



You Are Why We Are Here

**FRANKLIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION MINUTES
May 28, 2019
6:00 P.M.**

BOC: *Commission Chairman Thomas Bridges
District 1 Commissioner Robert Franklin
District 2 Commissioner Dr. Jason Macomson
District 3 Commissioner Ryan Swails
District 4 Commissioner Eddie Wester*

Media: *Shane Scoggins, Franklin County Citizen Leader
Mark Berryman, WLHR*

Staff: *County Manager Beth Thomas
County Clerk Elaine Evans*

Item 1: **Call meeting to order** – *Chairman Bridges expressed appreciation for those attending the May work session and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.*

Item 2: **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance** – *Dr. Macomson led the invocation and pledge of allegiance to the American flag.*

Item 3: **Items for discussion**

A. Public Comment – *There was no public comment.*

B. Presentations

*Dr. Pam Stone of the **Animal Shelter Board** came forward to speak. She stated the Animal Shelter opened in October 1998 on land that was donated by the City of Lavonia. The building was debt free when opened as the Animal Shelter operates as a non-profit with volunteers. The Animal Shelter receives support from Franklin County and Hart County and the cities located within them and the funding is based on usage. Dr. Stone said when animals are dropped off at the Shelter it is carefully documented where they came from and this goes against the county or city and is used for their requested funding amount. Franklin County only pays for the animals received from the unincorporated portion.*

Although the budget for the Animal Shelter has increased Dr. Stone said they are not seeking additional funding this year. The Board members of the Animal Shelter handle the increased expense by fundraisers and donations. In the future the Animal Shelter Board may have to request additional funding as they have plans to add an additional house for dogs which would allow them to stay open if a dog tests positive for parvo. Dr. Stone said the Animal Shelter operates on less than most shelters of comparable size.



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Dr. Stone stated the majority of the animal intake is from Franklin County. Hart County has animal control and there are also several groups that participate in animal adoptions. The Animal Shelter works with rescue groups to save as many animals as possible and has a save rate in the mid to upper 80 percent range. Dr. Stone said the area veterinarians also help with giving discounted rates for services.

Chairman Bridges told Dr. Stone from everything he hears the Animal Shelter is doing a great job. He asked Dr. Stone if they have difficulty getting grants. Dr. Stone said Hart EMC is very good to award grants for specific things and the Purina plant in Hartwell has also helped with pet food donations.

*Harvey Wasserman of the **Public Defender's Office** spoke next. Mr. Wasserman said his budget is submitted each year to the County Attorney Bubba Samuels. The Public Defender's Office handles five counties; Elbert, Franklin, Hart, Madison and Oglethorpe with the total budget being divided between them by formula based on case files. There are five attorneys in the Public Defender's Office, one for each county. The total budget requested for FY20 is \$413,359 about a one percent increase from last year. Part of the increase is for a State mandated increase of two percent in pay and Mr. Wasserman would like to give the same amount to the county employees.*

Franklin County's case filings for 2018 were 543 criminal cases and 120 juvenile cases. Based on the five-year averaging formula Mr. Wasserman stated the financial obligation for FY20 for Franklin County will be \$100,447 instead of \$94,010.26 the amount for FY19. Chairman Bridges questioned how many clients are seen by the Public Defender's Office each year. Mr. Wasserman said easily 500 as each lawyer handles about 300 open cases a year along with carryover cases.

Mr. Wasserman said by law a juvenile attorney is only required to handle delinquencies. The DFCS cases are also handled by the juvenile attorney in return for the counties helping to fund the position. Mrs. Thomas asked Mr. Wasserman what the difference is in the juvenile representation and the guardian ad litem. Mr. Wasserman said in a DFCS case a child is entitled to both a lawyer and a guardian. The typical role of the Public Defender in a DFCS case is representation of the parent. The representatives for the child in these cases are usually appointed by a judge.

Chairman Bridges paused the meeting at 6:30 p.m. for a break. The meeting resumed at 6:37 p.m.

C. National Safe Boating Week Proclamation

*Chairman Bridges said the National Safe Boating Week Proclamation for the week of May 18-24, 2019, was presented to the Commissioners for review. He asked for a motion to approve the National Safe Boating Week Proclamation. Commissioner Wester made the motion to approve. Chairman Bridges asked for a second. Commissioner Franklin seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Chairman Bridges asked for a show of hands. The motion passed by five (5) **YES** votes to zero (0) **NO** votes. The **YES** votes were Dr. Macomson, Commissioner Wester, Commissioner Franklin, Commissioner Swails and*



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Chairman Bridges.

D. Board appointments update

Mrs. Thomas said there have not been enough applications received to make the two appointments for the Joint Development Authority. She asked that anyone who is interested in the JDA to please apply. Dr. Macomson questioned if the members who terms ended were interested in reapplying. Mrs. Thomas said she had confirmed that one did not want to be reappointed and one had moved out of Franklin County.

E. Jacobs Engineering contract

Mrs. Thomas said since 2002 the landfill monitoring has been handled by Jacobs Engineering and each year Franklin County enters into a task order with them. For the coming year there is an increase of \$1,700 and \$10,000 contingency is always included in case it is needed for the monitoring results. Mrs. Thomas stated FY20 will be a bigger year because of the necessary corrective actions for the landfill closure monitoring. She said this is included in the budget proposal and would be approved then. The public defender will also be approved in the budget.

