



"You Are Why We Are Here"

**FRANKLIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION MINUTES
November 28, 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*

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

Item 1: **Call Meeting to Order** – *Chairman Bridges welcomed everyone and called the work session to order at 6:00 p.m.*

Item 2: **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance** – *Commissioner Franklin led the invocation and pledge of allegiance to the American flag.*

Item 3: **Items for discussion:**

A. Public Comment – *There was no public comment.*

B. Colston Drive – *Mrs. Thomas said Colston Drive has been discussed several times. She gave information to the Commissioners including the 2011 engineering report, pictures of the road and the parcel map. Mrs. Thomas said the request is to accept maintenance from the beginning of Colston Road to the dam. The easements for this portion of the road have been obtained and the requirements have been done by diligence from Angie Sheriff. Mrs. Thomas stated there does not appear to be adequate turn around space before going over the dam. This portion of Colston Drive is in better shape than the part after crossing the dam. Mrs. Thomas told the Commission Board that all the information needs to be considered before acceptance of the road. She said she would not recommend the County going past the dam for maintenance and this brings up the question should the County maintain the first part of the road.*

Commissioner Franklin asked if the Road Superintendent could look at Colston Road and see if the equipment can be turned around. Mrs. Thomas said yes, she would get with the Road Superintendent and check on it. Commissioner Franklin said he did not want the Commissioners to approve something that the Road employees cannot do. He said this issue would be looked at differently if the equipment can be turned



"You Are Why We Are Here"

around or not. Mrs. Thomas said in addition to easements for the road an easement would be needed for the turnaround spot. Chairman Bridges asked the Commissioners to review the information and see what can be done in this situation.

C. IBA Director Retirement – Chairman Bridges asked Mayor Harris Little to speak about the IBA director retirement. Mayor Little said the IBA Director Frank Ginn is not retiring, this is just for his retirement plan. When Mr. Ginn was hired for the IBA Director he and the IBA Board was under the impression that Mr. Ginn would go back into the retirement plan that he was part of while he was Franklin County manager. Mayor Little said Mr. Ginn's salary was adjusted based on his participation in the retirement plan. After his employment Mr. Ginn gained the knowledge that he would not be going back into this plan because it is frozen.

Mayor Little said from the information received from the retirement administrator it would not be a problem to allow Mr. Ginn to go back into the old plan as only an amendment would be needed. Mayor Little said the IBA met several months ago and agreed to fund the cost of placing Mr. Ginn back into this plan. He then stated that the next step in the process is for the Commission Board to approve the plan amendment and send it to the administrator. He stated again that the IBA has agreed to fund this and would like to see Mr. Ginn get what they promised him.

Mrs. Thomas said there are steps that must done and at the end of them the ACCG Defined Benefit Board of Trustees would have to approve the change. Mayor Little said if the IBA and the County are willing to do this then ACCG should be willing. Chairman Bridges asked if there is a timetable that this needs to be done by. Mayor Little said he did not know the answer and asked Mrs. Thomas. Mrs. Thomas said the County would have to accrue an immediate liability and pay something into the plan and there is no timetable on it. Mayor Little stated that the IBA has agreed to pay this money and to continue to pay it going forward. He asked that this be placed on the December regular meeting for an amendment to allow Frank Ginn to go back on the previous version of the retirement plan.

Chairman Bridges asked Mrs. Thomas if this would give her enough time to gather the information for the vote on Monday night. Mrs. Thomas said she already has a lot of the information and she will be glad to sit with each Commissioner individually and go over it. She said the information of what steps to follow has been provided by the ACCG Defined Benefit group. The cost estimates have been provided along with a lot of caveats for consideration. Mayor Little said the IBA is aware that the costs may change, and they are willing to fund this.

