

Work Session

Troup County Board of Commissioners

March 04, 2013

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
Claude F. Foster III, Commissioner
Morris Jones, Commissioner
Richard English, Commissioner

News Media Present:

Tommy Camp, Troup County News
Trey Wood, West Point Times-News
Matt Strother, LaGrange Daily News

Staff/Officials Present:

Tod Tentler, County Manager
Jerry Willis, County Attorney
Scott Turk, Finance Officer / County Clerk
James Emery, County Engineer
Cheryl May, Accounting / Deputy Clerk
Brandon Johns, Sr. Deputy Building Official
James Woodruff, Sheriff
Dexter Wells, Divisions Manager
Kevin Kinnersley, Civil Engineer
Valerie West, Executive Assistant
Dan Smith, Asst Chief Appraiser
Andy Harper, GIS Technician
Don Howell, Parks & Recreation Director

Others Present:

Joe McGrew, Representative for Moreland Altobelli

OPENING:

Chairman Richard Wolfe welcomed all in attendance.

Invocation - Reverend Jimmy Pruitt; Oakside Baptist Church- LaGrange

Reverend Jimmy Pruitt of Oakside Baptist Church - LaGrange was recognized by Chairman Wolfe and asked to pronounce the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Commissioner Buck Davis led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

AGENDA / MINUTES:

Discuss Property Valuation and Appeals Procedures:

Asst Chief Appraiser Dan Smith gave an overview of the property tax appraisers' process. Out of 5,000 appeals, there are about 990 appeals left to address. In February, 608 30-day notices were sent out to inform them of their hearing options. Those that appeal have three methods of

appeal: (1) Board of Equalization, (2) Hearing Officer, or (3) Arbitration. If Board of Equalization or Hearing Officer is elected-the staff appraiser reviews property value and any owner concerns mentioned in letter of appeal. (Within 180 days for Board of Equalization and within 90 days for Hearing Officer). If the Board of Assessors changes the value, the property owner may appeal to Board of Equalization or Hearing Officer within 30 days after notification. If the Board of Assessors does not change value, appeal is automatically forwarded to hearing officer. If both parties agree, the appeal may go directly to Superior Court. If Arbitration is selected, the taxpayer must provide a certified appraisal. Within 15 days of filing with the clerk, the judge shall issue an order authorizing arbitration. The arbitrator will make a decision at the conclusion of the hearing and must choose between the taxpayer's value and Board of Assessor's value. The "loser" must pay the cost of the arbitrator and court fees and the decision of the arbitrator is final.

Discuss Salem Road Bridge Replacement:

County Engineer James Emery and Mr. Joe McGrew of Moreland Altobelli discussed replacement of Salem Road Bridge. The bridge was built in 1929, and has deteriorated. Mr. Emery stated the engineers want to keep the aesthetic integrity of the original bridge, which has a lattice truss design. Mr. McGrew presented three options on designs for a new bridge. The first would incorporate original trusses from the current bridge, but without the top bracing that limit to a 13 ft 7 inch height at a total estimated cost of \$1.23 million. The second option, without a truss would cost an estimated \$825,000. A third option would use a new truss with stressed steel to the current bridge at an estimated total cost of \$1.1 million. Any work on the bridge would be covered by special-purpose, local-option sales tax funds and bridge would be closed about six months for construction. Mr. Emery commented they were ready to move ahead on one of these options in the next 30 days.

Discuss Energy Efficiency at Jail and Correctional Institute:

Members of ABM (formerly Linc Mechanical) gave an update on the energy enhancements made to the Jail and Correctional Institute.

Discuss Environmental Health Fees:

Ms. Melinda Bailey of Troup County Environmental Health discussed an increase of fees to offset expenses of performing additional duties such as training, increased inspection time and travel cost. Ms. Bailey stated the department is receiving less money from the state, leaving it with more cost to cover. Chairman Wolfe commented the state continues to make cuts and it continues to put on backs of local government. Commissioner Foster responded Ms. Bailey wants to be fair to tax payers by covering the cost. Ms. Bailey responded yes, the state is taking 12% from them.

Discuss Lifting Hiring Freeze for Positions at the Correctional Institute:

Warden Shane Morris asked for hiring freeze to be lifted for positions at the Correctional Institute. Mr. Morris is requesting one inside security position at the Correctional Institution and one building maintenance/correctional officer position assigned the Government Center. Chairman Wolfe questioned if these were budgeted positions. Mr. Morris responded they were positions already allocated in the current year budget.

Discuss Lifting Hiring Freeze for Positions at E-911:

E-911 Deputy Director Mr. Jerry Presnal asked for hiring freeze to be lifted for one full-time call taker and one part-time call taker position at E-911.

Discuss Lifting Hiring Freeze for Positions in the Parks & Recreation

Department:

Parks & Recreation Director Mr. Don Howell asked for hiring freeze to be lifted for positions in the Parks & Recreation Department including replacement of administrative program supervisor in West Point, one full-time and one part-time seasonal park maintenance worker.

Discuss Lifting Hiring Freeze for Positions in the Sheriff's Department:

Sheriff James Woodruff asked for hiring freeze to be lifted for positions in the Sheriff's Department. The positions needing to be filled are one lieutenant of training division, three deputy positions in the patrol division, two deputy positions in the court division and four deputy positions in the jail division.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Wolfe made a motion to adjourn.

Richard Wolfe, Chairman

Attest: _____
G.S. Turk, Clerk