

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Monthly Workshop and Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday, August 5, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Meeting Room located at the Brooks County Office Building. Commissioners present were: Mr. S. L. Jones, Chairman, Mr. Joe Wingate, Vice Chairman; Mr. James Maxwell; Mr. Willie Cody, and Ms. Myra Exum. Others present were: Mr. Justin DeVane, County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; and various residents.

Public Hearing

A. Special Exception Request – Willie Paul Booker

Chairman called the public hearing to order. Sign-in sheet was provided to those wishing to speak on behalf of the request and those against the request.

Todd Miller, Planner, Southern Georgia Regional Commission, presented the request by Mr. Willie Paul Booker for a Special Exception to establish a family burial plot. Willie Paul Booker submitted a Petition for a Special Exception to establish a family cemetery plot within the Agricultural zoning district on a 21.6 acre parcel of property located at 271 Booker Lane in the unincorporated area of Brooks County near Pavo. The plot would be a ½ acre cemetery located along the southeast corner of Mr. Booker's property. The Greater Brooks County Planning and Zoning Board unanimously voted (4-0) to recommend approval of the application. SGRC Staff reviewed the petition and determined that it is in compliance with the Standards for Exercise of Zoning Powers and the Standards for Special Exception Review of Sections 14-2.8 E and F of the Brooks County Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, Staff recommended approval of the Petition by Willie Paul Booker for Special Exception to establish a family burial plot.

Chairman asked for those in favor of the petition request to speak. Those signed in favor of was: Darrell Frazier, Paul Booker, Jr., Willie & Nadine Booker, and Darrell Booker; whom all stated they are for the establishment of a cemetery on the property.

Those in opposition of the petition were: Emma Swain, Maydell Davis, Cheryl Austin, Geraldine Moye, Curtis Samuels, Paul Austin, Fred Williams; and Mildred Williams. They all were expressive in their opposition of the burial plot being established on the family property. They all expressed their concerns of it not being the intention of their parents to have a cemetery on the property; but for them to live and grow. Their concerns also included the maintenance of the cemetery once established; and who will maintain it. They asked the Board for consideration of their opposition in making their decision. They all thanked the Board for the opportunity to come before them to be heard; and for taking the time to hear them.

County Administrator commented; should the request be approved there should be a public record for future generations; due to the fact of not being able to locate information on current cemeteries in the County; there should be a Board of Trustees, and an Attorney should prepare the documents.

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On a motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Wingate, the Board adjourned the public hearing to go into the monthly workshop at 5:55 p.m.

Call to Order

Chairman called workshop to order.

Work Session

Reports from Committees/Departments

A. Ken Collins – Elections Superintendent

Would like to schedule a workshop with Commissioners and Elections Board to discuss proposal on how can save money on elections; which is directed by the State.

B. Mark Deatcher – Public Works

- Reported on equipment being down; three Dump Trucks (being worked on), Side Arm, and Excavator
- Mt. Carmel Church Road has river coming onto the road; water across road signs
- Stated he has lot to catch up on with the equipment being down; but will get back on it as soon as equipment is back up

C. Ben DeVane – County Surveyor/Engineer

- 2013 LMIG contracts are done; sent to Scruggs; and upon receipt from Scruggs; Chairman will sign.
- CDBG has been delayed; due to getting on DOT right of way; have verbal agreement; had to do drainage report in order to work on DOT right of way.
- Initial survey on Ms. Fuller's property (CR 305) has been done and plotted; still working on.
- Will resume 2014 LMIG project as soon as complete CDBG; and get started on bid packet.
- Safety Action Plan (SAP) list has been approved; will resume after CDBG is done.

D. Mike Dewey – Sheriff

Informed Board of meetings/discussion with Board of Education in reference to SRO; presented proposal from Administrator to Mr. Clemons; have not gotten a response yet. Previously there were two SRO Officers; Board of Education is requesting three. Due to Board of Education severing the agreement with the County; the two SRO employees have been placed in other departments with the Sheriff's office. Mr. Maxwell stated the number one priority is the safety of children; and the Officers should be at the school tomorrow when classes resume

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until solution can be worked out. Board agreed the SRO Officers will be temporarily back at the school until they get together with Board of Education to find a solution within the next two (2) weeks.

