



*You Are Why We Are Here*

**FRANKLIN COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
WORK SESSION MINUTES  
August 27, 2019  
6:00 P.M.**

**BOC:** Commission Chairman Thomas Bridges  
District 1 Commissioner Robert Franklin  
District 3 Commissioner Ryan Swails  
District 4 Commissioner Eddie Wester

**Absent:** District 2 Commissioner Dr. Jason Macomson

**Media:** Shane Scoggins, Franklin County Citizen Leader

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

**Item 1:** **Call meeting to order** – Chairman Bridges called the August work session to order and expressed appreciation to those in attendance.

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

**Item 3:** **Items for discussion**

**A. Public Comment**

None.

**B. Presentations**

**Airport Authority** – Chairman Eddie Addison came forward and thanked the Commissioners and staff for the invitation to speak and present information. Vice-Chairman Mike Ward and Airport Manager Mark Brown also attended. Mr. Addison presented power point slides showing the improvements and work in progress at the Airport. The overhead pictures were taken by Airport Authority member Kevin McCraney who is the appointment from the Hart County IBA.

Mr. Addison said the Airport has to be a safe and secure environment. One of the goals for the Airport Authority is to follow the Georgia Open Meeting and Open Records Laws. Fiscal responsibility is a goal of the Authority and annual financial audits are needed. Another goal of the Authority is to develop relationships and complimentary strategies with the Franklin County and Hart County Industrial Building Authority's.

No certified audits have been found. There was an agreed upon procedure from 2013 performed by Rushton & Company at a cost of \$5,000. Mr. Addison stated for FY2020 a



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*certified audit will be done by a local CPA who is familiar with airports at a cost of \$3,500.*

*Mr. Addison said the last budget that was found was put together by Roger Bennett before the creation of the Airport Authority when it was still the Airport Committee. The operations budget for FY20 was put together by Mr. Addison with assistance from County Clerk Elaine Evans and was based on the closeout for FY19. In FY19 a large fuel customer was lost. Mr. Addison stated if the large fuel customer had not been lost the fuel sales would have been over \$200,000 instead of around \$106,000. This is lost profit of \$35,000 to \$40,000 annually. The fuel budget for Fy20 was also based on the closeout for FY19.*

*Mr. Addison said since the late 1990's the Airport Authority has not been operating per the Open Meetings Act and things were not ratified properly. The Airport Authority sought legal counsel and were advised to ratify the minutes. Mr. Addison said the minutes were ratified but they did not ratify the grants, loans, financials or the contracts. The grant on Runway Phase 1 was executed without any vote or approval from the Airport Authority. There is a loan that exceeded the agreed upon limit. Grant funds were comingled with funds for operations and contracts were executed without the Airport Authority approval. A bank loan was taken out in the amount of \$50,000 for a \$45,000 hangar. The \$5,000 over was not approved although the overage was placed in the operating account.*

*The local share for the Phase I Parallel Runway is \$70,000 and Mr. Addison stated the Airport Authority does not have it and this is due in late September or early October. Commissioner Swails questioned if Phase 1 was started prior to Mr. Addison becoming a member of the Airport Authority. Mr. Addison said yes, it was signed in 2017 and is out of compliance because it was not voted on by the Airport Authority. Commissioner Swails questioned if the Authority has the ability to raise funds outside of hangar rentals. Mr. Addison said the primary funds come from hangars which are invoiced by the County Clerk and follow up is sent for slow payers. There is a flight school that would like to operate out of the Airport but Mr. Addison said there is not a hangar to put the airplanes in. The flight school would generate \$20,000 to \$25,000 in fuel sales plus \$193 a month for hangar rental. If SPLOST funds could become available additional hangars could be built to help with the \$70,000 deficient.*

