

**MINUTES OF THE CRISP COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING HELD ON APRIL 11, 2017**

OPENING CEREMONIES

Chairman Sam Farrow, Jr. called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in Room 305 of the Crisp County Government Center. Commissioners present were Authur 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. Herbert Gladdin 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.

APPROVE OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Felton to approve the minutes of the last regular meeting of March 14, 2017, seconded by Mr. Dowdy, motion carried unanimously.

ADOPT MAYOR AND COUNTY RECOGNITION DAY FOR NATIONAL SERVICE

Mr. Patton read proclamation joining with and mayors and county officials across the country for the Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service and proclaim April 4, 2017 as National Service Recognition Day and encourage residents to recognize the positive impact of national service in our county; to thank those who serve; and to find ways to give back to their communities. **Motion was made by Mr. Nance to adopt the Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service, seconded by Mr. Mathis, motion carried unanimously.**

ADOPT NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK PROCLAMATION

Mr. Patton read proclamation proclaiming the week of April 2-8, 2017 as Crime Victims' Rights Week and reaffirm the county's commitment to creating a victim service and criminal justice response that assists all victims of crime throughout the year and to express gratitude and appreciation for those community members, victim service providers, and criminal justice professionals. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to adopt the National Crime Victim Rights Week Proclamation, seconded by Mr. Dowdy, motion carried unanimously.**

ADOPT OLDER AMERICANS MONTH 2017 PROCLAMATION

Mr. Patton read proclamation proclaiming May to be Older Americans Month and urge every resident to take time during this month to acknowledge older adults and the people who serve them as influential and vital parts of our community. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to adopt the Older Americans Month 2017 Proclamation, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.**

ADOPT AMERICAN RED CROSS MONTH 2017 PROCLAMATION

Mr. Patton read proclamation dedicating the month of March to all of those who support the American Red Cross mission to prevent and alleviate human suffering in the face of emergencies, proclaim March,

2017 as American Red Cross month, and encourage all Americans to support this organization and its noble humanitarian mission. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to adopt the American Red Cross Month 2017 Proclamation, seconded by Mr. Nance, motion carried unanimously.**

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Deputy Denise Youngblood reported that she is bringing a pre application for an EMA Grant for Noaa Weather Radios as there is a very good chance that we will qualify for the radios because of the January weather we had. It is an application for 200 radios to be disbursed out into the community. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to allow the sheriff's department to apply for the Noaa Weather Radios for our citizens, seconded by Mr. Dowdy, motion carried unanimously.** Mrs. Youngblood reported that one of their deputies had an accident responding to a call from 911 and hit a deer on Hwy. 280 over the weekend and was fortunate that he did not suffer any major injuries.

