

**FRANKLIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
January 4, 2016
6:00 P.M.**

Present: Commission Chairman Thomas Bridges
District 1 Commissioner Robert Franklin
District 2 Commissioner David Strickland
District 3 Commissioner Jeff Jacques
District 4 Commissioner Eddie Wester

Media: Shane Scoggins, Franklin County Citizen
MJ Kneiser, WLHR

Staff: County Manager, Beth Thomas
County Clerk, Elaine Evans
County Attorney, Bubba Samuels

Item 1 & 2: Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance – Chairman Bridges called the January 4, 2016 regular board meeting to order. He welcomed everyone and thanked them for taking the time to come out. Chairman Bridges then led the invocation and pledge to the American flag.

Item 3: Approval of Minutes:

December 7, 2015 Public Hearing
December 7, 2015 Regular Board Meeting
December 22, 2015 Work Session

Chairman Bridges said that the minutes have been sent out to each Commissioner for review. He then asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Strickland made the motion to approve all three sets of minutes at once. Chairman Bridges asked for a second. Commissioner Wester seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Chairman Bridges asked for a show of hands. The motion passed by five (5) YES votes to zero (0) NO votes. The YES votes were Commissioner Franklin; Commissioner Strickland; Commissioner Wester; Commissioner Jacques; and Chairman Bridges.

Item 4: Items for discussion:

A. Public Comment – Chairman Bridges asked if anyone would like to make a public comment to the Commission. There was no one who wished to speak.

B. Dixie Lane – Chairman Bridges said that at the December work session

several of the residents of Dixie Lane came before the Commission Board and asked for acceptance and maintenance of their road. He said that Dixie Lane provides access to four residents. The County has received easements from each of the property owners. The residents of Dixie Lane have taken the proper steps in accordance of Franklin County's Road Policy. Chairman Bridges said that there is no apparent reason to deny acceptance of Dixie Lane based on the recommendation from the County Engineer, John Phillips.

Chairman Bridges asked County Manager Beth Thomas for comments before the vote. Mrs. Thomas said that everything has been done by the residents of Dixie Lane in accordance with the Franklin County Road Policy. She said that based on the recommendation from the County Engineer that maintenance should end at a point of 975 linear feet from State Route 106 if the road is approved. This point gives access to all four residences and provides a turnaround place for County equipment.

Chairman Bridges asked Mrs. Thomas if her recommendation is to accept the road. Mrs. Thomas affirmed yes. Chairman Bridges asked for a motion to accept Dixie Lane. Commissioner Franklin made the motion to accept Dixie Lane. He said that he looked at the road and there is an adequate place for County equipment to turnaround. Chairman Bridges asked for a second. Commissioner Jacques seconded the motion. Chairman Bridges asked for discussion. Commissioner Jacques said that before the vote he wanted clarification that this is only maintenance from ditch to ditch. Mrs. Thomas said yes. This was the information provided in the memo from County Engineer John Phillips. There was no further discussion. Chairman Bridges asked for a show of hands. The motion passed by five (5) YES votes to zero (0) NO votes. The YES votes were Commissioner Wester; Commissioner Jacques; Commissioner Strickland; Commissioner Franklin; and Chairman Bridges.

C. STELAR update – Chairman Bridges said the Commission Board has been working with Representative Doug Collins on getting Atlanta television stations in this area. He asked Mrs. Thomas to give an update on this agenda item. Mrs. Thomas said that she read through the 62 pages of the FCC Rules and Order and she will give a summary of it. Mrs. Thomas said that Congress passed the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act Reauthorization (STELAR) in 2014. In the later part of 2015, the FCC moved forward on actions that implemented two statutory requirements of STELAR. One of those items related to so-called "orphan counties" such as Franklin County. The FCC Rules and Order adopt satellite television market modification rules which allows for the involved broadcaster; satellite carrier; and the county government to file a petition with the FCC. The local governments may only file a request with respect to satellite modifications, not for cable modifications. The FCC will determine whether or not to grant a modification request based on five statutory factors. The five statutory factors are found in another document from the FCC.

Mrs. Thomas said that by allowing local governments to petition the FCC, the County is able to make the request on behalf of its residents. The FCC strongly encourages county governments to enlist the aid and cooperation of the station they

wish to bring into their county. This is due to the time and expense of filing a petition. It is more than writing a letter, steps have to be followed. The satellite carrier and the affected broadcaster must be willing participants.

Mrs. Thomas said that the County is still researching the proper process for the “orphan counties” to have access to Atlanta television stations. She said that she has been in contact with the surrounding counties sharing information on what steps to take in this process. Mrs. Thomas said that her personal opinion is the next step should be to talk to the satellite carriers that represent this area to see if they are willing to change. Without the help of the satellite carrier, writing letters will not work. Commissioner Strickland asked if the counties are Franklin; Stephens; Elbert and Madison. Mrs. Thomas said that the counties that she has talked with are Stephens, Elbert and Hart. Chairman Bridges thanked Mrs. Thomas for the update and for her work on trying to get this programming into our area.

