



**BALDWIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR
MEETING**

**March 16, 2021
1601 N Columbia St, Suite 220
5:00 PM**

MINUTES

PRESENT

Henry Craig
John Westmoreland
Kendrick Butts
Emily Davis
Sammy Hall

ALSO PRESENT

David McRee
Carlos Tobar
Dawn Hudson
Jill Adams
Cindy Cunningham

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Henry Craig called meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. for a public hearing on Manufactured Home Regulations and Safe Property Standards with the Regular Meeting to follow at 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

Manufactured Home Regulations

Chair Craig asked if there were any comments from Commissioners regarding manufactured home regulations before the floor is open for public comment. Commissioner Butts stated as a new Commissioner he is here to listen with an open mind to learn about the topic and to make decisions on the matter based on what is best for community.

County Manager Carlos Tobar discussed a proposed amendment to the Code of Ordinances, Section 16-49 – General Design Requirements Pertaining to Manufactured Home Regulations. He stated revisions have been made to the section based on recommendations by Commissioners and the Land Use Committee. One recommended change is the placement of manufactured homes or mobile homes outside of a mobile home park. The requirement states that manufactured homes may be placed outside of a mobile home park if the preponderance of homes, 51% or higher, are manufactured or mobilehomes within 1/4 mile radius of the proposed home site. Also, manufactured homes are not permitted within 1/4 mile from the shores of Lake Sinclair.

Chair Craig opened the floor for public comment. The following people addressed the Board – Cindy Humphrey; Ray Woodall; Tina Behne; Harvey Behne; Melinda Ingram; Jennifer Lassen; and Jessica McQuain.

Speakers stated objections to various parts of the proposed regulations, as summarized below, to include: building's square footage; placement of manufactured homes outside a mobile home park only if the preponderance of homes, 51% or higher, are manufactured or mobile homes within 1/4 mile radius of proposed homesite; regulation that no manufactured home may be placed within 1/4 mile of shores of Lake Sinclair; manufactured homes outside mobile home parks must contain two or more sections; clarification of 1 acre requirement if outside mobile home park vs 1/2 acre in traditional neighborhoods; underpinning materials; permanent foundation; requirements pertaining to replacement of manufactured / mobile home by current property owner on a property that currently has mobile home located on it and property that is

sold and whether new owner can put another mobile home on the site; restrictions for placement of singlewide mobile homes on private property; but, allowance of singlewides in a mobile home park. Speakers expressed concern that the policy takes away people's opportunity to have affordable housing through ownership rather than renting; statements made that Lake Sinclair is a recreational lake and manufactured housing should be allowed; feelings are that County should not attempt to govern property as neighborhood homeowners' associations.

Chair Craig opened the floor for comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Butts asked County Manager Tobar to provide information about the ratio of manufactured homes to stick built homes in the County; County Manager responded he will provide the requested information. Commissioner Hall stated he thought ratio was approximately 25% of manufactured homes to stick built homes, and it seems that the major concern is areas around lake. He asked for a map of the areas where there is the most opposition to manufactured / mobile homes. Commissioner Butts stated he wanted to be more informed about how to best move the community forward, and feels it is important to help Baldwin County grow. Vice Chair Westmoreland felt upgrading homes on property you own should be further discussed. He stated if you own property you should be allowed to put another mobile home there. These are some things Commissioners need to discuss further in order to provide clarification.

Chair Craig stated Commissioners and staff will continue to work on language and another meeting will be scheduled.

Safe Property Standards

Chair Craig opened the floor for public comment on the proposed amendment regarding safe property standards.

The following people addressed the Board in favor of property maintenance standards: Tim Perdue; Teresa Wommack; and Bernadine Hudson. Comments included a need for these type regulations due to health and safety issues from inadequate sewage systems on property especially at the lake; complaints of junk on properties throughout neighborhoods such as abandoned boats, jet skis, vehicles, and the need for a more responsive and efficient Code Enforcement Department. These citizens stated they would like to work with the County Manager and staff in revising the proposed property standards ordinance.

County Manager Tobar responded the County does not have regulations on books to address these issues; County trying to get regulations adopted for enforcement of these type situations; currently County regulation does not address exterior property areas.

The following citizens addressed the Board expressing concern with the proposed safe property standards: Tina Behne and Harvey Behne. Comments included the fact that sewage issues are not covered in this proposed policy; biggest concern is abandoned vehicles in public view and being in public view does not necessarily constitute a safety hazard; questioned whether such properties are safety hazards or eye sores; whether trash is actually a safety issue; should determine whether policy is addressing safety issues or unsightly things on property; feels concern is predominately about lake area & traditional neighborhoods; County should distinguish between unsightly things on property and safety issues; concern that policy is not clear and is difficult to understand what is being proposed; concern about verbiage on abandoned vehicles which would put many people in rural areas of County in violation; stated that if County doesn't intend to fully enforce it, don't include it in the regulations.

