

**NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
April 5, 2005**

MINUTES

Newton County Courthouse
1124 Clark Street
Covington, Georgia 30014
Chairman Aaron Varner, Presiding

Present: Chairman Varner, Commissioners' Mort Ewing, Ronnie Dimsdale, Ester Fleming, Jr., J.C. Henderson, and Monty Laster; Attorney Scott Cole, and Clerk Jackie Smith

Also Present: Will Whitehorn (Covington News)
Crystal Tatum (Newton Citizen)
Large Group of Citizens

Chairman Varner called the meeting to order, read the thought for the day and extended a welcome to all present. Pastor Garrett Hart, Student Pastor from High Point Baptist Church offered the invocation. Chairman Varner, on behalf of himself and the board, expressed appreciation for the prayer and the wonderful influence High Point Baptist has on the citizens of Newton County.

Chairman Varner shared the good news from County Engineer Kevin Walter that Newton County would receive \$339,960.00 from the Georgia Department of Transportation. This is a grant for system safety enhancement and will include signage on all county bridges, railroad crossings and line striping as well as raised pavement markers for much of the county roadway system.

The chairman and board expressed appreciation to Kevin Walter and to Robert Griffith from our Public Works Department for their hard work in acquiring this grant.

APPROVAL OF BOC MINUTES DATED MARCH 15, 2005

Motion: To approve the minutes as written.

Proposed by: Commissioner Monty Laster, District Five

Second by: Commissioner Ronnie Dimsdale, District Two

Motion Carried Unanimously

LCI GRANT UPDATE

Lloyd Kerr (City of Covington Zoning Director) appeared before the board and provided an update regarding the LCI Grant.

- Previously awarded \$100,000 grant

- LCI 2005 Award Recipients – Key Dates (attached and made part of minutes)
- RFP's will be mailed back to Lloyd Kerr
- Members of Task Force will assist in review process and guidance.
- Would like email list for sending information to BOC.

Chairman, on behalf of himself and the board, expressed appreciation to Mr. Kerr for the update. No official action taken.

H 2 0 STUDENT CENTER PRESENTATION

Pastor Ron Compton of Covington Praise Center, located at 7165 Turner Lake Circle, Covington, Georgia, appeared before the board to apprise them of the new H20 Student Center to be located in the old Wal-Mart Building.

- Pastor Compton is a life long resident of Newton County
- Local church pastor for seven years
- Renting a 28,000 square foot building
- Space will be dedicated to serving young people
- Rent is \$55,000 per year and this is about ½ what building could be rented for.
- Wal-Mart is partnering with them and cutting the rental cost for them.
- Teens are doing the work with adult supervision
- Asking for “stamp of approval” from this board in what we are trying to do.
- Large game area
- Coffee House
- Stage Area to sing and perform on, i.e., bands, comedy acts
- Open free two nights per week for all
- Crosses all denomination lines
- This will be for kids...trying to reach kids before they make wrong decisions
- Safe atmosphere
- We will not tolerate alcohol of any kind, no drugs, and no sex peer pressure.
- Parents can feel safe knowing where their children are.
- 700-1000 kids at any one time
- Will have retired teachers helping out with studies
- Offer computer training
- Believes an impact can be made on the youth of this county.
- Invited BOC to stop by and see the kids at work,
- Not requesting money from this board; however they need to raise \$200,000 in six months.
- Working on grants
- Looking for people who want to invest in the lives of young people.
- Open for suggestions.

Commissioner Dimsdale and Commissioner Fleming expressed their moral support and commended Rev. Compton for not only having a great vision, but for putting feet under his dream. They stated this has been a vision for this community for a long time, but

haven't pursued it...you have, and we commend you. They noted they hoped Pastor Compton understood that government can't offer any monetary support, but can offer encouragement and moral support. Commissioner Fleming commented that he had known Pastor Compton all of his life and knew this would be a success. He also invited Pastor Compton to call upon him for his personal assistance.

No official action taken.

APPLICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CEMETERY PROPERTY (AS REQUIRED BY OCGA 36-72-1 ET SEQ)

Attorney Jimmy Alexander appeared before the board to present this request.

- Judson Caldwell is making request.
- This is part of the procedure that is required by the Secretary of State.
- This permit will be for six acres (coming out of cemetery property and constructing a Funeral Home on).
- No zoning change is required.
- Has nothing to do with zoning at all.
- It is presently zoned CG.

Motion: To approve request to issue a permit to remove six acres from property presently used for cemetery lots, and to approve the construction of a Funeral Home on the requested six acres. This application is required under Georgia Code OCGA 36-72-1 ET (SEQ).

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

Second by: Commissioner Monty Laster, District Five

Motion Carried Unanimously

DISCUSSION REGARDING ORDINANCE FOR RAPID ACCESS KEY BOXES, SECURITY CONNECTION CAPS FOR THE USE OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT IN TIMES OF EMERGENCY

Fire Marshall Tim Smith appeared before the board regarding this request.

- Could save lives and property
- Fire Department only will have key access
- Only paid stations will have key
- Saves time if alarm goes off not having to wait for owner or key holder to get there.
- Sprinkler System works same way.
- Allow personnel to enter building and cut off sprinkler system before further damage is done.
- Key box would be located at either front or rear door – 6 feet off ground

Discussion:

Commissioner Fleming

- Questioned if apartments would be included? Yes, anything that has a lock on it.

- Would apartments have a Master Key? Working on that now.
- Suggest one key box at each building. Will work with apartment complex to see what works best for them.
- What is approximate cost? \$500 to a \$1,000. Cost is not an issue according to the people Mr. Smith has talked with. Regarding water damage – within five minutes it would cost more than the cost of the box.

Commissioner Dimsdale

- Questioned the impact it would have upon insurance? Would save money through insurance company.

Commissioner Ewing

- Questioned the number of buildings that will be affected by the ordinance? Approximately 2,000 buildings at present time and about half would be affected.

The board expressed appreciation to Mr. Smith and will take his recommendation and comments under consideration.

No official action taken.

APPOINTMENT TO NCW&SA – DISTRICT ONE

Commissioner Ewing asked to have this on the April 19th agenda. Board concurred.

PROPOSAL TO REVISE & UPDATE JURISDICTIONAL WATERS REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED BEAR CREEK RESERVOIR

Scott Cole addressed the board regarding this proposal.

- Provided update
- Originally completed about eight years ago
- Same company provided report then
- Company very familiar with project and property
- The CORP requested this to be updated.

Motion: To approve the proposal to revise and update the Jurisdictional Waters Report for the proposed Bear Creek Reservoir by Eco-South, Incorporated for an amount not to exceed \$7,650.00; and with the understanding as part of the project, if possible, Eco-South will do the project for less.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by: Commissioner Monty Laster, District Five

Motion Carried Unanimously

**RESOLUTION R040505 – CERTIFYING SPECIAL PURPOSE
LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX (SPLOST) ELECTION**

Motion: To approve Resolution R040505 – Certifying the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) Election held on March 15, 2005 as required by the State of Georgia.

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

Second by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Motion Carried Unanimously

STREETLIGHTS:

COUNTRY ROADS SUBDIVISION OFF HWY. 162 DISTRICT TWO

Motion: To approve streetlights for Country Roads Subdivision off Hwy. 162 located in District Two as requested.

Proposed by: Commissioner Ronnie Dimsdale, District Two

Second by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Motion Carried

ALCOHOL LICENSE:

FIRST READING

THE PIT STOP

1313 HIGHWAY 11

SOCIAL CIRCLE, GEORGIA 30025

OWNER: JOHN S. HARDEGREE (100% OWNER)

DISTRICT ONE

PONY EXPRESS FOOD MART

1814 HIGHWAY 11 SOUTH

COVINGTON, GEORGIA 30014

OWNER: LEE KHANNA (100% OWNER)

NORTH FORK CHEVRON

3078 HIGHWAY 81 NORTH

OXFORD, GEORGIA 30050

OWNER: NOORAIR. AMERSI (100% OWNER)

COUNTY CHECKS:

Motion: To approve the county checks as read.

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

Second by: Commissioner Monty Laster, District Five

Motion Carried Unanimously

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Time: 7:30 p.m.

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

Proposed by: Commissioner Mort Ewing, District One

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

Motion Carried Unanimously

REGULAR SESSION

TIME: 9:05 p.m.

Motion: To enter into Regular Session.

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

Second by: Commissioner Monty Laster, District Five

Motion Carried Unanimously

ADJOURN

TIME: 9:06 p.m.

Motion: To adjourn.

Proposed by: Commissioner Monty Laster, District Five

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

Motion Carried Unanimously

Respectfully Submitted,

**Jackie B. Smith
County Clerk**