be utilized at the greenhouse. After meeting with Mayor Toms and Peach County Chairman Martin Moseley he is satisfied that there will not be a similar problem with the lighting as there was over at the other greenhouse.

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Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to authorize Chairman Stalnaker to sign the Agreement with landowner Perfect's Elko Properties, LLC that will acquire the property for the 80' right-of-way that is necessary for the paving of Flournoy Road in exchange for the County abandoning New Road, an unimproved road that traverses the landowner's property, and placing pasture fencing along the right-of-way as part of the Flournoy Road paving project.

Mr. Perdue asked Mr. Dunbar if there was existing pasture fencing that would have to be moved. Mr. Dunbar replied that there was existing fence to be moved and it would require some new fencing as well.

At the June 1, 2021 meeting the Board approved the award of one new 2021 GapVax MC 1312 Vacuum / Sewer Truck for use in the Water Department to GapVax of Johnstown, PA in the amount of \$442,537 to include extended warranties. The truck has now been delivered and invoiced to the County for that total. Unfortunately, there is a typo in the official minutes of this meeting stating the total cost as \$422,537 instead of the approved \$442,537. This staff error necessitates a correction to the minutes.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve a correction to the official minutes of the June 1, 2021 meeting whereby the stated \$422,537 total cost of the new 2021 GapVax MC 1312 Vacuum / Sewer Truck for use in the Water Department from GapVax of Johnstown, PA to include extended warranties is amended to read \$442,537.

Bids were solicited for one new one-ton regular cab truck with service body for use in the Public Buildings Department with two dealers responding. Staff recommends award to low bidder Phil Brannen Ford of Perry for an F-350 at a cost of \$38,420.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Perdue and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of one new 2022 Ford F-350 regular cab truck with service body for use in the Public Buildings Department from Phil Brannen Ford of Perry in the amount of \$38,420. SPLOST 2018 will fund the purchase of this vehicle.

Mr. Perdue asked Mr. Baker what kind of lead time was on the new truck. Mr. Baker replied up to six months.

Bids were solicited for the Juvenile Court Building roof replacement project with three proposals received. Based on the weighted selection criteria published in the construction documents by the review committee, staff along with our roofing consultant Edifice Consulting recommends award to Skyline Construction Services for \$269,950.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of the Juvenile Court Building roof replacement project to Skyline Construction Services, Inc. of Eatonton, GA in the amount of \$269,950. SPLOST 2018 will fund this project.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that the roof will not actually be replaced but rather a special type of material will be placed over the existing material which means it will not be nearly as costly as a complete tear-off.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$6,984,292.57.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Perdue and carried unanimously to approve Chairman Stalnaker signing an amended budget request of \$25,154.95 from JMA Architecture for additional services at the new State Court Building as outlined on the Additional Services Summary document.

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Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve the issue of a check for \$10,000 for initial payment to JMA Architecture for services in reference to the amendment approved on November 16, 2021 by the Board of Commissioners.

Chairman Stalnaker presented the proposed holiday schedule for the Board's consideration for Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday, November 25th and 26th 2021), Christmas (Thursday and Friday, December 23rd and 24th 2021) and New Year's (Friday, December 31st 2021).

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's holiday schedule for County employees as proposed by Chairman Stalnaker.

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

Walton Wood, 426 Sandefur Road, Kathleen asked if that was the last piece of right of way needed for the Flournoy Road project. Mr. Dunbar stated that there are other parcels still to acquire.

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

Chairman Stalnaker closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened Commissioner's Comments.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that the resolution concerning changes to the annexation process that was referenced at the last Board meeting would be on the agenda for the December 7th meeting. The intent is to send it to the entire local delegation. Mr. Hall has drafted the resolution with input from the ACCG.

On November 29th at 3:00 p.m. in the Jury Assembly Room of the courthouse Judge Harris will be sworn in as probate judge to be followed by a reception for Judge Spires' retirement.

Thanksgiving is next week, and he reminded everyone to be thankful for what we have as we live in a great County with a lot of good people living here.

Several local football teams play this weekend. Warner Robins High is on the road at Cartersville and Northside High and Perry High are both at home. It is good to see so many local teams still in the playoffs.

On December 9th at 7:30 a.m. is the next Eggs & Issues event with the County hosting. Each Commissioner will be a part of the program. Both Judge Harris and Judge Wilburn will be on hand as well.

On December 17th at 2:00 p.m. there will be a dedication of the new Bear Branch Road Water Treatment Plant. The plant is now in service, and work is being performed on the test well for the remote well site. So far, conditions are looking favorable for the test well.

