



**FRANKLIN COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
January 9, 2017  
6:00 P.M.**

**BOC:**                    *Commission Chairman Thomas Bridges  
District 1 Commissioner Robert Franklin  
District 2 Commissioner Dr. Jason Macomson  
District 3 Commissioner Jeff Jacques  
District 4 Commissioner Eddie Wester*

**Media:**                *Shane Scoggins, Franklin County Citizen  
Charles Robertson, WLHR*

**Staff:**                 *County Manager Beth Thomas  
County Clerk Elaine Evans  
County Engineer John Phillips  
County Attorney Bubba Samuels*

**Item 1 & 2:**        **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance** – *Chairman Bridges called the regular board meeting to order at 6:08 after a short recess from the public hearing. He asked Commissioner Wester to give the invocation and lead the pledge of allegiance to the American flag.*

**Item 3:**              **Approval of Minutes:**  
  
*December 5, 2016 Public Hearing  
December 5, 2016 Regular Board Meeting*

*Chairman Bridges asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from December. Commissioner Jacques made the motion to accept the minutes as written and distributed following review. Chairman Bridges asked for a second. Commissioner Franklin 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 Chairman Bridges; Commissioner Wester; Commissioner Jacques; Commissioner Franklin; and Dr. Macomson.*

**Item 4:**              **Items for discussion:**

A.     **Public Comment** – *Chairman Bridges asked for public comment. He said to come forward and state your name. **Angie Sheriff** of Colston*



Drive came forward. She said that the road is in such terrible condition that medical transport and school buses have not been able to get through. Ms. Sheriff asked the Commission Board if the dam on the road was federally funded. She wanted to know if this would make a difference in the acceptance of the road. Ms. Sheriff also stated that she had easement papers from everyone on the road. Commissioner Jacques asked Ms. Sheriff if all the easements were from the beginning of the road to the end of the road. Ms. Sheriff stated that she had all of them.

**Commissioner Franklin** clarified the location of Colston Drive if it is off of Williams Bridge Road. Ms. Sheriff said yes, it is. She said the main problem with Colston Drive is the hill near the dam. **Commissioner Jacques** stated that previously an engineering assessment and evaluation was done on the dam and it was found to be structurally deficient. He said that the County Engineer will need to look at this very closely before a decision is made by the Board to adopt this part of Colston Drive. Commissioner Jacques told Ms. Sheriff that he is onboard with what she has done which will allow the County to take the road on in a legal manner for perpetual maintenance if accepted.

**Teresa Cortigiano** came forward to speak. She stated that when she moved to Colston Drive in 1997 the road had gravel on it and she assumed that it would continue to be maintained. She said that she later learned that one of the homeowners was purchasing the gravel for the entire road. Ms. Cortigiano said that sometime later she called the County and asked for gravel to be placed on the road. She said that the road was maintained for several years after this call and then it just stopped. At this time her main concern is the hill that is almost impassable.

Ms. Cortigiano said that they have been told that Colston Drive is a private road. She stated that she has called and respectfully asked that the road sign be updated if this is true; the road sign should have PVT on it if it is private. She stated again that she did not understand putting gravel on the road and then quitting. **Chairman Bridges** said that at one time the County Commissioners would maintain roads for a certain period of time. He asked County Engineer John Phillips to explain this further. **Mr. Phillips** said that the County has tried several ways to help with road maintenance. He said that one of the ways was to adopt roads for a temporary period to allow the residents of the road time to give easements.

**Commissioner Jacques** said that in the past a former resident of Colston Drive, Mr. Parker got easements or commitments from the property owners and presented this to the Commission Board. He said that based on the policy in effect at that time the County was allowed to work the road for 18 months while the right of way deeds and surveys were prepared for transfer to the County. At the end of the 18 months all of the deeds were not secured therefore the County could not legally work the road. **Ms. Cortigiano** asked if the road would be accepted since Ms. Sheriff got the signatures. Commissioner Jacques told her that this is the predecessor to allowing the Commission Board to formalize the adoption by vote. He said that the County Engineer will review the information and then will make a recommendation to the



*Commission Board on adopting the road.*

**Commissioner Franklin** said that one thing that hurts the dam is all the trees growing on it. He said that in 1977 Toccoa Falls had a similar situation with tree roots that caused a flood. Commissioner Franklin posed the question of the liability issue of the dam. **Commissioner Jacques** said that about five years ago the Commission Board had a discussion about Colston Drive of adopting down to the dam because of the structural damage to the dam. At this time the County Engineer advised the Board that it was not in the best interest of the County to adopt the full road with the portion of the dam. If the property owners repaired the dam then the County could look at adopting the full road. Commissioner Jacques clarified that this information came from a prior board and not the one that is currently seated. He said that he would not have a problem voting to adopt the entire road if the dam was brought back up to standard.

