

FRANKLIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
November 7, 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*
Buddy Hardigree, *WLHR*

Staff: County Manager, Beth Thomas
County Clerk, Elaine Evans

Item 1 & 2: Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance – Chairman Bridges called the November regular board meeting to order and thanked everyone for coming out. He then led the invocation and the pledge to the American flag.

Item 3: Approval of Minutes:

October 3, 2016 Public Hearing
October 3, 2016 Regular Board Meeting
October 25, 2016 Work Session

Chairman Bridges asked for a motion to accept the October meeting minutes as written. Commissioner Strickland made the motion to accept all three sets of minutes. Chairman Bridges asked for a second. Commissioner Jacques seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Chairman Bridges asked for a show of hands. The motion passed by four (4) YES votes to zero (0) NO votes. The YES votes were Commissioner Franklin; Commissioner Strickland; Commissioner Jacques; and Commissioner Wester.

Item 4: Items for discussion:

A. Public Comment – Chairman Bridges asked if anyone would like to speak in public comment. No one came forward. Commissioner Strickland told the residents of Freedom Drive if they wanted to speak to the Commissioners that now is their time to do so. Chairman Bridges said that the Commission Board always wants to give anyone an opportunity to speak in public comment. He said that all of the

Commissioners have received emails from citizens and have answered them.

Tommy Slater came forward to speak. He said that he has emailed Commissioner Strickland concerning Freedom Drive. Mr. Slater said that he built his home in 1999. He said that the traffic is unbearable. He does not have trees around his property and the dust causes him to have to clean mud out of his gutters. Mr. Slater stated to the Commission Board that he would be happy with any help, it did not have to be full blown paving, tar and gravel would be fine.

Tammy Slater, sister of Tommy Slater, came forward to speak. She said that she lives below her brother and not with him. Ms. Slater said that she is raising her granddaughter and has to wait in the dust for the school bus. There are two Stephens County school buses and one Lavonia school bus that comes down the road. Ms. Slater said that sometimes the school bus driver keeps her granddaughter on the bus until the dust settles on the road. She said that the dust is not good for anyone. Ms. Slater said that she has lived on Freedom Drive since 2001 and the area has grown and grown and that the road has outgrown the traffic. Ms. Slater stated that she would appreciate anything that the Commission Board can do to help with the road.

Pam Brady stated that she lives on the Stephens County portion of Freedom Drive that was paved this summer. She said that the Stephens County residents are part of the reason that the traffic is more on the road. Ms. Brady said that she has lived there full time for the past three years. She said that when traveling the road she meets at least one car or multiple cars. Ms. Brady said that depending on the time of year there is always mud or dust. She said that any improvement would be greatly appreciated. The quality of life would increase for the residents if the road is improved.

B. Franklin County Speed Zone Ordinance – Chairman Bridges said that the speed zone ordinance has been reviewed by the Commission Board and it has to be officially adopted. He asked Mrs. Thomas to go over the ordinance. Mrs. Thomas said that the Georgia Department of Transportation has updated the Franklin County Speed Zone Ordinance. She said that this information was emailed to the Commission Board for review. She gave her recommendation that the Franklin County Speed Zone Ordinance be approved. She said that after approval the executed copy will be sent to the Georgia Department of Transportation and a copy will be given to the Sheriff's Department. Chairman Bridges said that it is his understanding that the deputies cannot use radar until this ordinance is approved. Mrs. Thomas said that this has to be updated and has to be posted before radar use goes into effect. This is a formality that has to be done every year. Chairman Bridges asked for a motion to accept the speed zone ordinance. Commissioner Strickland made the motion to accept. Chairman Bridges asked for a second. Commissioner Jacques seconded the motion following review. There was no discussion. Chairman Bridges asked for a show of hands. The motion passed by four (4) YES votes to zero (0) NO votes. The YES votes were Commissioner Wester; Commissioner Jacques; Commissioner Strickland; and Commissioner Franklin.

