

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting**  
**June 20, 2017**  
**Warner Robins, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday June 20, 2017 at the Houston County Annex in Warner Robins, Georgia with Chairman Stalnaker presiding and Commissioners Walker, Robinson, McMichael and Thomson present. Also present were County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Barry Holland, Director of Personnel Ken Carter, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar, Senior Animal Control Officer Alan Smith, County Extension Coordinator Charlotte Meeks, UGA District Extension Director Tim Varnedore, County Library System Director Sara Paulk, Library Board member Robin Engle, Perry-Houston County Airport Manager Patsy Goff, Ansel Peck, James Erdmanczyk, Jim Taylor, Flint Energies VP of Member Solutions Rogie Roberson, District 146 Representative Shaw Blackmon, District 147 Representative Heath Clark, Board of Elections member Tony Robbins, Warner Robins Councilwoman Carolyn Robbins, Board of Elections member Barbara Waddle and Ted Waddle.

Chairman Stalnaker led the audience in the Invocation.

Petty Officer 1st Class Alvin Robinson, US Navy (ret.) led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and detailed his 20-year military career. He enlisted in the Navy in October 1990 and was trained both as a hull technician and as a shipboard firefighter. He had many tours of duty here and abroad on different ships including one tour of duty where he helped to repair submarines. His last tour of duty was at the Norfolk Naval Brig detention facility where he counseled those who had made serious mistakes in their lives. He currently works as a service manager at Five Star Ford in Warner Robins.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized Representatives Heath Clark and Shaw Blackmon who in turn recognized Mr. Tony Robbins for his 44 years of service on the Houston County Board of Elections.

Representatives Clark and Blackmon presented Mr. Robbins with House Resolution 305 commending him on his outstanding public service.

Chairman Stalnaker presented Mr. Robbins a County challenge coin and then recognized Barbara and Ted Waddle and Mr. Robbins' wife Carolyn.

Mr. Robbins in turn thanked both Representatives and also the Board of Commissioners for their support of the Board of Elections over the years.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized County Extension Coordinator Charlotte Meeks who in turn recognized Miss Amelia Day this years' State and National 4-H Youth in Action winner.

Representatives Clark and Blackmon presented a resolution commending her for her achievements.

Commissioner Robinson then read and presented a resolution from the County to Miss Day.

Miss Day explained that her outreach program, called Operation Veteran Smiles, has helped touch the lives of over 4,000 veterans. Several Extension staff members, District Extension Director Tim Varnedore, and her parents and siblings were also in attendance to support her as she received these accolades.

Chairman Stalnaker recognized Robin Engle for her five years of service on the Library Board and then recognized Library Director Sara Paulk who presented Ms. Engle three books - one young adult book, one adult novel and one children's book - that will be put into the library system in her honor. Chairman Stalnaker presented her with a County challenge coin as well. Although she could not be in attendance, Chairman Stalnaker also recognized Susy King for her service on the Board as well. Ms. King will be moving on due to her husband, Col. Jeff King, leaving for his next duty assignment at the Pentagon.

Director Paulk then briefed the Board on the Library's Summer reading program and hinted that they should each block out the afternoon of August 2nd on their respective calendars for a special event that will be announced soon.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve the minutes of the June 6, 2017 meeting.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to add an item to the agenda for an Executive Session for Attorney / Client matters per O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(1).

Mr. Walker presented a request from Landfill Superintendent Terry Diestch for the Board to consider eliminating two current positions in his department and then creating two others. He would eliminate one Heavy Equipment Operator (Grade 13) and one Utility Clerk (Grade 10) and create one Senior Clerk (Grade 12) and one Equipment Operator (Grade 10). This will actually result in a cost savings to the County.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to authorize the elimination of one Heavy Equipment Operator (Grade 13) and one Utility Clerk (Grade 10) at the Landfill and the creation of one Senior Clerk (Grade 12) and one Equipment Operator (Grade 10) effective July 4, 2017.

Mr. Walker presented a request from Sheriff Talton to hire Mr. Eric Farris and Mr. Bryan Frizzell for the position of Deputy Sheriff. Both positions are currently vacant. Mr. Farris does have the necessary experience above the minimum requirement to qualify for the C-step and Mr. Frizzell for the B-step.

Motion by Mr. Walker, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to approve the hire of Mr. Eric Farris for the position of Deputy Sheriff at Grade 16-C and the hire of Mr. Bryan Frizzell for the position of Deputy Sheriff at Grade 16-B effective June 26, 2017.