D. Attorney appointment – Chairman Bridges asked Mrs. Thomas to give an update on the attorney appointment. Mrs. Thomas said that the Board of Commissioners elected to send out a request for proposal in anticipation of the January appointment. In the RFP there was guidelines for the submission of information and listed the criteria for selection and evaluation. Each RFP was evaluated using the same criteria of capability; cost; flexibility; and references. There were 12 requests for the RFP with only five of them returned. The Legal Services Committee included Mrs. Thomas; County Engineer John Phillips; Chairman Bridges and Commissioner Wester. This committee evaluated the submissions along with an independent evaluation performed by Mr. Ted Baggett of the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. Mr. Baggett provided his input to Mrs. Thomas by teleconference.

Mrs. Thomas said that after careful consideration the subcommittee narrowed the applicants down to two. Through further evaluation the subcommittee collectively agreed that oral presentations were not necessary. Based on available submission and criteria The Samuels Firm is recommended to be the legal services provider for the next year. The Samuels Firm had one of the highest ranking scores on experience and capability in local government. In addition they were tied for the most cost effective criteria. This process was valuable and a worthy endeavor. While the subcommittee is recommending continuing the relationship with the current attorney, revisions in the contract will prove to be a cost savings measure as the preexisting benefit structure will be eliminated. Mrs. Thomas said that it is the recommendation of the Legal Services Committee to appoint The Samuels Firm as the county attorney for 2016 at an hourly rate of \$100 as presented in the RFP. The current process of receiving authorization for work from the county manager will remain intact while the benefit package would be eliminated in the new contract.

Chairman Bridges asked for a motion to appoint The Samuels Firm based on the recommendation from Mrs. Thomas. Commissioner Jacques made the motion. Commissioner Franklin seconded the motion. Chairman Bridges asked for discussion before the vote. Commissioner Strickland asked who the other firm was and when did

the committee meet. Mrs. Thomas asked Commissioner Strickland if he would like to know all five of the applicants. Commissioner Strickland said sure. Mrs. Thomas said that the five firms were Jarrard and Davis; Samuels Firm; Pope Langstaff; Doug Kidd; and Royal Will. The committee met on a Friday afternoon before Christmas in accordance with the RFP. Commissioner Wester said that the date was December 11th. There was no further discussion. Chairman Bridges asked for a show of hands. The motion passed by five (5) YES votes to zero (0) NO votes. The YES votes were Chairman Bridges; Commissioner Franklin; Commissioner Strickland; Commissioner Jacques; and Commissioner Wester.

E. Clerk appointment – Chairman Bridges said that the evaluation for the clerk was done in executive session at the work session on December 22, 2015. He said that the evaluation for the clerk was very favorable. Chairman Bridges said that his interpretation is that each Commissioner is pleased with the clerk. He asked for a motion to appoint Elaine Evans as county clerk for 2016. Commissioner Strickland made the motion. Commissioner Wester seconded the motion. Chairman Bridges said that Mrs. Evans should be congratulated for getting good ratings from all five Commissioners. He asked for a show of hands. The motion passed by five (5) YES votes to zero (0) NO votes. The YES votes were Commissioner Jacques; Commissioner Strickland; Commissioner Franklin; Commissioner Wester; and Chairman Bridges.

F. Manager appointment – Chairman Bridges said that the manager has a contract and this will continue. He said that Mrs. Thomas was evaluated in the executive session at the December work session. He said that this was the annual evaluation for Mrs. Thomas as stated in her contract. Chairman Bridges said that a vote is not necessary for Mrs. Thomas as she has a three year employment contract. He said that he is pleased with the job that Mrs. Thomas is doing for the County.

Commissioner Franklin said that he is pleased with Mrs. Thomas working for Franklin County. She does a great job. Commissioner Jacques said that Mrs. Thomas does a great job and she is the right person at the right time for Franklin County. Commissioner Strickland said that Mrs. Thomas filled the void that was missing for finances. He said that he hopes that the County can get the software that is needed to get ahead of the curveball instead of being behind the eight ball. Commissioner Wester said that he appreciates that Mrs. Thomas took problems head on and found solutions and not just ideas. He thanked her for her hard work. Chairman Bridges said that he and the Commission Board feel like 2016 will be a very positive year with Mrs. Thomas as the manager for Franklin County.

Chairman Bridges asked Mrs. Thomas if she had a date for the planning session. Mrs. Thomas said that she has two possible dates – Friday, January 22nd starting at 12 noon and going for however long it lasts or combining it with the work session on Tuesday, January 26th. Chairman Bridges asked for feedback from the Commission Board. Commissioner Strickland said that January 22nd would work better for him as he will be out of town on January 26th. The other Commission Board members were in agreement for January 22nd. Mrs. Thomas said that the time for the meeting will be from

12 to 5 with additional discussion continuing at the January 26th work session if needed. Commissioner Jacques asked what location for the meeting. Mrs. Thomas said that she would confirm the location and let everyone know.

There was no further discussion. Chairman Bridges asked for a motion and a second to adjourn. Commissioner Jacques made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Franklin seconded the motion. Chairman Bridges asked for a show of hands. The motion passed by five (5) YES votes to zero (0) NO votes. The YES votes were Chairman Bridges; Commissioner Wester; Commissioner Strickland; Commissioner Jacques; and Commissioner Franklin. The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Signed on the _____ day of _____, 2016

Chairman J. Thomas Bridges

Robert L. Franklin, District 1 Commissioner

David R. Strickland, District 2 Commissioner

Jeff Jacques, District 3 Commissioner

Eddie Wester, District 4 Commissioner

Elaine H. Evans, County Clerk