

**MINUTES OF THE CRISP COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 14, 2017**

OPENING CEREMONIES

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Sam Farrow at 9:00 a.m. in Room 305 of the Crisp County Government Center. Commissioners present were A. James Nance, Wallace Mathis, Larry Felton, and J.R.Dowdy, III. Others present were County Administrator Tom Patton, County Attorney Rick Lawson, Finance Director Sherrie Leverett, and Clerk Linda Finch. Carl Gamble gave the invocation and Administrator Patton led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America. Chairman Farrow welcomed all in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 10, 2017, seconded by Mr. Dowdy, motion carried unanimously.

ADOPT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE 2016 CRISP COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL COUGAR FOOTBALL TEAM

Administrator Patton advised that this is an honor to read the Resolution Recognizing the 2016 Crisp County High School Cougar Football Team which was undefeated during the regular season with a perfect 10-0 record and the Cougars were crowned Region 1AAA Champions and made the 2016 Georgia High School Association Final Four Playoff Round. They posted the most successful Crisp County High School Football single season record in school history and Crisp County Commissioners honor and extend congratulations to the team and Head Football Coach Shelton Felton and other coaches. **Motion was made by Mr. Nance to adopt the Resolution Recognizing the 2016 Crisp County High School Cougar Football Team, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.** Commissioners congratulated all the Cougar team, Coach Felton and other coaches.

ADOPT PROCLAMATION OF EXTENSION LIVING WELL MONTH

Administrator Patton read the Proclamation of Extension Living Well Month advising it is a fitting tribute to the National Extension Association for Family and Consumer Sciences professionals and local staff that provide education that is critical to the quality of life of adults, youth and families and proclaim the month of March 2017 as "Extension Living Well Month". **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to adopt the Proclamation of Extension Living Well Month, seconded by Mr. Nance, motion carried unanimously.**

SHERIFF BILLY HANCOCK'S COMMENTS

Sheriff Hancock reported that in addition to their report he does have a couple of things that he thinks are noteworthy. He advised that in January they started a community policing division and as a part of that they are doing a lot of things in the community such as officers riding school buses, eating lunch with children, etc. They are also having an open house at the sheriff's office on March 18th and invite the public to come out and walk into a designated area of the detention center and back into the investigation division and administration side. People will be able to get a good idea of what goes on in the sheriff's office plus they will have a slide presentation of the courthouse and security they provide

there and also see what they are doing in the Champs school program. He advised that they are expanding their inmate work program as they have also partnered with the school board. They will have a town hall meeting in April.

PRESENTATION OF FY16 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Miller Edwards with Mauldin & Jenkins presented the annual financial report and advised that the county's financials look very good and he thinks the county has a lot of strength and good operations taking place. This financial report is a clean opinion or unmodified report where they believe the financial statements presented today are considered to present fairly the financial position and results of operations for the year ending June 30, 2016. He advised that one thing you have included in your budget is not only your county finances but also the Crisp County Power Commission, Crisp Regional Health Service and the Board of Health. Overall you have about \$78 million assets in your primary government and then you add the other components which all add up to well over \$250 million assets that are resources available to provide to this community. The General Fund has assets of a little over \$10 million and liabilities and deferred inflows of about \$1 million which leave a fund balance of \$9 million, which is liquid; he cannot say that in most governments. You have about seven months of cash included in that fund balance. Also, across the board all of your other funds, which include the Special Service District, E911, and SPLOST funds, are operating in pretty good shape. The Income Statement shows about \$23 million of Revenues offset by \$22.4 million of Expenditures leaving about \$900,000 for the year. The Budget to Actual Reports shows that what you budgeted for Revenues is what you got and what you budgeted for Expenditures is what you spent. He advised that in regards to the Proprietary Funds, which include the Water System, Landfill, and the Self Insurance Health Plan; these funds are not money makers and for the most part they all have good operating cash flows. The thing he wants to highlight to the Commissioners is that the County's Pension Plan is about 70% funded, which is about 10% lower than most governments are funded. The one recommendation is a repeat finding that we have had for the last couple of years is segregation of duties; they would recommend that the county look into and see if there is anything that can be done to reengineer and to look at things to see if you can't improve this. He advised that they did do a single audit this year and found no violations of the Federal Guidelines and overall you have a good financial audit report.

