

**HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION**

January 17, 2017
7:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present: J. Harry Lange, Susan Andrews, Martha Chewning, Becky Langston, Jim Woods. Staff Present: Randy Dowling, County Manager; John Taylor, County Attorney; Nancy D. McMichael, County Clerk.

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Chairman Lange called the Regular Session to order.
2. **HAPPY BIRTHDAY.** Commissioner Langston said that today is Commissioner Woods' 70th birthday. Following applause, all in attendance sang "Happy Birthday" to Commissioner Woods.
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** At the request of Chairman Lange, Commissioner Woods led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. **MINUTES.** The motion to approve the minutes of the January 3, 2017, Regular Session, was made by Commissioner Chewning, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.
5. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. **Decision on Rezoning Application of Keiven & Leonna Harris to Rezone 3.52 acres on Land Lot 113, Land District 19, Map 032, Parcel 010B, from R-1 (Single Family Residential) to A-1 (Agricultural & Forestry); current use single family residence; proposed use single family residence with greater than 4 dogs for breeding purposes; property location at 1290 Hart Drive, Fortson.** Chairman Lange said that the Public Hearing for this rezoning had been held and closed during the January 3, 2017, meeting and that the motion to disapprove had been made by Commissioner Langston, seconded by Chairman Lange, with action tabled to this meeting. Following discussion, which included that surrounding properties are zoned R-1 and A-1 and that the subject property was zoned to R-1 from A-1 approximately two years ago, Chairman Lange asked for a vote. The motion to disapprove passed unanimously.
6. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **Budget Schedule FY 2017-2018.** Commissioner Langston said that many citizens are unaware of the distribution of their tax dollars; that, in comparison to Muscogee County that has a population of over 200,000 and a millage rate of over 17 mills, Harris County has a population of approximately 33,000 and a millage rate of 6.14; that the County operates on a budget of about \$17 million; that of every tax dollar, \$.74 goes to the school board, leaving \$.26 for the County's maintenance and operation funds for law enforcement protection, EMS support, 911 emergency center, volunteer fire departments (receive a small stipend and equipment from the County), road repair and maintenance, home trash pick-up, transfer station and convenience centers, recreation/sports venues (Moultrie Park, Pate Park, and soon to be Ellerslie Park), recreation programs for youth, community center, animal control and shelter, public library, health department, and court services in addition to many other services. Chairman Lange thanked Commissioner Langston for her explanation of the distribution of tax dollars. He then asked for a motion on the budget schedule. The motion to approve the schedule was made by Commissioner Langston, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.
 - B. **Personnel Request: Tax Assessor.** Nancy McMichael, County Clerk, said that this matter has been withdrawn and will be part of the upcoming budget process.
7. **COUNTY MANAGER**
 - A. **Introduction of Prison Warden.** Randy Dowling, County Manager, introduced Cynthia M. Nelson as the County's new Prison Warden. He said that Ms. Nelson has 30 years experience with the Georgia Department of Corrections to include having been a Warden in three state prisons, and that she is highly recommended by individuals with the Department of Corrections.
 - B. **Project Updates.** Randy Dowling, County Manager, brought the Board up to date on various projects, as follows:

- (1) CFO. Proposal from Severn Trent on agenda for approval.
- (2) Library. Architect and Construction Manager in discussions regarding the construction plans with completion of project scheduled for early 2018.
- (3) County Website. Ongoing development of update to the County's website.
- (4) CDBG Kings Gap. Striping has been completed and all signs, with the exception of the street names, have been installed.
- (5) Hardage Road. Design to be completed by late March with bidding in April or May and completion by November.
- (6) High Speed Internet Connections. Formulate a plan of action to connect County facilities, to include the Community Center and the new Library, to high speed internet that will also benefit citizens, and that there is a proposal on tonight's agenda for consideration by the Board.
- (7) Fire Master Plan. Draft has been circulated to the Fire Departments with no comments forthcoming; therefore, plan is scheduled to be on the February 7 agenda for approval by the Board.
- (8) Fire Truck Purchases. The volunteer fire departments have been given the go ahead to order their vehicles.
- (9) Melody Lakes Dam. Evaluation has been performed by Carter & Sloope with status report expected soon and an EPD inspection scheduled for March 2.

8. COUNTY ATTORNEY

- A. **Agreement with Severn Trent: Two-Day Financial Assessment**. John Taylor, County Attorney, reviewed the proposal agreement for services that occurred last week, suggested a few changes to the document, and recommended approval with the changes, which are to be provided to Severn Trent to revise the document. The cost of the assessment is up to \$7,000. The motion to approve was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Andrews, and passed unanimously. The result of the study is to be discussed during an upcoming Called Meeting on either January 23 or 24. (Document can be found in "Contracts & Agreements" file as C&A #17-02.)
- B. **Agreement with TUSA Consulting: 9-1-1 & Radio Communications Assessment**. John Taylor, County Attorney, reviewed the agreement, suggested a few changes to the document, and recommended approval with the changes, which are to be provided to TUSA for revision of the document. The estimates cost for the services is \$131,900. Dean Ginn, of Dean's Commercial Two-Way, said that a study is currently being undertaken, at no cost to the County, the results of which could possibly offset some of the costs of the assessment. Discussion included that the County's CAD system will no longer be supported as of December 31 of this year, and that the 9-1-1 phone system will no longer be support as of September of this year; that Randy Dowling, County Manager, has worked with TUSA in two other counties and found them to be competent and reliable; that no other consulting firms have been contacted about the possibility of performing the assessment. Chairman Lange asked that this matter be tabled to the upcoming Called Meeting on January 23 or 24.
- C. **Proposal by Dean's Commercial Two-Way: High Speed Wireless Internet Connections**. Dean Ginn, of Dean's Commercial Two-Way, appeared before the Board, to discuss the proposal. He reviewed the various aspects, which included partnering with Point Broadband to use vertical assets (buildings, towers, water tanks) to launch wireless LTE internet to County facilities and citizens and would include two free wi-fi access points of the County's choice, the donation of 10% of their profits based on revenue from sites in the County to a charity of the County's choosing, to provide a 200 meg commercial internet via Diverse Power's fiber to the 9-1-1 Center with a one-time connection fee of \$199 and an estimated monthly cost of \$1,200, to provide a 50 meg down and 5 meg up internet connection to the new Library for a one-time connection fee of \$199 and an estimated monthly cost of \$150, and which could be shared by the Community Center via a wireless bridge or conduit between the buildings. To accomplish this, he explained that he would provide the 150 foot tower that is needed in Hamilton next to the existing Hamilton water tanks

at no cost to the County, other than installation costs for the shelter to house equipment, the erection of the tower, and the concrete tower base. In addition, he said that the 200 meg connection to 9-1-1 can be accomplished within 30-45 days of the fiber connection to 9-1-1; that a ground lease from Hamilton will be necessary for the tower and equipment shelter; that the tower site will cost approximately \$26,000 and include the shelter (\$9,500), labor and materials for tower, foundation and grounding (\$11,000), crane to lift shelter (\$5,000) and the connection fee for the Library; and that the County can connect the existing fiber (running from Courthouse to Sheriff's Office & 9-1-1) to the Diverse Power fiber at two locations for redundancy at an estimated cost of \$7.00 per foot; and that Diverse has agreed to splice the fiber at no cost to the County. Following discussion, the motion to move forward with the proposal was made by Commissioner Chewning, seconded by Commissioner Langston, and passed unanimously. (Document can be found in "Miscellaneous Documents" file as MD#17-01.)

9. **RECESS FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**. The motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing real estate acquisition was made at 8:15 PM by Chairman Lange, seconded by Commissioner Chewning, and passed unanimously.
10. **RESUME REGULAR SESSION**. The motion to go back into Regular Session was made by Chairman Lange, seconded by Commissioner Langston, and passed unanimously.
11. **ADJOURNMENT**. There being no further business to discuss, the motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Chewning, seconded by Commissioner Andrews, and passed unanimously.

J. Harry Lange, Chairman

Attest:

Nancy D. McMichael, County Clerk