

The McDuffie County Board of Commissioners held a regular Commission Meeting Wednesday, March 3, 2010, 10:00 AM, Grand Jury Room, McDuffie County Courthouse.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Charles G. Newton IV, Chairman  
Sammie Wilson, Sr., Vice Chairman  
Rev. Fred Favors, Commissioner  
Paul W. McCorkle, Commissioner  
Wm. "Bill" M. Jopling, Commissioner

**COUNTY REPRESENTATION:**

Don Norton, County Manager  
Annette Finley, County Clerk  
Darlow Maxwell, County Finance Director  
Eric Reisinger, Public Works Director  
Don Clauson, Director, Solid Waste  
Sandra Whitaker, Tax Commissioner  
Linda Thurmond, Chief Tax Appraiser  
Fred Guerrant, Director, Planning Board  
Stephen Sewell, Asst. Fire Chief  
Logan Marshall, County Sheriff

**MEDIA:**

WTHO Radio Station  
McDuffie Progress Newspaper  
McDuffie Mirror Newspaper

**OTHERS:**

Two (2) other citizens were in attendance.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Newton called the meeting to order, acknowledged a quorum of commissioners present and welcomed everyone in attendance.

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Reverend Ben Mattox, Minister of Music & Youth, Marshall Baptist Church, Thomson, GA offered the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVALS**

**Agenda (Current)**

A motion was made by Wilson to approve the current Agenda with addition of adding item "3. City-County Annual Retreat, to be held Friday, March 5, Savannah Rapids Pavilion, starting at 8:30 AM"; motion was seconded by Jopling and passed unanimously.

**Minutes (Reg. Commission Meeting 2-16-10)**

A motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Commission Meeting held on 2/16/10 was made by McCorkle seconded by Wilson and passed unanimously.

**INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. Proclamation – Georgia Census Week 3/8 thru 3/14/10: Chairman Newton presented a Proclamation in recognition of the Georgia Census Week March 8-14, 2010 and urged the residents of McDuffie County to participate in the US 2010 Census to provide an accurate count of the population of Georgia in the 2010 decennial census. A copy of the Proclamation is copied below and made a part of these minutes.

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2. **Announcement: Trash Amnesty Day, 3/27/2010, 7:30 AM-12:00 Noon.**
3. **Announcement: Annual City-County Retreat, March 5, 2010, Savannah Rapids Pavilion, Starting at 8:30 AM.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. City/County Government Center Status Update: Chairman Newton asked Program Manager Jud Bryant to present this update.

Jud briefly updated the Board of Commissioners of the progress being made at the City-County Government Center Complex:

- A) Relocation of Power Distribution in the area surrounding the site by Georgia Power.
- B) Thirty (30) Day Look Ahead:
  - During next 30 days, structural steel (Admin. Bldg.) will be delivered to site & Installation begun.
  - Site stabilization required in parking areas will continue.
  - Detention pond complete.
  - All Stairways and elevator shafts will be nearing completion.
  - Brick and mortar samples will be installed on site for Owner review and approval in preparation for developing full Mock Up for Owner and Historic Preservation review and comment.
- C) Natural Gas Utilization on Site:
  - An approach has been developed that will allow all preheat for the entire complex to be gas fired at a cost totaling \$64,000.

Jud stated that more details would be forthcoming at the upcoming Retreat to be held on Friday, March 5.

#### NEW BUSINESS

1. ER & ACO report – February 2010: Chairman Newton asked Tax Commissioner Sandra Whitaker to present this report to the Commission.

Sandra reported that the amount of revenue (tax dollars generated) due the County for the M&O of McDuffie County increased by \$12,396.11. Property Tax increase is due to many Appeals settled, the 2009 values had to be adjusted to reflect the 2008 values as per appeals, DOR released the Public Utilities with updated values to be mailed, new leased commercial property located and billed.

The Mobile Home Digest reflected an increase of \$599.05 due the County. Mobile Home Tax increase is due to the location of a mobile home not displaying the location permits for the last seven years.

After discussion, a motion to accept and approve the report was made by Wilson, seconded by Jopling and passed unanimously.

2. Discuss Need to Widen Happy Valley Road Prior to Resurfacing Project: Chairman Newton asked Eric Reisinger, Director of Public Works, to address this matter.

Eric reported that he recommended and would like to pursue the widening of 1.16 miles of Happy Valley Road. In order to construct consistent 11' travel lanes from current +/- 9-10' prior to state funded overlay project. The construction would be bid out. At this time, he was asking for permission from the Board to pursue this matter due to increased capacity of roadway and lower future maintenance costs.

After discussion, a motion was made by McCorkle to approve the recommendation with authorization to place for bidding purposes as soon as possible with the bid award to be made at the Commission Meeting scheduled for April 7, 2018; motion was seconded by Jopling and passed unanimously.

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3. Discuss Status of Reese Road: Chairman Newton asked Eric Reisinger, Director of Public Works, to address this issue.

Eric stated that road construction and asphalt paving of +/- 600 FL on Reese Road, N.E. will be utilized as an access road connecting Washington Road to the new East Bypass. Purpose is to construct a safe travel route and drastically reduce unimproved roadway maintenance since the route will be exposed to considerable traffic count when the bypass is opened. This will have a fiscal impact of approximately \$22,000-\$25,000 and he recommends that to make the necessary road base improvements in-house and utilize current DOT contract which Reeves Construction asphalt paving for lower asphalt costs. After discussion, Chairman Newton recommended the necessary road base improvements in-house and to utilize current DOT contract asphalt paving for lower asphalt cost with funds coming from SPLOST IV, not to exceed \$25,000. A motion to approve this recommendation was made by McCorkle, seconded by Wilson and passed unanimously.

4. Discuss Use of Soil-Cement Pavement/Road Base: Chairman Newton asked Eric Reisinger to delay this matter to the Commission Work Session scheduled for April 5, 2010.

5. Request to Lift Hiring Freeze for IT Director Position: Chairman Newton asked County Manager Don Norton to address this issue.

Don requested that the current "hiring freeze" be lifted in the IT Department in order to promote the current Systems Analyst III, Raymond White, to the position of IT Director effective today, March 3, 2010, at the minimum salary level of the IT Director for the department. This promotion will vacate the position of Systems Analyst III within the

Department and the new director, Raymond White, will make a future recommendation for the completion of the staff.

6. Interview of County Clerk Candidates: Chairman Newton announced that interviews had been arranged with 6 top candidates for the position of County Clerk and asked Don Norton to have each candidate enter at intervals of 15 minutes for their respective interview. The candidates are:

Julie Whitaker  
Charlotte Hinman  
Teresa Story

Penny Salley  
Ronica Cummings  
Tiffany Hill

Afterwards, Chairman Newton asked the Board to make their selection 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Choice and report back to Don Norton no later than noon Monday, March 8, 2010. At that time, a decision will be made as to the final selection of a new employee with an appointment to County Clerk to be made at the time of Mrs. Finley's retirement on March 31, 2010.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, a motion to adjourn was made by Wilson, seconded by Jopling and passed unanimously.

McDUFFIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Charles G. Newton IV, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Annette Finley, County Clerk