

**PIERCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING, TUESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 08, 2011 AT 6:30 PM**

Board Members Present:

Mitch Bowen, Chairman  
K. Neal Bennett, District 1  
Bill Cselles, District 2  
Randy Dixon, District 3  
Carl Boyette, District 4

News Media Present:

The Blackshear Times  
Pierce County Press

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER:** Chairman Bowen called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Edward Cady gave the invocation and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2011 MINUTES:** Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to approve the January 2011 minutes. Commissioner Neal Bennett seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**NFC/MPF/LIBRARY PROJECT**

**A) Invoices: NFC/MPF/Library invoices as of 1/3/2011 totaled \$41,414.70.** NFC/MPF-\$39,003.26; Library grant-\$86.59; Library-County-\$2,324.85. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to approve the NFC/MPF/Library invoices for \$41,414.70. Commissioner Neal Bennett seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**B) NFC Basket ball Court Layout-McCall & Associates, Inc. requesting board approval for the NFC Gym basketball court layout.** The defense floor total area of 79' x 110' and the court area is 50' x 84'. The court area will be silver, royal blue lanes and border with black basketball lines. Commissioner Bill Cselles made a motion to approve the layout for the basketball court layout. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**C) NFC/MPF/Library-McCall & Associates, Inc. requesting board approval for a plaque to be mounted on the exterior of the buildings.** The board agreed to discuss this at a later date after some research.

**RUSTY MCCALL-**Mr. McCall came before the board to give a presentation on the delays in construction of the library. Mr. McCall stated that there has been some allegations that the board has not handled the process of funding of the library in a timely manner and that the grant may be lost. Mr. McCall stated that part of the problem was that redesigns have cost the county \$1,644,000. He stated that part of the problem was that each step of the redesigns McCall and Associates had to submit the changes to the Pierce County Board of Commissioners, then to the Pierce County Library Board, then to the Board of Regents, then to other state agencies before the plans could be approved. Each agency had to sign off on the redesigns. Mr. McCall also stated that one of the major problem was the GA Department of Correction inmate work detail that was been sent to work on the project. Mr. McCall stated that only five inmates were sent to work on the project last week and they are having problems finding skilled labor. He said that the project really needs an electrical contractor and maybe the work detail will pick up now that the project in Forsyth has been completed.

Mr. McCall said that he had spoken to the Georgia Department of Correction and a second crew would cost \$42,000.

Chairman Bowen stated that "we haven't had a decent crew since this project was started." Commissioner Bennett stated that "we just got to keep asking for that skilled labor; asking every day if we have to."

Mr. McCall said that at the present rate of construction the project would not be completed for two more years.

County Manager Rita Nelson said that would mean that the county would miss its March 4, 2010 deadline to receive the \$1.90 million in grant money from the state. She told the board that the state is willing to delay no more than 30 days on the competition date, but only if the project is very near completion by March 4, 2012.

Commissioner Bennett stated that he didn't think that we need to wait two more years.

County Manager Rita Nelson stated that the answer for the commissioners was to go "local." She recommended that the county hire local contractors to supplement the prisoner labor.

No action was taken by the board on this discussion.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**D) Joey Walker-Discussion on land transaction-**Mr. Walker stated that he was still having problems with the assessment on his property. He stated that he had lost a sale on a piece of property that was valued by The Pierce County Tax Assessors Office for \$96,000.00 for 1.86 acres located in the Petticoat Junction area. Mr. Walker wanted to know why that land was valued so high and property located on Highway 84 was only valued at \$12,000 an acre. Mr. Walker then started to read a list of five problem areas that the review board touched on for the Pierce County Board of Assessors, including inconsistencies in the way the office valued property. Mr. Walker asked the board "How am I going to sell this land if it is valued at \$96,000.00 an acre?" Mr. Walker also stated that the review board was in violation of the law because it sent a man, Mr. Ernie Deen, who is from Bacon County.

Chairman Mitch Bowen interrupted Mr. Walker and told him that he was wrong and that what he was speaking about-the review board-was not what he had requested to speak to the board about.

Mr. Walker then continued to speak about the value of property located on Highway 84 stating that he wanted to know why the Highway 84 property was only valued at \$12,000.00.

Commissioner Randy Dixon stated that once the board had received the information on the property valued, the board brought in the review team, and the review team made their decision. Commissioner Dixon stated that the review board interviewed everyone connected with the problem, including the county commissioners.

Mr. Walker then began to read another violation found by the review board stating that the Pierce County Board of Assessors did not have an "internal policy and procedures policy."