LORENZO JOHNSON WITH PAXEN LEARNING SERVICES

Lorenzo Johnson passed out information about their program that they have in Crisp County along with other counties in our district. He stated that Paxen Learning Services is a program that is federally funded work force development program that helps employers hire and train workers for full-time, long term employment. It is a work experience internship through on the job training programs and he wanted to come to the Commissioners first to help get the overall message out to other employers in the community. They are currently partnered with Tyson Foods and MBM. He would love to have the county employees a part of this as well. He advised that they will reimburse the employee's training cost up to \$3000 per participate that qualifies. Commissioner Nance asked if the employees would be new or current, and Mr. Johnson advised mainly new employees but you can use a current employee if that position changes to a hirer position. He stated that they also buy particular items they need and will pay for drug screens, background checks and physicals to make sure they are employed. Also, those participants get to use their facility for job searches, resumes, etc. Chairman Farrow thanked Mr. Johnson for the information and advised that the County will look into this program.

TAMIM CHOUDHURY WITH SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Tamim Choudhury from the U.S. Small Business Administration advised that they are here due to the Presidential Disaster Declaration after the storms and tornadoes that took place in January. They provide low interest long-term loans from the Federal Government to home owners, renters, businesses, and non-profit that has been affected by the disasters. He advised that the first step is to register with FEMA; you can call 1-800-621-FEMA, go online to www.disasterassistance.gov or visit one of the disaster centers. He advised that once they register with FEMA they get referred to Small Business Administration and that is where the loan application starts. They do have loans for businesses that may go as low as 2.125% and non-profit's loans that may go as low as 2.50% and the loan maximum is \$2 million. The homeowners may qualify for loans for up to \$200,000 for the primary residence and for both renters and homeowners any personal property that has been damaged will go up to \$40,000 and these interest rates may be as low as 1.50%. The interest rates do carry up to a 30 year limit and the deadline for filing these loans will be March 27, 2016. Commissioners thanked Mr. Choudhury for the information and for helping our community during the disaster.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW CRISP ANR AGENT JOSHUA GRANT

Randy West, County Extension Agent, introduced Tim Varnedore the Southwest District Extension Director. Mr. Varnedore thanked the Commissioners for their support of the Extension Department in Crisp County. He advised that they were able to use some new funds the legislature passed last year to fill the Ag Agent position; their new candidate for this position is Joshua Grant. Joshua has gotten his Master's Degree from the University of Georgia in Entomology and has been working in the blueberry industry in east Georgia. He thinks Joshua will make a very good addition to the extension program; he is not a cotton and peanut man today but he is going to be with his knowledge, dedication and his willingness to get out and learn and help people. Chairman Farrow welcomed Mr. Grant to the community. Mr. Grant advised that he appreciates the chance to work with the community and learn about the crops here. He stated that he is originally from New Hampshire and he came to Georgia for the Graduate Program. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Vermont in Environmental Science. Commissioner Dowdy stated that his research background should serve Crisp County well. Commissioners all welcomed him to the community and are looking forward to working with him. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to hire Joshua Grant as the Ag Agent for Crisp County with effective hire date of March 1, 2017, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.**

REAPPOINTMENT OF COUNTY CLERK FOR 2017

Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to reappoint Linda Finch as the County Clerk for 2017, seconded by Mr. Nance, motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING – REQUEST FROM E. B. CHESTER FOR A SPECIAL USE PERMIT

Connie Youngblood, Planning Director, reported that she has a request from E. B. Chester for a Special Use Permit to construct a Guest House as an accessory use to a principal dwelling on a parcel of property located at 361 Lakeshore Drive and is zoned RS2 (Single Family Residential). Chairman Farrow opened the Public Hearing. Mrs. Youngblood advised that Mr. Chester built his main house in 2015, and he has enough acreage to have a guest house on this property; the guest house has to be 50% less than the square footage of the main house. She has spoken with the neighbor and the neighbor has no problem

with the request provided that the house is located at the same location and the square footage is the same as on the sketch plan. She advised that the only stipulation that he cannot meet per our regulations for a guest house is it should be located twenty feet behind the main house but because of the topo of the land and the lake he cannot meet that; that would be part of the condition if approved the house will be located as submitted on the plan. The guest house cannot be full-time living or rental only used for overnight guests and cannot be sold separately. Chairman Farrow asked for any comments for or against the request, there were none, so he closed the Public Hearing. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to approve the Special Use Permit for E. B. Chester to construct a Guest House as an accessory use to a principal dwelling with the stipulations submitted, seconded by Mr. Dowdy, motion carried unanimously.**

