



BALDWIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS JUNE 15, 2021 PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING

June 15, 2021

1601 N Columbia St, Suite 220

6:00 PM

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Henry Craig called the June 15, 2021 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Greg Boike, Middle Georgia Regional Commission, stated the public hearing is a requirement in order to amend the comprehensive plan to include the broadband services component. He stated residents, businesses and community facilities should have access to affordable and reliable internet services. Mr. Boike reported discussions with local elected officials, staff, local business leaders and residents of the County indicate there is a significant need to improve high speed internet. He discussed the needs and opportunities identified by various stakeholders and the locations of served and unserved census blocks.

Mr. Boike stated the purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comment on the changes proposed to the Comprehensive Plan. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) will then review the plan for thirty (30) days and most likely approve the changes. After DCA's approval, the County and City will approve the Resolution to adopt the changes. Once the updated Comprehensive Plan is approved by DCA and the County and City, The local governments can apply to the State for Broadband Ready designation.

Chair Craig opened the floor for comments from the public. He asked Commissioners for questions and comments. There were no public comments nor any questions or comments from Commissioners.

Recreational Vehicle Parks

Carlos Tobar stated an ordinance is being proposed for establishment and operation of Recreational Vehicle Parks. He reported the County issued a moratorium on RV Parks until the ordinance is developed. Mr. Tobar stated that additional reviews and revisions need to be made to the proposed ordinance, and he recommended no action be taken on this matter at this time.

Mr. Tobar discussed that a five percent (5%) lodging tax will be assessed daily on the rental of each RV space. It has been recommended that the proposed ordinance not limit the number of days a Recreational Vehicle could stay at an RV Park. Vice Chair John Westmoreland clarified the fact that management must be on site twenty-four (24) hours – seven (7) days per

week. He stated the Emergency Contact Information should be clearly posted so everyone would know who to notify.

The floor was open for public comments.

Mr. Steve Bowers, District Manager, Scenic Mountain RV Resort, addressed the Board about the proposed Recreational Vehicle (RV) Parks Ordinance. He presented information about his experience and background in the RV industry and statistics of the RV travel industry. He stated that in his opinion, Baldwin County needs to get as many RVs in this county as possible because people bring revenue to the County and city by spending money in stores, gas stations, restaurants, etc.

Commissioner Hall asked Mr. Bowers his assessment of the ordinance. Mr. Bowers stated he feels the proposed ordinance is fair and is very similar to ordinances governing other parks throughout the state and country. He does not have an issue with the 5% tax; however, he would like for the 30 day occupancy limit to be removed. He recommended the 5% fee be charged each day regardless of how long a person stays at the Park. He also stated the required lot size and the separation distance between RVs could be reduced from size requirements stated in the proposed ordinance. The ordinance provides for inspection of park sites which is also common practice at other parks. Commissioners discussed the fact the ordinance would allow for inspection of outside areas, i.e. water and sewer lines and not the interior of recreational vehicles. Commissioner Hall stated he felt garbage enforcement would be a job of park management not the County. Mr. Bowers commented this is standard procedures for the operation of RV Parks, and he has no issues with it.

County Manager Tobar stated taxes will be paid to the County. Susie Marshall commented she felt the tax would cause local businesses to lose money.

Chair Craig stated the proposed ordinance would bring RV Parks in line with other lodging facilities such as hotels, Airbnb, and VRBO units which are required to pay the hotel/motel tax. The proposed lodging tax will equalize the hospitality industry in that everyone will pay an associated tax.

Commissioner Kendrick Butts stated he felt the Scenic Mountain RV Park is a great asset to the County.

Cindy Humphrey stated her questions about the proposed ordinance have been answered.

There being no further comments from Commissioners or the public, Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to close public hearing at 6:30 p.m. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

AMENDMENT TO AGENDA

Commissioner Emily Davis made a motion to amend the Agenda for a Juneteenth Resolution. Commissioner Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Chair Craig read a Proclamation declaring June 19 of each year as "Juneteenth Celebration Day" in Baldwin County.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chair John Westmoreland made a motion to approve the minutes of June 1, 2021 Regular Meeting, June 1, 2021 Executive Session, June 8, 2021 Called Meeting and June 8, 2021 Executive Session as presented. Commissioner Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE / FISCAL MATTERS

Submission of Comprehensive Plan for Review

County Manager Tobar requested the Board's authorization for the Chair to sign a letter of submission for the updated Comprehensive Plan to be submitted to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the Middle Georgia Regional Commission (MGRC) for review and approval.

