

**CAMDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2003 6:00 PM
WOODBINE, GEORGIA**

A regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, December 16, 2003, at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the Camden County Courthouse, Woodbine, Georgia.

Present: Chairman David L. Rainer; Vice-Chairman E.B. Herrin, Jr.; Commissioner Preston Rhodes; Commissioner Stephen L. Berry; Commissioner Sanford S. Feller; County Manager Charles D. Akridge; and County Attorney Brent Green.

Chairman Rainer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Reverend Chris Ogden, Woodbine Church of God, delivered the invocation.

Chairman Rainer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll call indicated all Commissioners were present.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS:

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Feller and voted unanimously to amend the agenda to delete Work Session Item 6D, *St. Marys Railroad Historic Tourism Train*, and Presentation Item 11B, *Camden Fire/Rescue Presentation to the City of Woodbine for ISO Rating*, and add New Business Item S, *Final Plat Approval for Sanctuary Cove at St. Andrews Sound, Phase I, Section B*.

WORK SESSION:

A. Durango-Georgia: Discussion regarding possible condemnation.

Chairman Rainer indicated this item was placed on the agenda pursuant to a request from Commissioner Feller. Chairman Rainer stated there was a consensus among the Commissioners that this matter should be referred to the Joint Development Authority (JDA) for action, if any.

Commissioner Feller stated he believed the JDA is capable of reviewing this matter and making judgments and inquiries and reporting such to the Commissioners. Commissioner Feller believes this is an excellent opportunity for the JDA to exhibit its skills and abilities.

B. Employees' Annual Leave Policy.

Commissioner Berry advised the Citizens' Advisory Committee made recommendations regarding the annual leave policy, and the Commissioners have not taken on the matter. He indicated that he would like to hear the views of the other Commissioners, and if there is a general consensus, refer the matter to staff for recommendations. Commissioner Berry suggested amending the vacation policy to provide only two (2) weeks of vacation time for new hires becoming effective January or February 1st. Commissioner Berry stated the accrual rate would change.

Mr. Akridge commented new employees currently receive sixty (60) hours of vacation time after six (6) months of employment and three (3) weeks of vacation time after one year.

Commissioner Feller indicated he would not disagree with changing the policy to two (2) weeks after one year of service.

Chairman Rainer said staff would probably like the opportunity to evaluate this matter and make recommendations for the next fiscal year rather than as early as January or February.

Commissioner Herrin indicated he was satisfied with the policy as it currently reads, barring any recommendations from the staff.

Commissioner Berry stated staff did not have an opinion on a vacation policy change and was looking to the Commissioners for direction.

Commissioner Feller questioned what the prevalent vacation policy was in the private business sector. Mr. Akridge advised Commissioner Feller that two (2) weeks was generally the standard. Commissioner Feller stated this would be a good starting point and then review the other policies.

Commissioner Rhodes agreed with Chairman Rainer that it should be looked at for the next fiscal year. Commissioner Rhodes believed recommendations could be made by July 1st.

Commissioner Berry suggested staff bring recommendations to the Commissioners at the second January meeting. Commissioner Berry stated recommendations made at that time could be implemented immediately or July 1st.

Chairman Rainer supported Commissioner Rhodes' statement of giving staff time to analyze the matter to determine the effect on hiring. Chairman Rainer said he would object to changing the policy for current employees, and further stated it would not be practical to implement changes until the next fiscal year, and the staff should be given until March to review the matter.

Chairman Rainer stated it was the consensus of the Commissioners to allow the staff until July 1st to consider recommendations for changes in the vacation policy.

