

**MINUTES OF THE CRISP COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 10, 2017**

Vice-Chairman Authur James Nance called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in Room 305 of the Crisp County Government Center. Other Commissioners present were Wallace Mathis, Sam Farrow, Jr., Larry Felton, and James R. Dowdy, III. Also present were County Administrator Tom Patton, County Attorney Rick Lawson, Finance Director Sherrie Leverett, and Clerk Linda Finch. Rev. J. C. Clark gave the invocation and Administrator Patton led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America. Commissioner Nance welcomed all in attendance and new member Dowdy.

SAM FARROW, JR. APPOINTED CHAIRMAN FOR 2017

Administrator Patton called for nominations for Chairman of the Crisp County Board of Commissioners for 2017. Commissioner Mathis nominated Sam Farrow, Jr. There were no other nominations, and Commissioner Nance moved that the nominations be closed. **Administrator Patton called for the vote and Commissioner Farrow was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Crisp County Board of Commissioners for 2017.** Chairman Farrow thanked the commissioners for their vote of confidence in him and he will do his honest best to represent this board and this county to the best of his ability.

A. JAMES NANCE APPOINTED AS VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR 2017

Chairman Farrow called for nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Crisp County Board of Commissioners for 2017. Commissioner Felton nominated A. James Nance. There were no other nominations, and Chairman Farrow moved that the nominations be closed. **Chairman Farrow called for the vote and Commissioner Nance was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairman of the Crisp County Board of Commissioners for 2017.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Felton to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on December 13, 2016, seconded by Mr. Nance, motion carried unanimously.

REAPPOINT RICK LAWSON AS COUNTY ATTORNEY FOR 2017

Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to reappoint Rick Lawson as County Attorney for 2017, seconded by Mr. Nance, motion carried unanimously.

APPOINT VOTING MEMBERS TO CRISP COUNTY POWER COMMISSION

Chairman Farrow appointed himself, A. James Nance, and Wallace Mathis as voting members of the Crisp County Power Commission for a six month term ending June, 30, 2017.

APPROVE SHERIFF'S OFFICE REQUEST TO APPLY FOR COPS GRANT

Sheriff Hancock reported that the COPS Grant is for body cameras for his officers; we are in the initial phase of this, and it does not obligate the county to any money at this time, it is simply asking for permission to go forward and apply for the grant. He advised that they have researched this and they

are hoping to get about twenty-five at no cost to the county; we will need about fifty total to put body cameras on people in the detention center and road division. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis giving Sheriff Hancock permission to apply for the COPS Grant for body cameras, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.** Sheriff Hancock advised that there will be matching funds that the county will have to pay and those funds will be added to the 2017 budget. He advised that you had allowed them to apply for this grant last year, and out of the two hundred that was submitted, only four places in Georgia received any funding; this will be another long shot but we are going to try it again. Sheriff Hancock also advised that they were successful in getting funding for the Multi-Jurisdictional Task Force.

TABLE PRESENTATION OF FY 16 AUDIT REPORT

Administrator Patton reported that due to the hard copies of the audit not coming in we will need to table the FY 16 audit report presentation until the February meeting. **Motion was made by Mr. Nance to table the FY audit presentation until the February meeting, seconded by Mr. Dowdy, motion carried unanimously.** Mrs. Leverett reported that the audit is available on the county website if anyone wants to view it.

