

**NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
March 3, 2009
MINUTES**

Present: Chairman Kathy Morgan, Commissioners Mort Ewing, Earnest Simmons, Nancy Schulz, J.C. Henderson, and Tim Fleming. Attorney Tommy Craig, Administrative Officer John Middleton & Clerk Jackie Smith

Newspaper: Covington News-Gabe Khouli
Newton Citizen- Crystal Tatum
Small Group of Citizens

Chairman Morgan called the meeting to order, extended a welcome, and read the thought for the day. Reverend Ronny Brannen of Prospect Methodist Church gave the invocation and Chairman Morgan led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Chairman Morgan told the group that she had sad news to give them. Her father-in-law, Jack Hays Morgan, former Chairman of the Commission and former member of the Georgia House of Representatives passed away.

Commissioner Mort Ewing stated that Mr. Morgan served the citizens of Newton County well and will be missed by all who knew him. He applauded Mr. Morgan's service and said he thought it most appropriate for all flags in Newton County to be flown at half mast on Thursday, March 5th. He then made a motion to approve; a second by Commissioner Henderson, and the motion was unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF BOC MINUTES DATED FEBRUARY 17, 2009

Motion: To approve the BOC Minutes dated February 17, 2009 as printed.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by: Commissioner Nancy Schulz, District Three

Motion Carried

APPROVAL OF SCM MINUTES DATED FEBRUARY 25, 2009

Motion: To approve the BOC Special Called Meeting Minutes dated February 25, 2009 as printed.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by: Commissioner Nancy Schulz, District Three

Motion Carried

WATER SERVICE REQUEST – DISTRICT FOUR

Chairman Morgan recognized Commissioner Henderson who presented this request.

- Residents of Airport Road and Danielle Drive contacted him stating they were having pressure problems.
- Requested (Commissioner Henderson) Chairman Morgan and Mayor Roseberry to review the problem and requests.

- Passed out flier in neighborhood to see who was interested in participating.
- Information attached and made part of these minutes. (Memo to BOC from Commissioner Henderson and correspondence from Mayor Roseberry, City of Oxford)
- Cost of installing waterline is \$36,500.00; Newton County's portion would be \$10,060.00.
- Residents will be responsible for tap on fees.
- Note that Mr. Middleton indicated there were funds available in the water fund to cover this.
- City of Oxford will be the retailer and will purchase water at the wholesale rate from Newton County.

Motion: To approve the waterline request for Airport Road and Danielle Drive with the county portion not to exceed \$10,060.00.

Proposed by: Commissioner J.C. Henderson, District Four

Second by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Motion Carried

ARC QUALITY GROWTH IMPLEMENTATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Planning Director Marian Eisenberg, along with senior planner Scott Sirotkin appeared to present this request.

- Seeking support and approval to apply for ARC Quality Growth Implementation Assistance
- ARC will provide staff to help with program.
- No cost to Newton County.
- With each commissioner's signature extra points are awarded toward application.
- Copy of power point presentation attached and made part of these minutes.

Motion: To approve and endorse the Newton County Planning & Development Department's application for the ARC Quality Growth Implementation Assistance Program as presented.

Proposed by: Commissioner Earnest Simmons, District Two

Second by: Commissioner Tim Fleming, District Five

Motion Carried

R030309 – CSBG FFY 2009 INCREASE IN FUNDS

Administrative Officer John Middleton presented this resolution for board approval.

- Housekeeping measure required by DCA
- Serves seniors i.e. Meals on Wheels
- Serves low income families in Newton County

Motion: To approve Resolution R030309 CSBG FFY 2009 Increase in Funds of \$25,799.00 as presented. A copy of the resolution is made part of these minutes.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by: Commissioner Earnest Simmons, District Two

Motion Carried

JULY 4TH FIREWORKS EVENT

- Important yearly event enjoyed by community for many, many years. People look forward to this. Small price to pay for bringing thousands of citizens together for a day to celebrate our nation's birthday.
- Church at Covington hosts all day celebration ending with the fireworks extravaganza.
- Total cost is \$7,580.00.
- The fireworks extravaganza is sponsored by Newton County and the City of Covington at a cost of \$3,790.00 each.
- All commissioners support this celebration and expressed appreciation for all the hard work that is put in to making this a success; however, very concerned about spending money for this event when we recently implemented over \$5,000,000 in budget cuts and looking at next year's budget projections to have even greater cuts.
- Feels citizens would appreciate the board being prudent in spending this amount of money and will understand due to these tough economic times.
- Many years ago the Chamber of Commerce sponsored this event. Maybe they would like to take this back and get sponsorship.
- Suggested finding vendors or possibly cut back amount of fireworks.
- Suggested private funding.

Motion: Newton County will not fund the July 4th Fireworks Extravaganza for 2009 due to budget constraints, and encourage sponsors to seek private funding.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by: Commissioner Tim Fleming, District Five

Motion Carried with Commissioners Simmons and Henderson voting in opposition to the motion.

CHANGE ORDER FOR NELSON HEIGHT COMMUNITY CENTER – DISTRICT FOUR

Special Projects Coordinator Cheryl Delk appeared before the board to present the change order for the Nelson Height Community Center located in the fourth commission district.

- Requesting approval of change order in the amount of \$11,000.00
- Increase in prices of subcontractors as follows:
- Site work: \$3,000.00, Roofing: \$2,000.00, Plumbing: \$2,000.00; Electrical: \$2,000.00 = \$11,000.00
- Commissioners noted that they are in favor of this project; however voiced concerns about the increases and questioned the reasons for them.

- Reasons for increase: plan has changed 2-1/2 times since the beginning; submitted 3 site plans to the city for approval; plumbing & electrical increase is due to requirements by the city; grease trap and vent was added to the kitchen due to the requirement of fire marshal, and sometimes the fire marshal does not make immediate decisions on if something is approved or not. Changed the way the building was to face to save money. It was to face road that city owns; also plan was to pave the driveway and now it will be graveled; county is responsible to improve impervious surface;
- After approval of this change order there will be \$33,589.00 left in the contingency fund for this project.

Commissioner Henderson

- Project was funded by citizens of Newton County in 2005 SPLOST for \$500,000.00...frustrated that it is 2009 and project not completed. Feels this project should have been completed much sooner.
- Concerned that prices keep going up and the project is not finished.
- Expressed thanks to Ms. Delk for all her hard work, not only for this project, but all the other projects she is overseeing.

Motion: To approve the Change Order for the Nelson Height Community Center for a not to exceed amount of \$11,000.00.

Proposed by: Commissioner J.C. Henderson, District Four

Second by: Commissioner Earnest Simmons, District Two

Motion Carried

DECREASE IN FEES FOR FOOD SERVICE/SHERIFF'S OFFICE

- Frank's Restaurant, Inc. and the Castellana family desire to be part of the solution in helping the county during these tough economic times.
- Michael Castellana who oversees the food service for the Newton County Law Enforcement Center provided a letter to the commission reducing their rate from \$1.75 per plate to \$1.70 per plate.
- Estimated cost savings to county is \$35,000.00.
- A copy of the modification is made part of these minutes.
- Last year Frank's requested a very modest increase of \$.05 per plate and now to offer to reduce the cost should be applauded.
- Commissioner's expressed special thanks to Michael Castellana and the Castellana family for their generosity and support for Newton County.

Motion: To accept the gracious offer from Frank's Restaurant, Inc. and the Castellana family to decrease the fees per plate at the Newton County Law Enforcement Center from \$1.75 to \$1.70. This modification is effective with the invoice submitted for the period ending February 14, 2009 and in effect until further notice.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by: Commissioner Nancy Schulz, District Three

Motion Carried

COUNTY CHECKS:

Motion: To approve the county checks as read aloud by the chairman and printed in the board packet.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by: Commissioner Earnest Simmons, District Two

Motion Carried

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Time: 8:15 p.m.

Motion: To enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing land acquisition, litigation and personnel.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by: Commissioner Tim Fleming, District Five

Motion Carried

REGULAR SESSION

Time: 9:30 p.m.

Motion: To enter into Regular Session.

Proposed by: Commissioner J.C. Henderson, District Four

Second by: Commissioner Earnest Simmons, District Two

Motion Carried

JOINT WORK SESSION

Motion: To have a Joint Work Session with the Newton County Recreation Commission on Monday, March 16th @ 7:00 p.m. @ Turner Lake Complex.

Proposed by: Commissioner J.C. Henderson, District Four

Second by: Commissioner Earnest Simmons, District Two

Motion Carried

ADJOURN

Time: 9:50 p.m.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District Four

Second by: Commissioner Tim Fleming, District Five

Motion Carried

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Smith, County Clerk