Commissioner Jacques questioned that no one in the IBA or Mr. Ginn was aware of the plan change. Mayor Little said that none of the IBA are employees. Dr. Macomson asked if the IBA can bind themselves to pay for this long-term for Mr. Ginn. Mrs. Thomas said this is a good question because this would have to be paid on from now until when Mr. Ginn comes off the plan after retirement. She said she does not know the legalities if the current IBA Board can bind the next board, this is probably



"You Are Why We Are Here"

an attorney question. At this point Mrs. Thomas has the information of how to put Mr. Ginn back on the plan but she does not know the process of how to take him off if the next board chooses not to fund it. Mayor Little said the City of Carnesville with three employees has a defined benefit plan that was started over 20 years ago by the council that was in place then and the succeeding councils have continued to pay for it. Commissioner Jacques said it was financial considerations that prompted the County to make the plan change because of capital expenditures and the state of the retirement plan. Mayor Little said the administrative costs for a plan as small as the City of Carnesville is ridiculous, but it was a commitment made to the employees. Commissioner Jacques said the County made the commitment to every employee that was hired prior to the plan change to continue the old plan. Mayor Little questioned if people hired after this went on the new plan. Commissioner Jacques stated when the plan was changed the new hires were put into a 401k type of plan. He said his biggest concern with this request is treating one employee differently than all the others that have been hired during this time.

Mayor Little said he understands this and he does not question the concern. He stated again that when Frank Ginn was hired by the IBA it was with the understanding that he would be allowed back on the old retirement plan. It was a commitment made by the IBA to Mr. Ginn. Commissioner Jacques said if a commitment is made and it is based on policy he does not think the IBA should come to the Commissioners to correct it. When the decision to close the old plan was made it was heavily publicized. Mayor Little said people do not pay attention, if you are not an employee you don't care what happens. He said the decision is up to the Commissioners but the IBA is requesting the change because of the promise made to Mr. Ginn and they have agreed to cover the costs.

Mayor Little said it is the usual custom of the Airport Authority to host new commissioners with a reception and take them on an airplane flight. A new taxiway is being constructed and the spring would be a good time for the commissioners to come to the airport. Commissioner Jacques said this was a very worthwhile thing to do as it gives you a different perspective of the County. Mayor Little told the Commissioners that they will be getting back to them with a date.

*D. **LMIG 2018** – Mrs. Thomas gave the Commission Board the roads list for the proposed LMIG 2018 projects. She said she and the Road Superintendent Ralph Herren, Assistant Road Superintendent Nick Johnson, and County Engineer John Phillips have all worked together on the roads list to include all districts. There are a lot of needs in the County with very limited funds. Mrs. Thomas said this list includes a lot of patching as the need is greater for patching instead of resurfacing. She said it was a hard task to come up with a list that the County has the funds to do. Mrs. Thomas is requesting that the roads be patched with the 2018 LMIG money. In 2019 it will be looked at whether to continue patching or resurfacing. Chairman Bridges said the list looks like it is spread across the County and he is glad to be able to take of some of those roads.*



"You Are Why We Are Here"

E. Firefighters Insurance – Mrs. Thomas said this information is given as a reminder because the vote will be needed Monday night. She said ACCG granted an extension to Franklin County from December 1 to December 5 to give the Commissioners time to review and vote. Mrs. Thomas stated that her recommendation is to go with ACCG for this insurance coverage because of the price and the three-year guarantee along with the coverage. Chairman Bridges told the Commissioners to be ready to vote at Monday night's meeting. He also stated that this is not a full insurance only the cancer coverage.

F. Board Positions – Chairman Bridges said there are several board positions coming open and a lot of information has been given to the Commissioners. He asked Mrs. Thomas to explain this item further. Mrs. Thomas said Elaine made copies of every application received as well as giving information on the applications that are on file from the last twelve months. The procedure is all applications are kept on file for one year for consideration of open positions. Mrs. Thomas said she is not requesting the vote on these positions for the December meeting as this is a lot of information to look over. The Recreation Board provided minutes and recommendations for their four positions. Mrs. Thomas told the Commission Board that the Recreation Board did not have all the applications as they are to be turned into the County Clerk not the individual boards.

