

February 23, 2010
Statesboro, GA

Workshop

The Board of Commissioners met for a Workshop at 8:30 a.m. in the Community Room of the North Main Annex.

Commissioners present: Chairman Nevil, Commissioner Tankersley (arrived at 9:00 a.m.), Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Thompson, and Commissioner Gibson.

Staff present: County Manager Thomas Couch, Recording Secretary and Human Resource Director Heather McNeal, Planning and Zoning Development Director Andy Welch, and Statesboro Bulloch County Parks and Recreation Director Mike Rollins.

Chairman Nevil called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM and gave an invocation. The first item of business was the approval of the Workshop Agenda. County Manager Thomas Couch asked to address the Board, and requested to modify the agenda by adding an item to discuss an issue related to a building leased by Pegasus Air at the Statesboro-Bulloch County Airport to be placed as the first item of business on the Agenda. Commissioner Gibson offered a motion to modify the agenda by adding an item to discuss an issue related to a building leased by Pegasus Air at the Statesboro-Bulloch County Airport to be placed as the first item of business on the Agenda. Commissioner Rushing seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

For the first item of business, Chairman Nevil yielded the floor to Mr. Couch for his presentation regarding Pegasus Air. Mr. Couch informed the Board that the Pegasus building has been in disrepair for some time and that the Airport Committee has been seeking alternatives including construction of a new building. Mr. Couch asked Mr. Ellis Wood, Chairman of the Airport Committee, to speak further on the topic. Mr. Wood reviewed specific information regarding the structural problems, and stated that because of the age of the building, renovation was infeasible. Mr. Wood also added that as a flight training center, Pegasus requires certification of the facility by the Federal Aviation Administration for compliance with ordinary life safety codes and general suitability. Mr. Wood stated that Pegasus is now at jeopardy with certification given the current condition of the building. Mr. Wood presented information on the economic impact of

Pegasus to the community and the Airport. County Manager Couch briefed the Board on a funding plan that considers a possible low-interest loan with the One Georgia Authority or a suitable financial institution for up to \$400,000 for a new facility. Mr. Couch asked for authorization to prepare a scope of work and seek a Request for Qualifications for architectural design. Without further discussion, Commissioner Thompson offered a motion to authorize the initial scoping and preparation of a request for qualifications for design services for Pegasus Air at the Bulloch County Airport. Commissioner Gibson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

For the second item of business, Chairman Nevil yielded the floor to Mr. Couch for his presentation regarding improvements to the Main Annex building. Mr. Couch advised the Board that they were welcome to attend a staff meeting regarding proposed re-carpeting and painting of the facility that was approved as a project in the Capital Improvements Budget. Mr. Couch emphasized that the meeting will be important to ensure that the project will be compatible with the building architecture and that Commissioner input will be important. No formal action was taken.

For the third item of business, Chairman Nevil yielded the floor to Mr. Couch for his presentation regarding the County's purchasing policies. Mr. Couch advised the Board that previous Board discussions demanded that consideration be given to change the purchasing policies with regard to the local buyer's preference for items over \$5,000, a local vendor, if not the lowest bid is given the opportunity to match the lowest bid from an out-of-county vendor, provided that the local vendor is within three percent of the lowest bid price. Mr. Couch provided data from an array of policies used by various Georgia cities and counties. Mr. Couch urged the Board to consider what defines a local vendor or a principal business location within the current county policies upon giving some examples. After considerable deliberation, the Board consensus was to direct the County Manager to develop policies, with any formal action as necessary to be taken at a later date, that increased the bid matching threshold for local vendors to five percent for all purchases, and to define a local vendor as one possessing an occupational tax certificate within any city or the unincorporated area of Bulloch County, acknowledging that the Commissioners would need to adopt an Occupational Tax Code. No formal action was taken.

For the fourth item of business, Chairman Nevil yielded the floor to the Mr. Couch for his presentation regarding the business licensing, also known as Occupational Taxes. Mr. Couch provided data on the proposed codification and revenue structure of business licensing, recommending that the revenue structure should mimic the City of Statesboro's for seamlessness. Mr. Couch further acknowledged that the Board may want to be sensitive to the economy and perhaps defer using the employee method for revenue collection, in favor of mimicking Statesboro's \$25 fee and \$75 flat tax rate. After considerable deliberation, Commissioner Thompson offered a motion to direct the County Manager to proceed with developing an occupational tax ordinance where the cost of the certificate would be \$125 per business. Commissioner Tankersley seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

For the fifth item of Business, Chairman Nevil yielded the floor to the Mr. Couch for his presentation regarding the Fiscal Year 2011 budget and economic outlook. Mr. Couch presented the economic outlook first, providing a summary of forecasts for the nation, state and region from top economists, discussing business growth, employment, income, inflation, monetary issues and analysis of certain economic sectors. Mr. Couch stated that it appears that Bulloch County will not necessarily perform better than the state or nation, but that the community was not as severely affected by the recession as in other places. Mr. Couch theorized that Bulloch County will not see a visible recovery until the third or fourth quarter of 2010, but warned that conditions exist nation-wide where a "double-dip" recession could occur. Mr. Couch further explained that these effects on the County's budget pertain to difficulties in projecting revenues, but, that when final revenue estimates are completed; an overall flat-lining from FY 2010 levels is expected. Mr. Couch further explained that the County has had excellent cost control mechanisms currently in place that every department has adhered to without compliant, allowing the county to meet short-term targets for stabilizing its fund reserve. Mr. Couch also discussed the budget approach for the upcoming year, recommending that the County maintains its core service priorities and to continue with the baseline budgeting method. Mr. Couch concluded that the Board may need to be prepared to say "hold the line," with minor exceptions, depending on the progression of the economy.

For the sixth item of Business, Chairman Nevil yielded the floor to the Mr. Couch for his presentation regarding the regarding the Coastal Regional Commission's public transit proposal. Commissioner Thompson indicated that he had been contacted by an individual whose company provided transit services in another part of the state, where they claimed that they could provided the service to Bulloch County for \$1, versus the approximate \$10,000-\$20,000 proposed by the Regional Commission. Commissioner Thompson further indicated that he would like to contact this individual and asked that the County Manager try to get some background information on the company. Meanwhile, Chairman Nevil discussed the merits of public transit in general and stated that at the current time there appears to be a good opportunity to gain entry into public transit in a cost effective manner, acknowledging that the Regional Commission has the only legitimate at this time. Upon further deliberation and discussion, no action was taken, but, the consensus was to continue discussion and consideration for action at the following Board meeting.

For the final item of business, Chairman Nevil yielded the floor to Mr. Couch for his presentation regarding the potential restructuring of the Finance Department and introducing Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) county-wide. Mr. Couch deferred to Chief Financial Officer Harry Starling, and Mr. Starling explained that since he began working with the County two years ago, there have been current inefficiencies regarding financial management methods that need to be corrected. Mr. Starling requested that he and the County Manager be given that latitude to further examine these issues with specific focus on ERP. Mr. Starling continued by stating that ERP is a concept that links information technology improvements with broader work processes to streamline efficiencies that are currently absent. Mr. Couch stated that there may have to be some restructuring or reassignment of employee responsibilities to accomplish the goals of ERP successfully. After considerable deliberation, the Board consensus was to direct the Chief Financial Officer and the County Manager to develop an ERP, with any formal action as necessary to be taken at a later date.

Having no further items of business, Chairman Nevil asked if the Board or staff had any other comments. Hearing none, Commissioner Rushing offered a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

The Board adjourned the Workshop at 11:35 A.M.

J. Garrett Nevil, Chairman

Attest: Maggie Fitzgerald, Clerk of the Board