

AGENDA

McDUFFIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING March 5, 2008, 10:00 AM, Grand Jury Room, McDuffie County Courthouse

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

Chairman Newton

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Reverend Bob Eick, Pastor, Salem United Methodist Church, Thomson (595-5706 H)

APPROVALS

Agenda (Current)

Minutes (Regular Mtg. 2-29-08)

INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1. ACCG Annual Mtg., April 26-29, 2008, Civic Center, Savannah, GA**
- 2. Status Update – Holland Ware Tax Litigation (Don Norton)**

OLD BUSINESS

- 1. Appointment – Joint Development Authority (Chairman Newton)**

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. ER's & ACO;s (Errors Releases & Assessor's Change Order Report) Real Estate & Mobile Home Taxes – February 2008 (Sandra Whitaker)**
- 2. Discuss Sunday Liquor Sales (Chairman Newton)**
- 3. Proposed Annexation-Horizon Properties, Wrens Hwy. #17 (Chairman Newton)**
- 4. Proposal for FY 2008 CDBG Architectural/Engineering Report McDuffie County Sr. Citizens' Center Renovation Project - \$4000 (Chairman Newton)**
- 5. OneGeorgia Loan (Sammy Fowler)**
- 6. Bid: Fire Services, Protective Clothing (Bruce Tanner)**
- 7. Need for Motor - Fire/Rescue Dive Boat (Bruce Tanner)**
- 8. Budget Amendment Request for Public Defender (Jimmy Whitaker)**
- 9. Discuss Proposed Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Policy (Don Norton)**
- 10. Discuss Proposed Performance-Based Bonus Salary Program (Don Norton)**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Topic of Discussion: Personnel

ADJOURNMENT

The McDuffie County Board of Commissioners held a regular Commission Meeting, Wednesday morning, March 5, 2008, 10:00 AM, Grand Jury Room, McDuffie County Courthouse.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:
Charles G. Newton IV, Chairman
Sammie L. Wilson, Sr., Vice Chairman
Rev. Fred Favors, Commissioner
Darrell L. Wester, Commissioner
J. Robt. "Bob" Farr, Commissioner

COUNTY REPRESENTATION:
Sammy Fowler, County Attorney
Don Norton, County Manager
Annette Finley, County Clerk
Jimmy Whitaker, County Finance Director
Bruce Tanner, County Fire Chief
Steven Sewell, Fire Services/EMA
Kelly Evans, Director, IT Department
Sandra Whitaker, Tax Commissioner
Bob Howard, Director, Recreation, Leisure
Services, Rural Transportation
Mike Carrington, Executive Dir., Dev. Authority
Fred Guerrant, Director, Planning Board
Don Clauson, Director, Solid Waste

OTHERS
Three (3) other citizens attended

MEDIA REPRESENTATION
McDuffie Mirror Newspaper
McDuffie Progress Newspaper
WTHO Radio Station

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Newton announced that a quorum was present, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commission Favors offered the invocation which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVALS

Agenda (Current)

A motion to approve the current Agenda was made by Wilson, seconded by Farr and passed unanimously.

Minutes (Regular Mtg. 2-19-08)

A motion to approve the minutes of the regular Commission Meeting held on February 19, 2008, was made by Farr, seconded by Wilson and passed unanimously.

INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. ACCG Annual Mtg., April 26-29, 2008, Civic Center, Savannah, GA
2. Status Update – Holland Ware Tax Litigation: Chairman Newton asked Don Norton, County Manager, to address this issue. Don explained that 18 counties had been solicited for support of the legal actions relative to the claims of advalorem tax exemption by the Holland M. Ware Foundation. Only one, Meriwether County, chose not to participate due to a conflict of interest. After discussing the matter at length, Don recommended approval of \$387.72 from "contingency" representing the total additional amount due from McDuffie County as a result of related litigation. This brings the total, committed by McDuffie County, to \$3,448.63. A motion to approve the additional \$387.73 with funds coming from "contingency" was made by Wester, seconded by Farr and passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Appointment – Joint Development Authority: Chairman Newton presented the file from 3 previous meetings in which a replacement for Kenneth Ursy was needed who had been elected as Mayor and moved into an "Ex-Officio" position on the Joint Development Authority. At this time, Chairman Newton once again nominated Bob Knox, Jr., and Commissioner Favors nominated Rev. Isaiah Eberhart. At this time, Chairman Newton recommended "closing" the nominations. A motion was made to close the nominations by Wilson, seconded by Farr and passed unanimously and a roll call vote was requested with the following results:

