

Minutes

Dodge County Board of Commissioners

October 6, 2014

Present: William T. Howell, Jr., Vice-Chairman, District 1 Commissioner
Terry Niblett, District 2 Commissioner
Brian Watkins, District 3 Commissioner
Karen Cheek, District 4 Commissioner

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

Absent: Dan McCranie, Chairman

Vice-Chairman Howell called the meeting to order and stated the hearing for the proposed ordinance was the first order of business. He said the board would hear from the three persons who had requested to be on the agenda first. Mrs. Charla Fish, Administrator of Eastman Health & Rehab, said she would like to address the misconception about the facility. She said the facility has one hundred three (103) employees and one hundred (100) residents. She said the previous owner Pine Care Services contracted with the Department of Corrections to bring residents to the facility. She said as of July 1, 2012, the facility no longer receives residents from the Department of Corrections. She stated her specific objections to the ordinance related to Sections 4 and 5 stipulating that the administrator of the facility would be held personally responsible for fines and unpaid fees. She stated she was a taxpayer of Dodge County and felt she should not be held personally responsible for the actions of a business.

Mr. Terry Walker of Hartwell, Georgia addressed the board to echo the comments of Mrs. Fish. He said he represented the owners of the facility and they do not actively seek patients of the Department of Corrections. He said he was not aware of another ordinance like the proposed one in the state of Georgia and he felt the personal liability was unfair also. He addressed the internment costs of indigent individuals and how landlords, home health providers, hospices, and assisted living facilities could be held liable. He asked the board to reconsider action on the ordinance.

Mr. Wayne Fish of Eastman, Georgia addressed the board as a concerned citizen. He said small businesses are struggling as well as taxpayers with the recent tax increase. He said the hospital should be included in the ordinance in the Section 1 definition of health care facility. He also asked for the board to reconsider Sections 4 & 5.

Deputy Mark Sheffield of the Dodge County Sheriff's Department said the renegotiated rate for a sexual predator leg monitor was four dollars (\$4.00) per day with an annual cost of \$1,460 and totaling \$2,920 annually for the two predators housed at Eastman Health & Rehab.

With a return to the regular meeting, Vice-Chairman Howell led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag. Commissioner Cheek gave a devotional based on Psalm 136:1 and led in prayer.

Elected Officials/ Department Heads

Raymond Mullis representing the Heart of Georgia Regional Airport Authority and the City of Eastman told the board he had been asked by Commissioner Niblett if the City of Eastman could reduce or defray the water and sewage charges for the National Guard Armory building. He proposed an exchange for payment of the water and sewage at the Armory building for hauling of large waste items in the city to the landfill. He also said the city is willing to deed land for the recreation department back to the county and give the recreation board members back as well.

Approval of Minutes

A. September 15, 2014 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Niblett made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2014 regular meeting presented to the board in printed form. Commissioner Cheek seconded the motion with Commissioners Niblett, Watkins and Cheek voting in favor of the motion.

Old Business

A. Chester Highway

The county manager went over the estimates from DOT to resurface the Chester Highway and to resurface and widen the road a distance of two feet on each side. After discussion from the board members, Commissioner Watkins made a motion to resurface the road at the regular width seconded by Commissioner Howell. Commissioners Watkins and Howell voted in favor of the motion with Commissioners Cheek and Niblett voting against the motion. Vice-Chairman Howell said the item would be put on the agenda at the next meeting.

New Business

A. Approval of Accounts Payable

Commissioner Niblett made a motion to approve the Accounts Payable checklist seconded by Commissioner Watkins. The vote was taken and the motion passed.

B. Appointment to Central Georgia EMS Council

County Manager Peacock stated he had received a letter from the Region Five (5) EMS Advisory Council asking for the appointment of two members from Dodge County and his recommendation was EMS Director Rickie Coleman and Assistant EMS Director Clint Nelson.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion seconded by Commissioner Niblett to open nominations. Commissioner Niblett made a motion to nominate Rickie Coleman and Clint Nelson for the board. Commissioner Watkins made a motion to close nominations seconded by Commissioner Cheek. The nomination was approved by acclamation.

C. Aremac Road Contract

Vice-Chairman Howell opened the three (3) sealed bids to pave the road to the new Aremac building. The bids received were:

- Mann & Company \$69,942.85 for 800' \$48,150.05 for 600'
- Simmons Paving \$72,615.00 for 800' \$50,590.00 for 600'
- Dykes Grassing \$66,964.50 for 800' \$46,027.50 for 600'

Commissioner Watkins explained that the bids were for the new business at the college that will be a heat treat plant and the owners believe that there will be smaller businesses to locate around them. He made a motion to accept the low bid from Dykes for the 800 foot road and ask for a 50/50 split from the City of Eastman after the \$40,000 has been applied and requested a letter from the county attorney to the City of Eastman making the request due to the business being located inside the city limits. Commissioner Niblett seconded the motion and the vote was in favor of approval.

D. Keith Mincey

Mr. Mincey was not present.

E. Jonathan Guyton, Jr.

Mr. Guyton asked the board members for financial assistance to repair his vehicle that was involved in an accident on a county road. He said the accident occurred on August 2, 2014 at 1:00 a.m. due to a wash out on Shady Oaks Road. He said he had asked the county for help and the accident was turned over to the county's insurance carrier and the determination was that the county was not liable for damages.

Commissioner Reports

There were no reports from the commissioners.

County Manager Report

The county manager told the board that the DOT needs to know about the widening of the Chester Road and it may require a called meeting. He also asked the board to approve a contract with Carter & Slope for the Shady Oaks contract at \$49,934. Commissioner Watkins stated that this was the same road talked about earlier and paving of the road had been in the works since 2012. He made a motion to approve Carter & Slope as the engineers for the project that includes

Shady Oaks, Holder Place and McQueen Drive. Commissioner Niblett seconded the motion. Commissioners Niblett, Cheek and Watkins voted in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Cheek stated that she would like to help with the expenses of Jonathan Guyton, Jr. and made a motion to pay \$500 toward his expenses. The motion died for lack of a second.

Public Comments

Tom Cranford, Chairman of the Dodge County Recreation Department, asked for permission to approach the Regional Commission about a master plan for a new road at the recreation complex. Commissioner Cheek made a motion to grant permission seconded by Commissioner Watkins. Commissioner Niblett asked about the cost and Cranford said he would inform the board of any costs. The motion passed with Commissioner Niblett abstaining from the vote.

Jonathan Guyton, Jr. stated he would like to be on the agenda at the next meeting and the vice-chairman and the county attorney said he would have to go through the proper steps to be on the agenda.

Susan Coffee addressed the board concerning an editorial opinion printed in the October 5th edition of the Macon Telegraph.

Adjourn

With no further business to come before the board, Commissioner Niblett made a motion to adjourn seconded by Commissioner Watkins. All voted in favor of adjournment.