*The Airport is totally run by volunteers. Inspections are done by Mike Ward and John Collier. Mark Brown takes care of part of the fuel and the miscellaneous upkeep. Bud Brown oversees the fuel kiosk, inventory and fuel ordering. Mike Ward is involved in every project concerning the Airport. Johnny Coxx and John Collier handle the IT and miscellaneous items, in particular the lighting. Hayden Brown and Braxton Long, two 14-year-old young men perform yard upkeep by bush hogging and eliminating weeds. George Bennett is an asset for local issues. Kevin McCraney does all the drone and social media. The hangar waiting list is maintained by Mike Ward and Mark Brown.*

*A runway extension has been completed at the Airport. There are eight T-Hangars and two executive hangars. There is also an AWOS (Automated Weather Observation Station). Mr. Addison said Phase 1 Parallel Taxiway will be completed sometime in September 2019 although there were some EPD issues from a phone call from a neighboring property*



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*owner. This situation turned political and Senator John Wilkinson assisted with the EPD issue and he is a huge asset to the citizens of Franklin County. The Airport Authority members corrected the EPD issues with help from the contractor.*

*Mr. Addison stated the night approaches have been down at the Airport for the last two years. Several of the Airport Authority members met with GDOT and Croy Engineering recently to upgrade part of their contract to take care of the lighting for night.*

*A goal of the Airport Authority is to be customer driven and treat people right. Mr. Addison said the last large fuel customer was run off because of poor customer service. The large customers will buy approximately 80,000 gallons of fuel a year. The Airport makes between .25 to .35 cents off of each gallon. Commissioner Swails asked Mr. Addison if he knew why the large customer was lost. Mr. Addison said not being able to make night approaches was part of the reason and the other part was he was not treated as a customer. He stated he has approached this former customer and has asked him to come back.*

*Chairman Bridges asked how air control is handled. Mr. Addison said ATC announces the pilot's intentions and distance from the airport then they are self-regulated. All non-towered airports are self-regulated.*

*Mrs. Thomas questioned if the date has been finalized for the Chamber event. Mr. Addison said on October 3 the Chamber of Commerce will have their annual dinner event at the Airport. He thanked the Commissioners for their time and stated the goal of the Airport Authority is to showcase the Airport and grow it.*

**Extension** – *County Agent Raymond Fitzpatrick came forward to speak. As the Vice-President of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Fitzpatrick extended the invitation to the annual meeting to be held at the Airport although he will be at Perry with the 4-h program.*

*Mr. Fitzpatrick said the a new 4-H agent was hired last year on November 1 and she left her position on August 16 of this year. The process has started to rehire a 4-H agent with hopes of hiring by the end of the year. Mr. Fitzpatrick said 10 students went to camp this year, five students participated in poultry judging and 15 students participated in project achievement for Cloverleaf. There was a livestock judging team consisting of five students. The Junior/Senior district project achievement consisted of five students. 27 students participated in the State livestock showing and 39 will participate at the Georgia National Fair. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated he is continuing the club meetings at the middle and high schools in the absence of a 4-H agent.*

*In the last 12 months Mr. Fitzpatrick held 19 continuing education programs primarily for farmers. Over 800 site visits were made by Mr. Fitzpatrick. The Farmgate reporting is done through the Extension office. Franklin County is number two for poultry with only Madison County being ahead because they build larger houses. Franklin County is number four in the State for hay production and number three in beef cattle. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated water quality and other testing is also part of the services offered by the Extension.*



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**Senior Center** – Senior Center Director Rachel Wilson thanked everyone for the meeting invitation and support of the Center. The services offered at the Senior Center are fellowship, educational opportunities, exercise both mental and physical and a hot, healthy meal every week day. The Home Delivered meals consisting of either a hot meal or frozen meal serves seniors throughout all of Franklin County. The meal deliveries are made every week day and some of these seniors also receive supplementary meals for the weekend.

Ms. Wilson stated the car given to the Senior Center for meals delivery was huge. Volunteers also deliver many of the meals and they are greatly appreciated. The donation of food delivery bags, sewing machines and a treadmill by a local business has facilitated many of the services and activities offered at the Center. Woodmen of the World hosted a patriotic program and donated a flag and pole on Flag Day and thanks were extended to them and the Road Department for installation.

