

Monroe County Board of Commissioners

Minutes of the February 15, 2022

Regular Commissioners Meeting

9:00 A.M. Meeting

Present:

Greg Tapley, Chairman-Not Present

Lamarcus Davis, Vice Chairman

Eddie Rowland, District 2

John Ambrose, District 3

George Emami, District 4

Staff:

Jim Hedges, County Manager

Ben Vaughn, County Attorney

Janet Abbott, County Clerk

Richard Dumas, Public Information Officer

Kelsey Fortner, Zoning Officer

Welcome

Vice Chairman Davis welcomed everyone in attendance.

Prayer

Pastor Keith Harris led the invocation.

Pledge

Vice Chairman Davis led the Pledge.

Roll Call

County Clerk Janet Abbott called roll.

Call to Order

Vice Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

New Business

In honor of Black History month, Vice Chairman Davis read a proclamation proclaiming Tuesday, February 15th as Black History Remembrance Day in Monroe County. Commissioner Davis recognized Monroe County citizens, Antoinette James, Ralph Ogletree, Rosemary Walker and Charles Wilder for their contributions to the community.

Approve Agenda

Vice Chairman Davis presented the agenda for approval

Commissioner Emami motioned to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Approve Minutes-BOC Meeting-February 1, 2022

Commissioner Rowland motioned to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2022, Regular meeting with the usual 30 days for changes.

Commissioner Emami seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

United Way

Representatives of the United Way of Central Georgia, Ms. Lisa Berrian, and Ms. Clero Wright addressed the Board to propose a partnership with the United Way of Central Georgia and Monroe County.

George McCanless, President of United Way of Central Georgia gave an overview and background of United Way.

Philip Bryant, President of the Boys and Girls Club in Monroe County spoke giving an overview of the Boys and Girls Club.

The “Beatty Team”

Former Department of Community Affairs Commissioner, Mike Beatty, who now heads up “The Beatty Team”, was present and stated he has been in contact with Chairman Tapley and Mayor Wilson exploring how his organization can assist Monroe County and the City of Forsyth in designing strategies that will enable the community to achieve our vision and creating vibrant and livable communities.

Joint Comprehensive Plan Update

The State of Georgia requires each local government to have a comprehensive plan (i.e., comp plan), which outlines their vision and goals for the next twenty years. This plan is reviewed and updated every five years, along with a more detailed Community Work Program that highlights specific projects to be undertaken within a five-year period. Some communities may have additional planning requirements based on their characteristics. The guidelines for local comprehensive planning are issued by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

Joe Black, Government Services Specialist for the Middle Georgia Regional Commission presented to the Board.

Greg Boike, Middle Georgia Regional Commission representative, gave a timeline of what needs to be done over the next couple months. Mr. Boike stated October 31st is the deadline to have this approved.

Landfill Permit-Public Hearing

Commissioner Emami motioned to enter a public hearing at 9:37 a.m., for the landfill permitting.

Commissioner Ambrose seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Curtis Reynolds updated the Board on state requirements at the landfill.

No one was present to speak in opposition.

Commissioner Emami motioned to close the public hearing at 9:40 a.m.

Commissioner Ambrose seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Curtis Reynolds of Harbin Engineering presented a change order for the landfill expansion to the Board in the amount of \$192,455.46. Mr. Reynolds stated due to the amount of bedrock that was found while constructing the new cell, it would require a substantial amount of structural fill.

Following an extensive Board discussion, Commissioner Emami motioned to approve the change order in the amount of \$192,455.56 with funds to come from bank balance (reserves).

Commissioner Ambrose seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Solid Waste Management Plan

Curtis Reynolds, Harbin Engineering, presented recommendations for changes to the 2007 Joint Solid Waste Management Plan and Attorney Ben Vaughn suggests Curtis come before the Board of Commissioners to explain his recommendations prior to Attorney Vaughn drafting a new plan.

Mr. Vaughn gave a background to the Board on how the need for an update to the Solid Waste Management plan come about.

Following a Board discussion with Mr. Vaughn and Mr. Reynolds, Commissioner Emami motion to deny any modification in any way to the plan.

Commissioner Ambrose seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Impact Fee Advisory Committee

County Manager Jim Hedges presented the next item stating, Bill Ross, Consultant developing the Impact Fee Study, has advised he will need 5-10 individuals to serve on an Impact Fee Advisory Committee and at least 50% of the members must be related to the land development process in some way. They might be real estate agents, mortgage brokers, homebuilders, commercial developers, etc. and they need not be county residents. The remaining members should be community representatives.

Mr. Hedges stated the following people have expressed interest in serving on the committee and asked the Board to bring back a few more recommendations:

- Heath Hawkins
- Jimmy Redus

- Michelle Gilmer
- Alan Stern
- John Lovett
- Kerri Swearingen

Mr. Hedges stated he would like to go a few more weeks and see if the board could give him a few more names and he would bring it back to the March 1st meeting.

Ordinance Implementation

County Attorney Ben Vaughn presented the next item stating there have been several communications relating to “how” and “when” the county should begin implementation of several ordinances that have been on the books for some time. Mr. Vaughn stated he needed direction from the board on how to proceed.

