

MINUTES

January 6, 2015

MONROE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The Monroe County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on January 6, 2015 at 6:00 pm with the following present: Chairman Mike Bilderback, Vice Chairman Jim Ham, District 1 Commissioner Larry Evans, District 3 Commissioner John Ambrose, District 4 Commissioner Jarod Lovett, County Attorney Mike Dillon, County Attorney Ben Vaughn, Human Resource Officer/Deputy Clerk Janet Abbott, Finance Officer Ashley Wooley, and County Clerk/Administrator Anita Cauthen.

2013 County Audit and Financial Statements

Miller Edwards, Mauldin & Jenkins, presented the Board with the 2013 Audit (summary attached). He explained that although there were several findings including several departments with no segregation of duties, there were no compliance issues. The Board discussed several issues and proposed changes, including sending tax bills mid year and hiring a Certified Public Accountant.

2015 Phone Stipend

Commissioner Ham motioned to approve the list of employees (attached) to receive the phone stipend for 2015. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Ambrose and approved 5-0.

Take Home Vehicles

Commissioner Lovett motioned to approve the list of employees (attached) to be allowed to take county vehicles home. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Ham for discussion. Commissioner Lovett questioned what will stop the migration of more employees receiving this benefit. Commissioner Ham responded that each one is decided by the Board. Motion was approved 5-0.

2015 County Holiday Schedule

Commissioner Evans motioned to approve the following 2015 County Holiday Schedule:

January 19, 2015	Martin Luther King Day	County Holiday
April 3, 2015	Good Friday	Comp/Vacation
May 25, 2015	Memorial Day	County Holiday
July 3, 2015	Independence Day	County Holiday
September 7, 2015	Labor Day	County Holiday
November 25, 2015	half day for Thanksgiving	Comp/Vacation
November 26, 2015	Thanksgiving	County Holiday
November 27, 2015	Thanksgiving	County Holiday
December 23, 2015	half day for Christmas	Comp/Vacation
December 24, 2015	Christmas	County Holiday
December 25, 2015	Christmas	County Holiday
December 31, 2015	half day for New Year	Comp/Vacation

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Lovett and approved 5-0.

Resolution Declaring a “area basis” Slum or Blight National Objective for purposes of Georgia CDBG program per 24 CRF Part 570.483

Commissioner Evans motioned to approve the resolution that would designate the Hubbard property as “blight” in order to qualify for a Community Development Block Grant to be used to renovate the property. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Ham and approved 5-0.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Evans motioned to waive the reading of the Minutes of December 16, 2014, seconded by Chairman Bilderback and approved 5-0.

Commissioner Evans motioned to approve the Minutes of December 16, 2014 with any changes to come before the Board within 30 days, seconded by Chairman Bilderback and approved 4-0-1 with Commissioner Ambrose abstaining.

Commissioner Ham motioned to waive the reading of the Executive Session portion of the Minutes of December 16, 2014, seconded by Chairman Bilderback and approved 5-0.

Commissioner Ham motioned to approve the Executive Session portion of the Minutes of December 16, 2014, seconded by Chairman Bilderback. Chairman

Bilderback apologized for not asking for a vote in open session on the 16th. Motion was approved 3-0-2 with Commissioner Lovett and Commissioner Ambrose abstaining.

Commissioner Evans motioned to approve the waiving of the reading of the Minutes of December 31, 2014, seconded by Commissioner Ham and approved 5-0.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the Minutes of December 31, 2014, seconded by Commissioner Ham. Commissioner Evans wished to add more corrections to the Minutes of December 24th and asked that the approval for the December 31st Minutes be tabled. Commissioner Ambrose rescinded his motion.

Accounts Payable Checks

Commissioner Evans motioned to approve AP checks #53144-53275 in the amount of \$326,710.75, seconded by Chairman Bilderback and approved 5-0.

Board Appointments

Commissioner Ham motioned to appoint Jackie Boling to the governing **Board of River Edge Behavioral Health Center Community Service Board**, seconded by Commissioner Evans and approved 5-0.

The Board discussed the resignation of Tommy Campbell from the **Development Authority** and the previous Development Authority Board Appointments. Commissioner Lovett motioned to explore the legitimacy of the previous appointments and to request an opinion letter from Development Authority Attorney Charles Haygood. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Ambrose for discussion. Commissioner Ham stated that Commissioner Proctor already requested and received an opinion concerning the appointments. Commissioner Lovett responded that the conflict that he has is the appearance of a conflict of interest and the debate is not if Commissioner Ham can vote himself in but that the Open Meeting Law was violated with purchasing the Conference Center. Commissioner Evans responded that the problem he has with it is that Commissioner Ham made the motion, it wasn't on the agenda, the board would consist of too many farmers and needed more diversity. Motion was approved 4-1 with Commissioner Ham opposed, stating that an opinion had already been given.

Chairman Bilderback addressed the Board, stating that they can take one step further by getting a “Writ of Prohibition” and take the Development Authority to Superior Court. Commissioner Ambrose questioned Commissioner Ham, asking if he would be willing to change his appointments. Commissioner Ham responded that he did not wish to waste money and the appointments were legally done. He doesn’t want the bad publicity and he understands they don’t like it, but he wants to serve. He also stated that Commissioner Evans has had 6 years, and he would like his turn to help the County. After more discussion, Chairman Bilderback asked again if there was any interest in doing the “Writ of Prohibition”. Commissioner Evans asked for an explanation. Chairman Bilderback responded that a Writ of Prohibition would disallow the Development Authority to take any action until this was resolved. Commissioner Evans responded that he would make the motion. Chairman Bilderback seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0-1 with Commissioner Ham abstaining.

