

February 14, 2012
Statesboro, GA

Workshop

The Board of Commissioners met for a Workshop at 8:15 a.m. in the Community Room of the North Main Annex.

The following commissioners were present: Chairman Nevil, Vice Chairman Ethridge, Commissioner Mosley, Commissioner Rushing (left at 9:15 a.m.), Commissioner Thompson, and Commissioner Gibson. The following staff were present: County Manager Thomas Couch, Clerk of the Board Maggie Fitzgerald, Statesboro Bulloch County Parks and Recreation Director Mike Rollins, Chief Financial Officer Harry Starling, Public Safety Director Ted Wynn, Fire Chief Randy Walker, E-911 Director Kelly Barnard, Human Resources Director Karen Grabenstein, Area Road Superintendent Mike Boyett, County Engineer Kirk Tatum, Tax Commissioner James Deal, Probation Director Christi Black, Elections Supervisor Pat Lanier Jones, Deputy Chief Tax Appraiser Ronny Newton, EMS Director Lee Eckles, Public Facilities and Environmental Management Director Bob Smith, and Development Services Director Andy Welch.

Chairman Nevil called the Workshop to order, welcomed the Staff, and called on County Manager Thomas Couch for the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance. After the Invocation and Pledge, Chairman Nevil asked for amendments or modifications of the General Agenda. Hearing no amendments or modifications, Commissioner Gibson offered a motion to approve the General Agenda as presented. Commissioner Ethridge seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Chairman Nevil stated that the first item of Business was a Presentation on Strategic Issues, and called on County Manager Thomas Couch to proceed with the Presentation. Using a Power Point slide show, Mr. Couch discussed the purpose of the Workshop, direct services provided by the Board of Commissioners, the roles of other County (Constitutional and Statutory) Elected Officers, the growth of Bulloch County, future land use, current perspective, major accomplishments and milestones, community overview, organizational assessment: governance, organizational assessment: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, future needs regarding short-term issues (1-3

years) in terms of an operating model, capital investment model, and service delivery model, future needs regarding long-term (3-10 years) issues, and the goals grid. After Mr. Couch's Presentation, Chairman Nevil called for a ten minute recess.

After the recess, Chairman Nevil called the meeting back to order, and turned the meeting over to Mr. Couch and the panel of Department Heads to discuss technology issues. Mr. Couch discussed the possibility of using Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funds to pay for technology capital. Public Safety Director Ted Wynn discussed how IT is currently being handled in his departments, and stated that he supports hiring IT Staff. Mr. Wynn also discussed the recently updated reverse 911 program. Development Services Director Andy Welch discussed how having an IT Staff would save time for employees who are currently handling their own IT issues, the services that need to be offered on the County website, statics regarding the new website, the possibility of creating mobile applications for County use, record and document scanning, and going paperless. Statesboro Bulloch County Parks and Recreation Director Mike Rollins discussed possible online services that would benefit the Recreation Department, including a streamlined registration service that would allow citizens to register for activities online, and also discussed the possibility of a planned approach for purchasing technology equipment. Human Resources Director Karen Grabenstein discussed paperless personnel records, using the intranet for personnel forms, and possible time accounting systems for employees. Chief Financial Officer Harry Starling discussed automated time and attendance systems, updating the County's financial software, re-wiring the building, and the possibility of electronic checks. Tax Commissioner James Deal stated that TBS handles property tax software, and that the vendors used for his software do an excellent job. In conclusion of the technology issues panel, Mr. Couch stated that the County needs to consider hiring a consultant in order to get a clear understanding of how to proceed with hiring an IT Staff. After further discussion, Chairman Nevil called for a ten minute recess.

After the recess, Chairman Nevil called the meeting back to order, and turned the meeting over to Mr. Couch and the panel of Department Heads to discuss personnel issues. Deputy Chief Tax Appraiser Ronny Newton, who also serves as President of the Employee Committee, stated that the three main concerns of the committee are

retirement, health insurance, and the pay plan. Human Resources Director Karen Grabenstein stated that she keeps a list of employee grievances and also surveyed other counties, and that the main grievances for Bulloch County and other counties in Georgia are as follows: (1) retirement plans, (2) health insurance and wellness programs, and (3) pay. Statesboro Bulloch County Parks and Recreation Director Mike Rollins discussed the importance of merit increases versus cost of living adjustments, and stated that merit increases are the best way to reward employees. Mr. Rollins also discussed wellness programs and rewarding employees who implement cost saving measures. Public Safety Director Ted Wynn stated that his departments have not seen much employee turnover, but he is concerned that trained employees will leave once the economy improves for higher paying jobs. County Manager Thomas Couch stated that morale is good even though there is economic fatigue, and that the economy has changed retirement and pay for employees. Mr. Couch also stated that the Retirement Committee continues to work on a solution to improve the County's retirement plan.

After further discussion from the Board, Chairman Nevil called for Comments from the Board or Staff. EMS Director Lee Eckles discussed the critical mass situation and delayed response times at EMS due to the lack of personnel, equipment, and substations. Mr. Couch discussed changes to the upcoming budget survey.

Chairman Nevil asked for further questions or comments from the Board. Hearing none, Chairman Nevil called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Ethridge offered a motion to adjourn the Workshop. Commissioner Mosley seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

J. Garrett Nevil, Chairman

Attest: Maggie Fitzgerald, Clerk of the Board