C. Martha Drive Traffic Signal – Mayor Deborah Hase, City of St. Marys.

Mayor Hase advised the Commissioners that the completion of St. Marys Middle School has been project for August, 2005. Approximately 1,000 students will attend the new school and seventeen (17) buses will use Martha Drive to enter and exit the school. A Department of Transportation (DOT) evaluation determined a traffic signal will be needed at Highway 40 and Martha Drive. The cost of the traffic signal and turn lane will be \$200,000.00. The DOT has agreed to provide \$100,000.00 for the project. Mayor Hase reminded the Commissioners the City of St. Marys recently placed Winding Road at the top of the City's paving priority list as requested by the County. Mayor Hase advised the City's S.P.L.O.S.T. paving list is project-specific, and the City cannot use S.P.L.O.S.T. funds for the new signal. Mayor Hase asked the Commissioners' to recall the City's request for a portion of the S.P.L.O.S.T. money be delegated as general for unexpected projects, but the County denied that request. At the request of the School Board, the City is asking the County to help with the unanticipated expense of the traffic signal in the amount of \$100,000.00. The traffic signal will benefit the county school system and the City of St. Marys. Mayor Hase stated the St. Marys taxpayers contribute to funding for county roads and streets. She also commented that the County can assist in this matter because its S.P.L.O.S.T. list is not project-specific, and the County has over \$5 million dollars in S.P.L.O.S.T. funding available for the next five (5) years.

Chairman Rainer asked Mayor Hase if the City was requesting the whole \$100,000.00 from the County, and the Mayor affirmed the City was requesting \$100,000.00 in assistance from the County.

Commissioner Berry questioned Mayor Hase about the timeframe of this project, and Mayor Hase indicated the project could begin approximately two (2) months after receiving the money.

Chairman Rainer stated the Commissioners would take the matter into consideration.

Mayor Hase advised the project may not happen if help was not provided.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA:

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Feller and voted unanimously to adopt the agenda as amended.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 18, 2003:

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes and voted unanimously to approve the November 18, 2003, regular meeting minutes.

REPORTS:

A. Calendar

The December/January 2003 calendar was read.

B. County Manager's Report

Mr. Akridge reported the following:

- The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has sent correspondence granting the County a 120 days extension on the Consent Order for the construction and upgrade of the Flea Hill Water System improvements. The new deadline date is May 4, 2004.
- The Georgia Department of Community Affairs has advised the Camden County Solid Waste Management Authority has met the 2004 registration requirements.
- EPD evaluated the County's landfills. The site managed by Lannie Brant received a score of 100 out of 100, and the C & D site received a 95. Mr. Akridge indicated it was his understanding 100 scores are not readily given.
- Camden County will be participating in the "Bring One for the Chipper" Christmas tree recycling program on January 3rd.
- S.P.L.O.S.T. projects update:
 1. Fire Station #12 is 85% complete and completion is expected mid January.
 2. Camden County Public Library has requested new air conditioning units which were ordered this date in the amount of \$19,040 and are to be installed by mid February.
 3. The Maintenance Facility plans and specs are nearing completion. It is anticipated the bids will be ready the first week in January, the bids will be accepted in late January and the award of the bid will be done at the first Commissioners' meeting in February.
- There is an aggregate of 41.6% of allocations of the budget after five (5) months. The budget report for November indicates that as an aggregate, all County Departments are at 37.5%, which is 4% under budget.

Chairman Rainer announced the new courthouse walk through with James W. Buckley & Associates, Inc., has been rescheduled for January 6th, at 5:00 p.m.

Regarding a letter from Mr. Akridge to the City of St. Marys Planning Director, Max Tinsley, dated December 10, 2003, advising the City the County would have no

objections to the annexation of the Seales property that will become an extension of Osprey Cove, Commissioner Feller advised Mr. Akridge the proper procedure is to bring the matter before the Commissioners' for a vote. Mr. Akridge apologized for the oversight and stated in the future, he would notify the Commissioners prior to taking action.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Rubin Gomez, addressed the Commissioners concerning home construction and the inspection of such construction in this county. Mr. Gomez first said that not enough time is given to plan review and inspectors pass judgment on incomplete plans. Second, Mr. Gomez believes the inspection procedures are inadequate. Only three (3) inspections are done in this county and other counties perform as many as eleven (11), and soil compaction testing is not required. Poor soil compaction results in cracked foundations, which are seen all over this county. Thirdly, Mr. Gomez stated home construction contractors are incompetent. Mr. Gomez indicated that Camden County does not have a comprehensive Land Use Master Plan, which it needs. Mr. Gomez believes that Camden County will “boom” in the very near future, but the County is very ill-prepared for the new construction that will occur.
- David (did not wish to give last name), stated his home in Sheffield Island Estates is in need of major foundation repair due to faulty construction. He believes contractors and inspectors are not upholding the Standard Building Codes, and that procedures in this area are lax.

Chairman Rainer directed Mr. Akridge to take down this information and report back to the Commissioners, and Commissioner Feller requested adding a work session to the second January meeting to discuss these matters with staff.

