



**Fannin County Board of Commissioners  
Workshop  
Jury Assembly Room  
February 23, 2017 8:30 AM**

Chairman Stan Helton called the workshop to order at 8:30 AM.  
Chairman Helton introduced Rob Jones, Chairman of Pickens County that was present at the meeting.

Chairman Helton opened discussion regarding the county trash issues. Chairman Helton stated he had spoken with the Caldwell Detention Center regarding the probationers program but they are booked and have Fannin County on a waiting list. Chairman Helton remarked there are currently three county workers that are working to pick up litter. Commissioner Larry Joe Sosebee discussed working with the Fannin Sheriff's Office for or possibly hiring more individuals for the litter pick up crew. Commissioner Johnson stated that the long term goal should be to work with Caldwell Detention Center and said everyone could agree there is a trash problem in the county. Joe Cipolla, Darry Queen and Papa's Pizza owner, spoke about the importance of fast food restaurants having outside trash receptacles for customers. Cipolla also commented on cabin rentals contributing to the trash issues. Chairman Helton commented on garbage businesses not covering their trucks and that it is included in an ordinance to do so. Commissioner Sosebee asked who was in charge of enforcing the ordinance and Marie Woody, Land Development Department Head, stated Land Development is in charge of enforcing it. Commissioner Johnson asked how Land Development could enforce the ordinance and Woody stated it had never been enforced in the past but the department could send a courtesy letter. Chairman Helton stated he preferred face to face interaction over a letter. Commissioner Johnson inquired about a list of garbage businesses in the county and Woody stated she believed the Commissioners' office has the list. Commissioner Sosebee asked Pickens County Chairman Jones how his county handled trash issues. Chairman Jones gave the board an overview of the County Marshall program used in Pickens. Jan Hackett of the Chamber of Commerce stated they would be happy to help spread the word to cabin rentals.

Chairman Helton shifted to discussion regarding propane and fuel purchases. Chairman Helton stated that the county is currently purchasing fuel from four different suppliers and commented on improving the fuel system currently in place. Representatives from Heritage Propane, Freeman Gas, and Folgers Gas were present to give input regarding propane. The board discussed options with the companies and considered consolidating and bidding out the propane. The board decided the first step would be to identify the tanks and see which company owns them, as well as the condition of the tanks to look at the investment and liability potentially purchasing the tanks could place upon the county.

Chairman Helton moved to property condemnations. The board reviewed the spreadsheet of condemnations and recommendations submitted by Land Development. The board discussed building a case against the property owners including certified letters and documenting the contact with the owners. Commissioner Johnson added that condemnations are a serious issue and that if everything is done correctly, the process would go smoothly. The property condemnation list submitted by Woody is included and should be considered part of the minutes.

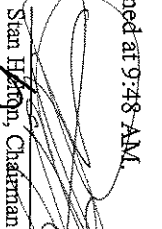
Chairman Helton shifted to discussion regarding the Chamber of Commerce contract. Hackett discussed the current approved contract. Hackett commented that if a change in the contract would take place, it would need to take place after 2018 for budgeting purposes. Chairman Helton stated the current contract includes 70% of Excise Tax going to the Chamber of Commerce and 30% to the county; Chairman Helton stated his goal is for the split to be 50%-50%. Chairman Helton suggested leaving the contract 70%-30% through 2017, adjusting to 60%-40% in 2018 and meeting the 50%-50% goal in 2019. Commissioner Johnson remarked he had met with Hackett and the board members and believed it is logical to adjust the percentage. Commissioner Sosebee stated the last thing he wants to do is to hurt the Chamber of Commerce but that there are county projects that need to be completed. Hackett stated that they are worried the cut will hurt the economy but a gradual change will not be as damaging to the Chamber of Commerce. Hackett spoke about the number of new visitors to the website that do not know about Fannin County; Hackett commented on competing with Pigeon Forge that has a \$11,000,000 budget. Commissioner Johnson stated that he would like there to be an outline of projects the county plans to complete with the money collected from the Excise Tax. A letter submitted from the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Paul Gribble is included and should be considered part of the minutes.

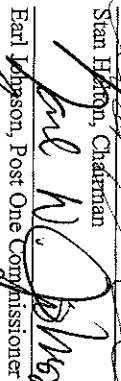
Chairman Helton moved to prioritizing the road paving list and establishing a time table for paving. Chairman Helton inquired with Zack Ratcliff, Public Works Director, about beginning paving in April or May; Ratcliff agreed that April or May would be a good goal. The board discussed the chip and seal process and Ratcliff stated it would be a quicker and more inexpensive way than paving the roads. Commissioner Sosebee spoke about Commissioner Johnson presenting the idea during the prior year and Chairman Helton spoke about using the post commissioners' knowledge and expertise in their respective fields to save the county money; Commissioner Johnson added that was one reason he ran for office. The board discussed the road priority list and Commissioner Sosebee stated that Big Creek Road needs to be higher on the list. Chairman Helton asked if Big Creek Road would be a good candidate for chip and seal; both Ratcliff and Commissioner Johnson agreed it would. The board discussed the right of ways on the roads and Chairman Helton stated that the board would need to know the status of right of ways. Chairman Helton stated it made sense to move forward with the list because there had already been investment in the roads. Commissioner Johnson inquired about Rainbow Road; Ratcliff discussed issues with utilities being close to the road on Rainbow Road. The board asked Ratcliff and Woody to work together on reviewing and inspecting the roads on the list. Commissioner Johnson and Ratcliff discussed looking at the roads with the most houses and most traveled first. Chairman Helton inquired about the investment with the chip and seal process. Ratcliff commented on equipment and training needs. Chairman Helton stated the investment would be a big return for the county. The road priority list is included and should be considered part of the minutes.

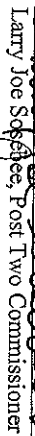
Woody asked to speak with the board regarding personal garbage complaints.

**CLOSING**

With no further discussion, the workshop was adjourned at 9:48 AM.

  
Stan Horton, Chairman

  
Earl Johnson, Post One Commissioner

  
Larry Joe Sosbee, Post Two Commissioner

Attest:

  
Kristen Stone, Merkin County Clerk