E. Mike Smith - 911/Emergency Management/Fire – Not present

F. Destination Brooks – no one was present.

G. Tina Herring – Brooks County Development Authority

- Chip Mill should be fully functional by September 24th.
- Wood Pellet Company's schedule has been pushed back to the 4th quarter
- New prospect for Industrial Park; and one for the State

H. Peggy Wilson – Victim Witness Advocate

Discussed Children Advocacy Program and benefits provided to abused children. Service has been provided to 91 victims; 12 of those are from Brooks County. Victims receive 172 hours of free therapy. The Children Advocacy Center in Valdosta needs new camera equipment; Valdosta usually provides funding, but due to budget restraints; is requesting \$2,000 from Brooks County for cameral system.

I. Stephanie Hollifield – New Extension Coordinator

- Silage testing has been completed for area producers; dairy update meeting scheduled for August 20th; and a Citrus meeting in August as well.
- Georgia Peanut tours will be coming to Brooks County.
- Extension Office will have a booth at this year Skillet Festival; and is working on gun raffle for the fall.

Chairman closed work session to go into the Regular Meeting at 6:51 p.m.

1. **Call to Order**

A. Prayer & Pledge – Mr. Cody led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

A. August 5, 2013 Regular Monthly Meeting - Mr. Maxwell made the motion to approve the agenda as written, Ms. Exum seconded. Vote was unanimous.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

On a motion by Mr. Wingate, seconded by Mr. Maxwell, the Board unanimously approved the following minutes as presented:

A. July 1, 2013 Workshop & Regular Monthly Meeting

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B. July 10, 2013 FY 2014 Budget Work Session & Special Called Meeting

C. July 23, 2013 FY 2014 Public Hearing

4. **Appearances**

A. Patricia Butler – Dixie Road Resurfacing Request – Ms. Butler submitted a request to be on the agenda to address the condition of Dixie Road; and for the road to be considered for resurfacing/repair. The road is rapidly deteriorating from the Grooverville Road access to the Thomas County line. Ms. Butler provided photographs of potholes, cracks, non-existent striping, and general disrepair.

5. **New Business**

A. Special Exception Request – Willie Paul Booker – Mr. Maxwell made the motion to approve/accept the Petition by Willie Paul Booker for a Special Exception to establish a family burial plot on a ½ acre of the property located at 271 Booker Lane; along the southeast corner in unincorporated area of Brooks County near Pavo with the following conditions: must have a deed to the burial plot; records must be kept of individuals buried and legally recorded; must have a drawing of the cemetery plot and plots are to be numbered; a Trustee Board must be established; and the burial plot must be maintained; Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous.

B. Adoption FY 2014 County Budget and Resolution
Mr. Wingate made the motion to adopt the FY 2014 Budget and Resolution as written; Ms. Exum seconded. Chairman called for the vote. Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Cody voted no, because they did not want the Constable included in the budget. Mr. Jones, Mr. Wingate, and Ms. Exum voted yes. Vote was 3 to 2.

C. East Brooks Fire Department – Georgia DOT Option for Right of Way
Administration received a request from East Brooks Volunteer Fire Department to approve the sale of right of way to Georgia DOT for the US Highway 133 widening project. The Fire Department is required to discuss all matters related to property transactions with the County for approval. On a motion by Mr. Cody, seconded by Mr. Wingate, the Board unanimously approve the sale of right of way to GDOT for the US Highway 133 widening project.

D. Southern Georgia Regional Commission Board Appointment
Mr. Jackson, current Board Member for Brooks County on the Regional Commission Board, notified Commissioner Exum of his resignation from his position on the Board. Based on guidelines for the Regional Commission Board, each County is allowed three appointees, one from the County, another from the City, and the third is considered a private representative. According to the RC, the private sector appointee meets one of the guidelines: A private sector representative; the Executive Director of a Chamber of Commerce; or a representative of institutions of post-secondary education; workforce development groups or labor groups. Administration spoke with Ms. Lauren Basford and she is willing to serve; Ms. Basford is currently serving as the Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Wingate made the motion to appoint Ms. Lauren Basford

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to the Southern Georgia Regional Commission Board to replace Mr. Jackson; and serve as a private sector representative for Brooks County, Mr. Cody seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous.

