



BALDWIN COUNTY REGULAR MEETING

October 18, 2022

1601 N Columbia St, Suite 220

6:00 PM

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Henry Craig
John Westmoreland
Kendrick Butts
Emily Davis (Virtual)
Sammy Hall

ALSO PRESENT

David McRee
Carlos Tobar
Dawn Hudson
Cindy Cunningham

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Craig called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

INVOCATION

County Manager Tobar delivered the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chairman John Westmoreland led the pledge.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Kendrick Butts made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 4, 2022 Regular Meeting and the October 4, 2022 Executive Session as submitted. Vice Chairman John Westmoreland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

PRESENTATION

County Housing Improvement Program

Dr. Damian Francis, Georgia College and State University, gave an update on the Baldwin County Housing Improvement Program. He commended Commissioners for their dedication to the community and thanked County Manager Carlos Tobar for seeking solutions to important issues facing citizens. Dr. Francis addressed a key issue in Baldwin County – the problem of Heirs property which is property handed down to family members and the property is held as tenants in common. He stated he feels this is a barrier to realizing the full potential of the property and to improving Baldwin County. Dr. Francis presented statistics from various studies on this matter. He stated racial minorities and lower income persons sometimes lack education in wills and estate planning. In a recent meeting of members of the GCSU Rural Studies Institute, the Center for Health and Social Issues and Habitat for Humanity, a short-term plan was developed. Dr. Francis proposed that funding be made available to alleviate the issues of heirs' property among the neediest citizens who were deemed ineligible because of this issue for CHIP funding to renovate their houses. He stated the modest estimate is a total of \$25,000 which would assist ten – fifteen property owners to start this process. He felt this show of good faith would be beneficial to the County in securing such designations as Plan First and would improve the ability for the County to secure additional grant funds. Dr. Francis also requested \$5,000 – \$7,000 to host five educational sessions on wills and estate planning for lower income persons and minorities.

Commissioner Butts asked how participants would be chosen. Dr. Francis responded the same type lottery system would be used as with the selection for CHIP recipients, concentrating on those with disabilities and the elderly. If there are remaining funds, the assistance could be opened up to the public. Commissioner Butts asked if the same census tracts would be used as with the CHIP grant. County Manager Tobar confirmed the same census tracts would be used at this point.

Dr. Veronica Wommack, Executive Director of the Rural Studies Institute, expressed her support for the efforts of the group and Dr. Francis regarding heirs' property. Ms. Pauline Harper addressed the Board thanking the County for the CHIP funding to renovate her house.

Commissioners Certifications

Chairman Craig presented Commissioner Kendrick Butts a plaque awarded by ACCG for his successful completion of the core requirements in the ACCG Lifelong Learning Academy.

Chairman Craig recognized Vice Chairman John Westmoreland for academic achievement in the ACCG Lifelong Learning Academy for his successful completion of the Quality of Life / Social Issues specialty track requirements of the Academy.

ADMINISTRATIVE/FISCAL MATTERS

Food Service Establishment Fees

Colin Duke, Environmentalist with the Baldwin County Health Department gave a power point presentation on proposed increases to food service fees. He stated the last fee increase was in 2019. He reported the Board of Health has approved the increase, and the goal is uniformity among all counties. Mr. Duke explained how the fees for food service establishments would be determined. Fees would be determined by the number of seats in establishment; number of meals served whether one, two, three or establishment open 24 hours; actual number of meals served daily to patrons; and the number of employees of the establishment. Mr. Duke stated the impact of the new fees, based on fifty random samples, would be an increase of \$10,425.00. He stated the increase in food service fees would be effective thirty days from the date of the vote. He requested ratification by Baldwin County of the increase in food services fees.

After discussion, Commissioner Kendrick Butts made a motion to approve the increase in food service fees as presented. The motion died for lack of a second.

Homeland Security Grant

Assistant County Manager Dawn Hudson reported EMA has been awarded a Homeland Security grant for equipment and training for the CERP program which trains citizens in hazard mitigation. In the event of a disaster this trained group of people will be able to assist. She stated the grant is in the amount of \$10,035 and there is no County Match.

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to approve the Homeland Security Grant as presented. Vice Chairman John Westmoreland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Resolution for Section 5311 Transit Application

Assistant County Manager Hudson presented a Resolution for the Board's consideration for the renewal application of the Section 5311 Rural Transportation program that has been operating in Baldwin County for over twenty years. She stated the objective is to meet public transportation needs to all citizens who want to use the service. The program is managed through the County Fire Department and the cost per ride is \$2.00 per trip.

Ms. Hudson stated the total operating budget for July 2023 – June 2024 is \$220,250 which will be shared 50 / 50 between the Department of Transportation and the County. Capital funds included in the budget total \$3,600. The total County share is \$110,505 and will be included in the 2023 budget. She stated the required advertising for the grant renewal has been made and no comments were received.

Action is needed by the Board to adopt the Resolution to submit the renewal application and to authorize the Chairman to execute all required grant documents and agreements.

Vice Chairman John Westmoreland made a motion to approve the Resolution as presented and to authorize the Chairman to execute required documents. Commissioner Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and it passed by the following vote:

Aye: Westmoreland, Butts, Davis, Craig

Nay: Hall

Reappointment to Development Authority of Milledgeville

Chairman Henry Craig stated a letter has been received from the Development Authority of Milledgeville and Baldwin County requesting the reappointment of Mr. Derek Williams to serve as a County representative on the Board of the Development Authority.

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to reappoint Derek Williams to the Board of the Development Authority of Milledgeville and Baldwin County. Vice Chairman John Westmoreland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Kendrick Butts requested an update on Ogden Inert Landfill. County Manager Tobar responded Public Works staff will be moving back to that project since the work on Old Plantation Trail is complete.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to come before the Board.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Tobar presented the following update on County projects: an Heir property workshop was held at the Collins P. Lee Center earlier in the month; Comprehensive Plan meetings will be held October 20th and 24th; he, along with Vice Chairman, attended the DCA Award Ceremony to receive the \$400,000 CHIP grant for housing rehabilitation and the CDBG grant for sewer infrastructure replacement; GICH team members will attend a conference 25th – 27th; attended the Georgia Airport Association conference; seeking letters of support and pictures from residents who have galvanized pipes to submit with a \$1,000,000 CDBG grant for galvanized water replacements and up to \$250,000 for housing rehabilitation.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were no public comments to come before the Board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - Litigation

Commissioner Kendrick Butts made a motion to adjourn into Executive Session at 6:55 p.m. to discuss litigation. Commissioner Sammy Hall seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

RECONVENE REGULAR MEETING

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to reopen the Regular Meeting at 7:20 p.m. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Kendrick Butts made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Henry R. Craig
Chairman

Cynthia K. Cunningham
County Clerk