Vice Chair John Westmoreland made a motion to authorize the Chair to sign the letter to submit the updated Comp Plan to DCA and MGRC. Commissioner Sammy Hall seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Ordinance for Recreational Vehicle Parks

County Manager Tobar stated further review is necessary on the proposed ordinance for Recreational Vehicle Parks. He requested no action be taken on the ordinance at this time.

Commissioner Emily Davis made a motion to table the Recreational Vehicle Parks Ordinance. Vice Chair John Westmoreland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Solid Waste Contract

County Manager Tobar reported a draft of the Solid Waste Contract has been received and Commissioners have reviewed the draft and provided comments. Mr. Tobar stated the revised draft requires further review.

Commissioner Emily David made a motion to table the Solid Waste Contract. Commissioner Sammy Hal seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Grant Awards

Finance Director Jill Adams presented the following grant awards for the Board's consideration:

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) Family Drug Court Grant Award - to provide funds in the amount of \$178,881 for the period July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 for the purpose of establishing specialty courts to address offenders arrested for drug charges or mental health issues.

Governor's Office of Highway Safety Technology Grant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Sheriff's Office and the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police (GACP) – to provide funds in the amount of \$25,000 for a period of thirty-six (36) months to purchase mobile data units for vehicles.

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) Law Enforcement Training Award - to provide funds in the amount of \$64,368 for the period June 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 for law enforcement agencies to provide hands-on training for officers in use of force or de-escalation.

Ms. Adams reported there is no required match on any of these grants.

Commissioner Emily Davis made a motion to accept all three (3) grant awards as presented by the Finance Director. Commissioner Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to come before the Board.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Davis requested an update on the traffic project at Sinclair Marina Road and 441 near the Dollar General Store. County Manager Tobar stated he has not received an update. The Department of Transportation (DOT) has three (3) separate projects for Baldwin County. The first project has been completed, the second, which is the traffic study at Meriwether Road and 441, is currently being done and the Sinclair Marina project will be done next.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager reported on the following: ACCG and GA Trend magazine awarded Baldwin County a "County Excellence Award for the Baldwin County Regional Airport; hangar construction began on west apron phase I; west apron phase II plans are being finalized; splash pad construction nearing completion; addresses to the County's parks are being placed on the website; clearing and grubbing continues at site of new aquatic center; Bonner Road set to reopen soon; 3,300 linear feet of new pipe has been installed to replace defective pipe at Erin Shores; Chief Building Official Steve Owens was appointed by Governor Kemp to the State Construction Industry Licensing Board; and swim lessons will be offered at Georgia College and State University this summer with details being finalized at the college legal department.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Pam Peacock addressed the Board regarding spay / neuter services by PAWS for GA. She reported that of 23 animals submitted for spay / neuter none had a current rabies vaccination. She stated education of the public regarding spay / neuter is very important to getting a handle on the situation.

Tina Behne commended Mr. Westmoreland for his comments to explain acronyms that are used. She stated documents posted on websites should be in one place so they are easier to locate. She discussed the Manufactured Home Ordinance and asked when will it be brought back to the Board for consideration.

Susie Marshall addressed the Board regarding no picture being taken with the Juneteenth Proclamation and problems with the lack of lighting on the southside of town on Vinson Highway.

Cynthia Edwards questioned why previous speakers were not reminded of the three (3) minute time limit. She stated sewage backed up in building at the Collins P. Lee Center and hopes the splash pads are being constructed to provide a safe place for kids. She thanked Commissioners for recognizing Juneteenth and would like to have a picture made for the presentation. She questioned what would happen to the Proclamation. Chair Craig stated he is not aware of any County procedures outlining who a proclamation is given to. He asked the County Attorney to review the matter of proclamation presentations.

Chair Craig reminded everyone of the availability of COVID vaccines and encouraged those who haven't had it to please consider getting vaccinated.

Cindy Humphrey commented her husband notified her that the sound of tonight's meeting is much better.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to adjourn the June 15, 2021 meeting at 7:00 p.m. Vice Chair John Westmoreland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Henry R. Craig
Chair

Cynthia K. Cunningham
County Clerk