Commissioner Evans motioned to appoint Judge Hugh Sosebee, Sr. to the **Middle Georgia Area Agency on Aging Advisory Committee**, seconded by Commissioner Ham and approved 5-0.

Commissioner Evans motioned to appoint Commissioner Lovett to the **Forsyth-Monroe County Chamber of Commerce Board**, seconded by Commissioner Ham and approved 4-0-1 with Commissioner Lovett abstaining.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to reappoint Marion McMillon and Philip English to the **Hospital Authority**, seconded by Commissioner Lovett and approved 5-0.

Commissioner Evans motioned to reappoint Franklin Freeman and Rosemary Gantt to **the Library Board**, seconded by Commissioner Lovett and approved 5-0.

Chairman Bilderback appointed Doris Ogletree to the **Planning and Zoning Board**. Commissioner Evans appointed Connie Gantt to the Planning and Zoning Board. Commissioner Ham asked to defer his appointment until the next meeting.

Commissioner Ambrose reappointed Katherine Sanders to the Planning and Zoning Board. Commissioner Lovett asked to defer his appointment until the next meeting.

Chairman Bilderback reappointed Wiley Crosby to the **Recreation Board**. Commissioner Evans reappointed LaMarcus Davis to the Recreation Board. Commissioner Ham appointed Ron Shipman to the Recreation Board. Commissioner

Ambrose appointed Adam Ham to the Recreation Board. Commissioner Lovett appointed George Emami to the Recreation Board.

Chairman Bilderback motioned to appoint Robert Grier to the **Board of Tax Assessors**, seconded by Commissioner Evans. Ed Hutcheson, Chairman of the Tax Assessors Board requested the Commissioners consider Jimmy Pace for the appointment. Motion was approved 3-0-2 with Commissioner Ham and Commissioner Lovett abstaining.

Commissioner Ham motioned to appoint Commissioner Ambrose as the **County Legislative Coordinator**, seconded by Chairman Bilderback. Commissioner Ambrose declined the position. By general consensus, the Board will revisit this appointment at the next meeting.

Commissioner Lovett motioned to appoint Carter & Sloope as the **County Engineer**. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Ambrose and approved 5-0.

Commissioner Lovett motioned to appoint Harbin Engineering as the **Landfill Engineer**. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Ham and approved 5-0.

Commissioner Ambrose suggested the function of **County Attorney** should be bid. Ed Hutcheson addressed the Board explaining the many tax appeal litigation cases that are still ongoing and that Dillon & Vaughn are competent and tenacious. Commissioner Ambrose responded that he just wanted to be sure the County was getting the best deal. Commissioner Ham explained that the County pays Dillon & Vaughn only \$90 per hour. Commissioner Evans reiterated that the Clerk, Road Superintendent and the County Attorney must be appointed at the first meeting of every year. Commissioner Ambrose amended his motion to state the County Attorney will be bid out and to appoint Dillon & Vaughn for 6 months. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Ham and approved 4-1 with Commissioner Lovett opposed.

Commissioner Evans motioned to reappoint Cliff Howard as the **County Road Superintendent** to include a \$5000 increase in pay, seconded by Commissioner Ham. Commissioner Lovett stated that all county appointments are starting with a clean slate and that he forms his own opinions. Chairman Bilderback requested of Cliff to expedite the water tap for Mr. Ken Whitehead on Hwy 87. Motion was approved 5-0.

Commissioner Lovett motioned to begin having a signed **Compensation Letter** for every new hire, seconded by Chairman Bilderback and approved 5-0.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to reappoint Donnie Mercer as **EMS Chief**, seconded by Commissioner Ham and approved 5-0.

Commissioner Lovett motioned to reappoint Anita Cauthen as **County Clerk/Administrator/Zoning Officer**, seconded by Commissioner Ham. Chairman Bilderback questioned Ms. Cauthen concerning Twin Creeks Road. Motion was approved 4-1 with Chairman Bilderback opposed.

County Manager

Commissioner Lovett addressed the Board stating that based on the audit, it was clear to him that the County needed more structure. Commissioner Lovett motioned to have the County Attorney draft a Resolution to change the governance of the county to a Commissioner and County Manager form of Government, with the Manager running the day to day business of the County. He reiterated that as of now, the organizational chart and all the job duties of the Clerk/Administrator are still in place. Commissioner Ham seconded the motion for discussion. Commissioner Evans stated he has been in training that debated the merits of clerk vs. manager and at the end of the day, having a clerk is preferable. Chairman Bilderback stated that giving a manager to authority to terminate department heads will force people to do their job. Motion was approved 5-0.

Monroe County Library

Commissioner Ham motioned to approve filling the upcoming vacant Library Branch Manager position. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Lovett and approved 5-0.

Other Discussion

Commissioner Evans stated he would like to see county employees receive more than a 1% cost of living increase.

Don Daniel questioned Commissioner Evans on the number of businesses and jobs new to Monroe County.

Jan Knecht, 4097 Boxankle Road, requested of the Board to install another warning siren in her area.

Don Martin requested that Rumble Road be paved.

Alvin Evans discussed businesses that would be a good fit for Monroe County.

Executive Session

At 9:28 pm, Commissioner Evans motioned to enter into executive session for land acquisition, seconded by Chairman Bilderback and approved 5-0.

The Board reconvened in regular session at 9:45 pm, on motion by Commissioner Ham, seconded by Commissioner Lovett and approved 5-0.

At 9:45 pm, the board adjourned on motion by Commissioner Ham, seconded by Chairman Bilderback and approved 5-0.