

WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE CALLED MEETING HELD

MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2016 AT 4:30 P.M.

The White County Board of Commissioners held a Called Meeting on Monday, June 13, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room at the White County Administration Building. Present for the meeting were: Chairman Travis Turner, Commissioner Terry Goodger, Commissioner Lyn Holcomb, Commissioner Edwin Nix, Commissioner Craig Bryant, County Manager Michael Melton, Finance Director Vicki Mays, and County Clerk Shanda Murphy.

Chairman Turner called the meeting to order.

Mr. Melton presented the bids received in the re-bidding process of a portion of Mt. Pleasant Church Road, a portion of Gene Nix Road, Yonah Valley Road, and Barrett Mill Road. These four (4) roads were bid out with the other three (3) roads which were a part of the entire paving project (Hefner Road, Grover Miles Road, and Shuler Road) to be prepared for paving by the County. Following the review of bids received there was a consensus that the bids be awarded to the low bidder on each project. Commissioner Bryant abstained from voting on the award of these projects due to family relation to one of the bidders.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Goodger, seconded by Commissioner Nix there was a vote award the preparation project on Gene Nix Road to Crumley Creek Construction in the amount of \$56,163.50 to be funded by SPLOST. Chairman Turner and Commissioner Holcomb voted in favor of the motion, with Commissioner Bryant abstaining. The motion carried with a 4-0 vote. It was noted that this vote was contingent on Crumley Creek Construction obtaining their e-verify number and if this requirement was not met the award would automatically go to the next lowest bidder being Nelson Grading.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Nix, seconded by Commissioner Holcomb there was a vote award the preparation project on Yonah Valley Road to Crumley Creek Construction in the amount of \$40,574.50 to be funded by SPLOST. Chairman Turner and Commissioner Goodger voted in favor of the motion, with Commissioner Bryant abstaining. The motion carried with a 4-0 vote. It was noted that this vote was contingent on Crumley Creek Construction obtaining their e-verify number and if this requirement was not met the award would automatically go to the next lowest bidder being Nelson Grading.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Holcomb, seconded by Commissioner Nix there was a vote award the preparation project on Barrett Mill Road to Nelson Grading in the amount of \$95,631.00 to be funded by SPLOST. Chairman Turner and Commissioner Goodger voted in favor of the motion, with Commissioner Bryant abstaining. The motion carried with a 4-0 vote.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Goodger, seconded by Commissioner Nix there was a vote award the preparation project on Mt. Pleasant Church Road to Nelson Grading in the amount of \$44,727.00 to be funded by SPLOST. Chairman Turner and Commissioner Holcomb

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voted in favor of the motion, with Commissioner Bryant abstaining. The motion carried with a 4-0 vote.

Chairman Turner noted that this expense was approved to be funded by SPLOST and if there was a cash flow issue within the 2014 SPLOST that 2008 SPLOST funds could need to be utilized.

Mr. Melton summarized that the Board had previously engaged Mr. Joe Gailey to conduct an evaluation of the YMCA Program and Facilities. He stated that the Board had been present with Mr. Gailey's detailed evaluation and summary recommendations. Chairman Turner directed that the recommendations be forwarded to the YMCA. Chairman Turner summarized the recommendations submitted by Mr. Gailey to the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Holcomb stated that it seemed that the Board had been dealing with the same issues with the YMCA for several years – through many different leadership changes and that the issues centered around a lack of communication, no cooperation in working with the school system, and no YMCA presence at youth sports activities. Commissioner Holcomb stated that he was also concerns about White County tax dollars being sent to the Georgia Mountains YMCA in Hall County.

Commissioner Holcomb made a motion to not renew the contract for management of recreation programs and facilities with the Georgia Mountains YMCA effective July 1, 2016 – as well as hire Mr. Joe Gailey as the Interim Director of White County Parks & Recreation. Commissioner Nix seconded the motion.

