



You Are Why We Are Here

**FRANKLIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION MINUTES
November 27, 2018
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 called the November work session to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Item 2: Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance – Dr. Macomson 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. Presentation

Chairman Bridges welcomed Joey Osborne of the Probation Office. Mr. Osborne came forward and stated he serves as the Chief Probation Officer for the Northern Judicial Misdemeanor Probation Office. He has been a probation officer for 26 years with 23 of those years serving in his current position.

The Probation Office has a staff of 12 full-time and four part-time employees. Mr. Osborne said one of the full-time officers will be retiring this week and one is on maternity leave. For the month of December part-time employees will be used to cover these full-time spots. Services are provided for 17 courts in five counties working with 14 judges and three superior court judges.

Mr. Osborne said the Probation Office duties include but are not limited to court intakes, probationer reporting times, drug screens, community service work agreements, provision of anger management and DUI information, recommendation of sanctions for probation violators, probationer home, work and jail visits and



You Are Why We Are Here

annual training. During the intake process the Probation Officer meets with the probationer and explains the conditions of probation and schedules them for their first reporting time. Mr. Osborne said each Officer has a certain day of the week for reporting times to meet with the probationer or to take their phone call. The Probation Officers are responsible to make sure the probationer is following the conditions of probation set by the judge.

Every probationer is not drug screened. Mr. Osborne stated the drug screens are done based on the charge and whether it is mandated by the court. Drug screens are also performed on reasonable suspicion. Some drug screens are done based on other people calling in and telling on the probationer. Mr. Osborne said 99% of the time the drug screens will come back positive from these tips. The probationer is not charged for the drug screen.

Mr. Osborne said all community service is done with non-profit organizations and an agreement is in place with them. He said each probationer who performs community service must first sign an agreement that relieves the liability on the agency saying that they will not be sued. The form used has the approval of the District Attorney. The probationer is able to pick an organization from the list provided to them by the Probation Officer.

Information is provided to probationers for substance abuse, anger management and DUI schools without a recommendation from the Probation Officer. Mr. Osborne said by law no recommendation is made by his Office for any of these services. The judges rely on the information provided by the Probation Officers for recommendations as they see the probationers monthly and are more familiar with their situations.

Field visits consisting of home visits and work visits are made occasionally. Mr. Osborne said with the court schedules in the five counties the Probation Officers do not have the time to make a lot of field visits but they take priority if a complaint is made. Most of the time the Probation Officer will ask for a Deputy Sheriff to make the visit with them. Jail visits to probation violators are also part of the Probation Officers duties. Mr. Osborne said options for the violator are discussed whether they own up to the violation and serve the time or challenge the violation assertion before the judge.

Mr. Osborne said all the Probation Officers are State certified officers with arrest powers and are permitted to carry firearms. Training is required each year to maintain their certifications.

There is a fee of \$36 per month charged for being on probation. Mr. Osborne said each year the collection fees have been enough to cover the Probation Office budget making this revenue neutral. He said his office does not cost the taxpayers and he is thankful for that. Mr. Osborne expressed thanks to the Commission Board for allowing the employees of the Probation Office to be a part of Franklin County's employee base. He said his office has a good working relationship with the BOC staff and County.



You Are Why We Are Here

Chairman Bridges questioned what happens if the probationer says they cannot pay the \$36 per month. Mr. Osborne stated his Office does whatever they can to make the probation work. He said fines can be converted to community service but most people are able to come up with \$36 per month. If the reporting fee is converted to community service the Federal Minimum Wage of \$7.25 per hour is used. Chairman Bridges asked how often are the probationers required to report. Mr. Osborne said most of the time it is once a month but can be more depending on what kind of programs they are in. He also said phone in probation is done for out of state residents and various court approved locations are used for those drug screens.

C. LMIG

Chairman Bridges asked Mrs. Thomas to give information on LMIG. Mrs. Thomas said Franklin County is scheduled to receive approximately \$562,000 in GDOT funding for the 2019 LMIG. Franklin County has to match these funds by 30% for a project of about \$730,000. Resurfacing needs in the amount of five million dollars has been identified by the County Engineer and Road Supervisor. Franklin County has limited funding and three roads are proposed for resurfacing. Mrs. Thomas said these roads were identified for resurfacing because patching would be needed again if they were not resurfaced. She asked the Commissioners to review the list and consider them for a vote at the December 3 meeting so the paperwork can be submitted on time. The three roads were identified as Dove Hill Road from US 29 to Dovetown Road, Stone Bridge Road from State Route 145 to Burroughs Road, and New Town Road from Gumlog Road to Smith Road. This is just under five miles of resurfacing for a total price of \$730,604.06. Mrs. Thomas said the additional funds for the project will come from SPLOST. Chairman Bridges said action will be taken on this at the December regular board meeting.

