

Dodge County Board of Commissioners

March 4, 2013

Present: Dan McCranie, Chairman
William T. Howell, Jr., Vice-Chairman, Comm. Dist. 1
Terry Niblett, Comm. Dist. 2
Brian Watkins, Comm. Dist. 3
Karen Cheek, Comm. Dist. 4

Also Present: John Harrington, County Attorney
Bobby Peacock, County Manager
Nancy Gail Rogers, County Clerk

The Dodge County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, March 4, 2013, in Suite 101 of the Dodge County Courthouse Annex.

Chairman Dan McCranie called the meeting to order and took a moment to remember Mrs. Linda Lowery whose funeral was held that morning. Chairman McCranie said she served as County Clerk for eighteen years and did a lot of good for Dodge County. He then prayed for her family.

After the Pledge of Allegiance a devotional and prayer was given by Karen Cheek.

Elected Officials/ Department Heads:

None noted as present.

Approval of Minutes:

A. Regular Meeting of February 18, 2013

Chairman McCranie asked if there were any corrections, deletions, or adjustments to the minutes presented in printed form to the board. Commissioner Terry Niblett made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner William Howell seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Old Business:

A. Recreation Department

Travis Niblett, Recreation Department Director, addressed the board members about the need for ice machines at the recreation complex. He passed out copies of bids taken by the department and asked that they be allowed to purchase two (2) ice machines with a capacity of 1000 pounds each before the March 22 opening of baseball season. Commissioner Karen Cheek asked if the machines listed on all three bids were comparable. Mr. Niblett responded that were very similar and all bids included installation. Commissioner Cheek asked if money was available in the SPLOST balance allocated to the Recreation Department and County Manager Peacock replied yes. Commissioner Brian Watkins made a motion to purchase two machines to be paid from the SPLOST funds for recreation. Commissioner William Howell seconded the motion. Commissioners Howell, Watkins, and Cheek voted in favor of the motion with Commissioner Terry Niblett abstaining.

B. Landfill

Commissioner Terry Niblett said in an effort to save taxpayer's money he had researched the cost of installing a septic tank at the transfer station to eliminate the rental of a portable toilet. He said Phillip Cadwell of the Health Department had approved the site for the septic tank and he anticipated the cost to be less than \$3,000. He said the county has a small building where a toilet and sink could be added. He made a motion to accept bids for installation of a septic tank at the transfer station. Commissioner William Howell seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

C. Concerned Citizens Group

It was determined there was no representative of the Concerned Citizens Group present. Chairman McCranie referred to a letter received from the group on February 27, 2013 and each commissioner was given a copy. He gave a brief history of the current monuments located at the courthouse and noted the army protocol regarding monuments. He said he had also conferred with the American Legion to gather information that might be helpful in drafting a policy for the county. Commissioner Watkins stated since no policy had been found to be in place, could the county attorney prepare a draft by the next meeting for discussion. County Attorney Harrington said he would have the draft by the next meeting.

D. Jail Update

Commissioner Terry Niblett asked for an update on the new jail. The county manager said the roof had been inspected on Friday. Commissioner Niblett asked to keep the jail under old business on the agenda as an ongoing item. Commissioner Cheek stated she wanted a progress report from the sheriff and asked the county manager to invite him to attend the next meeting.

New Business:

A. Approval of Accounts Payable

Commissioner Cheek asked if check number 12055 to William Pitts Oil Company for \$24,472 was for more than one month. County Manager Peacock replied that it was probably part of December and January for fuel for the road and sanitation departments. He stated that fuel costs were up and showing an increase in the expenses for several departments of the county. Commissioner William Howell made a motion to approve the list. Commissioner Niblett seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

B. Health & Sanitation Ordinance

County Attorney Harrington told the board members he had been contacted by Public Health Inspector, Phillip Cadwell, and informed there was no ordinance in place in Dodge County requiring payment for inspection fees done by the health department. He asked that the county adopt an ordinance using a model from the state with a penalty for non-payment of inspection fees. Commissioner Niblett made a motion to adopt a health and sanitation ordinance that would mirror the state ordinance. Commissioner Cheek seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Board of Elections

County Manager Peacock said he asked the county attorney to look at the requirements for establishing a Board of Elections. Attorney Harrington said the Official Code of Georgia states a board must have at least three (3) members. They are required to complete sixty-four (64) hours of education annually identical to the registrar and probate judge. After discussion about the different avenues to put a board in place Commissioner Brian Watkins said there were too many unanswered questions to make any decisions. Commissioner Cheek agreed for the need for more information. Commissioner Watkins asked the county attorney to prepare written information for the board to look over. County Attorney Harrington agreed to send the information via email for the board members.

As a matter of information Commissioner Niblett told the board that Mr. Michael Snipes of Laurens County would attend the March 18 regular meeting to discuss recycling.

Commissioner Reports:

None

County Manager Report:

County Manager Peacock reported that a crew of Community Service Workers under Neci Woodard had been at work on Saturdays cleaning up trash on Dodge County roads. He reported good progress but it would take a while to cover the entire county.

Public Comments:

Jeff Fordham stated that on Saturday the Young Eagles Program flew approximately eighteen (18) kids with the help of participants from Vidalia.

Eddie Driggers representing the HOG Regional Airport said he had heard rumors of local legislation being introduced this session to terminate the Airport Authority board. He asked the commissioners for support of a public hearing. Chairman McCranie suggested he talk to the board members after the meeting.

Susan Coffee expressed her disdain for the slow response to a sound system for the meeting room.

Cindy Eckles of the Dodge County News asked why the dumpsters were moved from Leonard Jones Road and if they would be returned to that site. Commissioner Watkins replied that there had been a problem with illegal dumping of items like tires and fence wire at the former site on Leonard Jones Road and those dumpsters were relocated to Chauncey. The illegal dumping had improved with the relocation and since they were only moved approximately 1 ½ miles they would not be returned to Leonard Jones Road.

Cindy Eckles also asked questions about payments made to county rural fire departments from the 2008 SPLOST funds and overpayments to the projects allocated with SPLOST funds.

Cindy Eckles also asked the status of back taxes owed to the county. Commissioner Watkins said Rob Stanley, tax collector, had given an update to the board.

Adjourn:

Commissioner William Howell made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Brian Watkins seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the meeting was adjourned.