



Fannin County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Jury Assembly Room
March 12, 2019 5:15 p.m.

OPENING REGULAR MEETING

Chairman Helton called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.
Present in meeting were Chairman Helton, Post One Commissioner Earl Johnson and Post Two Commissioner Glenn Patterson.

The Invocation was led by Robert Graham and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Johnson.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2019 Regular Meeting. Second made by Commissioner Patterson; motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Julie Wootten approached to make known she was not there to complain about hunting dogs; they were only there to express concerns about the Animal Control issues and local ordinance that has not been acted upon.

Mark Tune of Blue Ridge approached to elaborate on the concerns with restriping the lines on Aska Road. He stated the lines were almost invisible and made a recommendation to the Board of maybe using a different type of paint to keep the lines visible. Mr. Tune stated he would appreciate anything they could do to help with this issue. Chairman Helton asked Mr. Tune to email him regarding his concerns and he would respond to him and try to explain some of the issues they have been having.

Barbara Porter approached to make her concerns known about the issues she has had with dogs in her neighborhood and went on to express how she had left numerous messages for Animal Control.

Levi Franklin approached and stated to the Board how some of the people complaining here today are the ones that were calling Animal Control out to his house. He stated he just wanted everyone to know that they don't always know the whole situation especially when he has a dog house for his dog and a whole 50 lb. bag of dog food for his dogs.

Kirk Williams approached and stated he started volunteering at the Fannin County Animal Control last April. Mr. Williams went on to express some of his concerns regarding the conditions at the Animal Control facility. He also stated he had a copy of Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters.

Bethany Musselman, a high school student approached to state how the Fannin County Animal Ordinance had not been updated since Dr. Vollrath's administration. Ms. Musselman went on to present an exhibit of a logging chain that had been placed on a dog previously and stated how the chain had become embedded into the dog's skin.

Joe Webb came forth to elaborate on the prior Board meeting regarding the District Attorney's Budget Request.

Henry Mallard approached to express his feelings about puppy mills in South Georgia and the lack of a nuisance ordinance. Mr. Mallard applauded Commissioner Johnson for some of the things he had done lately but he stated Mr. Johnson wasn't going to do anything about it until he had a line going out the door behind him. Mr. Mallard asked everyone present that was supporting him to stand up. Commissioner Johnson stated to Mr. Mallard, "Since you invoked my name, how many of you here are on the other side are concerned and would you please stand up." (Several outburst occurred) Chairman Helton asked that the meeting come to order. Commissioner Johnson stated since they were keeping score, he wanted everyone to see what was going on.

James Bond approached to state that Mr. Helton was responsible for the day to day operations and told the Commissioners they didn't get a free ride sitting on the sidelines. Ms. Bond expressed to the Board he was never happy about the meeting not being a question and answer session. Mr. Bond stated he held John Drullinger responsible for the issues at Animal Control.

Jan Eaton approached to comment on what she saw here today was a room full of people that loved their dogs. Ms. Eaton stated she would help anyone with their dogs if they needed help. Ms. Eaton went on to elaborate about puppy mills in South Georgia and one here in the county. She also stated she was insulted when she saw volunteers cleaning up after dogs at Animal Control and wanted to know why we were paying their employees. Ms. Eaton thanked everyone that was present for being there at the meeting.

Dana Worm approached to reiterate the same on cleanliness at the Animal Control.

Chris Munkus approached and stated to the crowd, "A dog is a dog; if you don't want to hear the barking then go back to where you came from."

Nathan Stuart approached and stated he was not concerned about the issues with Animal Control and he didn't know anything about it. He stated he was an owner of plot hounds and he was only concerned with what was his. And he didn't want people coming onto his property and telling him what to do with what was his own property.

Michael Head stated he was one of the people that had Animal Control called on him. And he said he wouldn't go as far as calling his neighbor a trespasser but that's what it is. Mr. Head stated he had all vet records on his animals and that he competition racoon hunted. He went on to say that when you implement something, whatever it may be, it affects everybody.

Last to approach was Dixie Carter. Ms. Carter expressed the one issue that she had with Animal Control was the chipped concrete on the floors and walls. She went on to state she hoped the Board would listen to the people.