County Attorney Tom Hall presented the Effective Date and Exemption Clause to be added to the Access Management & Encroachment Control Manual that was approved at the May 16, 2017 meeting. The effective date of the ordinance is August 1, 2017. The exemption clause shall read as follows:

“Existing structures and right-of-way access as of August 1, 2017 that are non-conforming according to the Access Management & Encroachment Control Manual will not be required to be upgraded unless, in the opinion of the County, the property owner modifies the structure or changes the use of the property or causes the traffic to change. Approved construction plans for commercial developments and residential subdivisions having received preliminary plat approval, which do not require re-zoning, will not require upgrading if approval was granted since August 1, 2016.”

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve the Effective Date and Exemption Clause to be added to the Access Management & Encroachment Control Manual that was approved by the Board at the May 16, 2017 meeting.

Mr. Thomson presented recommendations for appointments to the Phoenix Center Community Service Board.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. Walker. Upon voting Mr. Thomson, Mr. Walker, and Mr. McMichael voted yes, Ms. Robinson abstained. Motion approved to appoint the following to the Phoenix Center Community Service Board:

Gail Robinson	7/01/2017 thru 6/30/2018
Clifford Holmes, Jr.	7/01/2017 thru 6/30/2018
Sean Whilden	6/21/2017 thru 6/30/2017 (Unexpired term of Ms. Linda Curry) 7/01/2017 thru 6/30/2018 (New term)

Mr. Thomson presented a Speed Limit Resolution for On-System and Off-System roadways to allow for the use of speed detection devices.

Motion by Mr. Thomson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to approve a resolution amending speed limits on all unincorporated (On-System) State Routes and all unincorporated (Off-System) roads. Pursuant to Georgia Code 40-6-483 and Section 40-6-376, the Uniform Rules of the Road Act, the Houston County Board of Commissioners does hereby adopt the On-System State Route Speed Limits within unincorporated Houston County as determined by the Georgia Department of Transportation and the Off-System roads speed limits as presented in List #0417-153. The County is responsible for all speed zone sign placement on non-state route roadways corresponding to this list (Off-System) as well as any advisory speed warning signs roadway conditions warrant. The County Attorney is authorized to amend the Speed Limit Ordinance accordingly.

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Chairman Stalnaker explained that adopting the speed limit resolution allows the Sheriff to use speed detection devices (radar) on County roads as listed.

Mr. McMichael presented a request from County Engineer Brian Jones to enter into two separate engineering services agreements with Integrated Science & Engineering (ISE). The GIS will enable the County to meet newly mandated EPD – NPDES permit requirements. ISE will also assist the County with the necessary data collection in order to meet strict state guidelines.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve professional engineering services agreements with Integrated Science & Engineering, Inc. of Newnan, GA for a Geographic Information System for stormwater program to meet EPD MS4 permit requirements at a cost of \$6,750 and for the collection of data on stormwater structures at a cost of \$7,560 (estimated utilizing a rate of \$14 per structure on 540 structures).

Mr. McMichael presented an amendment to the Wildlife Management Area Agreement the County has with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The County currently leases 1820.44 acres more or less to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources via the Wildlife Management Area Agreement dated August 25, 2003, first amended February 5, 2004 and last amended July 29, 2010. The County is requesting that 343 acres, more or less, be released for county use from the current Wildlife Management Area Agreement through the Fourth Amendment to Wildlife Management Area Agreement.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to authorize Chairman Stalnaker signing the Fourth Amendment to Wildlife Management Area Agreement in order to release 343 acres, more or less, for county use from the Wildlife Management Area Agreement dated August 25, 2003, first amended February 5, 2004 and last amended July 29, 2010.

Chairman Stalnaker explained that this is part of the Landfill acreage.

Mr. McMichael presented a request from the Purchasing Department for approval of a bid. Bids were solicited for gasoline and diesel fuel requirements for the period beginning July 1, 2017 thru June 30, 2018. Twelve bids were received and the Purchasing Department recommends award to low bidder Petroleum Traders Corp. of Fort Wayne, IN.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Ms. Robinson and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of a bid for gasoline and diesel fuel requirements covering the period beginning July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018 to Petroleum Traders Corp. of Fort Wayne, IN at -.0430 and -.0097 OPIS markup for gasoline and diesel fuel, respectively.

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County Attorney Tom Hall presented a second reading of the Unified Animal Control Ordinance Amendment by making multiple changes to Chapter 10 Unified Animal Control Ordinance Article I - In general and Article III – Reasonable Dog Ownership.

