

**NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
September 4, 2007  
MINUTES**

**Present:** Chairman Aaron Varner, Commissioners Mort Ewing, Earnest Simmons, Ester Fleming, Jr., J.C. Henderson, and Monty Laster, Administrative Officer John Middleton, Attorney Tommy Craig & Scott Cole, Clerk Jackie Smith

**Newspaper:** Covington News – Rachel Osborn  
Newton Citizen - Crystal Tatum  
Small group of citizens

Chairman Varner called the meeting to order, extended a welcome and read the thought for the day. Commissioner Mort Ewing gave the invocation and Chairman Varner led the Pledge of Allegiance to our great Flag.

**APPROVAL OF BOC MINUTES DATED JULY 17, 2007**

Motion: To approve the minutes dated September 4, 2007 as printed.

Proposed by: Commissioner Monty Laster, District Five

Second by Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Motion Carried

**STATE CHAMPIONS – DIXIE YOUTH SERIES - NEWTON COUNTY ALL STARS 11 & 12 Year Old**

Chairman Aaron Varner recognized Newton County Recreation Director Tommy Hailey, his staff and members of the recreation commission and invited them to join the board on the dais.

Director Tommy Hailey introduced the members of the commission present as well as his staff. He expressed thanks to the commissioners of their support and the great facilities recreation enjoys. He also thanked the numerous volunteers who faithfully work and give their time to the children of Newton County.

Director Hailey offered congratulations and thanks to the parents who worked so hard the entire summer supporting their children. He noted this group of young men is not just good ballplayers but they are a very special group. He asked that the parents and team be given a round of applause.

Director Hailey recognized the coaches, Sonny James, Bobby Wheeler and Scott Waldrip, along with long time recreation employee Ricky Vaughn and Sherman Graves. He noted that Sherman's son played on this championship team.

Ricky Vaughn addressed the board and noted that eight members of this team also played on the 2005 State Championship Team. He said these are some of the finest young men, not just athletes that he has had the privilege of working with and the parents are the greatest.

Coach Sonny Jones expressed appreciation to the recreation staff for all that is done for the kids of Newton County. He noted that practice began in March and they have either played or practiced nearly every day since the beginning, except for Sundays.

The commissioners invited the team to come forward and receive several tokens of their appreciation and congratulations for a job well done, noting how proud they are of the entire team. One of the notable gifts was a baseball signed by all the commissioners, which everyone appreciated. Congratulations were given, handshakes, and applause, and the boys of summer left very happy!

### **TASK ORDER #10 – STORMWATER UTILITY SETUP & IMPLEMENTATION**

Chairman Varner noted this was discussed at length at the recent work session that was held at the FFA Camp. He introduced Karl Kelley & Ron Felder to address the board. This will assist the county in the development of the stormwater utility program. After the presentation and discussion the board approved the task order as follows with a copy as part of the minutes.

Motion: To approve Task Order #10 – Stormwater Utility Setup and Implementation for Integrated Science & Engineering, Inc. (ISE) for a not to exceed amount of \$103,550.00 for Phase I, and for a not to exceed amount of \$112,150.00 for Phase II as presented and outlined in board packet.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by Commissioner Monty Laster, District Five

Motion Carried

### **PRESENTATION BY PREVENT CHILD ABUSE NEWTON COUNTY**

Monica Crafts and Director of Prevent Child Abuse Newton County appeared before the board and gave the stirring and heartfelt presentation. The commissioners expressed appreciation of the all the work that is being done in this area. Director Berry noted they are in need of office space for this program and they would be able to assist a lot more families. Commissioner Henderson suggested Cousins, but it seems another organization has already been allocated that space; however Chairman Varner asked Director Berry to contact him or Mr. Middleton and they would do their best to assist them in finding space. Commissioner Simmons also suggested other avenues they could possibly receive assistance from.

Information they provided is made part of these minutes.

No official action was taken.

## **BID #08-03 ADD-ON WORK TO DEARING STREET LOCATION**

Chairman Varner gave an update on the project and noted the problems that had been encountered. This is a great cooperative project between the City of Covington, private developers and the county. Unfortunately, it has taken two years to move the utilities, but the biggest delay was the signal permit. We had to prove to the DOT that we needed a signal at that intersection.

County Engineer Kevin Walter appeared before the board to present request for approval. Mr. Walter went over many details as outlined in the request. The total cost of the project is about \$920,000.00 with the county's portion being approximately \$474,000.00. Work will be funded by the SPLOST account of the roads and bridges CIE Program.

Commissioner Simmons noted that this is a great deal of money and he requested that in the future things like this be explained in more detail before the meeting.

Information made a part of these minutes.

After the discussion there was a motion to approve as follows:

Motion: To approve Bid #08-03 Add-on work to Dearing Street Location for a not to exceed cost of \$474,840.20 and award to Pittman Construction Company as presented by County Engineer Kevin Walter and outlined in board packet.

Proposed by: Commissioner Monty Laster, District Five

Second by Commissioner J.C. Henderson, District Four

Motion Carried with Commissioner Simmons voting against the motion.

## **PRESENTATION ON 5311 RURAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION GRANTS**

County Engineer Kevin Walter appeared before the board and stated that a grant is available to county's to start a very modest Rural Public Transportation Program. He introduced Ruth Miller from the Center who gave the presentation.

A copy of the presentation is made part of these minutes.

After questions and discussion Commissioner Simmons expressed appreciation for bringing this to the board's attention.

No official action was taken.

## **PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENTS**

Motion: To defer until after a work session on these amendments is held.

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

Second by: Commissioner Ester Fleming, Jr., District Three

**COUNTY CHECKS:**

Motion: To approve the county checks as printed and read by the chairman.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by Commissioner Ester Fleming, Jr., District Three

Motion Carried

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Time: 8:30 p.m.

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

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by Commissioner J.C. Henderson, District Four

Motion Carried

**REGULAR SESSION**

Time: 10:55 p.m.

Motion: To enter into Regular Session.

Proposed by: Commissioner Ester Fleming, Jr., District Three

Second by Commissioner Monty Laster, District Five

Motion Carried

**ADJOURN**

Time: 10:55 p.m.

Motion: To Adjourn the meeting.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by Commissioner Ester Fleming, Jr., District Three

Motion Carried

Respectfully Submitted,

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Jackie B. Smith  
County Clerk