

**PIERCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 03, 2009 AT 6:30 PM**

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 November 03, 2009 regular meeting to order at 6:30PM.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Commissioner Mike Streat asked to audience to recite The Lord's Prayer and then led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**OCTOBER 2009 MINUTES-REGULAR AND CALLED MEETINGS:**

Commissioner Aldeen Davis stated that a correction needs to be made to the October minutes on page 3; the second to a motion was incorrect. Commissioner Aldeen Davis made a motion to approve the October 2009 minutes with the correction and Commissioner Mike Streat seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION**

**A) Georgia Forestry Commission-**Bo Chesser and Donnie James will give the annual report of activities and services for the 2009 fiscal year. Bo Chesser, Area Ranger, stated that the Georgia Forestry Commissioner has three full-time employees stationed at the Patterson station. He said that the Commission has three tractor/plows for fire burns. Mr. Chesser said they worked 38 wildfires for a total of 301 acres burned. They also issued 7,000 burn permits, sold 59,730 seedlings, assisted with 8 pre-scribed burns, reforested 80 areas, plowed 211 miles for fire breaks and gave out 600 pamphlets for the school fire programs. Mr. Chesser stated that the rangers are on 1 day per month furlough.

**CONTRACTS, RESOLUTIONS & GRANTS**

**B) Earl Lawson, CPA-**Mr. Lawson stated that he had been asked to speak to the board regarding the money given to the county office personnel and the transit personnel. Mr. Lawson stated that the grant is governed by the Federal Department of Transportation, the Georgia Department of Transportation and the local transit system. The budget for the transit system was approved by the board of commissioners in 2008 for the FY 2009 budget. Mr. Lawson explained that in previous year the grant just listed the positions and that the positions in the commissioners' office were included in the salary line item. Mr. Lawson stated that in the FY 2009 grant budget, the transit grant now lists the specific person and that part of their salary is listed under the transit system budget.

Commissioner Aldeen Davis stated that he had no problem with the system being changed from position to person, but the money was part of their position, not a separate payment.

Mr. Lawson stated that the salary is listed in the General Fund-Administration and also listed in the transit salary line in the FY 2009 budget approved by the board, whether the commissioners recognized the changes or not.

Commissioner Neal Bennett asked Mr. Lawson who audits Pierce County Transit? Mr. Lawson responded by saying that it is audited by his firm as part of the Pierce County

audit, but it is not audited separately. Commissioner Bennett wanted to know why the monies have not been paid to the commissioner office employees in the previous year.

Mr. Lawson stated that he didn't know.

Chairman Dennison asked Mr. Lawson if he had followed the "letter of the law" in handling the entire matter. Mr. Lawson answered yes.

Chairman Dennison responded by saying "I just don't think they should have to pay the money back when the law was followed."

Commissioner Davis stated "since it was not explained to us and presented to us as a policy change during a meeting, it invalid."

Commissioner Bennett asked if the issue should be an "administrative" problem instead of an "accounting" problem.

Mr. Lawson replied "that's a legal question, I can't really answer that."

Commissioner Randy Dixon told the board that he feels an error was made on the vote to have the money repaid. Commissioner Dixon said that we approved the raises even though we didn't realize it. "I don't think we should make the women pay the money back" said Commissioner Dixon. Commissioner Dixon said that the county should reduce the ladies' commission salary going forward to compensate for the increase on the transit side, but not require them to pay back funds already received. Commission Dixon stated that the county has wasted three months on this issue.

Commissioner Aldeen Davis wanted to know if the board was going to proceed with the motion already made or if the board was going to vote on the issue again.

No action was taken by the board.

**Angie Bowen, Transit Director- Georgia Department of Transportation-Requesting approval of grant application for the America Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.** Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to table this discussion. Commissioner Aldeen Davis seconded the motion.

Angie Bowen, Transit Director asked to address the board. Mrs. Bowen stated that the time limit on applying for this grant was almost here and if she did not get the application in on time the county could lose this grant. She stated that Pierce Transit has applied for \$580,000 in hopes of constructing a new building, buying vans and office equipment, but Mrs. Bowen stated that the county would only be receiving \$180,000 due to the large number of applications. The first phase of the grant is a purchase order obligation for \$90,400 for two (2) 12-15 passenger vans and two (2) wheelchair lifts and a equipment contract obligation for two (2) wheelchair lifts, two (2) computer/printers and ten (10) office equipments for \$8,650.

Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to rescind his motion to table the discussion. Commissioner Aldeen Davis rescinded his second to Commission Streat's motion.

Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to approve a grant application for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds for Pierce County Transit. Commissioner Aldeen Davis seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

## **PLANNING & ZONING**

**C) Brandy Bowers, Sandy Bottom Grab & Go-**Review site plan and approve beer/wine license. This agenda item was tabled from the October 2009 regular board meeting. Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to take this agenda item off the

table. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

Commissioner Aldeen Davis wanted to know if the beer license is tied to the business or to the person. Community Development Director Marty Clifton stated that it is tied to the person; if Ms. Bowers sold the business the new owner would have to reapply for a license. Commissioner Mike Streat wanted to know if Ms. Bowers had met all requirements for a business license. Mr. Clifton stated that she had.

Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to approve the request for a beer/wine license for Brandy Bowers, Sandy Bottom Grab & Go. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

## **DEPARTMENT HEADS**

### **D) William Rozier, Tax Assessor**

**1. Discuss conservation use covenants-**Mr. Rozier will discuss this at a work session.

**2. Requesting approval to seek bids for update of small acre and large acre schedules.** Mr. Rozier will discuss this at a work session.

**E) Leonard Roberts, 911 Director-Total of road signs that have been stolen in 2009.** E911 Director Leonard Roberts informed the county commissioners that since October 20, 2009, 207 road signs have been stolen and the county has spent almost \$30,000 this year replacing road signs. He also stated that at the present time he has 24 signs to be replaced. Mr. Roberts stated "Some of them have been stolen and replaced as many as four times." Mr. Roberts estimates the county has about \$150 in each sign, including the sign, post and labor. He pointed out that this issue is a very serious one. He stated that the theft of the signs could result in help being delayed in case of an emergency.

Commissioner Randy Dixon also asked about the county wide mapping system for 911. Mr. Roberts reported that progress is being made. He said that the Southside and Hacklebarney areas have been completed.

### **F) Ken Justice, EMS Director**

**1. Requesting Walkerville Fire Station bids to be sent in December, awarded in December, and construction to begin in January 2010.** Kenneth Justice, Fire Chief, presented a proposal for bidding out a new fire station in the Walkerville area. He wants the bidding process to start in December and to award the construction bid in December and to start construct in January 2010. The building will be a metal building, 3,000 square feet and a price of approximately \$70,000. This will be bid as a turn key project. Commission Mike Streat wanted to know where the money going to come from to build the fire station. No money is available in the current budget for the project. County Clerk Mollie Howard reported that the current SPLOST will not generate enough money to build the station. She stated that all proceeds from the SPLOST fund are currently being used in the NFC/Library project. Commissioner Neal Bennett said funding for the new fire station may need to be included in the 2010 budget.

Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to allow Kenneth Justice to start the bidding process for the Walkerville Fire Station. Commissioner Aldeen Davis seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

**2. Discuss purchase of new equipment for ambulance with insurance claim funds.** Kenneth Justice, EMA/EMS Director, stated that ACCG had paid for the ambulance that was destroyed by fire. The insurance company paid \$25,150 for the ambulance itself and \$45,731.40 for the contents, which represents 80% of the total damages. The other 20% will be issued when the insurance company receives documents showing that all the contents have been replaced and at what cost.

Commissioner Aldeen Davis made a motion to allow Kenneth Justice to being to replace the contents of the ambulance. Commissioner Neal Bennett seconded the motion.

Commissioner Mike Streat stated that he had a problem with the price list that Mr. Justice presented to the board. Commissioner Street stated that that he had a problem with the prices and that they should have been included in the agenda packets, not presented at the meeting.

Commissioner Aldeen Davis rescinded his motion to allow Kenneth Justice to being to replace the contents of the ambulance. Commissioner Neal Bennett rescinded his second to the motion. Mr. Justice will present the agenda item at the December 2009 regular meeting.