The Board discussed in length the ordinance implementation and the problems that have arisen from the ordinance implementation discussion.

James Green, 73 Blount Street resident, addressed the board stating we must follow the laws and you must get rid of the blighted areas.

Harry Edge, Stokes Store Road resident, asked Mr. Emami to reconsider not running for office. He stated two of the people that have recently been ticketed have been cleaning up their properties.

Greg Mingee, Elbert Jackson Road resident, stated he has the RV park that has recently been discussed. He stated the code enforcement officer recently gave the residents 30 days to go and he must kick them out so be it, but they can't move in 30 days, they are all disabled.

Lisa Barrien with United Way addressed the board stating United Way helps communities and stated she would like to share 211 the nationwide phone number for people needing help.

Gwendolyn Byrd, 4175 Hwy 83 South resident, stated she works with Family Connections, and she will take the information from today back to Family Connections so they can figure out how they can help the people that will be displaced.

Keith Harris, 2125 Montpelier Road resident, stated the churches in Monroe County have for some time now operated Kingdom Builders that works with owner occupants to make their homes habitable and for people that can't do it themselves.

Mike Beatty stated at the USDA, safe and affordable housing is one of their missions.

Harvey Ellis, 68 Buck Creek Drive resident, stated we must stop the bleeding. He stated he can point out three residents that have been placed as permanent housing since this discussion started. He stated we have got to stop this problem from getting bigger.

Bronwyn Morgan, 159 Towaliga Lake Drive resident, stated her main concern is the arbitrary nature of how this is going to be enforced.

Kerri Swearingen, 412 Reedy Creek Road resident, stated she thinks about private property rights when these issues come up.

Following an extensive Board discussion, Commissioner Emami motioned that we begin the process of citing with a warning citation with 90 days' notice for anyone operating as an illegal campground or in violation of the Monroe County code regarding an RV and at that point begin implementation of the county code.

Commissioner Ambrose seconded the motion.

Commissioner Davis stated he agrees with Kerri Swearingen regarding blight, he stated we need to start cleaning up the blight.

Motion carried 3-1 with Commissioner Davis.

Recycling Center Attendant's Salary

Commissioner Ambrose proposed a salary of \$9.00 per hour for the recycling center attendants at the February 1, 2022, Board of Commissioners meeting. This proposed salary does not take into consideration years-of-service. County Manager Jim Hedges stated his recommendation is as follows:

- Starting to 5 years of service \$9.00/hour
- 5 to 10 years of service \$9.50/hour
- Greater than 10 years of service \$10.00/hour

Mr. Hedges stated the annual cost to implement this is \$46,000.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the proposed salary of \$9.00 per hour and scale for the recycling center attendants.

Commissioner Emami seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

High Falls Road Study-NOVA

AVH Properties, LLC (company pursuing an overnight truck stop on High Falls Road) has engaged the services of USA NOVA to perform a pavement evaluation study from I-75 Exit 198 to Buck Creek Road. Initially, USA NOVA informed Monroe County of their intentions and only after it was explained to them that High Falls Road is county property, did they come back and request permission to do soil borings on this stretch of road. One major issue is their intention of performing these tests on a weekday during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. using flagging control method of one-lane two-way traffic control while coring. Should the Board allow NOVA to perform this study, the following is recommended:

- Coring operations only allowed between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m.

- Monroe County Sheriff's office is required to provide traffic control on both ends of the designated areas
- NOVA must provide Monroe County with a coring and pavement evaluations study.
- NOVA must provide Monroe County with a proposed pavement design to strengthen High Falls Road to support the anticipated loads generated by the new truck traffic (the pavement design should be in accordance with the Mechanistic Empirical Pavement Design criteria.)

Commissioner Emami motioned to approve with the County Managers suggestions.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

High Falls Road-Construction Materials Services

County Attorney Ben Vaughn has recommended Monroe County obtain an independent geotechnical evaluation on High Falls Road, and our Consultant Kim Stokes recommends the services of Construction Materials Services, Inc. of Locust Grove. Mr. Hedges stated the estimated cost of the project is \$5,860.00.

Lakeshore Drive resident Alvin Crusan asked why AVH properties doesn't pay for the testing instead of the County.

Kevin Fields with AVH Properties asked if it is normal protocol to provide the information prior to the zoning hearing.

Lakeshore Drive resident Katherine Crusan asked will the study take into consideration the depth of the road or will it take into consideration another lane may have to be added.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to go with Kim Stokes recommendation to use Construction Materials Services, Inc. to do a study for the county on High Falls Road after receiving the results from NOVA.

Commissioner Emami seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Old Business

There was no old business discussed.

Commissioners' Comments

There were no commissioner comments.

Public Comments

Gary Ford, 95 Buck Creek Drive resident, stated he hopes the board follows up with blighted areas in High Falls. He stated from the boat ramp back towards high falls gives bad impression.

Executive Session

There was no executive session.

Action from Executive Session

There was no action from executive session.

Adjourn

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to adjourn at 12:31 p.m.

Commissioner Emami seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

Respectively Submitted by:

County Clerk, Janet Abbott