C. 2017 LMIG Projects – Chairman Bridges said that the project list for the

2017 LMIG was discussed at the work session. He asked Mrs. Thomas to give more information on this. Mrs. Thomas said that Franklin County is blessed in getting a large increase in GDOT funding but \$500,000 will only go so far in doing projects. Franklin County has 2.5 million dollars of immediate needs on roads. Mrs. Thomas stated that County staff had to whittle the list down to importance and what is able to fit within the confines of the grant money and the local match. The list was presented to the Commission Board at the work session. Mrs. Thomas recommended that the listing for the 2017 LMIG be approved because this has to be sent to GDOT before the end of this year in order to get the grant funding. She said that the approval is for the LMIG listing to go to the Georgia Department of Transportation, not that all the projects will be done. Mrs. Thomas said that this listing is comprised of what the County thinks that the pricing will be. She stated that the projects will be worked on in the order of what the list is within the confines of the grant money. Chairman Bridges asked for a motion to accept the 2017 LMIG project listing. Commissioner Jacques made the motion. 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 four (4) YES votes to zero (0) NO votes. The YES votes were Commissioner Jacques; Commissioner Strickland; Commissioner Wester; and Commissioner Franklin.

D. Announcements – Chairman Bridges said that the next agenda item is announcements. He asked Mrs. Thomas to make her announcement. **Mrs. Thomas** said that she had one good announcement to make. She said that every five years an update to the Hazard Mitigation Plan, a part of Emergency Management is required. She said that the update is due in 2019 but the County is getting a head start on it with applying for a GEMA grant. The total cost for the update to the Hazard Mitigation is \$24,000. The County was able to get a grant for \$18,000. The County match of \$6,000 will come from internal salaries of staff. Mrs. Thomas expressed her appreciation to EMA Director Lyndon Burgess for applying for the grant. Chairman Bridges said that this is good news. Commissioner Jacques said that all staff should be commended for their efforts toward this, it is tremendous.

Commissioner Strickland said that he had attended a regional convention and gained information about the widening project of Hwy 17 from Lavonia to Royston which should be completed by 2023. He also said that he was able to talk with Elbert County Chairman Tommy Lyons who said that Elbert County has purchased about 36 acres of land for over \$64,000 that is located near the railroad. Elbert County is also looking into possibly purchasing 500 more. Commissioner Strickland said that Franklin County needs to look into purchasing land near the railroad because of the Port of Savannah. He said that this could possibly help with property taxes.

Commissioner Strickland said that he has been talking with Mr. Randall of the school system about the old Sandy Cross school house. He said that in the five year goal it seems that there should be another ballfield for the Recreation Department. Commissioner Strickland said that no one knows who owns the land but it is tax exempt. Mrs. Thomas stated to Commissioner Strickland said that GMRC is working on a whole DCA plan for recreational plans. She said that she will make sure that this is

included. Commissioner Strickland said that there are ballfields in Lavonia, Royston, and Carnesville. He said that there is already a ballfield there and it would be a good thing for the County. Commissioner Strickland said that if the County is able to acquire the building it will need to put on a half of a roof because the Community Center could only afford to put on half of it.

Commissioner Strickland asked Mrs. Thomas to look into the issue of whether the chairman should vote or not and to put this item on the December work session. He said that in 1991 Franklin County became a Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Strickland said that in 1996 the chairman could not vote but in 1997 the chairman could vote. Mrs. Thomas told Commissioner Strickland that an update of the ordinances is being worked on now. She said that she has the local legislation book and she is willing to go through this with him. Mrs. Thomas also said that as Municode sends the updates they will be gone over. She said that the ordinances not being updated has been an issue. The update for ordinances was voted on by the Board of Commissioners and is now in process by Municode. Commissioner Strickland said that with going into a new year he did not want this to be an issue.

Chairman Bridges said that the District 2 Legislation Meeting is scheduled for November 16 from 10 to 12 at the North Georgia College in Dahlonega. He said that this is time for expression of needs in the counties. Chairman Bridges encouraged anyone who can attend this meeting to do so.

Commissioner Jacques asked that the potential list for LMIG be made available to the media and the public. He said that he would like for everyone to have access to this information.

There were no further comments or concerns. Chairman Bridges adjourned the regular board meeting at 6:22 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