In light of the motion on the table, Chairman Turner asked how the County would fund taking over the recreation programs and facilities. Commissioner Nix stated that he believed the current budget could be cut and the county could use the funds currently being utilized to operate the Parks & Recreation. Commissioner Holcomb suggested reducing the current \$575,000.00 which is provided to the YMCA to \$500,000.00 and has the Board review the budget in six (6) months. Commissioner Nix stated that he felt there was also an opportunity for additional revenue to be brought in through the various programs. Commissioner Bryant clarified that all current employees in this area are YMCA employees and those personnel would need to be transitioned onto the County's payroll. Chairman Turner stated that the YMCA does a great job on the adult programs; however there is a lacking in the youth programs. Chairman Turner asked the Board to consider giving the YMCA an additional year in order to provide them an opportunity to fill gaps in staffing. Chairman Turner stated that his biggest concern at this point was funding. Commissioner Holcomb stated that he wanted all current services to continue within the Recreation Department and to expand. Mr. Melton assured the Board that the County could charge a membership / user fee for the programs offered by adopting a fee schedule. Commissioner Goodger stated that within the evaluation there was notation that White County and one other county were the only Counties within the State of Georgia which funded a YMCA. Commissioner Goodger stated that he was not in favor of taking over the recreational services; however he would support the Board's decision either way and wanted to see the YMCA get the issues resolved. Commissioner Nix discussed the Board's intentions of constructing facilities on the Yonah Preserve property. Chairman Turner stated that the County Attorney had indicated

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that the Yonah Preserve facilities could be managed by the YMCA with permission of the State within the existing intergovernmental agreement for the use of the Yonah Preserve Property.

Mr. Greg Supianoski, Georgia Mountains VP of Operations, addressed the Board of Commissioners. He stated that more than half of the YMCA operations (as a whole) were some type of municipal partnership; therefore the current contractual agreement with White County is not unusual. He summarized the Board's concerns as a desire to reduce funding; however noted that Mr. Gailey's evaluation included a recommendation to hire three (3) additional full-time staff and the evaluation included recommendations for replacement of equipment – which would be the county's financial responsibility under the current contract. Mr. Supianoski reviewed that he had presented a proposal to the Board recently regarding increasing the registration fees for youth football, as White County had the lowest fees in the surrounding area. He stated that he is open to re-evaluate all fees in an effort to reduce the county's financial responsibility; however he would need the Board's support to change the fees. Commissioner Nix stated that the Board needed to be mindful that all repairs and improvements are still funded by the County, which does not fall within the YMCA's contract. Commissioner Bryant stated that he was not pleased that the YMCA had committed to reducing the county contribution to \$500,000; however the county was still funding at \$575,000 – down from the original \$800,000 contract. Commissioner Holcomb stated that a lot of the parent's concerns come from never having a familiar face at YMCA activities when the majority of the participants are there and he does believe the YMCA is understaffed. He also stated that the Board had repeatedly asked the YMCA to work with the school system; however there was never any coordination with the school system. Chairman Turner agreed that there are issues with coordination with the school system and the YMCA was not providing a strong, consistent presence during YMCA sponsored activities and within the community. Commissioner Nix stated that he believed revenue was being lost by an entrance fee not being charged and the concessions were not consistently available. He stated that he feels it is time for someone to step up and resolve all the issues which have not been corrected. He stated that he had been overwhelmed by phone calls and visits to his home by citizens who were very unhappy about the current level of service at the YMCA.

Ms. Connie Hood spoke in support of the YMCA, acknowledging issues with needing a greater presence at events, developing a working relationship with the schools and the issues with finances; however she praised the YMCA for the adult programs and encourage for those programs to be continued for both the county and the participant's good. She expressed her views that the YMCA adds credibility to the programs offered.

Ms. Laurie Lee spoke in support of the YMCA, expressed concern in regards to the contract being canceled in a two week period without the Board knowing what it will cost to operate the recreation program, and asked the Board to consider giving the YMCA six (6) months to a year to work on the various issues. She encouraged the Board to require fees consistently as currently many teenagers and adults are allowed to use the gym for free; however those who play pickle ball are required to pay to use the gym.

Mr. Greg Supianoski expressed the YMCA's desire to continue a partnership with the County – and he stated he was very confident the needed improvement could be made.

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Chairman Turner asked Mr. Supianoski if the County increased their contribution to the YMCA from \$575,000.00 to \$625,000.00 – if the YMCA would be able to increase staffing including hire a site director.

Mr. Supianoski stated that addition personnel would be helpful; however at the current (or increased) funding levels he did not see this as a possibility. He asked the Board to look at the fee structure in order to increase revenues. He emphasized the YMCA's work as a non-profit organization to raise funds for scholarships.

Commissioner Holcomb stated that he appreciated the YMCA's work in the community and their credibility; however he felt the County had the same thing to offer.

Chairman Turner asked if either Commissioner Holcomb or Commissioner Nix would be willing to withdraw their motion or second following this discussion in order to allow the YMCA time to come back with a plan to address the Board's concerns. Commissioner Holcomb asked that a vote be called for because he felt the Board had given the YMCA several opportunities to correct issues and there had been no results.