Bob Knox, Jr.
Newton – Yes
Farr – Yes
Wester – Yes

Rev. Isaiah Eberhart
Favors – Yes
Wilson – Yes

At this time, a second motion was made by Farr to appoint Bob Knox, Jr. to complete the term of Kenneth Usry on the Joint Development Authority effective immediately ending December 31, 2010; motion was seconded by Wester and passed 3 to 2.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **ER's & ACO's (Errors, Releases & Assessor's Change Order Report) Real Estate & Mobile Home Taxes – February 2008:** Chairman Newton asked Tax Commissioner Sandra Whitaker to present this report.

Sandra reported a decrease of \$711.11 in the amount of revenue due the County for the M&O of McDuffie County. The Property Tax decrease is due to several appeal filed on 2007 values were settled with some increasing and some decreasing; Approval of conservation covenant; Personal Property Audit was completed for several businesses that increased values for 2007, 2006, 2005 and 2004; some closed businesses which remained on the 2007 Digest in error.

The Mobile Home Digest decreased in the amount of \$1608.65 due the County for M&O. The Mobile Home tax decrease is due to the approval of homestead exemption for several owners; several mobile homes were detitled and put on digest as real property; location of several mobile homes located in the county were not displaying a location permit.

A motion was made by Farr to accept and approve this report; motion was seconded by Wilson and passed unanimously.

2. **Discuss Sunday Liquor Sales:** Chairman Newton announced that this subject matter had been discussed at length at the annual City-County Retreat held February 22-23 in Athens. At this time, he recommended and asked the Board for their action in having the County Attorney draw up a Resolution reflecting this matter and to be brought before the McDuffie County citizens in referendum form on the ballot during the General Election November 4, 2008. There was no objection and the County Attorney was instructed to present this Resolution at the next Commission Meeting to be held on March 18.
3. **Proposed Annexation-Horizon Properties, Wrens Hwy. #17:** Chairman Newton asked County Manager Don Norton to report on this matter.

Don stated that the City of Thomson had notified the County of its intention to annex property located on Highway 17 (Wrens Highway) owned by Horizon Properties, Tax Map No. T-330, Parcel No. 119-OCL of the Tax Valuation Map of McDuffie County. After discussion, there was no objection by the Board and it was agreed by all that the City of Thomson could pursue this matter further.

4. **Proposal for FY 2008 CDBG Architectural/Engineering Report - McDuffie County Sr. Citizens' Center Renovation:** Chairman Newton presented a proposal from Precision Planning, Inc., who submitted a proposal for professional design services for the Center. Their proposal outlined their Scope of Work and Assumptions and Exclusions in the amount of \$4,000.

After discussion, a motion to approve this preliminary Architectural / Engineering Report from Precision Planning, Inc. in the amount of \$4,000 for the Sr. Citizens' Center with funds coming from "contingency" was made by Wester, seconded by Farr and passed unanimously.

5. **OneGeorgia Loan:** Chairman Newton asked County Attorney Sammy Fowler to address this matter.

Sammy presented a OneGeorgia Authority Intergovernmental Services Contract along with Appendix A – Form of the Secured Promissory Note in the amount of \$500,000 each governmental entity (McDuffie County and the City of Thomson) and an Amendment to the Airport Lease Agreement . He stated that the three (3) agreements were in order and would enable the City of Thomson and McDuffie County each to jointly pursue the administrative measures required by the OneGeorgia Authority to obtain the \$500,000 loan as approved earlier for the purpose of constructing two sets of T-Hangers at the Thomson-McDuffie Airport.