PUBLIC HEARING – REQUEST FROM GRIFFIN-FOLSOM CONSTRUCTION, LLC FOR A SPECIAL USE PERMIT

Connie Youngblood, Planning Director, reported that she has a request from Griffin-Folsom Construction, LLC (with the property owner's authorization) for a Special Use Permit to operate a Gravel Pit, Topsoil Stippling/Borrow Pit in an RR (Rural Residential) zone district located on Milepond Road and North Coney Road. Chairman Farrow opened the Public Hearing. Mrs. Youngblood advised that originally there were three parcels of property included in the permit but Griffin-Folsom has withdrawn one of the parcels; the dirt acquired will be used for the DOT new Hwy. 280 Bridge project to replace the old bridge. One pit is 2.30 acres and is located on the eastern side of the Intersection of N. Coney Road and Milepond Road, and the other pit is 7.19 acres and is located west of 425 N. Coney Road. Mrs. Youngblood advised that the property is surrounded by farm land and it does require a Special Use Permit for a Borrow Pit in that zone district. Chairman Farrow asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the request. Stewart Bruinsman, lives at the corner of Milepond and Coney Roads wanted to speak about pit #1, and advised that the dirt needs to go because it is a safety hazard as there have been a number of fatalities there. He would like the permit to be modified so that the finish grade stays at or above the road bed on Milepond and Coney. Bill Goff, representing Griffin-Folsom, advised that they plan to take the corner where the high spot is down to just above the bottom of the ditch and they plan to drain it the same way that it is draining now. He advised that they will have two stages of moving the dirt and will probably take between 18 months and two years to complete the bridge but the dirt moving will probably happen about the first 12 months and then after they complete the bridge as they may need some more dirt to dress up the bridge after it is complete. Mr. Goff stated they will take the topsoil off and probably stretch it to a 10 foot cut and run out and put the topsoil back on and this type project the law requires that they put the topsoil back if there is not a pond built. He also advised that they have received the soil tests back and they think they have enough good soil with the other two pits so they will not have to disturb the pit located on 356 Milepond Road. They also want to do the corner first and then do the pit behind the J. B. Slade house and as far as utilities, there is a telephone pole there and he is working with the power commission on that. Chairman Farrow asked if there was anyone that wanted to speak against the request. Cliff Harpe stated that he would like that whatever conditional use permit that they issue clearly state the statements about levels and elevations, etc. The practical impact on his personal situation is not as much and he does agree that the lowering of the dirt on the corner of Coney Road is actually a public improvement as long as the noise and dust is not so bad on Mr. Bruinsman. He advised that there are a marked cemetery and an unmarked cemetery that is immediately east of that site and there are family members from time to time that come in the

cemetery. Mr. Goff stated that they would hold a three to one slope away from the cemetery, they will not be going to the east of the driveway plus the gravesites are delineated on the plat and cut out. Charles Miller, lives in this community, stated that this community is not a septic tank for everybody to do what they want in order to build a road and he adamantly protest the fact that there will be a pit out there; the topo says it will be 13 feet from the top of Milepond to the end on Coney Road and a 13 foot slope coming off. He thinks it will be a traffic hazard because there has been two deaths there already, ten or fifteen trucks pulling in and out a day five times a day and will be hauling dirt as fast as they can go, and they do not need any dirt pits in his area as they are a residential/agricultural community. Also one of the pits is not very far from a subdivision, and he thinks the pits will continue to get bigger and bigger. He stated that they don't need it in his community; he does not want it in his front yard and he doesn't want the permit approved. Mrs. Youngblood read the standards that are considered when we have a Special Use Request, and advised that this is a Department of Transportation project which is totally separate from the other borrow pits that Griffin-Folsom has that require a surface mine permit. Chairman Farrow stated that when the DOT project is gone this permit will be gone and has a definite ending date. Mrs. Youngblood stated that it will be restored back to the natural site and only for this project and the dirt will not be used for any other project. Melanie Harpe asked if the pit was approved are they going to close the intersection, and Mr. Goff advised that it would not be closed. There being no other comments, Chairman Farrow closed the public hearing. **Motion was made by Mr. Mathis to table the request for the Special Use Permit to operate a Gravel Pit, Topsoil Stripping/Borrow Pit for Pit #1 located on the eastern side of the intersection of N. Coney Road and Milepond Road and Pit #3 located west of 425 North Coney Road so they can receive more input, seconded by Mr. Felton, motion carried unanimously.**

PUBLIC HEARING – INPUT OF A PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT TO THE UNIFIED LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE

Mrs. Youngblood reported that in November the commissioners issued a moratorium on solar farms so the county could get an ordinance in place in regards to the use of allowing people to come into the county and build solar farms and also to protect the property owners. They do have a copy of the draft ordinance, which is modeled from several counties in our area. This is a public hearing for the consideration and public input of a proposed text amendment to the Unified Land Development Code for the purpose of creating a new principal use that shall be defined as Solar Energy Systems. Chairman Farrow opened the public hearing. Mrs. Youngblood advised that there are ground mounted panels, building mounted panels, and also solar farms which have to be at least five acres and no more than 100 acres unless the Zoning Board of Appeals issues a variance. She advised that if someone wants to put a solar panel on their home, the ordinance says that it can't be on the front slope of a pitched roof, no more than four feet above the height of the building; ground mounted can't be located in the front yard, can't be over a septic tank, and if it is in the base flood elevation in an area that is in the flood plain all the equipment has to be elevated above the base flood elevation. She stated that there are different heights in the zoning districts so whatever is required in that zoning district is what the height will be on that particular solar panel or no more than twenty feet. We may have to tweak as we go along, but we have not had any requests for solar panels to date. She also advised that they will be required to have a Surety Bond, and there is a minimum setback from the property lines and dwellings. All the uses will be considered special use and they all will have to come before the Board of Commissioners for a Special Use Permit except in the HC (Heavy Commercial) and I (Industrial) zone districts. Chairman Farrow asked if there were any comments from the public. Herbert Gladdin stated that he would like to know how this effects individuals and he thinks the ordinance needs to be made available for public to look at