APPROVE REFUND REQUEST FROM BOBBY MANDERS

Administrator Patton reported that he has a request from Bobby Manders for a refund for a mobile home he sold in October, 2015. After review, it was determined that there was no error on Mr. Mander's part, therefore it is recommended he receive a refund or credit from the Crisp County Tax Commissioner's office. **Motion was made by Mr. Nance to approve a 2016 property tax refund or credit for next year's taxes for Bobby Manders, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.**

APPROVE REFUND REQUEST FROM VINUBHAI PATEL

Administrator Patton reported that he has a request from Vinubhai Patel for a refund for his 2016 property taxes as he paid on the same property twice. After review, it was determined that there was no error on Mr. Patel's part, therefore it is recommended he receive a refund or credit from Crisp County Tax Commissioner's office. **Motion was made by Mr. Nance to approve a 2016 property tax refund or credit for next year's taxes for Vinubhai Patel, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.**

APPROVAL OF RADIO COMMUNICATIONS TOWER

Carl Gamble, Public Works Director, reported that in some of the questions concerning the zoning in siting the Radio Communications Tower, Section 4.2b of the Unified Development Code reads as follows: "antennas or towers located on property owned, leased, or otherwise controlled by the county shall be exempt from the requirements of the Section, provided a license or lease authorizing such antenna or tower has been approved by the Board of Commissioners". In order to be able to site the tower on county property, which is located adjacent to Georgia Veterans State Park on Ferry Landing Road, we need your blessings. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to approve this site for a Radio Communications Tower on Ferry Landing Road, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.**

APPROVAL OF BID FOR REPLACING SLADE BRIDGE

Mr. Gamble reported that the Slade Bridge project has been advertised and they received one bid from Southern Concrete from Albany, Georgia for \$575,575.00. He advised that the estimate on the bridge replacement was \$589, 200.00 so it is less than the estimated cost. Once Commissioners approve the bid, it will go to the Department of Transportation, and then we receive \$200,000.00 in monies from the state to go toward the cost of the bridge; county's cost of the bridge will be \$375,575.00. **Motion was**

made by Mr. Mathis to approve the bid from Southern Concrete of \$575,575.00 for Slade Bridge, seconded by Mr. Dowdy, motion carried unanimously.

APPLY FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT 2017 APPLICATION

Mrs. Leverett reported that Commissioners didn't have to make a decision today on the Community Development Block Grant project, but if you want to move forward with filing an application we need to know today. We are trying to determine how much county cost will be involved in each project before we bring the options to you today. Mr. Gamble advised that the two projects they are considering now are moving on with Phase II in Newtown area or a mobile home park on Hwy. 280 at Coney that when during the widening of Hwy. 280, the man's main well that serves the mobile home park will have to be relocated. He has approached the county about them coming onto the county water system. Administrator Patton advised that the man will probably not be able to relocate the well because of the radius around his site of the septic systems and Gum Creek. **Motion was made by Mr. Nance to make application for a Community Development Block Grant for 2017 and set county's cost of 20% or less, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.** Mrs. Leverett advised that we will have to have a pre-application public hearing for the CDBG; Commissioners do not have to be present but she would like to set that hearing on February 27th at 10:00 a.m. **By common consent, Commissioners approved the Pre-Application Public Hearing for February 27th at 10:00 a.m.**

APPROVAL OF BID FOR LOCALIZER REPLACEMENT AT THE AIRPORT

Mrs. Leverett reported that we have a bid to approve today on the Localizer replacement at the airport. Again, we received only one bid, it was duly advertised, and the bid came in over budget. This project was on the County's CIP Plan at \$150,000.00 that you approved a couple of meetings back. The single bid that we received came in at \$168,185.00. She had to go back to GDOT Aviation and request additional funding to make up that overage, and she received a call yesterday and they have agreed to pay 90% of the overage; the project will cost the county a total of \$8,409.00. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to accept the bid from Electronic Enterprises for the Localizer replacement at the airport, seconded by Mr. Dowdy, motion carried unanimously.**

APPROVE LICENSES FOR NEW LIQUOR STORE

Mrs. Leverett reported that in accordance with County Policy she has an application for a new Liquor Store, which has to be approved by the Board. The name of the business is Farmer's Liquor and they will be located at 2002 U.S. Hwy. 41 North, Suite A. She advised that they have paid all the fees that are required up front and everything is okay with the Planning Department. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to approve the Licenses for Farmer's Liquor, seconded by Mr. Nance, motion carried unanimously.**

