

**Minutes
Public Hearing
Elbert County Board of Commissioners
Monday, March 13, 2017**

A Public Hearing was held to hear a rezoning change request in regards to property at 2280 Washington Hwy., Elberton; Parcel# 0551 026 (35.87 acres); from Mixed Use to Rural Residential. This property previously housed a deer processing plant; but is no longer in business; therefore the owner requests a rezoning change. There were no public comments.

**Minutes of Regular Meeting
Elbert County Board of Commissioners
Monday, March 13, 2017**

Chairman Lyon called the meeting to order. Present were Chairman Lyon, Vice Chairman Horace Harper, Commissioner Lee Vaughn, Commissioner Chris Alexander, Commissioner Kenneth Ashworth, Commissioner Freddie Jones, County Administrator Bob Thomas, County Attorney Bill Daughtry, County Clerk Tamara Butler, CFO Phil Pitts.

After the pledge to the United States flag, the invocation was given by Chairman Lyon.

Adoption of Agenda. Commissioner Ashworth made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Chairman Lyon asked for motion to amend the agenda to add (18a)- Executive Session for litigation and personnel matters. Commissioner Ashworth made the motion. Commissioner Vaughn seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Adoption of Minutes of the Regular Meeting on February 13, 2017. Commissioner Harper made a motion to adopt the minutes as read. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Request from the "Citizens for Public Awareness" to address the Board. As there were numerous citizens from this group, Chairman Lyon asked for one spokesperson to address the Board. He also stated that we are in litigation and that no commissioners can make a comment on the issue. Mr. Andy Phelt, 1804 Lincolnton Hwy., spoke on the groups' behalf stating that he has been an Elbert County resident for 20 years. He is concerned about the proposal of a landfill near the Board River and what it would bring to Elbert County such as tons of household waste, coal ash and sewage sludge. He said he found that an overwhelming number of residents are opposed to the landfill and hopes that if the issue comes before the Board they will take their voices into account when making any decisions.

Request from James Faulkner to refund property tax of \$23.79 from the 2016 tax year for a mobile shed that he does not own. There is no electrical power or utilities in this building. After some discussion, it was the Boards unanimous decision to deny the request and suggest to Mr. Faulkner to ask the owner of the mobile shed to reimburse him.

Discussion and approval to sign the contract with Amec, Foster, & Wheeler for \$38,578 to prepare the Master Plan for Bobby Brown Park. Mr. Thomas stated this gives the authorization to go ahead and sign the contract with them as it will take roughly six months to prepare the plan. There will be an economic feasibility study done as well as public hearings and input from the U. S. Corps of Engineers.

Commissioner Vaughn made a motion to approve authorization to sign the contract. Commissioner Harper seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and approval of the Second Reading of an Ordinance Amending the Selection Process for the Board of Commissioners Vice Chairman. This amendment would replace code section 2-38(f) to update that section and clarify the manner in which the Vice Chairman is selected. The 1-year term will start the next calendar year with the District 2 Commissioner as Vice Chairman. Commissioner Alexander made a motion to approve the amended ordinance. Commissioner Ashworth seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and approval of a request from Jim-Ree Museum for a \$2,500 donation to help defray cost associated with advertising and expenses for their annual Spring Festival June 10, 2017. In the past we have donated \$2,500 from the Hotel/Motel tax fund, but funds are low in that account, therefore Mr. Thomas recommended a \$1,000 donation. He also recommended until funds are built back up in that account that we limit future donations to \$1,000 not only to the Jim-Ree Museum but to all applicants requesting donations. Commissioner Ashworth made motion to approve a \$1,000 donation. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and approval of two recommendations from the Elbert County Planning Commission:

- 1) **Rezoning change request from Dick Dickens, 2280 Washington Hwy from Mixed Use to Rural Residential.** Parcel 055A 026 consists of 35.87 acres. As stated at the Public Hearing, this property once housed a deer processing plant but is no longer in business; therefore the owner wishes to request that the property be rezoned to Rural Residential. The Planning Commissioner recommends approving this request. Commissioner Ashworth made a motion to approve the request. Commissioner Vaughn seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.
- 2) **Variance request for Stone Future for height restrictions on a building at 1479 Crosstie Drive adjacent to the airport.** According to a letter from Randy Haralson, Airport Director, he has reviewed information relating to the new building construction and has consulted with the airport engineering firm and found the measurements and dimensions is in violation of airport standards. Mr. Thomas stated that we could jeopardize federal funding if we approve this request; therefore he recommends postponing the request until we hear further from the FAA. Commissioner Ashworth made a motion to postpone the request. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and approval of bids for a bush hog mower for the Road Department. Three bids were received and all were fairly close to the same price. Mr. Thomas recommends going with the local bid from James Bailey Farm for \$13,687. Funds will come from SPLOST. Commissioner Harper made a motion to approve the purchase. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and approval of a request from the Elbert County Sheriff to purchase 24 body cameras (\$20,680 plus \$13,953 for the server) and 20 new Taser guns (\$3,280 for year 1 and \$5,280 for years 2,3,4). This request from the Sheriff was discussed at the Retreat and Work Session. The funds for the body cameras will come from SPLOST and the Tasers will come from the Sheriff's budget. Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the purchase. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and approval of proposed Health Department fee increases for inspections. Mr. Thomas stated that most of the fees will increase by \$25. This is the recommendation from the Board of Health. Commissioner Vaughn made a motion to approve the increased fees. Commissioner Harper seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion of a request by the American Legion Post to lease a portion of the old 4-H building next to the fairgrounds to hold their meetings. Mr. Thomas stated they meet twice a month in the evenings and once a week for lunch. They have agreed to pay \$250 per month and will be responsible for the upkeep of the portion of the building they are renting. According to Mr. Thomas there will be no conflict with the other activities that the 4-H program uses the building for. Mr. Daughtry recommended this be a month to month lease. Commissioner Vaughn made a motion to approve a month to month lease. Commissioner Ashworth seconded the motion. Commissioner Jones abstained due to being an active member of the American Legion. Upon voting the motion carried 4-0.

Discussion on a proposal to continue with the warranty on the roof at the Governmental Complex at a cost of \$7500. Mr. Thomas stated this warranty covers the government complex building and includes repairs to three separate areas. Commissioner Ashworth made a motion to continue the warranty. Commissioner Harper seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and approval to declare as surplus three (3) sheriff's vehicles that were used for replacement parts for newer vehicles. After stripping the cars for parts, they were used by EMS for extrication practice. VIN # 2FAFP71W35X116485, 2FAFP71W16X145436, 2FAFP71W05X116475. Commissioner Vaughn made a motion to declare the vehicles as surplus. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Financial Report. Mr. Pitts reported that General Fund is 2.4% under budget. There is \$3,311 in the Hotel/Motel tax fund. Revenues are \$411,000 less than they were this time last year. Mr. Pitts stated we have started an analysis to see why such a decrease in revenues and has asked Lorrie Higginbotham to do some research and get back to him; he also wants to get with individual departments to examine charges and services. Solid Waste is slightly better than break-even. E-911 fund revenues are \$54,695 more than they were last year at this time.

Public Comments. There were a couple of comments from individuals concerning the landfill. Chairman Lyon had already stated that we are in litigation and can make no comments on the matter.

Executive Session. Chairman Lyon asked for motion to go into Executive Session for litigation and personnel matters. Commissioner Ashworth made the motion. Commissioner Vaughn seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Ashworth made a motion to come out of Executive Session. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0. Chairman Lyon stated there was no action taken during Executive Session.

Adjournment. Commissioner Harper made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.