SET MEETING DATE AND APPROVE 2017 SPLOST TIMELINE

Mrs. Leverett reported that it is time for the 2017 SPLOST process to begin. Today they are asking for approval of a timeline that will be used as a working tool in preparation of the 2017 Special Local Option Sales Tax Intergovernmental Agreements and the referendum. The process will start when the commissioners approve the timeline and then formal notification to the cities within our jurisdiction that the county intends to call for a 2017 SPLOST referendum to be placed on the November General Election ballot. Hopefully the process will end with a submission of an approved referendum to the Georgia Department of Revenue. She advised that this is not a new tax but will be a continuation of our current SPLOST which expires on December 31, 2016. If approved, the new SPLOST will begin January 1, 2018 and end on December 31, 2023. The initial meeting will be February 1st if that is okay with the commissioners. **Motion was made by Mr. Dowdy to approve the 2017 SPLOST timeline, seconded by Mr. Mathis, motion carried unanimously.**

ADOPTION OF CALENDAR YEAR 2017 – FY 2018 BUDGET AND TAX DIGEST

Mrs. Leverett reported that the adoption of the calendar is a working tool for processing the FY 2018 budget and 2017 Ad Valorem Tax Digest. All the departments and division directors will receive a copy of this to make sure that everyone is aware of the state guidelines involved in both of these processes. The process actually starts this month with the distribution of FY 2018 budget request forms to all the departments, divisions, and outside agencies and it will end with the collection of the 2017 ad valorem taxes. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to adopt the FY 2018 budget and 2017 Ad Valorem Tax Digest Calendar, seconded by Mr. Nance, motion carried unanimously.**

AUTHORIZE BANKING RESOLUTION

Mrs. Leverett reported that the bank resolution is needed in order to update the signature cards on our bank accounts. She read the resolution. **Motion was made by Mr. Nance to adopt the Banking Resolution, seconded by Mr. Mathis, motion carried unanimously.**

SET STATE APPROPRIATE APPEALS HEARING OFFICER FEE

Mrs. Leverett reported that the Clerk of the Superior Court contacted her last week and advised that there is a provision in the Georgia Code that allows a taxpayer to request a property tax appeal hearing by someone other than a county Board of Equalization member. Mrs. Rogers has received a request and she states that this is the first time she has ever received a request like this. Mrs. Leverett stated that the state trains and certifies the special hearing officers, and then provides a list of the people available to the Clerk of Court's when they receive this type of an appeal hearing request. The state also requires that the Board of Commissioners must set the fee rate for these officers. She advised that through their research they could not find that the commissioners had ever set that fee rate. In order for Mrs. Rogers to complete this hearing in accordance with the code, you will need to set the fee rate. The issue with this is that the state does say that we have to set that rate at something equal or above a minimum of \$75.00 for the first hour and \$25.00 for every hour after the first hour. The person on that list who she chooses may or may not accept the minimum. We are asking today that the board set the minimum of \$75.00 for the first hour and \$25.00 for every additional hour but allow the county administrator the authority to approve anything reasonable over that on a case by case basis as recommended by the Clerk of Court. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to set the fee for the Special Hearing Officer at \$75.00 for the first hour and \$25.00 for every additional hour and give the county administrator the authority to approve anything reasonable over that on a case by case basis as recommended by the Clerk of Court, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.**

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mrs. Leverett reported that the first page included in this month's summary report begins with a preliminary report of revenues and expenditures as of 12/31/16 for the County's General and three major Special Revenue Funds. Combined, these funds are reporting year to date revenues of \$9.2 million and year to date expenditures of \$8.6 million leaving us with positive 3% revenue over expenditure balance at 12/31/16. We have received about 62% of the 2016 Ad Valorem Tax revenue projections. In the Water Fund YTD revenues are at \$360,178 and expenditures at \$236,371 giving it a net income of \$123,807. Water consumption billed for the month was 6,681,000 gallons and the USDA Bonds are current at \$1.4 million. In the Landfill Fund we are reporting accrued YTD revenue of \$838,182; year to date expenses of \$718,950 leaving a net gain of \$119,233. The total tonnage received for the month of December was 4,579.80, and the GEFA loans are current at \$3.4 million. In the cash report, the General Fund and Special Revenue Funds combined are reporting cash on hand of \$10.7 million, the proprietary funds at \$3.9 million and the SPLOST funds \$7.1 million, leaving a County Wide total at 12/31/16 of \$21.8 million. Of that amount \$7.9 million is reserved or restricted for special uses and/or projects. There was no activity to report on the 2000 SPLOST Issue; we still have just over \$100,000 to complete the final projects associated with that issue. For the 2005 SPLOST, we have \$2.3 million to complete the remaining projects as budgeted under that issue. Distribution no. 59 of the 2011 SPLOST Issue in the amount of \$305,581 is down, but by less than 1% from the December 2015 distribution. It brings issue to date collections to \$19.1 million but drops our monthly average slightly, down to \$323,635. We have a very slim margin of only \$56,184 to complete the projects remaining under this issue. Next is the detail list of all the SPLOST Expenditures for the month of December. We spent \$982,655 in total Special Local Option Sales Tax dollars during the month. Projects benefiting were, the Crisp County Airport, County Roads, County Buildings, County Fire, the Darton Project and the Cities of Cordele and Arabi. Like SPLOST, this month's LOST distribution of \$146,675 is down less than 1% from this time last year.