F. Manager's Report

Mrs. Thomas said the County received notification this week that the Off-System Safety Project grant of \$100,000 that was applied for in March was awarded by GDOT. The County will match this grant with \$30,000 of SPLOST funds. These projects are typically handled by the State so the necessary information will be provided to them.

Emergency LMIG funds for Banks Road and Rocky Ford Road were applied for with help from Senator John Wilkinson and Representative Alan Powell. Mrs. Thomas said the County has received notification that \$72,000 has been awarded.

Two bid openings will be held at the Board of Commissioners Office tomorrow (Wednesday) at 2:00 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. for Banks Road and Rocky Ford Road. Mrs. Thomas said the bid results will be emailed to the Commissioners by the County Engineer John Phillips. She asked after review of the bids for this to be considered at the June meeting for approval so the work can begin on these roads. SPLOST funds will have to be used on the road recovery as \$72,000 is not enough to cover the road replacements completely.

Mrs. Thomas said the sewer plant is up and running and is taking in sewage from the City of Carnesville which will be the largest customer. The final inspections are being completed and corrected. An open house is planned after the control room is completed.

The USDA loan for the sewer was closed on May 14 with the funds being disbursed on May 16. Mrs. Thomas said the interim loan was paid off and the permanent loan with USDA has been entered into. The ARC grant of \$300,000 has already been used. At this time the County is using the 1.47-million-dollar grant from USDA. Mrs. Thomas said grant funds will be utilized first for the sewer plant items.

Amanda Carroll with GEFA conducted a site visit on May 15. Mrs. Thomas said Ms.



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Carroll was pleased with the progress of the water projects. The mixing tank on Turkey Creek Road is almost completed. One well is connected although not turned on yet because additional testing is needed. The line work to connect the mixing tank is still being worked on. Mrs. Thomas said Contract 4 of the elevated tank is still outstanding.

Mrs. Thomas thanked the Commissioners for holding the Special Called Meeting to handle the insurance. The next day the notification was sent to the employees and dates were settled for the open enrollment process to begin the first week of June.

The budget was also covered in the Special Called Meeting and the first draft will be advertised this week. Mrs. Thomas said there will be a public hearing on June 11 at 5:30 p.m. for the budget. The revenues were higher for this past year and if they continue the projections are for them to be \$450,000 over. The insurance premium also came in \$185,000 over projection. Mrs. Thomas said the revenue growth could be related to the construction of the GRP plant. Fines and fees are also over projections with \$87,000 of the \$130,000 being in traffic fines. TAVT is running over projections. Mrs. Thomas said the County is having a banner year for revenues but they may not continue so it is better to project conservatively.

Chairman Bridges expressed thanks to Senator Wilkinson and Representative Powell for helping the County's management team with the grant process for help with the roads.

G. Announcements

Eddie Addison asked to be recognized. He said there is still an open position on the Airport Authority. There are a lot of things going on at the airport and it would be nice to have all positions filled. Bill Flowers was incorrectly appointed by the IBA as they only have one appointee and therefore Mr. Flowers is not a member of the Airport Authority as he was not appointed by the Commissioners. Mr. Addison said according to Roberts Rules of Order old business can be discussed. He asked the Commission Board to fill the vacant position for Franklin County on the Airport Authority as this problem has been ongoing since 2015.

Chairman Bridges said this is being looked at by the County Attorney. He said they do have Bill Flowers. Mr. Addison stated Bill Flowers was not appointed by the Board of Commissioners. Chairman Bridges said he understands that; it needs to be settled whether to leave Mr. Flowers on or pull him off. Mr. Addison stated Mr. Flowers has never been on the Airport Authority as he was appointed inadvertently by the IBA. Chairman Bridges questioned if Mr. Flowers has attended any meetings or handles anything. Mr. Addison said Mr. Flowers was appointed secretary/treasurer but the Airport By-Laws say that Franklin County Board of Commissioners has two appointees. The Franklin County Board of Commissioners minutes were reviewed and Bill Flowers was never appointed by the Commissioners. Mr. Addison stated it was confirmed by the IBA that George Bennett is their appointee and they do not have two appointments. Franklin County has an open slot and the Airport Authority would like for it be filled.

Mrs. Thomas said the County Attorney has been contacted to draft a particular motion that will handle the situation, both historical and going forward. Mr. Samuels, the



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County Attorney will be in attendance at Monday night's meeting for this. Mr. Addison stated he did not know how Mr. Samuels would address this being as Mr. Flowers was not appointed properly. Chairman Bridges said this is why we have an attorney and hopefully he will have an answer.

Dr. Macomson questioned if an appointment will be made at Monday's meeting. Mrs. Thomas said yes, and Mr. Samuels has been given all the information and will make a recommendation of how to handle the situation and make it right. Mr. Addison said this has to be done correctly. Chairman Bridges said they will take his input and take care of this at Monday night's meeting.

Chairman Bridges adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Signed on the _____ day of _____, 2019

Chairman J. Thomas Bridges

Robert L. Franklin, District 1 Commissioner

Dr. Jason Macomson, District 2 Commissioner

Ryan Swails, District 3 Commissioner

Eddie Wester, District 4 Commissioner

Elaine H. Evans, County Clerk