The first reading of this proposed amendment to the Houston County Code of Ordinances was held at the June 6<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

Chairman Stalnaker opened the meeting for a Public Hearing.

There being no comments the meeting continued.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to approve an amendment to the Houston County Code of Ordinances by making multiple changes to Chapter 10 – Unified Animal Control Ordinance Article I – In General and Article III – Reasonable Dog Ownership.

Ms. Robinson thanked Senior Animal Control Officer Alan Smith for his efforts on the amendment.

Chairman Stalnaker thanked Commissioner Robinson for her long service on the Animal Control Board.

Ms. Robinson presented Juvenile Court Contract Attorney Agreements for FY2018 as recommended by Judge Edwards.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Walker and carried unanimously by all to authorize Chairman Stalnaker signing Independent Contractor Agreements with Sherry Herrera Campbell at \$45,000 per year and Kameyan Sims at \$45,000 per year to provide for the defense of indigent persons appearing in the Houston County Juvenile Court. Each agreement will be effective July 1, 2017 and remain in effect until June 30, 2018. These agreements may be renewed from year to year subject to an annual review of performance conducted by the County in conjunction with the Juvenile Court.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. McMichael and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$1,085,934.32.

Chairman Stalnaker explained that the public hearing on the FY2018 proposed budget would be held after the Public and Commissioners comment session.

Chairman Stalnaker opened the meeting for Public Comments.

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Patsy Goff, Perry-Houston County Airport Manager, briefed the Board on the many improvements made at the airport during the past 10 years. She is retiring and brought incoming Airport Manager Mr. Jim Marquardt to meet the Board.

Jim Taylor briefed the Board on the status of Wellston Park and invited the Board to attend the grand opening celebration on August 31st at 10:30 a.m. He thanked the Board, Director of Operations Robbie Dunbar and Roads Superintendent Travis McLendon for their assistance with the project remarking that it has been a collaborative effort between many organizations including the County and the City of Warner Robins.

There being no further public comments the meeting continued.

Chairman Stalnaker opened the meeting for Commissioners Comments.

Mr. Walker thanked everyone for coming and Patsy Goff for her service to the Perry-Houston County Airport.

Ms. Robinson also thanked everyone for coming and thanked Senior Animal Control Officer Alan Smith once more for his considerable efforts on the Unified Animal Control Ordinance amendment.

Mr. Thomson thanked Mr. Taylor for the update on Wellston Park and also Sheriff Deputy Mueller for providing security for the meeting.

Mr. McMichael thanked everyone for coming and remarked that young Miss Amelia Day, the National 4-H Youth in Action winner, was exceptionally well-spoken and a true representative of what the 4-H organization stands for.

There being no further comments the meeting continued.

Chairman Stalnaker opened a Public Hearing on the Proposed FY18 budget.

Initial budget requests indicated that the budget was approximately \$1.3 million out of balance but it is not uncommon to be out \$2 to \$3 million. He briefly explained the lengthy process of how the budget was developed with the Commissioners, elected officials, constitutional officers, department heads, administrative staff and employees all working together to achieve a balanced budget. He related that although there is very little in new revenue, the County is in sound financial shape with no general obligation debt, a healthy seven-month cash reserve and that the proposed budget contains a contingency of over \$1.5 million for any unanticipated emergencies should the tax digest return less than anticipated. The County will not use any prior year General Fund Balance to balance the FY18 budget.

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Chairman Stalnaker then gave a detailed presentation highlighting the General Fund Budget, as well as the various enterprise and special revenue funds. The Chairman indicated that the General Fund proposed budget totals \$55,371,345 and projects no millage rate increase (remaining at 9.95 mills) for residents. The Fire millage is also projected to remain at the current level of 1.18 mills. The millage rate has remained at 9.95 mills for eight years and the Fire Tax has remained at 1.18 mills for eleven years. The budget does include a two percent cost-of-living adjustment for employees; however, merit and longevity pay increases will remain suspended for all County employees. Chairman Stalnaker remarked that the County's merit system pay increases have been frozen for nine years and that it has created a salary compression problem whereby new employees are hired into the same job at the same rate of pay as current employees who have held those jobs for several years. Merit increases would have to be reinstated in order to correct the compression issue, but right now it would take a tax increase to fund it and a tax increase is not factored into the budget. He was optimistic that it may be possible in the foreseeable future to correct the problem. Chairman Stalnaker remarked that cost savings realized through excellent budget management by department heads, elected officials, constitutional officers and employees was significant in being able to provide the 2% COLA. Although there are many new personnel needs with departments funded by the General Fund any new positions or reclassifications will have to be deferred for future years' consideration.

