

**PIERCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, REGULAR
MONTHLY MEETING, MAY 05, 2009 AT 6:30 P.M.**

Board Members Present:

James Dennison, Chairman

K. Neal Bennett, District 1

Mike Streat, District 2

Randy Dixon, District 3

Aldeen Davis, District 4

News Media Present:

The Blackshear Times

Pierce County Press

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman James Dennison called the May regular monthly meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Chairman Dennison gave the invocation and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 2009 MINUTES: Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to approve the May 2009 minutes. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

COMMUNITY NEWS

4-H-Robbie Jones-4-H Director Robbie Jones updated the commissioners on Pierce County's 4-H Program. Mr. Jones said that 71 children had signed up to go the summer camp. Also he reported that the 4-H group will be attending a Braves games in Atlanta. He reported to the board that government day is scheduled for May 13 from 8:30 AM to 12:00 at the courthouse with visits to the jail, voter registrar, and the Board of Education. Mr. Jones announced that the 4-H will be selling blueberry plants as a fund raiser. He also reported that efforts are underway to bring the 4-H's state Clover and Company group to Blackshear next year.

Recreation Department-Randy Bass-Randy Bass, Recreation Department Director, presented the financial report to the board. Mr. Bass stated that the total income for January through April 2009 was \$121,104.16 and the total expense was \$94,530.96 for a net income of \$26,573.20. Mr. Bass reported that the Spring Season softball will be ending on May 09, 2009.

Chairman Dennison requested help from the Chief of Police to block off Yeomans Street to help with the traffic.

Recreation Director Randy Bass request permission from the board to accept bids on refencing Thompson field and possibly Burgsteiner Field and moving the fence in 200 feet and turning it into a girl's ball field. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to allow Recreation Director Randy Bass to accept bids on fencing. Commissioner Mike Streat seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

Chairman Dennison asked Mr. Bass if the recreation board complied with the open records law concerning a signed affidavit when the recreation board went into a closed session. Mr. Bass replied that he was not aware of this procedure. Chairman Dennison stated that he would have County Clerk Mollie Howard furnish the necessary document to the recreation board. Chairman Dennison also announced that the secretary's position had been eliminated and that those duties will be merged with the county commissioner's office.

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATION

Chairman Dennison presented a certification plaque to Randy Dixon for completion of the ACCG's Certificated Commisisoners program.

PLANNING & ZONING

Final Plat-Fox Run Estates, Phase I-Sonny Bowen is requesting final plat approval for Phase I of Fox Run Estates, located off Tornado Road. Planning Commission recommends approval of request. Community Development Director Marty Clifton stated that a letter had been received by the County Commissioners stating that Winston Homes and Properties, LLC had set aside funds for the paving project. Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to approve the final plat for Phase I, Fox Run Estates. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

Rezoning Request-Betty Conner-Requesting 4807 Grady Street be rezoned from SF to MF. Planning Commission recommends approval of request. Community Director Mary Clifton that Ms. Conner owned a house on the corner of Grady and Moore Streets that was destroyed by a fire. Ms. Conner would like to move a trailer onto the property. Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to approve the rezoning request from Betty Conner to have 4807 Grady Street rezoned from SF to MF. Commissioner Neal Bennett seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

Rev. Hilton Martin-Chairman Dennison recognized Rev. Martin from the audience. Rev. Martin asked for permission to place another mobile home on the property he owns on Sandy Bottom Road. He stated that Community Development Director Mary Clifton had denied him a permit to do so on the basis that it did not meet the code to have two mobile homes on the same one acre of land. Rev. Martin is asking for a variance from the board to do so. Chairman Dennison asked Rev. Martin to re-apply for the permit and ask for a variance and to go before the Planning Commission again.

Code Enforcement Director Mary Clifton informed Mr. Martin that a rezoning variance will have to be advertized for two (2) weeks to let the public comment on the rezoning.

DEPARTMENT HEADS

Kenneth Justice, EMA Director/Fire Chief-Mr. Justice presented two proposals to the board.

1. Grant award for ambulance purchase-Mr. Justice reported that EMS had received \$71,000 for the purchase of a new ambulance from Georgia Trauma. He stated that the county would have to provide a match for the difference, estimated at \$50,000 and would have 120 to 180 days to bid out the ambulance and 80 days to purchase the ambulance. Commissioner Neal Bennett made a motion to accept the grant award for the purchase of a new ambulance for EMS. Commissioner Aldeen Davis seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

2. AFG Grant-Asking for approval to apply for grants with the assistance from Linda Carroll of Governmental Consulting Unlimited. The grants will be for EMS equipment, fire equipment and a fire truck. EMA Director Kenneth Justice told the board that he is hoping to secure grant monies in the sum of \$509,000. The grant application will be due May 20, 2009. The county's match will be 5% of the grant funds. Commissioner Aldeen Davis made a motion to allow EMA Director Kenneth Justice to apply for grants for EMS equipment, fire equipment and a fire truck. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

