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NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
1124 Clark Street
Covington, Georgia
REGULAR MEETING
January 21, 2014
MINUTES

Present: Chairman Keith Ellis, Commissioners John Douglas, Lanier Sims, Nancy Schulz, J.C. Henderson, Levie Maddox; County Manager John Middleton, Attorney Tommy Craig, & Clerk Jackie Smith

Newspaper: Covington News, Newton Citizen
Small group of citizens

Chairman Ellis called the meeting to order, extended a welcome, and read the thought for the day. The invocation was given by Pastor Ronny Brannen, Prospect United Methodist Church, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by View Point Health CEO David Crews and COO Jennifer Hibbard followed by a power point presentation on the View Point Health Program. (Attached and made part of these minutes)

Chairman Ellis recognized Pastor Ronny Brannen who received the 2014 Martin Luther King I Have a Dream Award. The board and audience expressed their congratulations with a round of applause and a group photo was taken with Pastor Brannen and the BOC.

401A PLAN ADMINISTRATION (FROM JANUARY 7, 2014 MEETING)

County Manager John Middleton addressed the board regarding the 401A Plan.

- GEBCorp and ICMA-RC previously made presentations to the board in December.
- Provided the board the 401 Fee analysis earlier in the week (BOC requested analysis at the January 21st meeting)
- Provides a side by side comparison of each company's plan showing their calculated annual plan and administrative fees.
- He briefly went over the analysis and answered the board's questions.
- Introduced ICMA-RC Representatives Art Flattich, Regional Vice President, Southeast, Randy Briskin, Retirement Plans Specialist & On-site Education Representative and Cary Scaglione, Managing Director Business Development And GebCorp Representatives Steve Vaughn, President & CEO, Greg Gease, Regional Client Manager, and Kale Hodges, Client Services; afterwards each company reiterated their presentation from December and provided updates. (Information is attached and made part of these minutes)
- Both companies are non-profits
- Both companies provide our 457 plans (employee's choice)

Motion by Commissioner Schulz, second by Commissioner Maddox, that based on the fee structure and willingness to lock in rate for five years to approve GEBCorp for the county's 401a and 457 Plans.

Motion denied 3 to 2 with Commissioners Douglas, Sims, and Henderson voting in opposition to the motion

Motion by Commissioner Douglas, second by Commissioner Henderson, to accept ICMARC's proposal as presented.

Motion carried 3 to 2 with Commissioners Schulz and Maddox voting in opposition to the motion.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- Strategic Planning Meeting on Monday, January 27th at 7:00 pm in the Administrative Building
- Thursday, January 30th – Farm Bureau Dinner.
- Proclamation will be presented on behalf of the BOC
- Wonderful MLK service. Again, Congratulations to Ronny Brannen recipient of the annual award.
- Cemetery Clean-up yesterday. Invited people in audience who participated to stand and they received a round of applause. (Frederick Johnson, Sheriff Brown, Commissioner Sims, & Chairman Ellis)
- Next meeting will present prescribed burn grant (\$1000) (Beryl Budd) and update on cruising timber (Mack Barber) at Bear Creek Reservoir property.
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COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

- Handed out financial statement and briefly gave an overview.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Ed Applewhite

Old Alcovy Road

- Concerned the many is being allocated to NHCC & Washington Street in District Four for community center/tutoring of children and not county wide.

Fredrick Johnson

1036 Hwy. 162

- Applauded all the help received from the public in cleaning up cemetery.
- Cemetery located at Hwy. 81 and Oak Hill Road area. (county owned property)
- Noted Monty Laster provided him information that N.C. has over 274 cemeteries identified. Plans are to locate and clean-up all cemeteries in the county.
- Appreciated Public Works delivering 16/18 tons of dirt to help fill in the sinking graves.

Chairman Ellis closed the public comments at 8:50 p.m.

COUNTY CLERK: APPROVAL OF BOC MINUTES DATED JANUARY 7, 2014

Motion by Commissioner Douglas, second by Commissioner Maddox, to approve the BOC Minutes dated January 7, 2014.

