

March 17, 2015
Statesboro, GA

Regular Meeting

The Board of Commissioners met at 8:30am in the Community Room of the North Main Annex. Chairman Nevil welcomed guests and called the meeting to order. County Manager Tom Couch gave the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Olympia Gaines, Clerk of the Board, performed the roll call of the commissioners and staff. The following commissioners were present: Chairman Nevil, Commissioner Gibson, Commissioner Thompson, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Mosley, Commissioner Simmons, and Commissioner Ethridge. The following staff was present: County Manager Tom Couch, County Attorney Jeff Akins, Assistant County Manager Andy Welch, Chief Financial Officer Whitney Richland, Public Safety Director Ted Wynn, Statesboro Bulloch County Parks and Recreation Director Mike Rollins, Purchasing Manager Faye Bragg, Chief Accountant Kristie King, Management Analyst Cindy Steinmann, Solid Waste Director Fred White, County Engineer Kirk Tatum, Transportation Director Dink Butler, and Tax Commissioner James Deal.

After Roll Call, Chairman Nevil asked for changes or modifications of the General Agenda. Mr. Couch asked to modify the agenda by adding an Executive Session after Commissioners and Staff comments for the purpose of discussing or deliberating on a personnel matter as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(2). Commissioner Gibson offered a motion to approve the General Agenda with the modification. Commissioner Mosley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously with Commissioner Gibson, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Thompson, Commissioner Mosley, Commissioner Simmons, and Commissioner Ethridge voting in favor of the motion.

Chairman Nevil asked for public comments from the audience at large or in writing. Hearing none, he stated the next item on the agenda was a presentation by the Statesboro Development Authority on City Tax Allocation Districts. Mr. Jonathan Gelber, Senior Consultant with Bleakly Advisory Group, explained that the City of Statesboro had approved a City of Statesboro Tax Allocation District (TAD) #1 (South

Main Redevelopment) in December 2014 and is asking the County to participate with the City of Statesboro in the TAD by pledging property tax increments from properties in the TAD in order to attract new development to downtown Statesboro.

He stated the South Main TAD Boundary includes 630 parcels with 899 acres. Mr. Gelber reported that in 2014 the property included in the TAD had a taxable value of \$35.9 million, which was 2.1 % of the value of Bulloch County's tax digest. He stated the main goals included the following: (1) to upgrade and enhance the South Main Street corridor; (2) to encourage the private redevelopment of outmoded, highway-oriented commercial development into pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use centers; and (3) to achieve the vision set forth in the 2011 Statesboro Downtown Master Plan and 2009 and 2014 Comprehensive Plans.

Mr. Gelber reviewed potential benefits from the TAD to include: (1) an improved gateway into downtown Statesboro; (2) implementation of the "Blue Mile" concept of streetscape, sidewalk and civic enhancement; (3) improved transportation infrastructure, sidewalks, and streetscapes; (4) enhanced quality of life for residents, workers, visitors, and students; (5) increased opportunities for economic activity within Statesboro and Bulloch County; (6) improved housing options, commercial buildings and public space; (7) redevelopment of blighted and vacant structures; (8) higher property values and property tax revenues for Statesboro, Bulloch County and Bulloch County Schools; (9) increased sales taxes (LOST, SPLOST, and E-SPLOST), and increased retail activity.

He stated that the County will continue to receive funds from current property tax revenue from properties within the TAD and TAD spending will catalyze new investment in the TAD area resulting in an estimated increase of 5%-10% per year versus current annual growth of 3%. Mr. Gelber stated funds received from current property tax revenues will continue to flow to the County's General Fund. Revenue received from incremental property taxes from new development and future growth inside the TAD District will flow to the TAD and can be used to pay for public projects within the TAD district either directly or with leveraged financing. Chairman Nevil asked if the growth period was between 10-25 years. Mr. Gelber stated they have authorized it up to 25 years, but that typically, depending upon the growth, you terminate the TAD sooner than 25 years. Mr. Couch asked what assumptions have been made about where the

development will occur in the TAD area over the next 5-10 years. Mr. Gelber stated they looked at the Downtown Redevelopment Plan and took a closer look at properties with a high vacancy rate or that had redevelopment potential. He stated they found seven areas where there could be redevelopment based on the demand estimates. Chairman Nevil thanked Mr. Gelber for his presentation.

Chairman Nevil stated the next item on the agenda was a presentation on the FY 2014 audit by Mr. Richard Deal of the accounting firm of Thigpen, Lanier, Westerfield & Deal. Mr. Deal briefly discussed the financial highlights and recommendations of the FY 2014 audit.