Dr. Macomson questioned if the Recreation Board is reporting and turning in minutes regularly. Mrs. Thomas said no. Dr. Macomson said this is something that they are supposed to be doing. Mrs. Thomas said she thought it would be good to turn them into Elaine. She said they are probably keeping them on file in their office but not turning into the County office. Of the four positions on the Recreation Board three of the current members choose not to be considered for appointment. Mrs. Thomas said she wanted the Commissioners to have the true picture of all applications before making the appointments.

Mrs. Thomas said Gary Farmer has put in an application to continue serving on the Tax Assessor Board. Gerald Voyles has requested to continue serving on the IBA Board. Mrs. Thomas said some of these positions will end on December 31 but the positions continue until reappointment. She said her recommendation would be to do the appointments at the January meeting. Mrs. Thomas said applications will continue to be gathered at the Clerk's office and a summary will be kept and forwarded to the Commissioners. Chairman Bridges asked if these positions were still being advertised. Mrs. Thomas said they were advertised for two weeks in the newspaper. The information is still on the website until filled. Mrs. Thomas said the County staff is making good use of the website especially in the changes of planning and zoning. The staff is receiving a lot of phone calls, but citizens are being directed to the website for the information.

G. Manager's Report – Mrs. Thomas said there are certain expenditures at the jail that need to be corrected for safety reasons. She said a purchase of cameras is needed. The price quote that Mrs. Thomas gave the Commissioners for this purchase



"You Are Why We Are Here"

for 26 cameras, a new server with the capacity to expand is approximately \$55,000. The other problem at the jail that needs to be corrected is the isolation doors do not have a window to give the inmates their meals. Mrs. Thomas said there is SPLOST III money that has been sitting in an account for a very long time. The corrections at the jail would be capital expenditures therefore a vote is needed before transferring the money. Mrs. Thomas said if the Commissioners did not want to use the SPLOST III then a transfer of Jail Fund money to the general maintenance budget of the County will be needed and this will be under the Board of Commissioners control.

Commissioner Jacques asked Mrs. Thomas what she would recommend, to use SPLOST or Jail Fund. Mrs. Thomas said to give the most flexibility she would recommend using the SPLOST III funds and this account has been sitting for years. When this money is used then the account can be closed therefore eliminating the reporting requirements. Mrs. Thomas said this is a capital expenditure and would leave the Jail Fund money to be used on operations if needed. Chairman Bridges asked Mrs. Thomas what timeframe would she like to see. Mrs. Thomas said as soon as possible because the quotes are only good for 15 to 30 days. If the vote could come at the next meeting this would allow the Jail Administrator to begin the process. Chairman Bridges asked the Commissioners to look this over and be prepared to vote on Monday night.

Mrs. Thomas said the County has received a letter of support from the Georgia Association of Broadcasters for the FCC modification. She said she has forwarded this letter to the other four counties. Mrs. Thomas said in her research of the Greenville South Carolina stations she can prove that no coverage for the recent elections in the cities of Canon and Carnesville was provided. These were small elections, but they are still important to the citizens of Franklin County. Mrs. Thomas said she will be giving this information to the County Attorney to file for Franklin County. Commissioner Jacques said this past Sunday the Atlanta Falcons football game was not in our area, only the Carolina Panthers. Mrs. Thomas asked everyone when it was showing on the television screens only Carolina coverage and no Georgia coverage to please take a screen shot so this can be included in the report showing the lack of Georgia coverage for our area. Chairman Bridges said this has taken considerable time, but we do want it to be right before submission. Mrs. Thomas said the only county that has been able to get the market modification is currently locked in appeal. She said the Greenville stations can always file an appeal, but Franklin County wants to have a strong case to start with.

H. Announcements – None.

There was no further discussion. Chairman Bridges adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.



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Signed on the _____ day of _____, 2017

Chairman J. Thomas Bridges

Robert L. Franklin, District 1 Commissioner

Dr. Jason Macomson, District 2 Commissioner

Jeff Jacques, District 3 Commissioner

Eddie Wester, District 4 Commissioner

Elaine H. Evans, County Clerk