

MINUTES

Work Session

Troup County Board of Commissioners

November 30, 2012

Troup County Government Center

Troup County Board of Commissioners Chairman Richard Wolfe called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Board Members Present:

Richard Wolfe, Chairman
Buck Davis, Vice-Chairman
Ken Smith, Commissioner
Morris Jones, Commissioner
Richard English, Commissioner

News Media Present:

Matthew Strother, LaGrange Daily News
Trey Wood, West Point Times-News
Thomas Camp, Troup County News

Staff Present:

Tod Tentler, County Manager
Jerry Willis, County Attorney
Scott Turk, Finance Officer / County Clerk
Brandon Johns, Sr Building Official
Dennis Knight, EMA Director
Nancy Seegar, County Planner
James Emery, County Engineer
Dexter Wells, Division Director
Don Howell, Parks & Recreation Director
Dan Wooten, Aging Services Director

Others Present

Tripp Foster, Commissioner Elect
Dr. Margaret Schaufler

OPENING:

Chairman Richard Wolfe welcomed all in attendance and asked Vice-Chairman Davis to open the meeting with an invocation.

AGENDA / MINUTES:

Chairman Wolfe read the agenda.

Discuss Change in Workplace Safety and Health Policy:

County Manager Tentler stated that staff has spent a lot of time looking at various policies and assembled a proposal [passed out to commissioners] of what a Troup County policy might look like. Approximately 40 local doctors signed petition in support of proposed policy. Mr. Tentler introduced Dr. Schaufler who stated approximately 75 percent of businesses now have workplace smoking policies. In researching other organizations, the policy transition takes about one year to implement successfully - to create a smoke-free culture.

Mr. Tentler stated we would like our employees be able to quit tobacco. We have a strategy to propose to give employees tools to help them quit.

Mr. Dexter Wells presented the proposed policy change to personnel policies to help employees avoid related diseases and disorders such as emphysema, heart disease and cancer. Mr. Wells presented additional information and statistics. Tobacco users cost more in healthcare costs, absenteeism, smoke breaks, and second hand smoke effects. The policy proposes a total ban on tobacco use on all properties owned, controlled and managed by the Troup County Government. If adopted, the policy will become effective July 1, 2013. Employees will receive a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach including best practices from the American Heart Association to assist with tobacco use cessation.

Chairman Wolfe asked what is the policy of the City of LaGrange. Mr. Tentler stated that the City is considering a similar ban. Commissioner Smith stated he smoked for 35 years and appreciates the addiction and difficulty of quitting and the assistance the County will offer.

Mr. Wolfe stated that the City of LaGrange's insurance is tiered so that if an employee quits, insurance drops. Commissioner Smith suggested a review of all aspects of implementing the policy, including increasing the employee surcharge for smoking. Commissioner English agreed that smoking spouses covered under insurance should pay more as well. Commissioner Smith suggested asking smoking employees what they think they need from us to help quit smoking. Chairman Wolfe and English agreed, adding non-smokers might also be included. County Attorney asked how it's enforced County-wide, in County-owned cars for example. Mr. Tentler stated the policy addresses those issues. Commissioner Wolfe asked if we had a sense of what the other Constitutional Officers' positions were on the policy.

Discuss Replacement Hire for Active Life Center:

Parks and Recreation Director Don Howell stated that the Active Life Center prepares 200 meals per day for seniors. Mr. Howell introduced center director Dan Wooten. Mr. Wooten stated that employees are very dedicated and have received perfect scores on recent inspections.

Commissioner English stated that the employees' pay is not sufficient for the work performed. Mr. Tentler and Mr. Wooten agreed. Mr. Wooten stated that there are three workers, a full-time and two part-time. Commissioner English stated the hire is a replacement. Mr. Tentler stated the costs are partially covered through grants. Mr. Tentler also stated that Mr. Wooten is planning for growth of the senior population with expansions and exercise facilities and is raising funds privately including a \$10,000 donation from Kia.

Discuss Zoning Ordinance Amendment for Accessory Structures:

County Engineer James Emery introduced a proposed amendment to Zoning Ordinance Article 5 Chapters 4-9 to change the number of accessory structures allowed on property. The amendment will be presented through the Board of Zoning Appeals and Planning Commission in accordance with the legal process for zoning issues. Commissioner Smith asked how long the current rule was in place. Mr. Emery stated it was adopted along with the new Zoning Ordinance in 2008. Mr. Emery also stated that some of the issues will instead be addressed through the Nuisance Ordinance.

Discuss GEMA Memorandum of Understanding:

EMA Director Dennis Knight offered background information regarding the GEMA MOU. The state is attempting to create a state-wide capacity for 50,000. Red Cross has nine shelters identified but don't have volunteers. Many of the shelters are at churches, Mr. Knight stated, and GEMA will attempt to enroll members as volunteers when needed. GEMA will buy equipment and supplies. Mr. Knight described the process for opening shelters. It will be available for local emergency use - tornadoes - with the County replacing supplies. If it's a regional emergency designated by GEMA/FEMA, the State will incur the costs.

Consideration of November 20, 2012 agenda items:

Chairman Wolfe read the proposed agenda for Tuesday, November 20, 2012. Mr. Willis requested an Executive Session for ongoing litigation be added to the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Wolfe Adjourned the meeting.

Richard Wolfe, Chairman

Attest: _____
G.S. Turk, Clerk