

PIERCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, REGULAR BOARD MEETING, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 05, 2010 AT 6:30 PM.

Board Members Present:

Mitch Bowen, 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 MEETING TO ORDER: Chairman Bowen called the October meeting to order at 6:40 PM.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Aldeen Davis gave the invocation and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 2010 MINUTES: Commissioner Aldeen Davis made a motion to approve the September 2010 minutes. Commissioner Mike Streat seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

- A. City of Blackshear-Requesting \$1,707.50 in 2003 SPLOST funds to pay an invoice from EMC Engineering Services, Inc. for Blackshear street drainage.** Funds are available. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to approve the City of Blackshear's request to pay EMC Engineering Services, Inc. for an invoice in the amount of \$1,707.50. Commissioner Mike Streat seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

DEPARTMENT HEADS

- B. Ken Justice, EMA Director-Request to purchase stretcher.** This is a budgeted item. Ken Justice came before the board requesting funds to purchase a Power-Pro XT stretcher from Stryker EMS Equipment for \$11,753.60. Commissioner Randy Dixon made a motion to purchase a Power-Pro XT stretcher from Stryker EMS Equipment for \$11,753.60. Commissioner Aldeen Davis seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.
- C. Leonard Roberts, 911 Director-NXR 700 Digital Base Station for \$7,372.00 from Monroe Communications.** Leonard Roberts stated that this is the same 2008 AFT Grant and that the new radios will be in compliant with the phase out of narrow band radios which according to the FCC guidelines must be completed by 2013. Commissioner Neal Bennett made a motion to approve the purchase of a NXR 700 Digital Base Station for \$7,372.00 from Monroe Communications. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.
- D. Bill Rozier, Tax assessor-Review the Department of Revenue Performance Review of the Pierce County Tax Assessors.** Mr. Rozier presented a copy of the review by the Georgia Department of Revenue. The Performance Review Board conducted its investigation of the Pierce County Board of Assessors on August 10-12, 2010 at the Pierce County Courthouse Annex III located at 312 Nichols Street. The board was made up of three independent individuals, Mr. Earnie A. Deen, Ms. Teresa Lupo and Mr. Joseph D. Wright. The investigative staff of the DOR reviewed the minutes of the Board of Assessors meetings for calendar year 2008, 2009, and 2010, property record cards, and tax maps. In addition to the county records, various citizens of Pierce County presented the PRB with specially prepared reports and a list of specific properties where they had valuation issues. The PRB also interviews the Pierce County Board of Commissioners members,

Pierce County Attorney and County Clerk, Pierce County Tax Commissioners and members of the Pierce County Board of Equalizations and the Pierce County Board of Tax assessors, Pierce County Tax Assessors Office Manger, Assistant Chief Appraiser and Chief Appraiser. Also the PRB interviewed Mr. Matt Carter and Mr. Joey Walker.

The Department of Revenue provided five agents to assist the PRB in its investigation. The PRB directed the agents to conduct field reviews of residential grading, application of accessibility/desirability codes, and those specific parcels brought to the PRB's attention by taxpayers. The agents also looked at various small acreage conservation use properties. They also reviewed random properties selected by the PRB, as well as specific properties where valuation issues had been brought to the attention of the PRB during interviews.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY OF THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW BOARD

- The commercial revaluations should not be used for valuation purposes in Pierce County until the data characteristics, building types, and grades are verified. The county should use internal ration studies to test the accuracy of the work performed. The county may also want to consider a uniform valuation method for commercial land.
- The office of the County Commission, Board of Tax Assessors, and Tax Commissioner need to jointly draft and adopt a policy compliant with O.C.G.A. 48-5-154 and 48-5-241 regarding Errors and Releases (adjustments to the digest).
- It is recommended that the County Governing Authority pass a resolution setting the terms of the County Board of Tax Assessors as directed in O.C.FG.A. 48-5-295.
- The appraisal staff should utilize the appeals tracking module in WinGap to track appeals and valve in dispute.
- The Chief Appraiser and the BOA need to develop and adopt an internal policy manual to ensure consistent compliance with the APM.
- The PRB recommend the members of the BOA seek other educational opportunities while maintaining certification hours in addition to Caveat.
- The BOA should enter into a contract with a reputable, qualified mass appraisal company for the purpose of conducting a full review/update of all residential schedules and improvements in the county.
- The minutes of the BOA need to clearly reconstruct the actions that took place during the meeting and display transparency of motions, seconds, discussions, and other business. We recommend that BOA secure a copy of Robert's Rules of Order and structure the meeting and minutes accordingly.
- The county appraisal staff shall recommend to the BOA audit criteria for selecting accounts for audit.