**3. Request to take bids on ATV, trailer, and building skid unit.** Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to not approve this item and to place it on hold due to lack of funding. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. . All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

**4. EMS Consultants doing billing for Pierce County EMS.** Commissioner Neal Bennett stated that since there were no documents to support Pierce County EMS turning over the billing to EMS Consultants he would like this item stricken from the agenda and placed on the December agenda.

### **ELECTED OFFICIALS**

**G) City of Patterson-**Requesting \$55, 750 from 2003 SPLOST to purchase a John Deere backhoe loader. Funds are available. Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to approve the request from the City of Patterson to purchase a John Deere backhoe loader for \$55,750. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

**H) Sheriff Richard King-**Requesting \$19,400 to purchase three (3) 2009 Ford pursuit vehicles. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to approve the request from Sheriff Richard King to purchase three (3) 2006 Ford police pursuit vehicles from Premier Automotive Sales of Orange Park, FL for \$19,400. Commissioner Aldeen Davis seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

**I) 2010 Budget-**Commissioner Neal Bennett suggested that this item be moved to the end of the agenda.

**J) Purchasing Policy-Review current purchasing policy.** Commissioner Neal Bennett led a discussion on the county's purchasing process/policy. Commissioner Bennett stated that anything over \$2,500 must be bid out and must be advertized in the legal organ and that any bidder from the county will get the bid as long as it is not more that 10% above competitive bidders from outside the county up to and including \$1,000 and not more that \$100 for all bids above and beyond \$1,000. Commissioner Bennett stated the "I think we need to follow our policy or go back, take a look at it and revise it." Commissioner Mike Streat disagreed stating that he feels the county's bidding process is working well. County Franklin Rozier stated that the board needs to look at the original ordinance on purchasing.

**K) Pierce County Agriculture Building-**Progress report on building repair- Commissioner Aldeen Davis asked for a status report on the repairs at the Agriculture building. Chairman Dennison stated that he referred everything to Commissioner Davis to handle. Commissioner Davis told Chairman Dennison that the county office staff should have prepared bids. Commissioner Davis stated" It's not my job to get bids, that's the county office's job." Commissioner Davis stated that he had received one bid from someone interested in placing vinyl siding on the building. Commissioner Davis also wanted the old van parked at the building to be removed. Commissioner Davis asked the

board to consider bidding out both painting and vinyl siding for the building since no bids has been sent out.

**L) Horseshoe Road/Mossy Pond Road**-Progress report on road realignment.

Commissioner Aldeen Davis asked for an update on the realignment of Horseshoe Road/Mossy Pond Road. A letter from Statewide Engineering, Inc has been received with their recommendations for the alignment and location of all signs in the intersection. Commissioner Davis wanted to know if the county road crew is going to do the work or is the county going to wait on state aid. Chairman Dennison told Commissioner Davis that nothing had been done on the project stating "The Mershon Road Bridge project is a priority." Commissioner Davis then stated that "since it is a county project, you can pull a work crew to work at Horseshoe Road and Mossy Pond Road." Chairman Dennison stated that he would inform road superintendent John Gill to begin work as the road crew becomes available.

**BIDS**

**M) Motor grader**-Bid specifications to be determined. Commissioner Neal Bennett stated that the most important features of a new motor grader; according to the specification received from various companies; are all wheel drive, net horsepower, tires and operating weight and those four (4) items should be the bid specifications for a new motor grader. Commissioner Bennett also stated that the minimum buy back for the motor grader should be set at \$99,500.

Commissioner Neal Bennett made a motion to set the bid specifications for the motor grader and include the four (4) major points and to set the minimum buy back at \$99,500. Commissioner Aldeen Davis seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

Recess at 8:27 PM. Commissioner Mike Streat left for work.

Meeting started back up at 8:37 PM.

**K. Agriculture Building**- Commissioner Aldeen Davis made a motion to seek bids on painting or vinyl siding for the Pierce County Agriculture Building. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Chairman Dennison voted aye. Motion carried.

Work session will be Thursday, November 19, 2009 at 6:00 PM to discuss economic development with the cities and immediately following a work session on the 2010 Budget.

Having no further county business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 PM by a motion from Commissioner Randy Dixon and a second from Commissioner Neal Bennett.

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James W. Dennison, Chairman

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K. Neal Bennett, District 1

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Mike Streat, District 2

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Randy Dixon, District 3

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Aldeen Davis, District 4

