



BALDWIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

March 7, 2023

1601 N Columbia St, Suite 220

6:00 P.M.

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Emily Davis
John Westmoreland
Kendrick Butts
Henry Craig
Sammy Hall

OTHERS PRESENT

Bandon Palmer
Carlos Tobar
Dawn Hudson
Cindy Cunningham

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Emily Davis called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

INVOCATION

Minister Barbara Harper delivered the Invocation

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Baldwin High School JROTC presented the Colors. Ms. Susie Harper Marshall led the Pledge

PRESENTATIONS

Communities in Schools

Executive Director Janet Cavin presented an overview and yearly report on the Communities in Schools. She discussed the services provided including tutoring, mentoring, case management, school uniforms and supplies, blessing bags, personal hygiene supplies and adult education. Ms. Cavin expressed her appreciation to the Board for their continued support of Milledgeville/Baldwin County Communities in Schools.

Oconee Community Service Board

Mr. John Timm and Mr. Ezekiel McWilliams presented an update on the Oconee Center. They reported the Oconee Center's mission is to provide high quality and cost-effective behavioral health care services. They discussed services including mental health, developmental disabilities and addictive disease which are provided to the counties of Baldwin, Hancock, Jasper, Putnam, Washington and Wilkinson. Commission Chair Emily Davis also services as Chair of the Oconee Community Service Board. They expressed appreciation to Chair Davis and the Board for the support given to the Oconee Community Service Board and the Oconee Center.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chairman John Westmoreland made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 21, 2023 Regular Meeting and the February 21, 2023 Executive Session as submitted. Commissioner Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE / FISCAL MATTERS

Land Bank Resolution and Intergovernmental Contract

County Manager Carlos Tobar reported numerous discussions have been held regarding a proposed Intergovernmental Contract with the City of Milledgeville to establish a Land Bank. He stated a Work Session was held earlier today, and City representatives were present for discussion of the proposed Contract. Mr. Tobar presented the Intergovernmental Contract between Baldwin County and the City of Milledgeville Creating the Baldwin County Land Bank.

County Attorney Brandon Palmer stated the Agenda item includes a Resolution to Establish and Create the Baldwin County Land Bank. Commissioner Henry Craig read the Resolution for the Board's consideration.

County Manager Tobar discussed aspects of the Intergovernmental Contract. Commissioner Henry Craig discussed legislation creating land banks for the purpose of improving neighborhoods and communities.

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to adopt the Resolution and approve the Intergovernmental Contract creating the Baldwin County Land Bank as presented. Commissioner Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

A copy of the Resolution is herewith attached and made an official part of the minutes at pages ____ and _____. The Intergovernmental Contract is on file in the Board of Commissioners Office.

OLD BUSINESS

Vice Chair John Westmoreland stated he received a call from Commissioner Butts about citizens being carded at the convenience centers. He stated he felt the County should reissue cards for use of the convenience centers; and until that time, citizens should show their driver's license. Commissioner Craig recommended that County Manager Tobar evaluate the situation to decide how best to handle this.

NEW BUSINESS

Vice Chair John Westmoreland recommended that Commissioners begin the process to hold staggered elections. County Attorney Brandon Palmer stated should the Board choose to pursue this matter it would go through the local legislative delegation to introduce the bill to make the change.

Vice Chair Westmoreland made a motion to ask the local legislative delegation to introduce legislation in the next legislative session to create staggered elections. Commissioner Henry Craig seconded the motion.

Commissioners Craig, Westmoreland and Hall stated they would volunteer their districts for two (2) year terms. Commissioner Butts asked that the motion be amended to include this.

Vice Chair John Westmoreland amended his motion. The motion is to request that the local legislative delegation introduce legislation in the next legislative session to create staggered elections with districts 3, 4, 5 becoming two (2) year terms. Commissioner Henry Craig seconded the motion.

Chair Davis called for a vote on the amended motion to request local legislation for staggered terms with districts 3, 4, and 5 being two (2) year terms. The motion passed by the following vote:

Aye: Westmoreland, Craig, Hall

Nay: Butts, Davis

Chair Davis called for a vote on the original motion made to request local legislation in the next session to create staggered elections. The motion passed by the following vote:

Aye: Westmoreland, Craig, Hall

Nay: Butts, Davis

Chair Davis stated Public Hearings should be held to see how the public feels about this matter prior to contacting legislators requesting the legislation. Commissioner Hall stated Public Hearings are not required since it will be local legislation. Commissioner Craig recommended asking Attorney Palmer to evaluate whether Public Hearings are required.

Attorney Palmer stated since this would be an act of the local legislative delegation Public Hearings are not required. However, the Board could vote at a later date if a Public Hearing will be scheduled.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Carlos Tobar presented the following report: fifteen (15) concrete pads have been poured for disc golf course; RAISE grant application for Oconee Heights Streetscape was submitted to USDOT; grant application for sewer extension to Smith-Sibley was submitted to Senator Ossoff; application will be submit for a sewer rehabilitation project to Senator Warnock by this Friday; received letters of support from Representative Ken Vance and Senator Rick Williams and Mayor Mary Parham-Copelan; held a public hearing for 2023 multi-activity (sewer rehab and housing) CDBG application at Wesley Chapel AME the previous with good participation; inspector visited the first three CHIP homes today to prepare bid list; bid package should be out for bid within two weeks; Office of Planning and Budget reached out to us to make minor edits to our grant applications.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Gregory Barnes, 3736 Sussex Drive, addressed the Board stating he and Commissioner Hall had been given misinformation that 501 c (3) organizations could not work within the County government. However, according to the SPLOST referendum this is not correct. He stated he hoped other 501 c (3) organizations would be able to do so as well. Mr. Barnes stated he had submitted an open records request about the upcoming SPLOST and had not received a response. County staff stated they would look into the matter to locate the request.

Mr. Hudman Evans, 328 Railroad Drive, addressed the Board regarding the Oconee Heights proposed project which included solar lighting. He stated each district should be afforded opportunities for improvement especially if the district qualifies for grant funding regardless of whether another district qualifies for the same. He also expressed his concern regarding mental health issues. He stated he felt a mental health officer should be on call to assist law enforcement in dealing with situations caused by mental health.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:00 p.m. Vice Chair John Westmoreland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily C. Davis
Chair

Cynthia K. Cunningham
County Clerk