Chairman Nevil stated the next item on the agenda was a FY 2016 Budget Orientation by Mr. Couch. Mr. Couch stated the unreserved fund balance in the general fund is currently just under \$4.9 million and has dropped from \$7.9 million four years ago. Mr. Couch explained that this decrease in the fund balance may create problems with cash flow in the earlier part of the fiscal year, particularly in the fall before the collection of property taxes. He stated there is a chance to close with a balanced budget for FY 2015, but the County will need a soft landing in terms of expenditures, and this has to be conveyed to the various departments.

Mr. Couch stated some of the structural budget issues and challenges, such as the constriction of sale tax revenues, don't allow the County to complete some of the initiatives the County wants to undertake to help lower operating costs. Those constrictions further challenge the County's ability to meet its needs as well as to replenish capital stock and meet the needs of infrastructure. Demands for services continue to rise, but revenues are not keeping up to meet those demands for services. Also as a result of the demand for services, the County will need to deal with potential labor cost issues. Mr. Couch estimated that there are about six internal departments that will need employees to meet the demand for services. He stated in the future, the County will need to go to a performance-based approach in regards to pay in order to create an environment where the County is competitive, but he also does not want to reward mediocre employees.

Mr. Couch stated they are considering some changes in fund accounting and budgeting. One change included creating a fund for services provided for the

unincorporated residents. Another example would be to bring the recreation fund activities into the general fund. He proposed having each agency and department come before the Board to discuss both revenue and expenditure items in their budgets.

Chairman Nevil thanked Mr. Couch for his presentation and stated the next item on the agenda was to approve the Consent Agenda as follows: (1) approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting held on March 3, 2015; (2) approve an alcohol beverage license for package retail beer and wine sales to Saishri Inc (Himanshu and Avenika Patel) for Chevron Food Mart located at 9651 Highway 301 South (See Exhibit #2015-022); (3) approve purchase of five new 30 yard capacity roll off containers from Lewis Steel Inc. per bid specifications and results (See Exhibit #2015-023); (4) approve sealed bid package of \$11,412 to Whitfield Signs for LED message sign board at Mill Creek Park (See Exhibit #2015-024). Without further discussion, Commissioner Thompson offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Gibson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously with Commissioner Gibson, Commissioner Thompson, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Mosley, Commissioner Simmons, and Commissioner Ethridge all voting in favor of the motion.

With no items of Old or Unfinished Business, Chairman Nevil stated that the first item of New Business was the discussion and/or action to approve a contract with Peek Pavement Marking, LLC for \$124,750 for re-striping on approximately 92 miles of various county roads. Commissioner Gibson offered a motion to approve a contract with Peek Pavement Marking, LLC for \$124,750 for re-striping on approximately 92 miles of various county roads (See Exhibit #2015-025). Commissioner Ethridge seconded the motion and it carried unanimously with Commissioner Gibson, Commissioner Thompson, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Mosley, Commissioner Simmons, and Commissioner Ethridge all voting in favor of the motion.

Chairman Nevil called for general comments or statements from the commissioners and staff. The commissioners thanked everyone for their attendance, thanked staff for all their hard work, thanked Mr. Gelber, Mr. Deal, and Mr. Couch for their presentations, and thanked Mrs. Richland and the finance department for their hard work and dedication in ensuring the integrity of the financial process for the County. Mr. Couch congratulated Commissioner Gibson on his new grandchild and Commissioner

Thompson on his 47th wedding anniversary. Mrs. Gaines reminded commissioners of the upcoming event with Archie Manning and to RSVP if attending. Mrs. Richland thanked everyone for their support, and she stated she as well as other members of the finance department are available to answer any questions if needed.

Hearing no further comments from the Board or Staff, Chairman Nevil stated that there was no further business expected for the open session of the regular agenda and the Board must close the meeting and enter into Executive Session to discuss Personnel Matters. Chairman Nevil called for a motion to adjourn into Executive Session in accordance with the provisions of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3 (b) (2) and other applicable laws, pursuant to the advice of County Attorney Jeff Akins, for the purpose of discussing and deliberating on Personnel Matters. Without further discussion, Commissioner Ethridge offered a motion to adjourn and enter into Executive Session to discuss and deliberate on Personnel Matters (See Exhibit #2015-026). Commissioner Mosley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously with Commissioner Gibson, Commissioner Thompson, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Simmons, Commissioner Mosley and Commissioner Ethridge voting in favor of the motion.

The meeting was reconvened, and Chairman Nevil asked if there were any further comments from the commissioners or staff. Hearing no further comments from the commissioners or staff, Chairman Nevil asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Simons offered a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Mosley seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously with Commissioner Gibson, Commissioner Thompson, Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Simmons, Commissioner Mosley and Commissioner Ethridge voting in favor of the motion.

J. Garrett Nevil, Chairman

Attest: _____

Olympia Gaines, Clerk of the Board