so we can decide before we agree with it or not. Mrs. Youngblood advised that no decision will be made today and that anyone can have a copy of the draft ordinance. Commissioner Nance stated that there is no way that you can hash out every particular case in every situation but you have to have a basis from which to begin; the process will allow someone to come in with a particular situation. Mr. Gladdin stated that he would like to see no cost for the Special Use Permit. Chairman Farrow asked for any other comments, there were none so he closed the public hearing and stated that a decision will be made at the next regular meeting.

APPROVE THE REPLACEMENT OF THE BRIDGE OVER REEDY BRANCH TRIBUTARY

Carl Gamble, Public Works Director, reported that they have received a letter from the Department of Transportation proposing to provide preliminary engineering, construction and half of the right-of-way costs for Reedy Branch Tributary located on Watson Road. The county will need to provide support and agree to pay for the remaining cost of any right-of-way that is needed for the project, there are only two landowners; the Department of Transportation will acquire the necessary right-of-way and let the project to construct. He advised that to be able to pursue this, the commissioners will have to agree to the requests. Mr. Gamble advised that this is a failing bridge and we are either going to have to replace it or close it soon. **Motion was made by Mr. Nance to approve the request from GDOT on Reedy Branch Tributary and authorize the Chairman to sign the necessary paperwork, seconded by Mr. Dowdy, motion carried unanimously.**

APPROVE OFF-SYSTEM SAFETY ACTION PLAN

Mr. Gamble reported that it is time for our Off-System Safety Action Plan and we have done the striping, signage, resurfacing, and shoulder widening and paving in the past. There is a list of things that are eligible for the program that is included their packet, and he advised that we can continue on with the shoulder widening on Drayton Road in this program and we can widen and pave the road from North Coney Road three miles to McCay Road. The request would be two feet of shoulder paving and edge striping on each side of the existing pavement to have a minimum of 21 feet of paving. This will be a continuation of the last request that is approximately 85% complete. Cost will be approximately \$200,000 with about \$20,000 coming from the county's TSPLOT. **Motion was made by Mr. Dowdy to proceed with the grant process, putting aside approximately \$20,000 from TSPLOT and giving Chairman Farrow the authority to sign the necessary paperwork, seconded by Mr. Mathis, motion carried unanimously.**

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mrs. Leverett reported that today's packet includes a preliminary report and summary on the major funds of the County as of March 31, 2017. The first page shows the monthly and YTD activity for the General and three major Special Revenue Funds. Combined numbers for these funds bring YTD totals to just over \$14 million in revenues and \$12.3 million in expenditures providing a positive 11% revenue over expenditure balance of \$1.8 million at the end of the third quarter of this fiscal year. March activity brings the YTD revenue total to \$517,793 for the Water Fund and YTD expenditures to \$340,474 increasing this fund's net income to \$177,319; 1329 customers were billed for a total usage of 4,479,000 gallons. The USDA Bonds are current at \$1.4 million. The Landfill Fund accrued revenue of \$1.3 million and expenditures of \$1.1 million leave this fund with a net operating income of \$238,119. This is about a third of the YTD Income we were showing this time last year. The total tonnage received for the