The total proposed budget of \$108,474,386 is broken down as \$55,371,345 General Fund; \$4,030,667 E911 Fund; \$2,467,661 Fire District Fund; \$19,806,240 SPLOST Fund; \$6,997,500 Water Fund; \$7,685,973 Solid Waste Fund; \$11,435,000 Internal Service Fund; and \$680,000 Special Revenue Funds.

Chairman Stalnaker then opened the meeting for Public Comments on the proposed FY2018 budget.

Ansel Peck, 109 Latham Drive, Warner Robins complimented the Board, elected officials and County staff for their dedication and diligence concerning the proposed budget.

Mr. Walker thanked the Chairman for being a great leader and commended everyone involved in the budget process for the team effort. He thanked the citizens for their part as well.

Ms. Robinson thanked the Chairman and the other Board members. She also thanked the citizens for providing the taxes that enables the County to provide the multitude of services needed.

Mr. Thomson thanked the Chairman for his time and expertise in the budget process. He also thanked Barry Holland, Sandi Stalnaker and each of the department heads and elected officials. He especially thanked Sheriff Talton and his staff as the combined budgets of the Sheriff Department, Detention Facility, the Juvenile Division and the 911 Center equal nearly half of the entire General Fund budget.

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Mr. McMichael thanked everyone for their efforts.

Chairman Stalnaker once again thanked all employees, department heads, elected officials and constitutional officers for doing their part.

There being no further comments the public hearing was closed and the meeting continued.

Motion by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all to enter into Executive Session for Attorney / Client matters per O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(1).

Upon returning, Chairman Stalnaker reconvened the regular meeting and announced that no action would be taken as a result of the Executive Session.

Motion to Adjourn by Mr. McMichael, second by Mr. Thomson and carried unanimously by all.

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Barry Holland  
Director of Administration

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Chairman

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Commissioner

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Commissioner

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Commissioner

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**EXECUTIVE SESSION AFFIDAVIT**

STATE OF GEORGIA  
COUNTY OF HOUSTON

AFFIDAVIT OF PRESIDING OFFICER

Tommy Stalnaker, Chairman of the Houston County Board of Commissioners, being duly sworn, states under oath that the following is true and accurate to the best of his knowledge and belief:

1.

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in a duly advertised meeting on June 20, 2017.

2.

During such meeting, the Board voted to go into executive session.

3.

The executive session was called to order at 8:22 p.m.

4.

The subject matter of the closed portion of the meeting was devoted to the following matter(s) within the exceptions provided in the open meeting law:

  X   Consultation with the county attorney or other legal counsel to discuss pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the county or any officers or employee or in which the county or any officer or employee may be directly involved as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(1);

       Discussion of tax matters made confidential by state law as provided by O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(2) and (insert the citation to the legal authority making the tax matter confidential) \_\_\_\_\_;

       Discussion or voting on:

       Authorizing a settlement as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(1)(A);

       Authorizing negotiations to purchase, dispose of, or lease property as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(1)(B);

       Authorizing an appraisal as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(1)(C);

       Entering a contract for the purchase, disposal of, or lease of property as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(1)(D);

       Entering into an option to purchase, dispose of, or lease property as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(1)(E);

\_\_\_\_\_ Discussion or deliberation on the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a county officer or employee as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(2);

\_\_\_\_\_ Interviewing candidates for executive positions as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(2);

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (describe the exemption to the open meetings law): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ as provided in (insert the citation to the legal authority exempting the topic) \_\_\_\_\_.

5.

\_\_\_\_\_ During the course of the closed session devoted to exempt topics, an incidental remark regarding a non-exempt topic or an attempt to discuss a non-exempt topic was made.

\_\_\_\_\_ The attempt was immediately ruled out of order and attempts to discuss same ceased immediately.

\_\_\_\_\_ The attempt was immediately ruled out of order. However, the comments did not cease, so the closed/executive session was immediately adjourned without discussion or action being taken regarding any non-exempt topic.

6.

Minutes were taken of this meeting and will be filed and held for in camera inspection only.

This \_\_\_\_\_ day of June, 2017.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tommy Stalnaker, Chairman  
Houston County Board of Commissioners

Sworn to and subscribed  
before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of  
June, 2017.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public  
My commission expires:

\_\_\_\_\_