In Summary, the PRB has determined that this request for review by the County Governing Authority was made due to pressure from one tax payer in the county. After investigating thoroughly the claims/accusations made before the board during interviews the PRB found little merit in the said claims. While certain errors were discovered there was no indication of malice on the part of the BOA. The taxpayer was treated fairly throughout the appeal process.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to change the order of the September 2010 agenda by moving on with items F, G & H before going into the executive session. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

BIDS

- E. Yellow Line Pavement Marking**-Bids for 21.31 miles of county roads were accepted until 11:00AM on September 22, 2010. Discussion to take place after the executive session.
- F. Road Department Pickup-Purchase of 2000 GMC 3500 Sierra truck**-Truck is to be used as the fuel truck for the Road Department. Chairman Mitch Bowen stated that he had secured a truck from Benjy's Repair Service in Patterson for \$4,000. Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to approve the purchase of a 2000 GMC 3500 truck to replace the fuel truck at the road department for \$4,000.00. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.
- G. Fire Equipment**-Bids were accepted until 1:00 PM on October 05, 2010. Kenneth Justice, Fire Chief, presented three (3) bids to the board on fire equipment. The bids included prices on supply lines, hi-combat attack lines, Akron nozzles, gas powered hose testers and steamer intake valves. S.A.F.E. Inc bid \$158,581.00, Ten-8 Fire & Safety Equipment Inc. bid \$126,235.58 and Municipal Equipment Company bid \$133,753.00. Commissioner Neal Bennett and Commissioner Aldeen Davis raised some questions regarding the prices submitted and asked Mr. Justice if the bid submitted followed the bid specifications. Commissioner Aldeen Davis made a motion to table the bids for fire equipment until the November regular meeting so that the board could look over the bids more closely. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

NFC/LIBRARY PROJECT

- H. Invoices**-The outstanding invoices for September 2010 totaled \$100,185.02. The amount for the NFC/MPF was \$71,616.65, the Library-Grant \$25,240.76 and the Library-County match \$3,327.61. Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to approve the NFC/Library Project invoices for the month of September for a total of \$100,185.02. 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 Mike Streat made a motion to adjourn into executive session at 7:23 PM. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

The regular September board meeting was reconvened at 8:24 PM by a motion from Commissioner Randy Dixon and second from Commissioner Neal Bennett. Chairman Mitch Bowen announced that no action had been taken in the executive session.

- E. Yellow Line Pavement Marking**-Bids for 21.31 miles of county roads were accepted until 11:00AM on September 22, 2010. Commissioner Neal Bennett made a motion to table the bid on yellow line pavement marking. Commissioner Randy Dixon seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

CONTRACTS & RESOLUTIONS

- I. **County Manger RFQ**-Commissioner Mike Streat stated that the process of seeking applications and request for qualifications need to be started. He stated that the board would like to see the county manager in place before the new year begins. Commissioner Aldeen Davis stated that he would like to have more time to study the job duties for the county manager.

- J. **County Manager Resolution**-County Attorney Franklin Rozier presented the resolution establishing the position of county manger for Pierce County.

Commissioner Mike Streat made a motion to start the adverting process to seek request for qualifications for a county manger and to approve the resolution establishing the position of county manager for Pierce County. Commissioner Aldeen Davis seconded the motion. All commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

COMMENTS

Commissioner Mike Streat asked the board to prohibit the placement of any kind of signs on the courthouse grounds. Chairman Bowen stated that he had already had some of the signs removed.

Chairman Mitch Bowen announced that a budget work session is scheduled for Tuesday, October 12, 2010 at 5:30 PM.

Having no further county business, Chairman Bowen adjourned the October regular board meeting at 8:30 PM.

Mitch Bowen, Chairman

K. Neal Bennett, District 1

Mike Streat, District 2

Randy Dixon, District 3

Aldeen Davis, District 4