Motion carried unanimously

ADMINISTRATION: TO DECLARE FIRE TRUCK AS SURPLUS PROPERTY

Fire Chief Kevin O'Brien appeared before the board to present this request.

- 1985 International Fire Truck
- Removed from service a year ago.
- Has reached life expectancy and too costly to repair
- Chairman Ellis would like to swap truck to FFA Camp for services.
- Reviewed with county attorney and this can be done.

Motion by Commissioner Sims, second by Commissioner Henderson, to declare as surplus property a 1985 International Fire Truck as presented by Chief O'Brien.

Motion carried unanimously

FIRE SERVICES: TANKER

Fire Chief Kevin O'Brien appeared before the board and asked them to table the tanker request for future discussion.

- Table indefinitely.

Motion by Commissioner Douglas, second by Commissioner Sims, to table the request for a tanker indefinitely.

Motion carried unanimously

FIRE SERVICES: FIRE TRUCK/APPARATUS

Fire Chief Kevin O'Brien appeared before the board seeking approval to put out to bid a new fire truck/apparatus.

- Funding: Fire Fund – FY2015
- Incorporate into the FY2015 budget session

Motion by Commissioner Sims, second by Commissioner Douglas, to allow the purchase of new fire truck/apparatus and to move forward with accepting bids.

Motion carried unanimously

FIRE SERVICES: DEPARTMENT TRAINING UPDATE

Fire Chief Kevin O'Brien appeared before the board to give an update on training.

- Discussed training mandates for both career and volunteer personnel.

Board expressed appreciation to the chief for his leadership and keeping them updated.

ADMINISTRATION: RENAMING PORTION OF HWY. 278 @ I-20 TO STANTON SPRINGS PARKWAY

Motion by Commissioner Henderson, second by Commissioner Sims, to table this request until the February 4, 2014 board meeting.

Motion carried unanimously

QUALIFYING FEES: SET QUALIFYING FEES FOR 2014 ELECTION

- Chairman Ellis read the qualifying fees into the record.
- Advertisement will run in Covington News before February 1, 2014 as required.

Motion by Commissioner Henderson, second by Commissioner Sims, to set the 2014 Qualifying Fees as follows:

OFFICE	QUALIFYING FEE
BOC Commission District Two:	\$ 484.92
BOC Commission District Four:	\$ 484.92
BOE District One:	\$ 216.00
BOE District Three:	\$ 216.00
BOE District Five:	\$ 216.00

Qualifying fees are established based on the following:

OCGA § 21-2-131 (a) (1) (A), Qualification fees

15-16-20 a), Sheriff Compensation

December 18, 2001 action of the Newton County Board of Commissioners,

District Commissioner Compensation Base Salary = 20% of the Sheriff's Base Salary

Motion carried unanimously

JUVENILE: APPROVAL TO ACCEPT GRANT/FROM COUNCIL OF JUVENILE COURT JUDGES OF GEORGIA - \$1,000

Motion by Commissioner Douglas, second by Commissioner Henderson, to accept, on behalf of the Juvenile Court, a \$1,000 grant from the Council of Juvenile Court Judges of Georgia.

Motion carried unanimously

SHERIFF'S OFFICE: APPROVE FACILITATOR FOR INMATE OFFENDER CLASSES

Sheriff Brown and Apryle Jones appeared before the board seeking approval of this request.

- Program has been very successful.
- Contracts attached and made part of these minutes

Motion by Commissioner Douglas, second by Commissioner Sims, to approve the Independent Contract Agreement with Melissa Tice and Ernetta Dailey-Worthy for the Inmate Offender Classes.

Motion carried unanimously

ALCOHOL LICENSE:**First Reading**

CVS Pharmacy #8419
 4192 Salem Road
 Covington, GA 30016
 Owner: Georgia CVS Pharmacy, LLC
 District Two

- Chairman Ellis read alcohol request into the record

Final Reading

Ashkish Investments, LLC
 (Formerly J.J. Quick Stop)
 298 Highway 162
 Covington, GA 30016
 District Five

Motion by Commissioner Maddox , second by Commissioner Henderson, to approve the alcohol license request for Ashkish Investments, LLC (formerly J.J. Quick Stop) located at 298 Highway 162, Covington, GA as requested.