Kenneth Justice-Walkerville Fire station-Chairman Dennison stated that the county now has the property to move forward with building a new fire station. Commissioner Mike Streat suggested getting a local company to draw up the plans for the fire station. County Clerk Mollie Howard informed the board that a local company could draw up the plans as long as the building was less than 5,000 square feet. Commissioner Aldeen Davis stated that he was for moving forward with the building, but wanted to know where the funds would be coming from. County Clerk Mollie Howard stated that the funds are not available from the 2009 budget, but could be placed in the 2010 budget.

Commissioner Aldeen Davis made a motion to allow Fire Chief Kenneth Justice to move forward with placing bids for the plans for a fire station. Commissioner Neal Bennett seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mayor Sammie June Thomas-City of Patterson is requesting donation for \$2,500 for the Spirit of Liberty Festival. Chairman Dennison reported that this request was for the fireworks at the

festival. Commissioner Aldeen Davis made a motion to approve the request from the City of Patterson for \$2,500 donation for the Spirit of Liberty Festival. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS

Blackshear-Pierce County Recreation Board-Appointment of board member. Harlan Thornton has resigned as he has moved into the city limits. Randy Dixon made a motion to appoint Brantley Crosby to fill the position vacated by Harlan Thornton. Commissioner Mike Streat seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

BIDS

Motor grader-Currently accepting bids for one motor grader for the road department. Bids will be accepted until May 22, 2009 at 10:30 AM and opened immediately following. Award of bid will be announced at the June board meeting.

Fuel Bid-Postponed from May 2009 meeting. Commissioner Neal Bennett and Commissioner Alden Davis said they had talked with Keith Bennett of Bennett Oil about the fuel problem. The problem had been rectified with additional testing and filters in the tanks and Transit Director Angie Bowen is satisfied with the solution. Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to approve the bid from Bennett Oil for fuel for the county. Commissioner Neal Bennett seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

Radio Bid-Kenneth Justice announced that he had received three (3) bids for the radios.

Mr. Justice stated that the three (3) bids were as follows: Monroe Communication, \$92,629.13; Murphy Communications, Inc. \$111,084.44 and Two-Way Communications, Inc \$105,780.00. Mr. Justice stated that the radios will be paid from grant money received in the 2008 AFT grant. He also told the board that the new radios will be in compliant with the phase out of narrow band radios which must be completed by 2013. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to accept the bid from Monroe Communication for \$92,629.13 for radios. Commissioner Aldeen Davis seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

MPC/NFC/LIBRARY PROJECT

Invoices for April 2009-The total amount for invoices for April 2009 were \$2,314.18 with \$ 1,847.11 for the NFC/MPF and \$467.07 for the Library. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to approve the April 2009 invoices for the MPC/NFC/Library projects totaling \$2,314.18. Commissioner Neal Bennett seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

CITIZEN INPUT

Chairman Dennison recognized Tommy Lowman. Mr. Lowman asked the board to explain why the county was part of the Okefenokee Area Development Authority (OADA) and what was OADA doing for Pierce County. Mr. Lowman stated that “paying OADA \$50,000 per year makes no sense.” He pointed out that OADA’s website only mentioned Pierce County and Blackshear in two sentences. Mr. Lowman also stated that he would like to see a list of what OADA has done for Pierce County in the past several years.

Commissioner Neal Bennett agreed that Mr. Lowman made good points that need to be addressed, but he also pointed out that Pierce County is at a disadvantage. Commissioner Bennett stated that “Pierce County has infrastructure problems and that won’t change until we have an industrial park we can market.”

Commissioner Mike Streat then asked for a roll call vote on the process to withdraw Pierce County from the Okefenokee Area Development Authority. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Commissioner Neal Bennett voted nay. Commissioner Mike Streat voted aye. Commissioner Randy Dixon voted aye. Commissioner Aldeen Davis voted aye. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

County Attorney Franklin Rozier requested that the board adjourn in to executive session to discuss real estate. Chairman Dennison called for a motion to adjourn into executive session. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to adjourn into executive session at 7:46PM. Commissioners Neal Bennett seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The board reconvened at 7:524 PM by a motion from Commissioner Randy Dixon and a second by Commissioner Aldeen Davis.

Chairman Dennison stated that no action had been taken in the executive session.

Having no further business, the May 2009 regular monthly meeting was adjourned at 7:55PM by Chairman Dennison.

James Dennison, Chairman

K. Neal Bennett, District 1

Mike Streat, District 2

Randy Dixon, District 3

Aldeen Davis, District