After discussion, a motion was made by Wester to approve the three documents as written by the County Attorney; motion was seconded by Farr and passed unanimously.

6. **Bid – Fire Services, Protective Clothing:** Chairman Newton asked County Fire Chief Bruce Tanner to present this matter.

Bruce reported six (6) bids were received for the protective fire clothing and the bid results are as follows:

After discussion, a motion was made by Wester to accept the low bid of \$12,088.60 from Anderson Fire & Safety Company; motion was seconded by Wilson and passed unanimously.

7. **Need for Motor – Fire/Rescue Dive Boat:** Chairman Newton asked County Fire Chief Bruce Tanner to address this issue.

Bruce reported that the dive boat has a "used" 30-year old motor which had been used for several years by the Dive Team and out of service due to an inoperable motor. He noted that in the past several years, the Dive Team

had been successful in several water recovery missions within the county and had assisted the McDuffie County Sheriff's Office, Georgia Bureau of Investigation and the Thomson-McDuffie County Water and Sewer Department with various underwater operations.

At this time, the Fire Chief is requesting the transfer of funds, not to exceed \$9000, to the EMA budget from "contingency" for the purpose of purchasing an appropriately sized outboard motor and the associated material and labor costs to install motor on the dive boat. It was note that he is using a 17' Boston Whaler boat, donated by the DNR.

At this time, a discussion was held regarding the possible purchase of a new boat, motor, and trailer. Commissioner Wester recommended that the matter be postponed with Bruce obtaining additional information regarding further details regarding the possibility of obtaining a new boat, motor and trailer. The next Commission Meeting will be held on March 18 at which time Bruce will report his findings to the Commissioners.

8. **Budget Amendment Request for Public Defender:** Chairman Newton asked County Finance Director Jimmy Whitaker to address this matter.

Jimmy stated that he had been asked to amend the 2008 budget as previously approved to provide additional funding for an attorney and related expenses for the Public Defender's Office. He noted that McDuffie County will be responsible for paying this new attorney and related expenses, but will be reimbursed 58.6% from the other five (5) counties in the Toombs Circuit. Currently, the Public Defender is budgeted \$34,812 for the year 2008. By adding a new attorney position and considering the benefits and other changes to be made the Public Defender's budget would be increased to a maximum of \$38,814 for McDuffie County's portion.

After discussion, a motion was made by Wester to approve this request contingent upon the other 5 counties in the Toombs District approving the request and their commitment had been received in writing; motion was seconded by Wilson and passed unanimously.

9. **Discuss Proposed Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Policy:** Chairman Newton asked County Manager Don Norton to address this issue.

Don stated that the proposed Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Policy was very similar to the 2008 policy and the main difference was the dates of scheduled events for the department heads to adhere. He asked for the Board to review the policy for any concerns and it would be presented again at a later date. Note was made that adoption of this policy would be requested at the April 2 Commission Meeting.

No action was taken or required at this time.

10. **Discuss Proposed Performance-Based Bonus Salary Program:** Chairman Newton asked County Manager to address this issue.

Don reported on the "Performance-Based Bonus Salary Program" which is in the process of being established at this time. Don was advised to proceed with the establishment of the program and report back to the Board at a later date.

At this time, Chairman Newton asked that an Executive Session be held to discuss personnel. A motion to enter into an Executive Session was made by Farr, seconded Wilson and passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Topic of Discussion: Personnel

At the end of the Executive Session, a motion to resume the regular Commission Meeting was made by Farr, seconded by Wilson and passed unanimously.

No action was taken or required at the end of the Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further action to come before the Board of Commissioners, a motion to adjourn was made by Wilson, seconded by Farr and passed unanimously.

McDUFFIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Charles G. Newton IV, Chairman

ATTEST:

Annette Finley, County Clerk