

**Monroe County Board of Commissioners**

**Minutes of the March 05, 2024**

***Regular Commissioners Meeting***

**6:00 p.m.**

**Present:**

Greg Tapley, Chairman

Eddie Rowland, Vice-Chairman

Lamarcus Davis, District 1

John Ambrose, District 3

George Emami, District 4

**Staff:**

Ben Vaughn, County Attorney

Jim Hedges, County Manager

Janet Abbott, County Clerk

Richard Dumas, Public Information Officer

Kelsey Fortner, Community Development Manager

**Welcome**

Chairman Tapley welcomed everyone in attendance.

**Prayer**

Commissioner Lamarcus Davis gave the invocation.

**Pledge**

Pastor Reverend Matt Bishop led the Pledge.

**Roll Call**

County Clerk Janet Abbott called roll.

**Call to Order**

Chairman Tapley called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

## **New Business**

### **Approve Agenda**

Chairman Tapley presented the agenda for approval with the addition of Item I.

Commissioner Emami motioned to approve the agenda with said changes.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and the motion passed 5-0.

### **Approve Minutes-BOC Meeting-February 20, 2024, Workshop and Regular Meeting**

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2024, regular meeting with the normal 30 days for changes.

Commissioner Emami seconded the motion, and the motion passed 5-0.

### **Monroe County Hospital Review**

County Manager Jim Hedges introduced Kerry Trapnell as the Interim Chief Executive Officer of Monroe County Hospital. Mr. Trapnell is the Chief Administrative Officer for Aletheia Health Partners, Inc., offering strategic advisory services, interim leadership, and hospital management to rural hospitals. Aletheia Health manages the daily operations of Monroe County Hospital.

Mr. Trapnell and the members of the Monroe County Hospital Board were present.

Mr. Trapnell provided an overview of operations at the Monroe County Hospital.

Mr. Trapnell introduced Terrell Neal as Full-time CEO starting in April.

### **Building Permit Penalty Waiver Request**

Mr. Eric Dial has requested to appear before the Board of Commissioners to dispute the Building Permit Fees, which have been doubled in accordance with the UDO, for building a 7,200 square foot building (he describes as a pole barn) without a building permit.

Community Development Manager Kelsey Fortner stated the applicant started building without a building permit. After a Stop Work Order was placed the applicant applied. Once approved for the permit the fees were doubled for starting without a permit. The applicant does not agree with the doubled fees.

The location of the property is 1946 Johnstonville Road and the property owners are Kim and Eric Dial.

Mrs. Fortner stated the applicant is using the building for batting cages and was charged commercially for this use. Had he been charged for a residential building; the fees would have been much higher. Mrs. Fortner stated the Board approved the cap of \$3,250 for building permits.

Following a Board discussion, Commissioner Ambrose motioned to deny the request to waive the fees.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

## **Water Tap Clarification**

County Manager Jim Hedges stated there has been some misunderstanding regarding water tap fees, specifically relating to the discount period, and more importantly, the cost associated with new installations requiring a bore.

### **Background**

- Tap Fee Conversations
  - Discount for 6 months after Juliette Project phase is completed. (Ends March 31, 2024)
  - With a box/without a box.
  - Short bore or long bore.
- In 2019, BOC established a single fee (by meter size) regardless of box or no box, and regardless of short or long bore.

### **Current Tap Fees-Effective April 1, 2021-Residential/Commercial**

- ¾" \$2000.00
- 1" \$2400.00
- 1.5" \$2900.00
- 2" \$4200.00
- Any Meter over 2" TBD by Contractor

### **Boring**

- Per Jeff Dorough, the standard rate is \$750.00.

### **Discount Rate**

- BOC established a tap fee discount rate of \$500, regardless of whether a bore was required, provided the tap fee was paid within 6 months of the completion of the Juliette Project phase was completed.
  - The discount fee expires on March 31, 2024.
- This discount also applied to earlier water projects with the same terms and conditions.
  - All earlier projects discounts have long expired.

### **Process Amendments**

- New Water tap
  - Application with Water Department (no fee paid at this time).
  - H2O determines if a bore is required and obtains estimate.
  - Applicant is notified of total connection cost: minimum of \$2,000 for ¾"; \$2,400 for 1"; \$2,900 for 1.5"; \$4,200 for 2"; and any meter over 2" TBD by H2O.
  - Applicant pays new water tap fee.

- No discounts for TAP fees after March 31, 2024.

Commissioner Emami motioned to approve the recommended process amendments with the addendum of half the cost if a box is already installed.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion.

The motion carried 5-0.

### **P & Z Hearing-Sarah Smith Variance**

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to enter a public hearing at 6:58 p.m. for a variance application.

Commissioner Emami seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Community Development Manager Kelsey Fortner presented a variance application located at 214 Loraine Forest Drive, Map 103B Parcel 013A.

Mrs. Fortner stated the applicant is requesting a variance to place an ADU (accessory dwelling unit) in front of the home. The UDO states an ADU must be in the rear or on the side but not in the front.