D. Board Appointment updates

Chairman Bridges asked Mrs. Thomas to give an update on board appointments. Mrs. Thomas said one application has been received for the Tax Assessor Board with recommendation from the Tax Assessor Board itself to reappoint Dan Stroud. Mr. Stroud is currently serving on the Tax Assessor Board and is interested in continuing. Mrs. Thomas concurred with this recommendation from the Tax Assessor Board and asked the Commission Board to consider this at the December regular board meeting.

Mrs. Thomas said there are two openings on the Planning Commission and only one application has been received. This application was forwarded to the Commissioners for review. Mrs. Thomas asked the Commission Board to consider this application for possible appointment. She asked the Commissioners to reach out to people who might have an interest in serving the County. Dr. Macomson asked if the Planning Commission always meets once a month. Mrs. Thomas said in the past year it has met once a month. Planning and zoning are heavily regulated by the State and it is very specific in the manner in which public hearings, advertisements and meetings are held. Dr. Macomson questioned what kind of training is needed. Mrs. Thomas said it is more training by fire on the job although there are planning and zoning rules that



You Are Why We Are Here

dictate procedures. She said because of the structure of the Planning Commission, arguments are heard and the recommendation is immediately made unless it is tabled. If items are tabled the public hearings are delayed. The Planning Commission looks out for the future of Franklin County.

Mrs. Thomas said there are two openings on the Recreation Board. No new applications have been received. The Recreation Board made a recommendation of an applicant that was received in the past year. Mrs. Thomas asked the Commissioners to reach out to people with an interest in recreation. She stated it is hard to operate any of the boards when they are short.

E. Manager's Report

Mrs. Thomas said today was the final day for Franklin County to file opposition to the Greenville stations in the FCC market modification. She said the Greenville stations filed for extension and it was granted. Franklin County had 15 days to oppose. Mrs. Thomas said she filed opposition of 14 pages of rebuttal and 75 plus pages of supporting documents. A copy was mailed this afternoon to all the parties including the FCC. This is a review of whether the FCC correctly interrupted the information to grant the market modification. Mrs. Thomas said she has contacted Representative Doug Collins office for guidance. No changes will be made in the markets at this time.

The sewer and line construction meeting will be held this week. Mrs. Thomas said the weather has had an impact on the project but it is running on schedule. There was a pre-construction meeting for the water improvement projects this week with GEFA, ARC and DCA.

F. Announcements

Mrs. Thomas said additional staff has been added at the Road Department. The Landfill operation is short staffed. The roads are in need of work due to the extra rain. Mrs. Thomas said someone to man the Landfill is becoming an issue and it is not feasible to take someone from working roads to man the Landfill operations. At this time the Landfill is open six days a week. Mrs. Thomas said beginning January 1, 2019 she would like to close the Landfill on Mondays and this would allow one person to take care of the hours of operation, Tuesday through Saturday. She said this would be the most cost-effective solution with the least interruption to citizens.

The employee appreciation Christmas luncheon is scheduled for December 14. Mrs. Thomas said this is scheduled each year to express appreciation to the employees for their service to the citizens of Franklin County.

Commissioner Franklin said he has had calls about the conditions of roads. He said District 1 has a lot of dirt roads. The rain has made it impossible to operate the motor grader. Commissioner Franklin said he has given assurances to the citizens the roads will be taken care of as soon as the weather permits.

Commissioner Wester gave his thanks to retiring Road Superintendent Ralph



You Are Why We Are Here

Herren for his outstanding service to Franklin County over the years. He also expressed thanks to Elections Supervisor Gina Chappelle for the smoothness of the election process. Franklin County's election department puts the metropolitan election departments to shame.

Chairman Bridges reminded everyone of the public hearing on December 3 at 5:30 p.m. prior to the regular meeting at 6:00 p.m. There was no further discussion. Chairman Bridges adjourned the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

Signed on the _____ day of _____, 2018

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