**Ron Jackson** spoke next. He said that from what he is hearing service is not provided to Colston Drive because of the structural soundness of the dam. **Commissioner Jacques** said that the reason service is not being provided to Colston Drive is because it is private property. He defined that prior boards viewed the dam as one reason to not adopt the whole road. Commissioner Jacques said that this should be considered along with the County Engineer's review. Mr. Jackson said that from 2004 to 2010 the road was maintained by the County. **Chairman Bridges** told the residents of Colston Drive to get with Mr. Phillips for further review and information.

**Angela Sullivan** said that she lives on Riverbend Road. She said that Franklin County is a beautiful place and she would like to keep it beautiful. Ms. Sullivan stated that she is against the variance for Ms. Blount and to just keep it legal.

**Guerry Hall** said that several months back Bryan Burns had to move a chicken house pad which cost him \$7,500 because it was built in the wrong place. He stated that granting a variance would set a precedence of what the Board is willing to do. Mr. Hall said that Ms. Blount's attorney has misrepresented the information that was presented to the Commission Board. He said that the house is not 90% complete as the inside is nothing but a hull. He also said that the value of the house is closer to \$60,000 and not \$200,000.

**Michael Malia** said that when the house for Ms. Blount was ordered to stop building, they kept on building. He said that he disagrees with the value of \$200,000 that the attorney stated that maybe it is more of a value of \$60,000. Mr. Malia said that a law has been presented and the Commission Board needs to stick with that.

**Walter Brown** said that he wanted to speak about Aderhold Road. He said that as he had stated to the Commission Board before that when it rains the water runs into the yard from the road. Mr. Brown said that he was told by the County Manager that there are not enough employees to go around. He said that Murphy Road has recently been worked which is below Aderhold Road. **Chairman Bridges** said as was



previously discussed that this road is on the schedule for maintenance.

### **B. Public Hearing items**

1. Chairman Bridges asked Mr. Phillips to comment on the **conditional use permit** for 685 South Fairview Road. Mr. Phillips said that the Planning Board considered this request and recommends approval for four pullet houses. Chairman Bridges asked for a motion to accept the recommendation from the Planning Board. Commissioner Jacques made the motion per the recommendation from the Planning Board. Chairman Bridges asked for a second. Dr. Macomson 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; Dr. Macomson; Chairman Bridges; Commissioner Jacques; and Commissioner Wester.

2. Chairman Bridges said that the next item is a **variance** for 279 Riverbend Road. He asked Mr. Phillips for his recommendation. Mr. Phillips gave the recommendation from the Planning Board to grant the variance as requested. Chairman Bridges asked the Commission Board for a recommendation. Commissioner Wester made a motion to table this item to allow time for additional research. Chairman Bridges asked that part of this motion be that this item will be brought back up at next month's regular meeting. He then asked for a second. Commissioner Franklin seconded the motion.

Chairman Bridges said that from what he was hearing from both parties, it seems to be the time for mediation. He said that if the item is tabled that will be the recommendation although the Commission Board cannot tell anyone to do that. Commissioner Wester said that he would like the opportunity to look into what was signed off on by the County Marshal.

Chairman Bridges asked for a show of hands to table the variance request. The motion passed by five (5) **YES** votes to zero (0) **NO** votes. The **YES** votes were Commissioner Wester; Commissioner Jacques; Chairman Bridges; Dr. Macomson; and Commissioner Franklin.

### **C. Appointments**

1. Chairman Bridges said that the **County Clerk** is appointed each year. He asked for a motion to appoint Elaine Evans for another year. Commissioner Jacques made the motion. Chairman Bridges asked for a second. Dr. Macomson 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 Jacques; Commissioner Wester; Dr. Macomson; and Chairman Bridges.

