

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Monthly Work Session and Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday, March 5, 2018 at 5:00 p.m., in the Commissioners Meeting Room located at the Brooks County Office Building. Commissioners present were: Ms. Myra Exum, Chairperson; Mr. Joe Wingate, Vice Chairman; Mr. Willie Cody; Mr. S. L. Jones; and Mr. James Maxwell. Others present were: Mr. Justin DeVane, County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Mr. Vann Parrott; County Attorney; and various residents.

**PUBLIC HEARING – NONE**

**WORK SESSION** – Chair Exum called Work Session to order.

**Reports from Committees/Departments**

**A. JJ Allen – Road Superintendent** – New Road Superintendent presented report to Board:

- Installing driveways, mowing side roads; and has started grading and cleaning roads at same time.
- Has started a 2-way grading operation by placing younger employees with older veteran employees.
- Will be placing two men on 911 calls instead of one.
- The moral is changing, there are signs of more interest in their job.
- Mr. Allen asked the Board to consider purchases for the department; they are in need of trucks; tractor; and radios for communication.
- Asked the Board to re-evaluate the cost of putting in driveways/culverts, the County losing money on these installations due to the rising cost of materials.

**B. Stephanie Hollifield – UGA Extension** – Presented updates for February:

- Provided agronomic education programs for Brooks County producers. February 1<sup>st</sup>, Vegetable Production meeting was held.
- February 7<sup>th</sup>, Brooks County Extension Cotton Production meeting was held; attended by 61 cotton producers.
- On February 8<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Mark Abney, UGA Peanut Specialist, visited three local peanut producers.
- Assisted Brooks County Pork Producers with annual Pork Producer Hog Show; assisting with set up, weighing in of pigs; and show clean up.
- Angela Wild, part-time 4-H County Program Assistant, worked weekly with Cloverleaf DPA participants in preparation for March PDA competition.

**C. Ben DeVane – County Surveyor/Engineer** – not present

Chair closed Work Session to go into the Regular Meeting at 5:24 p.m.

**1. Call to Order** – Ms. Exum called meeting to order.

**A. Prayer & Pledge** – Pastor Jim Pitts, Morven Baptist Church, led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

**A. March 5, 2018 Regular Monthly Meeting** – Mr. Wingate made a motion to approve the agenda Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

On a motion by Mr. Cody, seconded by Mr. Wingate, the Board unanimously approved the following minutes:

A. Work Session, Regular Meeting February 5, 2018

**4. Appearances**

**A. Syreeta Brown – Use of Facilities Request (Courthouse Grounds)** - Administrator received a request from the Ms. Syreeta Brown for permission to host a Kidney awareness Event on March 17 from 7am – 12 pm. The event is to raise awareness about kidney health and function and prior events have been approved by the Board in the past. Mr. Cody made motion to approve use of Courthouse Grounds to host a Kidney Awareness Event from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on March 17, 2018; seconded by Mr. Maxwell. Vote was unanimous.

**B. Laymen’s Group – Use of Facilities Request (Courthouse Grounds)** - Administrator received a request from the Commissioner Willie Cody on behalf of the Brooks County Laymen’s Group to host their annual Battle of the Grills / Car show event on April 7<sup>th</sup>. This event has been approved by the Board in the past. The request of the Brooks County Laymen’s Group to host their annual Battle of the Grills/Car Show Event on April 7, 2018 was approved with the motion by Mr. Maxwell; and seconded by Mr. Cody. Vote was unanimous.

**C. David Monds – Concerns about DeVane Road** – Mr. Monds was not present. This item was omitted from agenda. Mr. Monds came into Administration office and spoke with Mr. DeVane and addressed his concerns.

**D. Mattie Neloms – Use of Facilities Request (Courthouse Grounds)** - Ms. Mattie Neloms submitted a request to use the Courthouse Grounds on April 4<sup>th</sup> and April 14<sup>th</sup> for an event to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Death. She is requesting the use of the grounds on April 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m., and on the April 14<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Ms. Neloms’ request was approved to use Courthouse Grounds for celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Death on April 4<sup>th</sup> and April 14, 2017 on the motion by Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous.

## **5. New Business**

**A. Road Closure – Portion of Cullen Road** - Administrator requested the Board's consideration to officially close a portion of Cullen Road. The Road Department has no longer been maintaining the road, from best the Administrator can tell, we have not maintained the road for over 15 years. There is no official documents showing the road closed and it is still shown on the tax assessor's website as a public right-of-way. Administrator would like for the Board to consider the road portion east of Copeland Road for closure. There is one property owner that owns a majority of both sides of the road, Mr. Jack Adams, and an old one acre homestead that appears to be abandoned. Administration has not spoken to either party, but if the Board voted to proceed with the closure process, the parties would be contacted through mail. There is also one tract on the Colquitt County side, that property owner would also receive a notification, whom the Administrator has spoken to. Mr. Wingate made the motion to approve the portion of Cullen Road east of Copeland Road be abandoned and no longer serve as public need; and to begin the closure/abandon process; Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous.

**B. Elections Superintendent Position** – Administrator requested the Board's consideration for what direction it would like to take to fill the position of Elections Superintendent. After discussion, Mr. Wingate made the motion to table this item until the Board has an opportunity to speak with Mr. Charles Dave, Assistant Supervisor, Mr. Jones seconded. Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Cody opposed. Vote was tied 2 to 2. Chair Exum voted yes; and broke tie.

**C. Approval of Hazard Mitigation Contract** - Administrator received a request from the 911 Director, Mike Smith, for approval to pay the first installment of the Hazard Mitigation Plan services provided by the Regional Commission. The total cost is \$18,000.00. The invoice is for 50%, and the amount is \$9,000. Mr. Wingate made the motion to approve payment to the SGRC for \$9,000.00 for Hazard Mitigation; Mr. Jones seconded. Vote was unanimous.

**D. Proposed Opioid Litigation** - Administrator received a request from Vann Parrott, County Attorney, to address the possible Opioid Litigation that is being headed up by an area attorney that the County may have interest in. Attorney Rob Howell, Conley, Griggs, Partin, LLP appeared with Attorney Haynes Studstill of Studstill Firm, LLP, to present information to the Board. Ms. Haynes presented an Agreement for Legal Services and a Resolution. The Law Firms are authorized and instructed to pursue all civil remedies against the manufacturer and/or distributors of prescription opioids responsible for the opioid epidemic that is that is plaguing the County. The Law Firms shall receive one-third of the gross recovery or any amount the Client receives directly or indirectly. In the event nothing is recovered for this Claim, directly or indirectly, the Law Firms shall be paid nothing for services rendered for this Claim, thus, no fee if there

is no recovery. The Board will review the Agreement and Resolution, and will place it on an agenda for a later date.

**E. Parliamentary Procedure Ordinance** - Administrator received a request from Vann Parrott, County Attorney, to address the Parliamentary Procedure Ordinance as it pertains to the Chair's position when voting. County Attorney advised the Board that for future reference they need to change the ordinance so that the Chair can vote. A memo was sent out by County Attorney; but some Board members did not receive it. After discussion, on a motion by Mr. Maxwell this item was tabled until Board review the memo from County Attorney, Mr. Cody seconded.

**6. Unfinished Business - None**

**7. County Administrator Notes/Comments – None**

**8. Commissioners Notes/Comments**

**A. Joe Wingate - District 1** – Thanked Road Superintendent for inviting him to meeting. He commented that Mr. Allen is jumping in and getting started; and his requests has been heard and Board will take them in consideration.

**B. S. L. Jones, District 2** – Mentioned that he saw a side arm attached to a truck in Lowndes County.

**C. Willie Cody, District 3** – Commented to Road Superintendent to keep doing what he is doing; likes what he has heard; and pleased they are working together.

**D. Myra Exum, District 4** – Thanked Road Superintendent and wished him the best. Commented on the offices in Administration Building being painted in an effort to spruce up the building.

**E. James Maxwell, District 5** – Commented on the Forest Commission Building and possibility of purchasing the same. Also, commented on removing requirement for degree for Fire Chief position; and employees should go to Department Head not Administrator.

**9. Executive Session – None**

**10. Adjournment** - Mr. Cody made the motion to adjourn regular meeting at 6:16 p.m.; Mr. Maxwell seconded.

Ms. Myra Exum, Chair  
Mr. Justin DeVane, Administrator  
Ms. Patricia A. Williams, Clerk