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mrs. Leverett reported that the first report includes the preliminary report of revenues and expenditures for the County's General and three major Special Revenue Funds for seven months ending January 31, 2017. Combined monthly revenues of \$2.9 million exceeded combined monthly expenses of \$1.1 million, pushing YTD revenues above YTD expenditures by approximately \$2.4 million or positive 14%. The Water Fund increased our YTD net income to \$142,292. Water consumption billed for the

month was just over 5 million gallons to a total of 1,332 customers and the USDA Bonds are current at \$1.4 million. In the Landfill Fund, accrued YTD revenue of \$987,756 million and accrued YTD expenses of \$825,123 leaves this fund with a net gain of \$162,633. The total tonnage received for the month of January was 4,752.21 tons. The GEFA loans are current at \$3.3 million and we have received our official notice of compliance for fiscal year 2016 on our landfill financial assurance requirements. In the Cash Report, the General Fund and Special Revenue Funds combined are reporting cash on hand of \$12.7 million, the proprietary funds just over \$4 million and the SPLOST funds at \$7.3 million leaving us with a County Wide total of \$24 million. Just under \$8 million of that amount is reserved or restricted for special uses and/or projects. For the 2000 SPLOST Issue, there is no change from last month's report. We still have around \$113,000 to complete the various projects associated with this issue. Next is the same report for the 2005 SPLOST Issue; total expenditures to date of \$22.4 million leaves us with \$2.3 million in budgeted dollars to complete the projects listed under this issue. Distribution no. 60 of the 2011 SPLOST Issue in the amount of \$344,727 is actually up, slightly, just under 2% over last year. It brings issue to date collections to \$18.4 million but still leaves us just over \$40,000 per month short of meeting budgeted projects excluding the use of contingency. We spent \$192,386 in Special Local Option Sales Tax dollars during the month. Projects benefiting were the Airport, Crisp County Recreation, the Darton Project and the Cities of Cordele and Arabi. This month's distribution of \$165,473 for the Local Option Sales Tax is also slightly up over last January, by about 1.75% but annually still fell short of the previous calendar year. In the CDBG Revolving Loan Fund monthly report, our total number of loans remains at ten with an overall outstanding balance of \$2.6 million. The last report is the preliminary revenue by fund and expenditures by department report which shows the expended percentage of appropriations for each individual department and the total for each fund. Expenditures should be at 58% or below. As of this report the General and Special Revenue Funds combined are at 59%, the Water Fund is at 43% and the Landfill fund ended the month at 48%. To date we have received \$5 million in 2016 Ad Valorem Tax revenue which equates to about 95% of the amount projected.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Patton reported that Commissioners have his report but did want to remind the Commissioners that the Ag Tech building briefing will follow the Crisp County Power Commission meeting, the ACCG annual conference is April 28-May 1, and the annual Fish Fry is tomorrow night in Atlanta.

INTRODUCTION OF TWO NEW EMPLOYEES IN TAX ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Sean Sammons, Chief Tax Assessor, introduced two new employees Jeremy King and Broderick Daniels. He stated that Mr. King just started and Mr. Daniels has been with the county a few months. He also advised that there were a number of interesting items to them that were on the agenda today including a new business and additional improvements to a home. Commissioners thanked Mr. Sammons and the office for the work they do in the county and welcomed Mr. King and Mr. Daniels.

GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Mr. Nance to go into Executive Session to discuss litigation and personnel, 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. Felton, motion carried with all Commissioners agreeing to come out of Executive Session.

APPOINT ANDREA WADE TO ANIMAL CONTROL BOARD

Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to appoint Andrea Wade to the Animal Control Board replacing Harold Reynolds, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.

ADJUST SHERIFF HANCOCK'S SALARY TO \$90,000.00

Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to adjust Sheriff Hancock's salary up to \$90,000.00 and make it retroactive to January 1, 2017, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSS SYNERGY

Administrator Patton reported that Mr. Creekmore with Synergy has contacted him about the county giving them some of our residential garbage for recycling and the problem is our county contract says we have to send our garbage to the landfill. He has told Mr. Creekmore that he might want to talk with the City Commissioners and see if they would be willing to give them some of their garbage. He doesn't see any problem with that but the part of the waste they will not be able to use; they want the county to give them credit for that. He doesn't think that we could afford to pay that, and he just wanted the Commissioners to be aware of this.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mr. Felton to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 p.m., seconded by Mr. Nance, motion carried unanimously.

Sam Farrow, Chairman

Tom Patton, Administrator