In the CDBG Revolving Loan Fund monthly report, we closed the FiberWorx RLF in December bringing our total number of loans to ten with an outstanding balance as of 12/31/16 to \$2,472,441. The last report included is preliminary revenue by fund and expenditures by department report. The summary report shows the expended percentage of appropriations for each individual department and the total for each fund. All expenditures should be at 50% or below. As of this report, overall, the General and Special Revenue Funds combined are at 52%; the Water Fund is at 38% and the Landfill fund ended the month at 42%.

UPDATE FROM PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Carl Gamble, Public Works Director, reported that they are presently working on the relocation of the ditch at the ball complex; working on the BMI for Slade Bridge Road which was slowed down because of the holidays; paving was progressing but has slowed down because of the rain; continuing to work on Drayton Road as well as the other roads in our resurfacing projects; have submitted to the state the resurfacing projects for this coming year; repairing roads because of the rains; had some good reports from EPD on the landfill; and the sewer system in Newtown area is coming along very well and if the rain had not have slowed them down they probably would have had all the main line in.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Patton reported that one big item they are working on is with the Power Commission on the ash removal as they will have to stop using coal per a federal mandate; we will have a modification to the landfill to take the ash and this will be an expense in that we will have to do more monitoring that will have to last the life of the landfill plus thirty years. He is the county liaison to the General Assembly, and he has already contacted our representatives regarding some of the county issues, especially sales tax and getting it back to where it should be. He also advised that February 15th is the Legislative Fish Fry where we lobby with the state to let them know about the things that we would like to see happen and one issue will be to continue funding for the rail line hopefully from Columbus to Savannah and other items we are interested in to help our area.

GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Mr. Felton to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel, real estate, and property, seconded by Mr. Nance with all commissioners agreeing to go into Executive Session.

COME OUT EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to come out of Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Felton with all commissioners agreeing to come out of Executive Session.

APPOIINTMENT TO COUNTY BOARDS

Chairman Farrow appointed Larry Felton and Sam Farrow to the Landfill Committee, James Nance and Wallace Mathis to the Water System Committee, Larry Felton and Wallace Mathis to the Public Safety Committee, Larry Felton and James Dowdy to the Crisp County Public Works Committee, Sam Farrow and James Nance to the Crisp County Planning Committee, and Sam Farrow and James Dowdy to the Finance Committee.

REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE AIRPORT BOARD

Motion was made by Mr. Nance to reappoint Derwin Plummer and Chip Wells to the Airport Board for five-year terms expiring 12/31/21, seconded by Mr. Mathis, motion carried unanimously.

REAPPOINTMENTS AND APPOINTMENT TO RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Motion was made by Mr. Nance to reappoint Herbert Hughes and Jimmy Tyrone Walker and appoint Charles Felton to the Recreation Advisory Board for three-year terms ending 12/31/19, seconded by Mr. Mathis, motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mr. Nance to adjourn the meeting at 10:41 a.m., seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.

Sam Farrow, Jr., Chairman

Tom Patton, Administrator