The property owner/applicant is Sarah Smith.

The Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval 3-0.

No one was present in opposition.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to close the public hearing at 7:02 p.m.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and the motion was carried 5-0.

Commissioner Emami motioned to approve the variance application.

Commissioner Ambrose seconded the motion, and the motion was carried 5-0.

### **P & Z Hearing-J.E. Roush-Rezoning**

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to enter a public hearing at 7:03 p.m. for a rezoning application.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and the motion was carried 5-0.

Community Development Manager Kelsey Fortner presented a rezoning application located at 2343 Hwy 42 N, Map 051 Parcel 014.

Mrs. Fortner stated the applicant is requesting to rezone the 4-acre tract to R-1 from A-R to split it in half to build another home. Sutton Road will be used for the ingress/egress. The minimum is 2-acres in R-1.

The Property Owner/Applicant is J.E. Roush & Company, LLC.

Mrs. Fortner stated there is no recommendation from the Planning & Zoning Board due to one member recusing himself and not having a quorum.

No one was present in opposition.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to come out of the public hearing at 7:04 p.m.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and the motion was carried 5-0.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the rezoning application.

Commissioner Emami seconded the motion, and the motion was carried 5-0.

### **Subdivision Plat-Pine Meadows-Final**

Community Development Manager Kelsey Fortner presented the final plat for Pine Meadows Subdivision located on Giles Road for approval.

Following a Board discussion with Surveyor Steve Coleman, Mr. Coleman requested to withdraw the application so that he could have a discussion with the property owner and make revisions. Mr. Coleman stated he will bring it back to the Board for consideration.

### **Strickland Loop Rezoning**

Community Development Manager Kelsey Fortner stated the Board tabled a rezoning application for Brian Wesley at the February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Board meeting. Mr. Wesley with PTW Properties, LLC, is requesting the property to be rezoned. Ms. Fortner stated he isn't requesting the plat to be approved.

Mrs. Fortner stated the applicant is requesting rezoning from R-1 to R-2 for phase 2 of the subdivision named Strickland Woods. R-1 minimum is two acres. R-2 minimum is one acre. Phase one of Strickland Woods has been developed and was rezoned to one acre lots; the property owner is seeking conformity.

Following a Board discussion, Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve.

Commissioner Emami seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **Commissioners' Comments**

#### **Commissioner Lamarcus Davis**

Commissioner Davis thanked the staff for their hard work and for continuing to stay positive. He stated he would like to recognize the Road Department for their hard work and wanted to remind everyone of the election on Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup> and that the TSPLOST on the ballot is an extension of the existing tax not a new one.

#### **Commissioner Eddie Rowland**

Commissioner Rowland stated the Monroe County Hospital Board is doing a great job and he wanted to thank Kerri Swearingen for the effort and sweat she put in to making the change in hospital management happen. He stated he wanted to thank the Board as well as the staff at the hospital.

#### **Commissioner John Ambrose**

Commissioner Ambrose stated when Connexon installed the internet for EMC customers, Ga. Power customers were not included. He stated we have got to try to get the internet to everyone in the county.

Commissioner Ambrose stated he still does not agree with the controversial books at the library.

**Commissioner George Emami**

Commissioner Emami stated he would like to congratulate the Hospital Board, he stated they have hit a home run with the new CEO. He stated their choice of Terrell Neal as CEO is a testament of how rich the resources are in this county.

Commissioner Emami stated he was concerned a plat can get to the board and not have any type of health department approval on it. He stated he thinks it is bad business to approve a plat with zero health data.

Commissioner Emami stated this needs to be required on lots smaller than five acres prior to Board approval.

Commissioner Emami stated he appreciates Kelsey Fortner for posting this week about the tract of land for sale on High Falls Road. He stated there is absolutely nothing going on, zero back door conversations are happening. If something does develop there will be zoning requests and hearings beforehand. He encourages anyone that might want to develop this property to speak with the individuals in the community to determine what the interest may be.

**Chairman Greg Tapley**

Chairman Tapley stated the Hospital Board has been working hard to get management in the Monroe County Hospital to be successful.

Chairman Tapley stated he wanted to remind everyone of the Georgia Heart Fund.

Chairman Tapley stated Community Development Manager Kelsey Fortner and the Community Development department staff don't deserve to be treated they way they have been treated. He stated we are doing things to make y'all safe; and to the community when you come in don't make things personal.

Chairman Tapley stated on March 16<sup>th</sup> the National Guard Troop in Forsyth will be deployed and he is asking everyone to line the streets in support.

Chairman Tapley reminded everyone of the Forsythia Festival this coming up weekend.

**Executive Session**

There was no executive session.

**Action from Executive Session.**

There was no executive session, therefore no action.

**Adjourn**

Commissioner Emami motioned to adjourn at 7:41

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and the motion passed 5-0.

Respectively Submitted by:

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MCBOC draft Minutes of March 05, 2024, meeting  
MCBOC approved.  
Janet Abbott, County Clerk