

The McDuffie County Board of Commissioners held a regular Commission Meeting Wednesday morning, November 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 REPRESENTATIVES:

Don Norton, County Manager
Annette Finley, County Clerk
Jimmy Whitaker, County Finance Director
Chris Pelly, Director of Public Works
Sandra Whitaker, Tax Commissioner
Wanda Sisson, Tax Assessor's Office
Bruce Tanner, County Fire Chief
Bill Jopling, Commissioner Elect
Paul McCorkle, Commissioner Elect
Don Clauson, Director, Solid Waste

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES:

WTHO Radio Station
McDuffie Mirror Newspaper
McDuffie Progress Newspaper

OTHERS:

Four (1) citizens attended.

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

Chairman Newton

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Reverend Bob Eick, Methodist Minister, Thomson, GA, 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 (Reg. Mtg. 10-1-08)

A motion to approve the minutes of the Commission Meeting held on October 1, 2008 was made by Farr, seconded by Wilson and passed unanimously.

NOTE: Regular Meeting of 10-21-08 was cancelled.

Minutes ("Called" Mtg. 10-22-08)

A motion to approve the minutes of the "Called" Commission Meeting held on October 22, 2008 was made by Wester, seconded by Favors and passed unanimously.

INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. ACCG 7th District 2008 Meeting, 11-18-08, Warren County Community Service Bldg., Warrenton, GA

PUBLIC INPUT

Mr. Brink Bradshaw asked to address the Board of Commissioners as a citizen of McDuffie County regarding the hiring of a "CM at Risk" for the new City-County Government Center Complex. Chairman Newton acknowledged Mr. Bradshaw and allowed 5 minutes for input. Mr. Bradshaw presented his thoughts toward not allowing local companies to bid for the construction of such project and felt strongly they could save the county money in the long run.

Also, Commissioner Elect Paul McCorkle questioned the cost quoted in 2005 as opposed to the current 2008 cost of \$250 per sq. foot. Note was made that this issue would be addressed later.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Appointment – Hospital Authority Board: Chairman Newton advised that he had received a letter informing him of the approval of Mr. P.J. Alderman to fill the position of Mrs. Robin Dudley. The Authority now requests three names for consideration in replacing Mr. Rusty Lovelace, Post 9.

After discussion and selection, the Board approved the following named individuals to be submitted to the Authority for their consideration as a potential replacement for Mr. Rusty Lovelace:

Mrs. Renee Wright Office Mgr. & V.P. of Lending First Bank P.O. Box 1560 Thomson, GA 30824 Telephone: 706/595-1600	Mrs. Lynn Crawley SunTrust Bank P.O. Drawer 1200 Thomson, GA 30824 Telephone: 706/595-1234	Mr. John M. Moss 369 County Line Road, S.E. Harlem, GA 30814 Telephone: 706/595-3849 (Retired: Sold Hospital Supplies)
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A motion to approve these names for submission to the Hospital Authority was made by Wester, seconded by Favors and passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Status Update of Government Center Project: Chairman Newton asked Jud Bryant, Program Manager of the new City-County Government Center Project, to present this matter.

Jud reviewed the current plans for this project further stating that he was now coming to the Board for approval of:

- A Traffic Study of the exact area and surrounding areas on which the Complex is to be constructed. Jud stated that this Traffic Study is necessary and noted that the State Department of Transportation would not provide the many details of curbs, driveways, parking, etc. which are necessary in building such a complex.

After discussion, a motion to approve the Traffic Study at a cost not to exceed \$20,000 was made by Favors, seconded by Wilson and passed three to 1 with Farr voting "no".

- The hiring or not to hire a CM at Risk (Construction Management) for the City-County Government Center Project. Jud pointed out the advantages and disadvantages of having a CM at Risk company to handle all of the bidding, construction, purchasing of equipment & supplies, lighting, etc. The CM at Risk would assume all of the responsibility and present progress reports to the Board of Commissioners insofar as costs, quality, schedules, etc. This approach also allows for a "guaranteed maximum cost" set early in the process and actually facilitates more involvement of local contractors and sub-contractors.

A lengthy discussion was held on this matter after which Chairman Newton recommended to the Board that this plan of action be taken. A motion was made by Favors to approve the recommendation, seconded by Wilson; the motion was tied 2 to 2 with Farr and Wester voting "no"; Chairman Newton voted "yes" to break the tie and the motion passed 3 to 2.

2. ER & ACO Report for October 2008: Chairman Newton asked Tax Commissioner Sandra Whitaker to present this report.

Sandra reported a decrease in the amount of revenue due the County for the M&O of McDuffie County. The Property Tax decrease is due to several appeals settled; errors on the digest concerning businesses that had closed before January 1, 2008, duplicate billing on several business accounts; Personal Property Audits; and, Conservation Use Covenant exemptions approved on several parcels resulting in lower tax revenue.

Sandra further stated that there were no changes in the Mobile Home Digest.

After discussion, a motion was made by Wester to accept the report as presented; motion was seconded by Favors and passed unanimously.

3. Temporary "One Day" Alcohol Bev. License Fee (\$100) Waiver for Non Profit Organizations: Chairman Newton presented a proposal to consider waiving the "\$100" fee for temporary "one day" permits to nonprofit organizations in selling alcoholic beverages on a "case by case" basis. After discussion, there was no opposition by the Board for such action however, it was recommended by Commissioner Farr to seek "legal advice" on the matter. County Manager Don Norton was instructed to contact the County Attorney regarding the matter since the County Ordinance is specific about requiring the \$100 fee. Don is to report back to the Board at the next scheduled Commission Meeting, November 18, 2008.
4. Consideration to Defer Salary Increases for 2009 & to Restore the Reserve Fund as Soon as Possible: Chairman Newton stated that after consideration, he recommended the 2½ % Salary increase budgeted in the 2009 budget be deferred until after the legislature meets January 2009 and the LGIP Reserve Fund be reimbursed as tax revenue avails itself. This would be the \$900,000 which had to be drawn down for cash flow needs, largely due to the economic "crises" of 2008. The State hopefully will grant the county \$305,000 in Homestead Relief Tax Grant (HTRG) funds afterwards. It was noted that the 2 ½% salary increase amounts to \$115,000 with an additional \$35,000 for the 2009 "pay for performance" bonus totaling \$150,000. These funds are in the Salary Contingency Fund Budget 2009.

After discussion, a motion was made by Farr to approve the recommendation of deferring the 2 ½% salary increase effective January 1, 2009; the vote died due to the lack of a second.

Additional discussion was held with Commissioner Favors recommending the 2 ½% salary increase be left "as they are" with this increase given to county employees as budgeted and effective January 1, 2009. A motion to approve Favors recommendation was made by Wester, seconded by Wilson and passed 3 to 2; Farr and Newton voted "no".

5. Bid Award: DOT Safety & Signage Program: Chairman Newton asked County Manager Don Norton or Director of Public Works Chris Pelly to present this bid.

Chris reported that the bid opening was held on November 4 noting that only four (4) bids had been received for the project. The Department of Transportation representatives were on hand to open bids and they are as follows:

