

**MINUTES OF THE CRISP COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MEETING HELD ON JULY 21, 2015**

**OPENING CEREMONIES**

Chairman Clark Henderson called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with commissioners A. James Nance, Sam Farrow, and Larry Felton in attendance. Wallace Mathis was absent. Others present were County Administrator Tom Patton, County Attorney Rick Lawson, Finance Director Sherrie Leverett, and Clerk Linda Finch. Sheriff Billy Hancock gave the invocation, and Administrator Patton led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America. Chairman Henderson welcomed all in attendance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion was made by Mr. Nance to approve the June 9, 2015 regular meeting, June 23, 2015 called meeting, and July 10, 2015 called meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.**

**SHERIFF'S REPORT**

Sheriff Billy Hancock reported that in June his department served 185 warrants, 187 civil papers, and 98 subpoenas; court was in session 63.5 hours, and they had 103 prisoner court transports. In the traffic division, they wrote 856 citations with 27 coming from inside the city limits of Arabi, and 8 coming from inside the city limits of Cordele, and they worked 20 accidents. In inmate housing, they housed 2576 billable days for US Marshals, 2 days for Bureau of Prisons, 427 days for Cordele PD, 37 days for Warwick PD, and 30 days for Monroe County SO. In the Detention Center, they booked 192 prisoners, released 191 prisoners with total man hours for transports at 514. In the animal division, they picked up 92 animals, sent 83 animals to the Cordele Animal Shelter, and had 61 animal assistance calls. Sheriff Hancock advised that the last report was E-911, with total calls to Crisp County SO at 1,352, total calls to Cordele PD at 1,436, 476 calls for EMS, 53 calls for Crisp County Fire/Rescue, and 29 calls to Cordele Fire Department. He stated that they are asking for a pre-grant to Georgia Emergency Management for \$50,000, which will have a 15% cash match, or \$7,500, and he will pay this out of the drug account. This will go toward their EMA operations center so that they can work on some things in the building, like air conditioner and electronics. He also advised that they have asked to secure a grant from the USDA for a vehicle, the amount is \$34,237 and is a 100% grant; he will need a public hearing next meeting to discuss the USDA funds and to get public comments. The final thing he has is the Statewide Electronic Secondary Metals Recycler Database Agreement; it is due every year, so we will need approval from the commissioners to continue this service. He also gave Mrs. Leverett a check for \$137,415 for May US Marshall billing. He stated that they recently received a forklift from the forestry service at no charge to help move some commodities in times of storms, etc., and that the Homeland Security Director Jim Butterworth will be in Cordele in August to speak to the Lions Club, and he invited all the Commissioners to come visit with him. **Motion was made by Mr. Nance to approve the request to make grant application to the Georgia Emergency Management for operations, seconded by Mr. Farrow, motion carried unanimously. Motion was made by Mr. Nance to ratify the annual Statewide Electronic**

**Secondary Metals Recycler Database Agreement, seconded by Mr. Farrow, motion carried unanimously.**

### **APPROVE CLOSURE OF BARROW ROAD**

Carl Gamble, Public Works Director, reported that on July 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. a public hearing was held to close Barrow Road after the request of the closing by the property owners. There were two citizens present at the public hearing with no opposition to close the road. He advised that the road is approximately .2400 mile, and it will not affect the traffic patterns in the area. **Motion was made by Mr. Farrow to approve the request by the property owners and close Barrow Road, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.** Mr. Gamble advised that attorney Lawson will prepare a quit claim deed from the county, and the property owners will be responsible for all costs of the closing of this road. Chairman Henderson asked Mr. Gamble if he would give the Commissioners an update on the activity for the last month or so in his department. Mr. Gamble advised that they have drained both the water tanks for tank maintenance to make sure we have good quality water, they had a meeting concerning the Community Development Block Grant for the area around Hanna, Judy, Ruby, and Pearl Streets, the paving projects will begin on July 27<sup>th</sup>, they have received the notification from the Department of Transportation and are preparing the list for the 2016 Local Maintenance Improvement Grant, the landfill is between 65-70% complete after the NOV corrections that were received a couple of years ago from EPD, and they are waiting on information from EPD regarding the old inert landfill.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mrs. Leverett reported that the financial report for the General and three major Special Revenue Funds combined shows year to date revenues at \$15.9 million with expenditures at \$14.6 million. This leaves preliminary positive 8% revenue over expenditure balance of \$1.2 million as of June 30<sup>th</sup>. We still have several year-end accruals and other activity to post before we can present a final accounting for the fiscal year. In the Water Fund, monthly activity brings year to date numbers to \$608,154 for total revenues and \$542,270 in expenses leaving this Fund with a preliminary net income of \$65,885 for the year. Customer usage billed for the month was 9,531,000 gallons, and the USDA Bonds are current at \$1.5 million. In the Landfill Fund, we have \$1.5 million in year to date revenues; \$1.2 million in expenses, leaving the landfill fund with a preliminary net income of \$347,982 for the fiscal year. The total tonnage received for the month of June was 4708.23 tons. Approximately 45% of that was delivered under the Advanced Environmental commercial contract, 13% under the free residential City contract and 6% under the County's residential curbside contract. The GEFA Loans are current at \$3.9 million. In the cash on hand report as of June 30, 2015, we ended with \$7.6 million in the General and Special Revenue Funds combined, \$2.5 million in the proprietary funds, and \$8.2 million in the SPLOST & TSPLOST funds giving a county wide total of \$18.4 million. Over half of that balance is reserved or restricted for special projects or uses. For the 2000 SPLOST Issue, we have spent \$17.6 million, leaving us with \$763,030 to complete the various projects associated with this issue. For the 2005 SPLOST Issue, to date we have total expenditures of \$20.8 million leaving us with \$3.9 million to complete the projects included in this issue. For the 2011 SPLOST Issue, distribution no. 41, received in June representing May retail sales, in the amount of \$321,529 is down 3% from June of 2014. To date we have collected \$13.5 million in revenue under this issue and expended \$13.2 million; our monthly average is running about \$15,000 per month lower than the previous SPLOST ISSUE and just over \$2,900 per month short of what

will be needed to meet the revised Budget. If this trend continues, we will be facing additional budget revisions on this SPLOST issue by the end of the calendar year. Projects benefiting from our Special Local Option Sales Tax penny for the month of June with a total cash outlay of \$380,438 were County Buildings, Crisp County E-911, Crisp County Sheriff's Department, Crisp County Fire & Rescue, County Roads the Darton Project and the cities of Arabi and Cordele. This month's L.O.S.T. distribution of \$154,316 is also down 3% from June 2014. For the CDBG Revolving Loan Fund monthly report, we ended the month of June with a total outstanding balance of \$1.6 million for all these accounts. The final report included is the revenues by fund and expenditures by department preliminary report for the twelve-month period of July 2014 through June 2015. As of June 30th, all departments and divisions should be at or below 100% of their annual allowances. Overall, the preliminary numbers indicate the General Fund and Special Revenue Funds at 97%, the Water Fund at 94% and the Landfill Fund at 92%.

### **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Administrator Patton reported that 1) he attended several meetings and events last month; 2) the pump at Pickens Pool went out and will be replaced under warranty. Pool should be back up this week; 3) met with Advanced Disposal to discuss delinquent accounts. The number hovers around 800 consistently, about 10% of all accounts. We continue to look at possible solutions to this problem; 4) he met with Steve Rentfrow and Edward Beach to continue with the search for Bruce's replacement and reorganization of the IDA/IDC. They began interviews this week of a potential director; 5) ACCG's 2015 Legislative Leadership Conference will be October 7-9 at Jekyll Island/Glynn County; 6) he attended the coordinating meeting with county, city, and engineers for the CDBG sewer project; 7) he attended several IDA meetings to select new Attorney and discuss reorganization of the IDA/IDC; 8) Piedmont Construction Group was awarded 1<sup>st</sup> place for Darton State College Cordele Campus at the AGC build Georgia Awards Annual Convention. There will be a brief presentation of the award to Dr. Jones, Interim President of Darton State College and the Leadership of Cordele/Crisp County on July 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9:00 a.m. prior to the monthly IDC meeting in the CCPC Boardroom; and 9) ACCG 8<sup>th</sup> District Fall Meeting will be held on October 26<sup>th</sup> in Stewart County at the Florence Marina State Park.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman Henderson stated that he was going to do something he doesn't usually do but we did finish the meeting early today, and he asked if anyone in the audience would like to speak: Valencia Grant stated that she doesn't understand why the Commissioners have their meetings in the mornings when people are working, and if you don't get off of your job, you can't come and participate, and they should be able to participate without taking off of their job. Chairman Henderson stated that the meeting date and time was set many years ago, and in order to change the meeting time, we would have to ask the legislature for approval to make that change; we are not having it to avoid public participation. Willie Mae Dexter asked if the public hearings commissioners will be having is about property taxes going up, and she asked why was the property tax was going up. Commissioner Nance stated that he thought it would be appropriate for Mrs. Leverett to provide Mrs. Dexter with a breakdown of our revenues and expenditures so she can examine the line items and get a clearer understanding. Administrator Patton stated that the county has picked up about \$500,000 in unfunded mandates for things the state is not paying for anymore. An example is in the court system we now have to pay for another public defender and an investigator. Commissioner Nance also advised that one thing we have done this year is allocated funds for the IDA to help in generating jobs, as we can't just continue to go up on property

taxes all the time so we have to have some type of alternative. The philosophy is if you invest more in the IDA, they can work harder and have some money allocated to them in order to try and generate jobs; and this will offset having to go to property taxes all the time. A lot of the communities around us have already done this. Tifton is a prime example of having added some millage on their tax bill for the IDA to use in attracting businesses to their area. Debbie McEwing asked if the ½ mill for the IDA is going to be every year, and Commissioner Nance advised that it would have to be approved by the commissioners on an annual basis. She asked how much millage rate was going up, and Mrs. Leverett advised that it will be going up 1.282 over the previous year; the county's millage rate is going up .762 mills and .02 mills is because of the drop in the digest figures. Herbert Gladdin stated he knows it is a policy of a citizen being able to participate in a meeting, he understands the policy, and what that does to all citizens in the community is it puts off for thirty days their opportunity to address any issues that comes up in a meeting unless they were privy a week ahead of time to the agenda; the agenda is not published a week ahead of time. He wants to request that the Commissioners abolish this policy and establish a new policy that is more users friendly and allows them to participate in a public meeting. Chairman Henderson stated that the reason the Commission would like to know is to give Administrator Patton an opportunity to review and inform the commissioners of what is coming up, since they do not handle the day to day operations. Commissioner Nance stated it is the uniqueness of Crisp County in that we do have televised meetings, and most other communities do not have the media present at their meetings. He advised that the process of speaking at a public meeting was different in times past, and he does feel that the public should have an opportunity to participate, but this is a policy that the board has adopted, and the board could change it if they decided to vote and do so. Barbara Brysch stated that they do want public participation, you all work for us, and we all should have a say in what is going on instead of having to put our name on a list and having to wait a month to speak. Commissioner Nance stated that there is one city in Georgia that they don't allow for any public participation, and he understands that is allowable for them to do that according to the law. Commissioner Felton stated that he would like our community to participate, not just in county meetings but in the city and school board meetings as well.

#### **GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion was made by Mr. Nance to go into Executive Session to discuss potential litigation, personnel, and real estate, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried with all Commissioners agreeing to go into Executive Session.**

#### **COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion was made by Mr. Nance to come out of Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Farrow, motion carried with all Commissioners agreeing to come out of Executive Session.**

#### **AUTHORIZE CONFORMATION FOR STATE FUNDING AT THE AIRPORT**

Administrator Patton reported that the Commissioners approved the Airport Improvement Program a few months ago, and we now need to approve the conformation and formal request for state funding for the airport. **Motion was made by Mr. Nance to authorize the chairman to sign the conformation for state funding at the airport, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion was made by Mr. Nance to adjourn the meeting at 11:53 a.m., seconded by Mr. Farrow, motion carried unanimously.**

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**Clark Henderson, Chairman**

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**Tom Patton, Administrator**