E. South Regional Joint Development Authority Board Appointment (SRJDA)
Administration received notification of the need to fill the vacancy on the South Regional Joint Development Authority Board since Mr. Lawson retired. Mr. Cody made the motion to adopt the Resolution and appoint Ms. Myra Exum to fill Mr. Lawson's vacancy on the SRJDA Board until December 31, 2016; Mr. Wingate seconded. Vote was unanimous.

F. Washington Street Gym – Boys and Girls Club
Mr. Maxwell requested County Administrator to review the lease agreement between Brooks County and the Boys and Girls Club regarding the use of the Gym on Washington Street in Quitman and to place this item on the agenda. Mr. Maxwell addressed his concern of the Boys and Girls Club is not using the Gym to its full

capacity; and suggested during the weeks, months to come to get with the Boys and Girls Club director to discuss their plans.

G. Victim Witness Request – Budget Amendment Request for Equipment

Mr. Maxwell made the motion to amend the budget to purchase camera equipment for the Children Advocacy Center in Valdosta for \$2,000.00 from contingency fund, Mr. Wingate seconded. Vote was unanimous.

6. Unfinished Business

A. Special Exception Request – Sandi James

This item was tabled during last month's meeting in order for the two sides (Ms. James and neighbors) to try and work out an agreement both sides could be happy with. Ms. James submitted a Petition for a Special Exception to establish a catering business within the Agricultural zoning district on an 80 acre parcel of property located at 1338 Ellenburg Road, Quitman, GA. The SGRC recommends approval; and the Brooks County Planning Commission approved the request 4-0. After lengthy discussion, the disagreement narrowed down to the time in which amplified sound would be involved; and days and hours of operation of the catering business. Ms. James agreed to no amplified sound before 11:00 am; end by 10:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday; and end by 11:00 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Mr. Maxwell motioned to accept the agreement between Ms. James and neighbors on Ellenburg Road to have no amplified sound before 11:00 am; end activities by 10:00 p.m. week days; and end activities by 11:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, Mr. Wingate seconded. Ms. Myra Exum abstained from voting due to relationship with the applicant.

7. County Administrator Notes/Comments

A. Sheriff's Department High Mileage Vehicle Policy

Local Government Risk Management Services advised Administrator of the need to establish a policy for replacement of high mileage vehicles. This issue will be looked at

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by the Board on a later date.

B. Letter from GDOT – SR 133/SR 122 Intersections

Administration received reply from GDOT regarding the letter sent to them last month requesting improvements be made at the intersection of SR 133/SR 122. The District Traffic Engineer recommended some changes be made. GDOT did install additional signage at the intersection this past month. The letter stated the construction project that will widen the roadway is scheduled for June 2014 and at that time additional features will be implemented that should further improve the safety of this intersection.

C. Application for FEMA Safer Grant

Notification was received that the FEMA Safer Grant application process is underway. The Safer Grants can be used to hire or retain paid firefighters, and recruit new volunteer firefighters. Administrator requested Board permission to submit an application to fund new positions within the department. Board granted permission to submit application; stating it would be great if we get it.

D. Courthouse Renovations

A final invoice was received from C. H. Whitney for Courthouse renovations. The final request is for \$3,978.52, but only \$2,115.72 remains in the budget; therefore, an

additional \$1,862.80 is needed for this project. Additionally, new sound equipment is also requested, but information was not available at the time Commissioner packets were prepared. A motion was made by Mr. Maxwell to pay the final invoice of the remaining balance of \$1,862.80 from contingency fund for courthouse renovations, seconded by Mr. Wingate. Vote was unanimous.

E. September Regular Monthly Meeting

The regular meeting for September will be held on the second Monday, September 9, 2013, due to the first Monday being Labor Day Holiday.

8. Commissioners Notes/Comments

- A. Joe Wingate - District 1 – Expressed concerns regarding fire ISO premium rate going up.
- B. S. L. Jones, District 2 – Lots of bad roads.
- C. Willie Cody, District 3 – Stated the same, bad roads.
- D. Myra Exum, District 4 – Inquired if curtains at Ag Building had been removed.
- E. James Maxwell, District 5 – Bad roads.

9. Executive Session - None

10. Adjournment

Mr. Maxwell made the motion to adjourn regular meeting at 8:20 p.m.; Ms. Exum seconded.

Mr. Sanford L. Jones, Jr., Chairman

Mr. Justin DeVane, Administrator

Ms. Patricia A. Williams, Clerk

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