month was 4,531.98, and the GEFA Loans are current at \$3.2 million. We ended the month with \$10.93 million in the General and Special Revenue Funds, \$4.3 million in the proprietary funds, and \$6.7 million in the SPLOST & TSPLOST funds giving a county wide total at 3/31/17 of \$22.0 million; of that amount \$15.5 is restricted or reserved for special purposes or investments. For the 2000 SPLOST Issue, no change from last month, still have just over \$100,000 available to finish out this issue. In the 2005 SPLOST Issue, to date we have expensed or obligated \$24.5 million of the \$24.7 million under this issue leaving us with \$262,513 to complete the projects included here. This month's distribution for the 2011 SPLOST Issue is basically even with last March, short by only \$412. It does bring issue to date collections over the \$20 million mark by \$13,761, and to date we have spent or obligated \$18.6 million under this issue. In the L.O.S.T distributions, again this month's distribution of \$141,498 is virtually even with March of 2016. In the CDBG Revolving Loan Fund report, we ended the month with a total outstanding balance of \$2.7 million for all these accounts. The final report is the revenues by fund and expenditures by department preliminary report from July 2016 through March 2017; all departments should be at 75% of their annual allowances. Overall, preliminary numbers indicate the General Fund and Special Revenue Funds at 74%, Water Fund at 55% and Landfill Fund at 62%. She also reported they have been working on the 2017 proposed SPLOST Issue, and she has provided a worksheet for them, the initial requests came in at almost \$28 million over revenue projected after the first meeting with the City of Arabi and the City of Cordele on February 1st. The City of Cordele and the county went back to department directors and divisions and requested that everybody review, revise, and resubmit their requests and that dropped it down to a \$13.5 million shortfall. Again they met with the City of Cordele and were able to whittle it down to a \$6.8 million shortfall. She has before them a proposed final project list for the new SPLOST. The City has reviewed this and basically saying they are in agreement with this, and there will be no action for them today, this is a matter of information to them; she will be giving the worksheet to our County Attorney Rick Lawson and asking him to begin the process of formulating the Intergovernmental Agreements and Resolutions which will require action from them at the next regular meeting. She advised that none of these numbers are set in stone, it is balanced, and we are fairly certain that the city is in agreement with this number. Mrs. Leverett read in summary the proposed SPLOST budget and under the current proposal the estimated revenue for the 2017 SPLOST is \$20,100,000 of that the Airport would be receiving \$677,500 and all but \$100,000 of that is the county's match from grant funds the county will receive from FAA and DOT for projects; county buildings \$337,120; detention center \$215,918; Crisp County Sheriff's Department/E911 \$172,000 for preliminary costs associated with hopefully a new 911 center in the next SPLOST; Crisp County Sheriff's Office/Public Safety \$3,618,783 for a new radio system; EMS \$611,499; fire department \$425,200; finance department \$129,834; recreation department \$653,000; county roads \$4,296,960; public works \$776,217; Sheriff's Department \$1,016,635; Sanitation/solid waste \$1,715,259; water fund \$36,120; City of Cordele would be receiving \$5,168,955 for the projects they have requested; and City of Arabi would receive \$249,000. She stated that they will be summarizing the SPLOST requests and put it on the county website and we will be bringing the formal documents to you at the next regular meeting.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Patton reported that his report is in their packet but he did want them to know that he and Grant Buckley, IDC Director, were invited to a roundtable conference by the National Association of Counties and there were people from different states and nationals as well. The discussion was where do we go in the future with transportation mainly in the southeast, and once the committee found out we had an inland port and we had passed the TSPLOT their presentation was one of the most well received presentation of any that was given; they had directors from several different ports there and they are all interested in the concepts of ports. Also, we are going to try to tap into a grant opportunity,

which is a federal grant, and last year over \$5 million was in that program. This will be for big projects; the real key is going to be rail.

GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

REAPPOINT PATTI SMITH TO THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION

Motion was made by Mr. Nance to reappoint Patti Smith to the Board of Elections and Registration, seconded by Mr. Mathis, motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN MEETING

Motion was made by Mr. Nance to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 a.m., seconded by Mr. Dowdy, motion carried unanimously.

Sam Farrow, Chairman

Tom Patton, County Administrator