Commissioner Dixon stated "we have done what we as a board can do. We paid for that review out of county tax dollars."

Mr. Walker then began to talk again about Mr. Deen stating that "the law says that the review team members have to be out of this region." "Why did one come from Alma? Did I get a fair shake?" "I don't think so."

Chairman Bowen stated that Mr. Deen grew up in Alma, but lives elsewhere in the state; therefore there was no violation for Deen to be included on the review team.

Mr. Ted Clark asked to be recognized by the board. Chairman Bowen stated that he could speak. Mr. Clark said that "when you are talking about this being Joey Walker's problem, the way the rest of the county sees it is that it could be anyone's problem"

At that, Mr. Walker thanked the board for letting him speak.

**E) Tommy Lowman-Discussion on economic development efforts in Pierce County and a plan of action.** Stricken from agenda. Mr. Lowman could not attend tonight due to a date conflict. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to table this discussion. Commissioner Neal Bennett seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

#### **ELECTION OFFICIALS**

**F) City of Blackshear-Requesting \$2,705.50 in 2003 SPLOST funds to pay an invoice from EMC Engineering, Inc. for Blackshear drainage project.** Funds are available. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to approve the request from the City of Blackshear to pay from 2003 SPLOST funds an invoice from EMC Engineering, Inc. for Blackshear drainage project. Commissioner Bill Cselle seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**G) City of Blackshear-Requesting \$2,202.33 in 2003 SPLOST funds to pay an invoice from Statewide Engineering, Inc. for Blackshear drainage project.** Funds are available. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to approve the request from the City of Blackshear to pay from 2003 SPLOST funds an invoice from EMC Engineering, Inc. for Blackshear drainage project. Commissioner Bill Cselle seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

#### **DEPARTMENT HEADS**

**H) Thomas Sauls, Clerk of Court/Edward Cady, IT Director-Courthouse Sound System-Three (3) bids were received for the sound system.** 1. Southern Audio Design-\$9,837.00 plus \$1,500.00 for conduit/electrical work; 2-Toby's Music & Sound-\$9,295.94; 3. Musician's Place-\$4,953.00. Mr. Sauls stated that Mr. Cady, Rick Herndon, owner of Musician's Place and himself had gone to Appling County's courthouse and listened to the system there. Mr. Herndon had installed that system. Mr. Sauls stated that he was very happy with how the system sounded and they had tested the microphones to see how they picked up the sound. IT Director Edward Cady recommends that the board go with the bid from Musician's Place for \$4,953.00. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to approve the bid from Musician's Place for \$4,953.00. Commissioner Carl Boyette seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**I) William A. Rozier, Tax Assessor-Discussion on a County Resolution to set staggered terms for the Pierce County Board of Assessors as required by Georgia law.** Mr. Rozier stated that the review board suggested that the county set staggered terms for the Pierce County Board of Assessors. The resolution read as follows:

Section 1. Each members presently serving on the Pierce County Board of Assessors shall continue to serve until the end of their respective terms, and all new appointments of reappointments shall be made as to stagger the terms. The first term which ends 12/31/11 will be appointed to begin 1/1/12 and end 12/31/14, the second term which ends 12/31/12 will be appointed to begin 1/1/13 and end 12/31/16, the third term which ends 12/31/15 will be appointed to begin 1/1/16 and end 12/31/18.

Section 2. Members thereafter appointed to the Piece County y Board of Assessors shall serve for a term of six (6) years.

Section 3. All ordinances or resolutions in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

Commissioner Neal Bennett made a motion to adopt the County Resolution to set staggered terms for the Pierce County Board of Assessors. Commissioner Bill Cselles seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**J) Jordan C. Sasser-Athletic Coordinator, Pierce County Parks & Recreation Department-Requesting \$26,797.50 in 2008 SPLOST funds for the Pierce County Parks & Recreation Department.** Funds available \$38,744.01. These funds will be used to purchase baseball/soft ball equipment, football/soccer equipment, landscaping, including Bermuda and centipede sod and clay, and capital improvement to the building which will include fence guard, speaker system with amplifier, intercom system for handicapped, paint for parking lot lines and office furniture. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to approve the request from Jordan Sasser for \$26,797.50 in 2008 SPLOST funds for the Pierce County Parks & Recreation Department. Commissioner Bill Cselles seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**K) Jordan C. Sasser-Athletic Coordinator, Pierce County Parks & Recreation Department-Requesting \$1,200.00 in 2008 SPLOST funds for lights at the walking tract.** Service will be performed by Georgia Power at the cost of \$300.00 per pole. Georgia Power will install four (4) poles with lights. Mr. Jordan stated that he has received complaints for the walker that the tract is too dark at the far end of the tract and he would like to have four new lights installed. Commissioner Randy Dixon wanted to know if the poles could be bought from Ace Pole and installed by them. Mr. Jordan stated that Georgia Power would not install their equipment on poles that were not installed by them. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to table the discussion until he could get with Ace Pole and Georgia Power about the poles. Commissioner Carl Boyette seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**L) Kenneth Justice, Fire Chief –Requesting approval of Assisted Firefighters Grant items.** Mr. Justice stated that this is just for information to the board that these funds have already been approved in the November 2010 meeting when the AFG was amended.