In consideration of the motion previously made by Commissioner Holcomb, seconded by Commissioner Nix to not renew the YMCA's contract for operation of the county recreation programs and maintenance of the county recreation facilities July 1, 2016 for the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year and to hire Mr. Joe Gailey as the Interim Director of the Parks & Recreation Program, Commissioner Bryant voted in favor of the motion. Chairman Turner and Commissioner Goodger opposed the motion. The motion passed by a 3-2 vote.

Chairman Turner expressed his appreciation to the YMCA for their partnership.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Nix there was a unanimous vote to adjourn for a five (5) minutes recess.

Following a brief recess, Chairman Turner called the meeting to order.

In discussing the proposed Fiscal Year 2017 Budget, the Board was presented with a draft budget which had a \$1,671,361.00 deficit to be balanced. The Board began discussions as they considered reductions and expenses and / or increases in revenue in order to provide staff with direction to balance the proposed budget.

Mr. Melton noted that the White County Health Department had approximately \$200,000.00 in fund balance. There was a consensus of the Board that the county's contribution to the Health Department should be reduced from \$145,000.00 to \$120,000.00 for Fiscal Year 2017.

There was a consensus that an additional \$75,000.00 could be reduced by establishing the recreation budget at \$500,000.00 compared to the \$575,000.00 budgeted for the YMCA contribution. It was determined that this would be reviewed at mid-year.

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Chairman Turner stated that Mr. Melton had provided information detailing the contributions made to other agencies through the Hotel / Motel Tax Fund beyond what was required by law; therefore General Fund could be retaining more revenue than currently budgeted. There was a consensus to reduce the contribution made to the Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce by \$30,500.00 each – thereby retaining an addition \$61,000.00 in General Fund.

Chairman Turner stated that with the last audit fund balance was at 3.3 months for the county. There was a consensus to use the .3 months fund balance for the Fiscal Year 2017 Budget.

There was a consensus to reduce the Road Department line item “Gravel / Maintenance” from \$150,000.00 to \$50,000.00.

Commissioner Nix asked that all fees currently charged by the county be evaluated. Mr. Melton stated he believed the county was behind on fees and there was definitely room for modifications in many areas. Mr. Melton stated that he would conduct this comprehensive evaluation in-house over the next 60 days.

Chairman Turner praised the Board, Elected Officials, and Department Heads for working diligent to keep expenses down, especially over the past few years; however he stated that services are being called on more and more which is stretching the county’s budget.

There was direction to base revenue on a ½ mill increase for the proposed Fiscal Year 2017 Budget.

The calendar for the budget adoption was set as follows: Public Hearing – Thursday, June 23, 2016 at 8:00 a.m. and Budget Adoption – Thursday, June 30, 2016 at 8:00 a.m. immediately preceding the Work Session / Regular Meeting. Ms. Murphy stated that the millage adoption process would take place in July once the Assessor’s Office provided the final digest – with the required notices, public hearings, and adoption.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Nix, seconded by Commissioner Holcomb there was a unanimous vote to appoint Commissioner Bryant as the vice-chair of the Board of Commissioners – which would allow Commissioner Bryant to conduct the Public Hearing on June 23, 2016 in Chairman Turner’s absence.

Commissioner Goodger stated that White County News Editor, Billy Chisolm, would be retiring in August and he had been approached with a request to name a trail on the Yonah Preserve Property in his honor as “The Old Chisolm Trail”. This was acceptable to the Board.

Commissioner Goodger stated that he had received information that the City of Cleveland was interested in contributing to the cost of construction of restroom facilities adjacent to Freedom Park in the back section of the Courthouse. He also stated that an estimate he received was much less than expected for this renovation – approximately \$25,000.00 and John Stover of Carter & Sloope was working on a sketch. Commissioner Nix stated that his concern was insuring that space was reserved for expansion of the court facilities.

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Upon a motion by Commissioner Goodger, seconded by Commissioner Nix there was a unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting.

The minutes of the June 13, 2016 Called Meeting are hereby approved as stated this 30th day of June, 2016.

WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

s/Travis C. Turner
Travis C. Turner, Chairman

s/Terry D. Goodger
Terry D. Goodger, District 1

s/Lyn Holcomb
Lyn Holcomb, District 2

s/Edwin Nix
Edwin Nix, District 3

s/Craig Bryant
Craig Bryant, District 4

s/Shanda Murphy
Shanda Murphy, County Clerk