Motion carried unanimously

ALCOHOL RENEWALS

Texaco Food Mart
 3363 Salem Road
 Covington, GA 30016
 Owner: Guru Arjan, Inc.
 District Three

Motion by Commissioner Schulz, second by Commissioner Maddox, to approve the alcohol license request for Texaco Food Mart located at 3363 Salem Road, Covington, GA as requested.

Motion carried unanimously

T & H One Stop
 14625 Hwy. 36
 Covington, GA 30014
 Owner: Shaheen Quick, Inc.
 District One

Motion by Commissioner Sims, second by Commissioner Maddox, to approve the alcohol license request for T & H One Stop located at 14625 Hwy. 36, Covington, GA as requested.

Motion carried unanimously

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Commissioner Maddox

- Applaud the City of Porterdale: movie Prisoners was filmed in Porterdale and has been nominated for an academy award.
- Feels like one of the most important votes he'll cast in office is the vote on the assistant county manager. Excited about the future.

Commissioner Henderson

- Fund raiser: Little Mr. & Miss Nelson Heights – invited to donate funds to help sponsor this.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Time: 9:20 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Maddox, second by Commissioner Sims, to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel and threatened litigation.

Motion carried unanimously

REGULAR SESSION

The board entered back into regular session with a motion by Commissioner Douglas, second by Commissioner Maddox.

Motion carried unanimously

ADMINISTRATION: SUCCESSION PLANNING

- Have county attorney create a job description for an assistant county manager based on current county manager job description.
- Commissioner Maddox who duly made the motion noted that he had been researching and praying about this decision for several months.
- Commissioners stated they wanted someone on board immediately to begin learning from Mr. Middleton...noting especially the FY2015 budget process.
- One by one they expressed their deepest confidence, respect, and appreciation for Mr. Middleton and the outstanding job he has done for Newton County, i.e. Superb, capable, outstanding county manager
Incredible job
Can't be replaced...will just find someone to follow in your footsteps.
Worked with him since he came on board and appreciate that he doesn't tell you what you want to hear, but what you need to know.
Greatest respect for him.
Thankful for the privilege of working with him.
Thanks for staying with us for another year and for helping guide the new person through a smooth transition.
Thank you for everything you have done for us.
- Commissioner Schulz registered her concerns that there has not been adequate time given to this decision, was not a formal interview process followed and was disappointed that other prospective candidates were not given an opportunity to be interviewed.
- She stated that she felt like timing was off, while the other board members felt timing was of the essence, because of the need for the person to be with Mr.

Middleton as much as possible from now until Mr. Middleton's retirement in September.

- Commissioner Schulz told the board she would still like for ACCG Government Relations representative Dave Wills to come and meet with the board at a couple of work sessions to look at the county's organizational chart and the county charter.
- Commissioner Douglas commented that the board needed to do this now to have someone in place to overlap with Mr. Middleton, especially the budget cycle.
- Commissioner Schulz stated the following into the record:
 "I have the utmost respect for Tom Garret, but the process by which we have proceeded with this appointment is very concerning to me. We had no formal interview process; we had no documentation in front of us to make this decision. At this time I am not prepared to vote on this decision. We had nothing in our packets that gave us information, except a line item that said succession plan. I would have preferred to wait until our next board meeting to make a decision so that we could have a formal process to interview potential candidates, but we were not afforded that opportunity.

Motion by Commissioner Maddox, second by Commissioner Douglas, to offer the position of Assistant County Manager to Tom Garrett beginning January 27, 2014 or as negotiated. Also, request county attorney's office to create a job description based on current county manager job description, and to include compensation package for board approval.

Motion carried 4 to 1 with Commissioner Schulz voting in opposition to the motion.

With no further business, a motion by Commissioner Douglas, seconded by Commissioner Sims, the meeting adjourned at 10.30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


 Jackie B. Smith, County Clerk