

November 4, 2014
Statesboro, GA

Workshop

The Board of Commissioners met at 3:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the North Main Annex. Vice-Chairman Anthony Simmons welcomed guests and the media.

The following Commissioners were present: Vice-Chairman Anthony Simmons, Commissioner Ray Mosley, Commissioner Carolyn Ethridge, Commissioner Robert Rushing, Commissioner Walter Gibson, and Commissioner Roy Thompson. The following staff were present: County Manager Thomas Couch, County Attorney Jeff Akins, Developmental Services Director Andy Welch, Interim Chief Financial Officer Whitney Richland, Public Safety Director Ted Wynn, Area Road Superintendent Mike Boyett, Area Road Superintendent Fred White, Area Road Superintendent Therman Fail, Transportation Director Hermon "Dink" Butler, County Engineer Kirk Tatum, and Human Resources Director Maggie Porter.

Vice-Chairman Simmons called the meeting to order and deferred to the County Manager to immediately proceed with the Workshop. County Manager Thomas Couch led the Board of Commissioners through a lengthy Power Point presentation (See Exhibit #2014-183) regarding issues with transportation, roads and bridges. The purpose of the presentation was to update the Board on broader topics and issues, the current status of the county's 2020 Transportation Improvement Plan, and its different segments and categories. Mr. Couch presented issues on future funding and the impact of stagnating sales taxes collections. This was followed by an update and the following categorical project areas: 1) economic development road projects at I-16/US 301 and Gateway Industrial Park; 2) network and neighborhood resurfacing progress; 3) the need to accelerate safety striping and bridge rehabilitation work; 4) projects in the southeast quadrant south of Statesboro (including resurfacing and intersection projects); and dirt road maintenance and equipment needs.

The final categorical project area that required substantive discussion was dirt road paving. Mr. Couch presented a list of eleven candidate roads (See Exhibit #2014-184), consisting of 11.73 miles of roadway, which have had some level of petitioning or right-of-way acquisition activity. Mr. Couch further explained that only two of the

eleven candidate roads are ready for county force work and eventual paving, but that the remaining roads were not ready for varying reasons. Mr. Couch further explained that many of these candidate roads lack connectivity between existing paved roads which creates adverse issues when partially paved. Finally, Mr. Couch emphasized that the amount of funding available through Fiscal Year 2020, to which the current Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax period is funded, would only permit approximately five-to-seven miles of dirt roads to be paved unless funds were shifted from elsewhere. This stresses the importance of selecting a rationale or method to select dirt roads to pave, whether it is by objective rating, first come-first-serve with right-of-way donations, or by other means. He also pointed out that regardless of which dirt roads are ready or not ready to pave, the Board of Commissioners have not authorized the paving of any other dirt roads other than Horace Mitchell Road, which is nearing completion.

Led by Commissioner Ethridge, several commissioners asked to have additional information on precisely what percentage of property owners on fully petitioned dirt roads (fully petitioned is 100% of all property owners along the road) have submitted right-of-way deed donations. Mr. Couch pledged to bring this information to the next regular meeting to continue the discussion so that the Commissioners could expedite some decisions on new project authorization.

After further discussion, Vice-Chairman Simmons called for a 30 minute recess.

Anthony Simmons, Vice-Chairman

Attest: Thomas M. Couch, County Manager