Chair Craig asked those citizens who are interested in meeting with Mr. Tobar on this issue to contact him and provide further comments / information.

Commissioner Butts stated there are numerous areas of the County that must be cleaned up. Of the 12,000 properties in Baldwin County, he asked County Manager Tobar to provide information on number of calls we get about these type properties.

County Manager responded that there is currently nothing on books to address this issue. He stated he worked on the regulations with Eric Buckley, a citizen who was opposed to the IPMC, as well as with other citizens to try to come up with something palatable. There are approximately 3 dozen severe properties that the County needs to address. He concluded that in enforcement of the unsafe building abatement the County has not collected any money and has not placed a lien on anybody's property. The County has gotten 100% compliance from citizens.

Commissioners concurred they are developing regulations to clean up such areas of the County.

Chair Craig concluded by saying these are complex issues that all communities have; and however, much you try you will not make everyone happy in addressing these type situations.

Commissioner Hall made a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing at 5:56 p.m. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chair John Westmoreland made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2021 Regular Meeting as submitted. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

NAACP Presentation

Ms. Cynthia Edwards, NAACP Unit President #5169, addressed the Board requesting the renaming of the Baldwin County Government Building in memory of Oscar Davis Sr. Ms. Edwards presented personal and professional information on Mr. Davis.

The following guests spoke on behalf of the NAACP request to rename the Baldwin County Government Building:

Mr. James Lunsford; Former Commissioner Bobby Warren; Ms. Beverly Calhoun; Attorney Rick Gardner; Oscar Davis, Jr.; Attorney Cedric Davis; Commissioner Emily Davis and Commissioner Kendrick Butts.

Chair Henry Craig stated the County has a Facility Naming Policy that has to be followed, and Commissioners and County Attorney McRee will be evaluating the request.

Women's History Month Presentations

Commissioner Emily Davis presented Certificates of Recognition to the following women in recognition of Women's History Month:

Ms. Traci Rollins – the first female director of the Baldwin County Recreation Department; Dr. Janee Michele Moss - founder of Education Brings Leadership and Achievement (EBLA); Ms. Beverly Calhoun - first black female to work for GA Legal Services; and Mayor Mary Parham - Copelan - first female to serve as Mayor of the City of Milledgeville. Quinton T. Howell accepted for Mayor Copelan who was unable to attend due to illness.

ADMINISTRATIVE / FISCAL MATTERS

Request for Increase in Supplement for Election Superintendent

Chair Henry Craig stated Election Superintendent Todd Blackwell had addressed the Board at a previous meeting about the election process. Judge Blackwell reported that due to changes in election laws, advanced voting, absentee ballots and new voting machines the process is more complex and now requires extra duties and an increased amount of time to supervise an election. He stated new regulations not only require more of his time but also more time spent on elections from his office staff. Judge Blackwell requested Commissioners transition to a Board of Elections. At that time, the Board decided to continue dialogue on this matter. At the Commissioners' Retreat held later in January, the Board agreed to develop a proposal for Judge Blackwell's consideration to continue as Election Superintendent. A proposal was presented to Judge Blackwell to increase his supplement by \$10,000 annually.

Commissioner Emily Davis made a motion to approve the \$10,000 annual increase in the supplement for the Election Superintendent. Commissioner Kendrick Butts seconded the motion.

Commissioner Sammy Hall stated the Board also agreed to hire additional employees for the Probate Court and elections to assist with the additional duties required. Chair Craig responded Assistant County Manager Hudson is working to develop job descriptions and salary ranges for new positions.

Chair Craig called for a vote to approve the \$10,000 annual increase to the supplement for the Election Superintendent as presented. The Board voted unanimously to approve the annual increase.

AMENDMENT TO AGENDA

Commissioner Emily Davis made a motion to amend the Agenda to discuss the Resolution to establish additional facilities for holding court in the Law Enforcement Center. Commissioner Sammy Hall seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING ADDITIONAL FACILITIES FOR HOLDING COURT

Commissioner Hall made a motion to approve the Resolution as presented to establish additional facilities at the Law Enforcement Center for holding Court. Commissioner Davis 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 _____.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to come before the Board.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to come before the Board.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Tobar requested that Commissioners review his written report and contact him with any questions.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Dr. Gloria Wicker stated Dr. Francis of Georgia College and State University has been meeting with citizens throughout the County to address citizens' needs. She reported the Oconee Heights area has identified the following critical needs: resurfacing streets; many streets have been patched but need to be resurfaced; drainage issues; sidewalks; and demolition of blight. She requested that these issues be considered in the upcoming SPLOST project list.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - POTENTIAL LITIGATION

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to adjourn into Executive Session at 6:40 p.m. to discuss potential litigation. Vice Chair John Westmoreland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

REGULAR MEETING

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to reopen the Regular Meeting at 7:25 p.m. Vice Chair John Westmoreland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Emily Davis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. Vice Chair John Westmoreland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Henry R. Craig
Chair

Cynthia K. Cunningham
County Clerk