Birthdays and holidays are celebrated at the Senior Center. Ms. Wilson thanked Commissioner Franklin and his wife, Nancy for grilling hotdogs for the Memorial Day celebration. The annual Pie in the Face contest raised funds for the Center and Spenser Risner of the Recreation Department made a great winner. Ms. Wilson thanked County Manager Beth Thomas for her support and help. She also thanked the kitchen staff Peggy Mitchell and Diane Moore for their dedication. Legacy Link provided a farmer's market during the summer and will host a program for Medicare answers in October.

#### **C. Water System Improvement contract for tank removal**

Mrs. Thomas said the first three contracts for water system improvements are almost completed. The tank removal on Hwy 59 will be the fourth contract and this was bid out with only one bid being received for a net amount of \$36,300. The demolition cost is \$41,300 with a credit of \$5,000 given for the scrap. Mrs. Thomas recommended using available funds from GEFA and ARC to take the tank down and asked for this to be considered at the September meeting.

Commissioner Swails asked if the tank is a hazard or is it just an eyesore. Mrs. Thomas said it is an eyesore. The last time the tank was inspected the inside was okay. This tank is not beneficial to the County's water system and will not be used. Mrs. Thomas said efforts were made to sale the tank but there has not been interest in it. Chairman Bridges said this would be considered at the September meeting.

#### **D. Manager's Report**

Mrs. Thomas said the mixing tank on Turkey Creek Road has filled up and the building is under construction. The well is online and is feeding into the County's system.

The crew is onsite and is working on the elevated tank. Mrs. Thomas said the County is getting pricing for the lighting.

Mrs. Thomas said the final project for the water system improvement will be water mains. The list cannot be completed until ARC clarifies how the funds get used and how they apply to the projects.



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*Appreciation was expressed to those attending the Comprehensive Plan Update. Mrs. Thomas asked for input by completing the online survey located on the County's website.*

*Mrs. Thomas said the Tax Digest was approved Friday, August 20. She thanked Tax Commissioner Bobby Martin and everyone involved. Tax bills are in the mail and collections will be at the usual time.*

*The County and the cities have been working together for forward funding on the SPLOST. Mrs. Thomas said one of the cities decided not to participate and the bond attorney said the process in place was all the cities and the County or no deal. The County is back to determining if they want to forward fund alone. The SPLOST collections with no growth are on target to collect 4.1 million dollars in excess funds. Mrs. Thomas contacted the representative from Stifel to ask about the County going for funding without the cities participating. If the County decides to go with the borrowing and have the money readily available for projects, the interest will be around \$338,000 plus the closing costs. The bond attorney said any of the cities could move forward individually and this would help pay the interest. Mrs. Thomas asked the Commissioners to consider the SPLOST forward funding.*

*Mrs. Thomas stated there will not be a public hearing in September but five applications have been received for October. The applications are two poultry houses, a variance, rezoning and a conditional use permit for a business on I-85. There are also four occupational tax certificates in review. Mrs. Thomas said it may be time to look at the zoning regulations with the Planning Commission for home-based businesses. There has been a resignation on the Planning Commission due to scheduling conflicts with meeting times and this position will be advertised immediately.*

*Commissioner Franklin questioned the timeframe for the washout on Banks Road. Mrs. Thomas said the culverts have been ordered but not delivered yet. She will check on the date and let him know.*

#### **E. Announcements**

*None.*

*Chairman Bridges adjourned the work session at 7:04 p.m.*



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Signed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2019

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*Chairman J. Thomas Bridges*

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*Robert L. Franklin, District 1 Commissioner*

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*Dr. Jason Macomson, District 2 Commissioner*

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*Ryan Swails, District 3 Commissioner*

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*Eddie Wester, District 4 Commissioner*

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*Elaine H. Evans, County Clerk*

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