



**Fannin County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting**

Jury Assembly Room

March 10, 2020 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 & County Attorney Lynn Doss.

The Invocation was led by Commissioner Glenn Patterson and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Earl Johnson.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Chairman Helton asked for a Motion to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2020. Motion made first by Commissioner Patterson. Motion made second by Commissioner Johnson. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

First to approach the podium was Mr. Larry Henderson. Mr. Henderson addressed the Board and asked for the resignation of Commissioner Patterson due to inappropriate behavior and comments at the Patriots Meeting.

Next to approach the podium was Lane Bishop. Mr. Bishop made comments as to Commissioner Patterson's behavior at the Patriots Meetings; and stated he felt that Commissioner Patterson was not out of line with any of his actions or comments at the meeting.

Last to approach the podium was Mr. Joe Webb. Mr. Webb commented on updating several of the Fannin County Ordinances.

Public Commentary was closed at 5:23 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Item #3 on the agenda was EMA Director Robert Graham. Mr. Graham presented to the Board a slide presentation on Talking Points for General Public and COVID-19 which was issued on March 10, 2020.

Item #4 on the agenda was a Variance Request from Michael & Carol Russo to place a garage 8 feet from the US Forest Service Property Line. This variance was tabled from the previous meeting on February 25th for more resolution of the footage being 10 feet from the US Forest Service Property Line. Ms. Carol Russo was present during the meeting and stated there was not an issue with 10 feet which was agreed. Chairman Helton made a motion first to approve the variance. Motion made second by Commissioner Patterson. Motion passed unanimously.

Item #5 on the agenda was a Variance Request from Robert M. Hill to construct a house 41 feet from the centerline of Meadowlark Lane instead of the required 55 feet. There was no one present to oppose the variance. Chairman Helton asked for a motion to approve the variance. Motion made first by Commissioner Johnson. Motion made second by Commissioner Patterson. Motion passed unanimously.

Item #6 on the agenda was the new Board appointment of Clay Bell to the Fannin County Water Authority. Mr. Bell will replace Kay Kendall for the new three-year term. Motion made first by Chairman Helton. Motion made second by Commissioner Patterson. Motion passed unanimously.

Item #7 on the agenda was John Drullinger with Fannin County Animal Control. Mr. Drullinger gave an update on all the stats and improvements with Animal Control to date for the year. Mr. Drullinger also

stated the Georgia Department of Agriculture had inspected the Animal Control Facility and they got a passing score with 100%.

Last item on the agenda was Item #8, discussion regarding the Blue Ridge Annexation. Chairman Helton stated that he had learned recently that the City of Blue Ridge wanted to expand into the County. Chairman Helton stated he was concerned about this and asked County Attorney Lynn Doss if we had received anything at all from the City of Blue Ridge. Ms. Doss stated to her knowledge, we had not received anything. The entire Board verified they had not received any notification of the annexation. Chairman Helton stated the annexation would be all the way down the hill from Walmart to Gravely Gap; and then from Tamen Park to Forge Mill Road. Chairman Helton expressed his concerns about the Ordinances and wanted to know if anyone had asked the Sheriff how it would affect him and 911. Chairman Helton stated the big issue was with the alcohol. Commissioner Johnson stated he had only learned about this from the articles in the News Observer. County Attorney Lynn Doss stated she knew they had voted on it but learned only through the newspaper article. Commissioner Johnson wanted to know if this was a common practice with the City. Ms. Doss explained the process with one annexation and the information came from the City Attorney. Ms. Doss stated she had not seen any advertisement. Commissioner Johnson expressed his concerns about the amount of highway included in the annexation and not including the County in any discussions. Commissioner Patterson wanted to know why the County was bypassed. Ms. Doss stated the County needed to have input due to the Comprehensive Plan of getting services. Ms. Doss stated if the Board wanted to take any action; they would need to take it before Thursday, because Thursday was crossover day. Chairman Helton stated he was ready to ask for a motion; his position on this was "No" and would like to instruct Ms. Doss to contact the Capital with the opposition. Commissioner Patterson stated that he felt it was offensive and insulting, not getting any information at all. Commissioner Johnson stated he didn't understand how this major undertaking could take place without talking to anyone. Commissioner Johnson stated it could affect any landowner and not just the road right of way. Chairman Helton stated he felt what he was reading from the Newspaper was very disturbing. Ms. Doss spoke regarding the Strategic Delivery Service and having to re-do the plan after it was done two years ago. Ms. Doss said from what she understood; they approved this back in February and they have had plenty of time to reach out. Chairman Helton made a motion first opposing the annexation. Motion made second by Commissioner Patterson. Motion passed unanimously. Chairman Helton asked County Attorney Lynn Doss to draft the letter opposing the annexation. Commissioner Johnson asked County Attorney Lynn Doss if she could let the Board know of the proper notification.

Commissioner Patterson asked to have just a minute to elaborate on the request for his resignation by Mr. Henderson. Commissioner Patterson explained the differences in opinions; and thanked Lane Bishop for what he had said earlier. Commissioner Patterson explained he was concerned about the type of behavior when he had attended the Patriot Meeting and stated his wife even got thrown into the disturbance also. Commissioner Patterson went on to say he was very disappointed, not because his opinion was not embraced, but because of the fact mutual respect seemed to be nonexistent; and a disruptive tone was set. Commissioner Patterson stated Commissioner Johnson talked about some of the negativity in the last meeting when he announced he was not going to run for Post next term. Commissioner Patterson stated when people get caught up in their emotions, poor decision making usually follows; which is certainly detrimental to the Democratic process. Commissioner Patterson stated we should all including, myself, approach issues with an essential point of keeping civility and open mindedness at the forefront. Commissioner Patterson stated that he was all he had to say.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Helton stated there was not a need for Executive Session at this time.

CLOSING


Chairman Helton asked for a Motion to adjourn. Motion made first by Commissioner Patterson. Motion made second by Commissioner Johnson. Motion passed unanimously. Adjourned at 6:25 p.m.



Stan Helton, Chairman



Earl Johnson, Post One Commissioner



Glenn Patterson, Post Two Commissioner

Attest:



Sherri L. Walker, County Clerk