Chairman Helton closed Public Commentary at 6:00 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Next on the agenda was Item #3, Mike Scearce General Manager of the Fannin County Water Authority. Mr. Scearce updated the Board on the construction and adequate water supply. He stated the county water was running well. He presented the Board with an attachment exhibiting the Water Usages Report which is from a new software that gives a report of water usage from the customers. He stated the software was installed at the end of September 2018. Mr. Scearce elaborated on the current projects they have. Mr. Scearce also gave an update on Board Members. Chairman Helton inquired on the completion date of those projects and asked if they would get completed by the end of the year. Mr. Scearce stated, "Yes Sir". Commissioner Patterson asked if there were any concerns for the future or anything he wanted to keep an eye on. Mr. Scearce replied, "The one thing he could think of was the tourism and people moving in, the demand which they could help the cities with that demand and take that off of them." Mr. Scearce also stated the infrastructure needed to be upgraded and that was a known fact. Commissioner Johnson asked Mr. Scearce what plans his authority had in the future for the western part of the county. Mr. Scearce stated the biggest thing was communication because they did have an agreement with all of the cities and that's why they are here; is to partner with the cities. Mr. Scearce stated, "The biggest thing I can say to you is, we have to have communication and it has to work both ways." Chairwoman Anita Weaver spoke up to say, "We would love to go into that area and we have tried but until we can get the cities to work with us, there's not a lot we can do. The City of Morganton had come to us and said they couldn't afford to go out into the area anymore; so, they gave the Water Authority the service area." Commissioner Johnson stated, "That answers my question." Chairman Helton asked the question about the supply to City of Blue Ridge and the City of Morganton being limited in what they could get in that area. Mr. Scearce spoke about getting wells in that area but there is some testing that has to be done. Chairman Helton made the comment of the Water Authority being in existence since 2010, it's only been since 2014 or 2015 that they had separated out from the County as its own entity and at one time the Water Authority owed the County over a million dollars with all the expenditure; and all that has been paid back several years ago. Chairman Helton stated, "That's real positive." Mr. Scearce elaborated on some of the issues they have had in McCaysville and how that's the perfect situation where they could go in and help; not wanting to take over but to help. Mr. Scearce ended by stating, "We have the means to help and the number one goal is to provide all of Fannin County with adequate water." Chairman Helton stated, "They have high caliber people on the board and they discuss issues and make good decisions for the county."

Next on the agenda is Item #4, Robert Graham, Director of EMA, presented the Board with the contract from the last meeting contract being from Go Green Medical Waste. Mr. Graham stated this contract was

the one discussed in previous meeting as saving around \$11,000. Chairman Helton made a motion first, second made by Commissioner Patterson, motion passed unanimously. Next contract was for the debris removal which is for SDR Southern Disaster Recovery which was discussed in previous meeting also. First motion made by Chairman Helton, second motion made by Commissioner Johnson, motion passed unanimously. The second contract was for Phillips and Jordan, Inc.; motion made first by Chairman Helton, second motion made by Commissioner Patterson, motion passed unanimously. Mr. Graham gave a quick update on the back part of the new facility and gave a list of expenses to date.

Next on the agenda was Item #5, Zack Ratcliff, Director of Public Works. He presented the purchase of a new dump truck in which he had discussed in the budget meeting on September 26, 2018 last year. The truck will be paid for out of the SPLOST funds. Mr. Ratcliff stated the price on the truck is \$143,152.00. Chairman Helton asked about the delivery. Mr. Ratcliff stated, "The delivery would be tomorrow if he called them." Chairman Helton also asked about the mileage on the dump trucks presently and Mr. Ratcliff stated some had over five-hundred thousand miles on them. Commissioner Patterson stated if he had no other questions or comments, he would like to make a motion to get him this equipment to keep the roads up. Chairman Helton stated he wanted to give Commissioner Johnson a chance to respond, he was very knowledgeable about this equipment. Motion made first by Commissioner Patterson, second by Chairman Helton with Commissioner Johnson opposing purchase. Motion carries two to one with Commissioner Johnson voting no.

Last on the agenda is Item #6, Eddie O'Neal with Recreation. He presented mowing bids to the Board from which was discussed in the last Board meeting. Mr. O'Neal stated these were 24 months contracts instead of 12 month and he had five bidders. Those bids were read as follows: Farmers Landscaping & Lawn Care for \$1,750.00 per mo., SDC Lawn care for \$2,400.00 per mo., Green's Lawn care for \$1,700.00 per mo., U.S. Lawns for \$2,288.16 per mo., & 4-V Ranch, LLC for \$2,200.00 per mo. All have Certificate of Liability Insurance. Mr. O'Neal stated his preference, since it was coming out of his budget, he was for the cheapest bid. Mr. O'Neal said he was for the cheapest on a trial basis to make sure they get what was presented. Commissioner Patterson stated they were getting one day of extra cleaning on bathrooms with Greens. Chairman Helton stated he would abstain from voting on this since one of the businesses does work for him and his family. Commissioner Patterson made first motion to accept Green's bid on a trial basis to see you if they do a good job, motion made second by Commissioner Johnson, motion passed unanimously with Chairman Helton abstaining from vote due to conflict. Next issue that was discussed by Mr. O'Neal was lighting at the park. He stated there were a lot of lights out and he felt they needed to be converted over to LED lights which would ultimately save money. He stated he would like to use SPLOST to pay for it. He stated he had a couple of electricians look at them and it would be about \$15,000/\$16,000. Chairman Helton stated they could pay for that legally out of the SPLOST, they had the letter to confirm that. Commissioner Patterson stated they knew overall it would save money. Commissioner Johnson stated people had to see to get to their cars. Mr. O'Neal stated they have to light the exits. Chairman Helton made motion first for paying for lighting out of SPLOST, motion made second by Commissioner Patterson, motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Helton stated there would be a need for Executive Session for the purpose of legal and real estate issues. Chairman Helton made first motion for Executive Session at 6:48 p.m., motion made second by Commissioner Patterson, motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made first by Chairman Helton at 7:15 p.m. to come out of Executive Session, motion made second by Commissioner Patterson, motion passed unanimously.

No decision made at present time.

CLOSING

Motion to adjourn made at 7:17 p.m. first by Commissioner Patterson Motion made second by Chairman Helton; motion passed unanimously.

Stan Helton, Chairman

Earl Johnson, Post One Commissioner

Glenn Patterson, Post Two Commissioner

Attest:

Sherril Walker, County Clerk