

June 26, 2007  
Statesboro, GA

**CALLED MEETING**

The Board met at 8:30 a.m. in the Community Room of the North Main Annex. Chairman Nevil welcomed the guests and called the meeting to order. Commissioner Simmons gave the invocation and the pledge of allegiance.

Ms. Evelyn Wilson, Clerk of the Board, performed the roll call of commissioners and staff. The following commissioners and staff were present: Chairman Nevil, Commissioner Jackson, Commissioner Simmons, Commissioner Tankersley, Commissioner Gibson, Commissioner Thompson, Commissioner Rushing, County Manager Tom Couch and Staff Attorney Jeff Akins.

Chairman Nevil asked for changes or modification before approval of the General Agenda. Commissioner Tankersley offered a motion to approve the General Agenda as printed. Commissioner Jackson seconded the motion and it carried, unanimously.

The first item of business was discussion and/or action to accept the lowest bid for a tractor from Jenkins Tractor in the amount of \$21, 275. Chairman Nevil asked Mr. Couch to lead this discussion. Mr. Couch commented that this item was deferred from the last meeting and referenced memorandums from Mr. Smith and Mr. Akins regarding the bid. The staff would recommend accepting the lowest bid based on Mr. Akins' memo to maintain the integrity of the purchasing policy and in consideration of the fact that there are no known vendor issues with Jenkins Tractor. Commissioner Rushing said he understood from Mr. Akins' memo that the Board could reject any or all bids. He commented that a \$1250 difference between a John Deere tractor and a Kubota is not a significant savings when considering doing business with a local vendor and the local vendor providing parts for maintenance and the difference in trade-in values. Commissioner Thompson commented that even if the 3% local vendor status is applied, the bid is still \$600 higher than the Kubota. A company submitting the lowest price should get the bid unless there is a reason to disqualify the bid. Unless it can be proved that the Kubota is inferior to the John Deere from a mechanical standpoint what type of message is being sent to bidders in Bulloch County. Chairman Nevil said he had no allegiance toward Kubota or John Deere, but the larger equipment that Kubota is now

making has not yet been proven that it will be as good as other makes of this size tractor. He would be skeptical of trying something that is not yet proven. The market has proved that John Deere has a higher resale value than other tractors of this type. Mr. Akins said the specifications do allow for some flexibility, but there needs to be an objective determination with some objective basis to make that determination. There was some discussion about the cost of out of town services or repairs, warranties and other considerations. Mr. Couch remarked that if there is some uncertainty, references could be requested, the availability of parts and service could be checked and perhaps some demonstrations could be given. It might be worthwhile to go through this exercise, which shouldn't compromise the integrity of the bid process, to give the bases for making the decision based on objective factors. Mr. Couch suggested that Purchasing Department and Mr. Smith go over the bid documents again and call references, check warranty information and other information and bring back objective factors for making a determination that John Deere would be the best value for the county. Commissioner Gibson offered a motion to table the bid award on the tractor until the next meeting. Commissioner Rushing seconded the motion and it carried, unanimously.

The next item for discussion and/or action was a bid award to Riggs Pharmacy for inmate drugs. Chairman Nevil asked Mr. Couch to present this item. Mr. Couch reviewed the bid report and said the recommendation is for the bid award to go to Riggs Pharmacy based on the analyses of the use of inmate drugs. Commissioner Simmons offered a motion to accept the bid for inmate drugs from Riggs Pharmacy. Commissioner Tankersley seconded the motion and it carried, unanimously.

The next item was appointments for the Development Authority of Bulloch County. Chairman Nevil asked Mr. Couch to present this item. Mr. Couch advised the Development Authority has three terms expiring and has submitted the names of Devra Walker, Paul Roesel and Billy Allen for reappointment. Commissioner Simmons offered a motion to reappoint Devra Walker, Paul Roesel and Billy Allen to the Development Authority of Bulloch County. Commissioner Jackson seconded the motion and it carried, unanimously.

The next item was discussion to consider the proposal for the Splash in the 'Boro audit. Chairman Nevil asked Mr. Couch to lead this discussion. Mr. Couch referenced

the bid document and proposals for the audit and his memorandum giving his recommendation. His recommendation was the firm of Mauldin and Jenkins with a condition to lower the overall cost by negotiating out a couple of extreme elements. Commissioner Rushing said he had a conversation with a CPA who has considerable auditing experience and his opinion was that one of the bids was about as ridiculous as the other one. He said the bid from Mauldin & Jenkins was more than the entire county audit had been in the past and the other bid was so low that all the county would get would be some paper shuffling to meet a requirement. Commissioner Rushing stated there was something wrong with these two bids and the CPA had recommended rejecting all the bids and re-bid the audit. Commissioner Jackson asked what would be the effect of delaying the bid. Mr. Couch explained the water park will close the major part of operations in August and a similar bid solicitation would take a little longer than thirty days. He said he could adjust the scope of work with some provisions for a cap of \$20,000 and request formal quotes. He said that Mauldin and Jenkins projected 220 hours of work and Richard Deal projected 76 hours of work but he thinks it probably could be done in about 150 hours. Commissioner Thompson said he had confidence in the local firms in Bulloch County and there are major rate differences between the two firms. He said the county audit begins in August and why not hire the local firm to do the work if they stated that they can perform the work and if additional time is needed, then negotiate it with them. Mr. Couch said if the bid is awarded to the firm of Thigpen, Lanier, Westerfield and Deal, he would like to negotiate a specific letter of procedures that may or may not adjust the price. Commissioner Thompson offered a motion to accept the low bid from Thigpen, Lanier, Westerfield and Deal for the Splash in the 'Boro. Commissioner Rushing seconded the motion and it carried, unanimously.

The next item was the discussion and/or action to adopt a resolution approving the fiscal year 2008 general appropriations budget. Chairman Nevil asked Mr. Couch to present this item. Mr. Couch submitted a final appropriation budget of \$57,755,938 with the general fund budget being \$28,908,200. He recommended a general fund tax levy of 10.3 mils. This 1.75 mil increase needs to remain intact to maintain the level of reserve stabilization and to improve the future operation position of the county. He reminded everyone that this budget helps improve the county's operation position and

gives the county the ability to continue to operate at the level of service demanded by Bulloch County citizens. He referenced the budget for the Fire Tax District and said there are three categories that impact the proposed millage rate for the Fire Tax District. He discussed the method of calculation for funding of the Fire District based on the tax digest values proposed by the City of Statesboro and said other factors have to be considered. He said he didn't believe the tax digest should be the sole factor in considering the funding for the Fire Tax District. A meeting is needed with the City of Statesboro to find a equity solution that is fair to the City and the taxpayers in the Fire District. Commissioner Tankersley offered a motion to adopt the resolution approving the fiscal year 2008 general appropriations budget. Commissioner Simmons seconded the motion and it carried, unanimously. See exhibit #2007-63.

Commissioner Thompson commented that a statement was made in the Public Hearing that the tax increase will solve the budget problem for a period of time barring any unforeseen circumstances. Mr. Couch said that if all variables hold constant and the departments use due diligence in managing their budgets and depending on the operation of the jail expansion, this level of funding will sustain the budget for at least three years. Chairman Nevil commented that no one can look into the future, but in looking back at the last several years, the facts are that the county's expenses have grown faster than the revenues even though the county has made budget cuts. He said the county will continue to operate as efficient as possible.

Chairman Nevil asked for other business or comments. Commissioner Simmons offered a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Gibson seconded the motion and it carried, unanimously.