1. Probotics America-Super Pumper Fire Truck w/ siren, flashing lights-\$6,800.00. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to approve the request from Kenneth Justice to pay the invoice from Probotics American for \$6,800.00. Commissioner Bill Cselles seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2. Surrey Fire Safety House-33 ft Safety House with command center-\$55,000.00. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to approve the request from Kenneth Justice to pay the invoice from Surrey Fire Safety House for \$55,000.00. Commissioner Bill Cselles seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### **CONTRACTS**

**M) Waycross Judicial Circuit Defender Office-FY 2011 Budget and Indigent Defense Agreement. The 2011 budget is \$41,248.78.** The payments will be made in quarterly installments of \$10,312.19 each. Commissioner Neal Bennett made a motion to approve the Waycross Judicial Circuit Defender Office-FY 2011 Budget and Indigent Defense Agreement. The 2011 budget is \$41,248.78. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**N) Pierce County Department of Family & Children Services-Approve January 01, 2011-December 31, 2011 Budget.** Grand total-Fiscal year 2011 County Budget-\$29,229.00. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to approve the Pierce County Department of Family & Children Services 2011 Budget for \$29,229.00. Commissioner Neal Bennett seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman Mitch Bowen called for a motion to adjourn into Executive Session. Commissioner Bill Cselles made a motion to adjourn into Executive Session. Commissioner Carl Boyette seconded

the motion. The regular meeting was adjourned into executive session at 8:00 PM. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

The regular meeting was reconvened at 10:00 PM by a motion from Commissioner Randy Dixon and a second from Commissioner Bill Cselle. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

County Manager Rita Nelson announced that upon her recommendation Mr. A.J. Griffis be appointed Road Department Superintendent. Commissioner Randy Dixon called for a roll call vote. The vote was as follows:

Neal Bennett-Aye  
Bill Cselle-Aye  
Mitch Bowen-Aye  
Randy Dixon-Aye  
Carl Boyette-Aye

Motion carried.

County Manager Rita Nelson announced that upon her recommendation Mary Clifton not be reappointed as Community Development Director due to not meeting the requirements for a certified code inspector. Commissioner Randy Dixon called for a roll call vote. The votes were as follows:

Neal Bennett-Aye  
Bill Cselle-Aye  
Mitch Bowen-Aye  
Randy Dixon-Aye  
Carl Boyette-Nay

Motion carried.

County Manager Rita Nelson announced that upon her recommendation Mollie Howard not be reappointed as County Clerk as her title also included County Clerk and that would be one position eliminated from the budget. Commissioner Randy Dixon called for a roll call vote. The votes were as follows:

Neal Bennett-Aye  
Bill Cselle-Aye  
Mitch Bowen-Aye  
Randy Dixon-Aye  
Carl Boyette-Aye

Motion carried.

County Manager Rita Nelson announced that upon her recommendation Mr. Jordan Sasser be appointed as Interim Recreation Director. Commissioner Randy Dixon called for a roll call vote. The votes were as follows:

Neal Bennett-Aye  
Bill Cselle-Aye  
Mitch Bowen-Aye  
Randy Dixon-Aye  
Carl Boyette-Aye

Motion carried.

County Manager Rita Nelson announced that upon her recommendation Kenneth Justice, EMA/EMS Director/Fire Chief, Leonard Roberts, 911 Director/Assistant Fire Chief and Angie

Bowen, Pierce County Transit Director be reappointed to their positions. Commissioner Randy Dixon called for a roll call vote. The votes were as follows:

Neal Bennett-Aye  
Bill Cselle-Aye  
Mitch Bowen-Aye  
Randy Dixon-Aye  
Carl Boyette-Aye

Motion carried.

Having no further county business, Chairman Bowen adjourned the February 08, 2011 meeting at 10:03 PM.

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Mitch Bowen, Chairman

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K. Neal Bennett, District 1

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Bill Cselle, District 2

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Randy Dixon, District 3

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Carl Boyette, District 4