2. Chairman Bridges asked for a motion to appoint Bubba



Samuels as the **County Attorney** for another year. Commissioner Wester made the motion. Chairman Bridges asked for a second. Commissioner Franklin 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; Dr. Macomson; Chairman Bridges; Commissioner Jacques; and Commissioner Wester.

#### D. **Authority to receive checks**

Chairman Bridges asked Mrs. Thomas to go over the authority to receive checks item. Mrs. Thomas said the Commission Board needs to vote to give the **Tax Commissioner Bobby Martin** the authority to receive checks as payment. Chairman Bridges asked for a motion to authorize the Tax Commissioner Bobby Martin to receive checks. Commissioner Jacques made the motion. Chairman Bridges asked for a second. Commissioner Franklin 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 Chairman Bridges; Commissioner Franklin; Commissioner Wester; Dr. Macomson; and Commissioner Wester.

#### E. **Announcements**

1. Chairman Bridges asked Mrs. Thomas to go over the announcements. Mrs. Thomas asked Bobby Martin to announce his appointment for **Chief Deputy Tax Commissioner**. Mr. Martin stated that this is for informational purposes only and to comply with the Georgia Code. He said that Loraine Harris is appointed Chief Deputy Tax Commissioner for the new term beginning January 2017.

**Sheriff Thomas** stated that he has been in law enforcement almost 37 years and it has been a long road with events that shattered his life in 2014; officers being shot in Lavonia; and an offender being chased after a car crash. Sheriff Thomas said that he posted information on FACEBOOK and the citizens came through to help as they always do. He said that the offender had felony charges and was on felony parole but after a citizen tip he was caught.

Sheriff Thomas said that Captain Gary Smith has retired from the full time position of jail administrator although he is still working part time courthouse security. He said that Captain Smith had always done a fantastic job. Sheriff Thomas said that three people were interviewed to replace Captain Smith. All three were good candidates but he selected **Captain Greg Sisk** from Madison County as the new jail administrator. Sheriff Thomas then asked Captain Sisk to come forward and introduce himself to the Commission Board.

**Captain Sisk** said that he is a graduate of the Northeast Georgia Police Academy. He said that in 2011 he was promoted to jail administrator in Madison County. As the jail administrator he was responsible for the safety and security of the jail; supervision of 24 employees; purchasing; implementation of a 32 bed addition;



*pod kiosk for inmates; and medical services were contracted with Southern Correctional Medicine. Captain Sisk said that the additional 32 beds minimized housing costs. He said that the pod kiosk cut down on the time that officers had to go into the inmate areas and was also a huge savings on paper usage. The contract with Southern Correctional Medicine was a cost savings as weekly ER visits were eliminated.*

*The fifth day of December was Captain Sisk's first day as jail administrator for Franklin County. Captain Sisk said that Captain Smith had graciously stayed on and trained him for a 2 week period so that the transition was smooth. He said that Sheriff Thomas is a man of integrity and he is looking forward to working with him. Captain Sisk said that he is looking forward to many years of service to the citizens of Franklin County. He said that he is open to questions, comments or giving the Commission Board a tour of the jail. Chairman Bridges and the Commission Board thanked Captain Sisk and Sheriff Thomas for the introduction.*

*Mrs. Thomas said that the upcoming meetings are listed on the bottom of the agenda. Chairman Bridges thanked everyone for coming out and taking an interest in the County. He said that additional information is available on the County's website.*

*Chairman Bridges asked for a motion to adjourn the regular board meeting. Commissioner Jacques made the motion. Chairman Bridges asked for a second. Dr. Macomson seconded the motion. There was a show of hands. The motion passed by five (5) **YES** votes to zero (0) **NO** votes. The YES votes were Commissioner Franklin; Dr. Macomson; Chairman Bridges; Commissioner Jacques; and Commissioner Wester. The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.*



Signed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017

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*Chairman J. Thomas Bridges*

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*Robert L. Franklin, District 1 Commissioner*

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*Dr. Jason Macomson, District 2 Commissioner*

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*Jeff Jacques, District 3 Commissioner*

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*Eddie Wester, District 4 Commissioner*

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*Elaine H. Evans, County Clerk*