Good news for Houston County as the United Way campaign has surpassed our goal of \$25,432 having pledged \$32,155 or 126% of the stated goal. He praised Community Planner Jake Cox for his diligent work on the campaign as well as all the employees who have generously pledged to this program.

We lost an outstanding judge with the passing of L.A. "Buster" McConnell, Jr. yesterday. He was a good friend and will be missed by many.

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He passed copies of letters to each Commissioner that will be sent to the members of the local delegation that will be reviewing and scoring the applications for the State Fiscal Recovery Funds. Houston has spent a considerable amount of time assembling two different applications. One is for water infrastructure improvements to certain underserved areas of the County and the other addresses three separate economic impact projects that will support existing and future economic development. The real issue is that there is much more funding being applied for than is available. The County would match dollar for dollar any funding that is awarded through this program.

Lastly, Chairman Stalnaker shared that on December 4th the entire Board has been requested to participate in each of the three separate Christmas parades for the cities. There will be a 200th anniversary float prepared for use in each event. The City of Perry will have their parade in the morning, the City of Warner Robins around lunch time, and the City of Centerville in the evening.

Mr. Walker thanked everyone for coming and wished everyone a wonderful and safe Thanksgiving holiday.

Ms. Robinson thanked everyone for coming and wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Mr. Perdue commented that he and several others were at the ACCG Fall Conference in Savannah this past weekend and Chairman Stalnaker was recognized at that event and awarded the Legislative Advocate of the Year for his work with changes in the annexation and elections laws. The ACCG is a nonpartisan organization and the work done there relative to legislative advocacy is for the betterment of all citizens of this state. He commended Chairman Stalnaker for his efforts and leadership. He also recognized the Bonaire Middle School chapter of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) who recently attended the national convention where they received the Model of Excellence Award. The award is the highest honor given to a middle school FFA chapter.

Chairman Stalnaker commented that he appreciated Mr. Perdue being there in Savannah along with Mr. Hall and Mr. Holland. The conference is an educational process for the county officials throughout the state. You can learn not only from the speakers and the educational classes but also from your fellow commissioners. One of the greatest services that ACCG provides is the lobbyists and legislative advocacy on behalf of all Georgia's counties.

Mr. Byrd wished to extend the honor and respect that we have shown to our nation's veterans this past weekend. He felt that our community appreciates and celebrates veterans and their families with enthusiasm. He then expressed appreciation to the law enforcement community and offered condolences to the family, friends, and fellow law enforcement officers for the recent loss of Col. Rueben James McGhee who served with the Houston County Sheriff's office for forty years.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Perdue and carried unanimously by all to recess the regular meeting and enter into Executive Session for Attorney-Client Matters per O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(1) and Real Estate Matters per O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(1).

Upon returning from Executive Session, Chairman Stalnaker resumed the regular meeting announcing that there would be no action taken relative to the Real Estate matters, however he then asked County Attorney Hall to present an action item pertaining to the Attorney-Client matters.

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Mr. Hall explained that the County is currently involved in the national opioid litigation and is represented by outside counsel. The County’s counsel has advised that they are ready with settlement and release of liabilities for the following entities: McKesson Corporation; Cardinal Health, Inc.; and AmerisourceBergen Corporation; (“Settling Distributors”) and Johnson & Johnson, Janssen Pharmaceuticals Inc., OrthoMcNeil-Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., and Janssen Pharmaceutica Inc. (“Janssen”). In order for the County to move forward as part of this settlement agreement it will be necessary for the County to accept the proposed settlement and release the above-mentioned entities of liability by entering into the Participation Agreement for Subdivision Settlement with the above-mentioned entities pursuant to the Georgia Memorandum of Understanding regarding the pursuit and use of potential opioid litigation funds and consistent with the material terms of the July 21, 2021 proposed National Opioid Settlement Agreements.

Motion by Mr. Perdue, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all for the Board of Commissioners to adopt the Houston County, Georgia Emergency Resolution to Accept the Material Terms of the Distributor and Janssen Settlements Pursuant to the Georgia Memorandum of Understanding and Consistent with the Terms of the July 21, 2021 National Opioid Settlement Agreements and authorize Chairman to sign and enter into the Participation Agreement for Subdivision Settlement with McKesson Corporation; Cardinal Health, Inc.; AmerisourceBergen Corporation; (“Settling Distributors”) and Johnson & Johnson, Janssen Pharmaceuticals Inc., OrthoMcNeil-Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc., and Janssen Pharmaceutica Inc. (“Janssen”) pursuant to the Georgia Memorandum of Understanding regarding the pursuit and use of potential opioid litigation funds and consistent with the material terms of the July 21, 2021 proposed National Opioid Settlement Agreements.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Perdue, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all, meeting adjourned.

Barry Holland
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner