

**HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CALLED WORK SESSION**

August 31, 2017
9:00 AM

Board Members 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. Also Present: Bryan Huskey, Bond Advisor w/Stifel.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Lange called the meeting to order and said the purpose was to discuss the proposed SPLOST 2019 projects and other County issues.

SPLOST 2019.

Community Center Bond Debt. John Taylor, County Attorney, and Bryan Huskey, Bond Advisor w/Stifel discussed various methods regarding the refinancing of the Community Center Bond in order to include same in the upcoming SPLOST referendum. Following discussion, there were no objections to moving forward with the refinancing the bond in order to lock in the low interest rate.

Projects for SPLOST. Discussion included that broadband in the amount of \$1.25 million as seed money will show the County's commitment toward securing County-wide broadband, which seems to be a major concern for citizens; that some citizens are interested in recycling, the Agri-Center arena and the Sheriff's Office substation in Ellerslie Park; that regarding the substation, it may be more feasible to rent an area in the Ellerslie Volunteer Fire Department for the Sheriff's Office substation; that citizens in the Cataula area are pushing for the Rails to Trails project; that the old Library does need to be renovated for use by a County office or the building will have to be demolished in a few years due to neglect; that it may be a good idea to purchase the building/property in front of the old Library for parking purposes; that a central records storage facility is needed and could be accomplished with a Butler building and staffing; that by including the Community Center debt in the amount of \$3.7 million, it will take the burden off property taxes; that a six-year SPLOST with intergovernmental agreements with the municipalities would be better than a five-year SPLOST; that perhaps the Soccer Field and Pate Park parking can be included in Roads & Bridges; and that from the initial project proposal list, \$1.7 million has been removed from roads & bridges, \$400,000 from Public Works, the Hwy 208 park/ballfield, the water system improvements, and the soccer field lighting.

Project Consensus. The Board's consensus was to have a six-year SPLOST, have intergovernmental agreements with the municipalities, refinance the Community Center debt and include \$3.7 million of that in the SPLOST, which leaves four more years of payments remaining on the debt; to reduce the Rails to Trails amount to \$500,000, the Roads & Bridges amount to \$1,150,000, add Broadband for \$1,200,000, and the other projects and amounts remaining as proposed. There were no objections to moving forward with notification to the municipalities regarding a SPLOST meeting, and to have such a meeting either on September 19 or October 3.

OTHER

Recreation Board & Little League Association. Discussion included that it appears funds of about \$20,000 are missing from the Little League treasury, and the Recreation Board has called a special meeting for next Wednesday (September 6) to address the situation.

Football Scoreboard at Pate Park. Discussion included that the Football League would like to be able to sell space on the scoreboard, which was purchased a few years ago, in an area that is 2' x 16' at a cost of \$250 per 2' x 4' space, with the possibility of adding more advertising space on each end of the scoreboard. The proposal was provided to John Taylor, County Attorney, to review.

Animal Control Letter from Humane Society of Harris County (HSHC). Discussion included that a meeting had been held with Anna Donaldson (Animal Control Officer), Bit Geter (Animal Control Officer), Mike Brown (Public Works Director), Cynthia Nelson (Warden), Nancy McMichael, and Randy Dowling in attendance to discuss the letter from the HSHC dated August 24, 2017, with the outcome being that the issues in the letter from HSHC were basically misunderstandings and budget issues. Mr. Dowling was directed to have a meeting with the HSHC, and no interest was expressed by the Commissioners to be included in the meeting.

Airport Fuel Truck. Mr. Dowling reported that the AV Gas fuel truck was to be delivered tonight (August 31), and that the County will have a few weeks to try it out before being invoiced.

AV Gas & Jet Fuel Taxes. Mr. Dowling reported that Eastern Aviation, from whom the Airport obtains its fuels, will remit the appropriate taxes to the State, and that the Airport is not required to have a license to sell the fuels.

Credit Card Fees. Consensus was that any fees charged for use of credit/debit cards should be passed on to the consumer and that the County should not be paying such fees.

ADJOURNMENT

MINUTES APPROVAL. The motion to approve these Work Session minutes was made during Regular Session of September 19, 2017, by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Chewning, and passed unanimously.