- George Scott commented that June 19th, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) provided the Commissioners with vacation standards from around the country, and on August 19th, Chairman Rainer and staff met with the CAC and agreed with the changes. Mr. Scott stated the County's guidelines are currently out of sink with the rest of the world, and the County's liability for compensated absences is still increasing with a current balance of \$656,000.00. He believes staff has asked for leadership and the Commissioners have failed to provide it.

Mr. Scott commented the approved the approximate \$300,000 C.O.L.A. also included at 10.95% payroll tax increase and 4% for the 401K. For each dollar approved in payroll changes, another 15% should be included when discussing funding.

Mr. Scott indicated the group of individuals invited to the Camden Elected Official's Dinner is the same group who attends Destination Camden, but most of the Commissioners do not attend the Destination Camden meetings. Mr. Scott advised most companies do not allow for the entertainment of other offices or management, which he considers it a violation of policy, and if the County does not have a policy, it should implement one. Mr. Scott believes the Camden Elected Officials' Dinner is not a legitimate business expense but an entertainment expense.

- Mayor Deborah Hase, City of St. Marys, advised the Commissioners that the City's leave policy provides for 8 hours of sick and vacation leave per month for 0 to 2 years after 30 days of employment.

Regarding the Camden Elected Officials' Dinner, Mayor Hase respectfully disagreed with Mr. Scott. Mayor Hase stated the dinner allows for lobbying and bargaining purposes. The public has indicated to her they

want the local governments to communicate with each other. She stated three (3) dinners have been held this year, and it has been very beneficial to meet and progress was made due to the lack of the stress of a formal business meeting. Mayor Hase said the citizens of St. Marys were glad to allow this dinner.

Mayor Hase stressed the importance of the Commissioners attending Destination Camden meetings and without the County's participation not much would be achieved. Mayor Hase encouraged the Commissioners to attend the next Destination Camden meeting on January 27, 2003, 6:00 P.M., at the Kingsland Annex.

- Katherine Zell commented it was nice to see an agenda in the previous Friday's newspaper as it is usually not in there. Ms. Zell believes the County's minutes need to be more detailed. Additionally, Ms. Zell spoke against the recent approval of Irvin Lewis' application for rezoning, Mr. Lewis' proposed ingress and egress to the property, his failure to follow the County's rules regarding rezoning, and the County's failure to enforce those rules as they pertained to Mr. Lewis' rezoning.

PRESENTATIONS:

A. BlueGreen – Sanctuary Cove at St. Andrews Sound Development

Mr. Akridge introduced Mr. Tom Powers, President of BlueGreen Golf, who presented a \$250,000.00 check to Camden County for fire services. BlueGreen Golf will be contributing a total of \$500,000 to Camden County for fire services.

Joe McDough announced that Friday, December 19, 2003, at 9:30 a.m. Coastal Resources Division of the Department of Natural Resources will hold a permit hearing for the marina and bulkhead at Dover Bluff. Mr. McDough invited the Commissioners to attend this hearing in support of the development of northern Camden County.

B. American Red Cross Presentation by Linda Elders to Camden Fire/Rescue

Ms. Elders, on behalf of the American Red Cross, presented an appreciation award to Camden Fire/Rescue for their cooperation with the Red Cross in assisting fire victims. Fire Chief Danny Daniels accepted on behalf of Camden Fire/Rescue stating the County needs to give Ms. Elders and the American Red Cross the applause for all that they do for Camden County.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of the Flea Hill Water System Construction Bid

Mr. Akridge stated the bid consisted of two (2) divisions - Division I being the construction of the water main and Division II being the construction of the water well. Mr. Akridge stated the County's engineer has recommended waiting to award the Division I and award the Division II to Woody Sapp of Sapp Well Drilling in the amount of \$74,905.00.

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes and vote unanimously to award the Division II, Flea Hill Water System bid to Woody Sapp of Sapp Well Drilling in the amount of \$74,905.00.

B. 3% COLA for the County Manger, Charles Akridge

Chairman Rainer clarified Mr. Akridge was not included in the recent 3% COLA for County employees due to a misunderstanding about Mr. Akridge's contract. Chairman Rainer indicated the previous County Manager received COLAs, and Mr. Akridge was entitled to the same.

Commissioner Herrin made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to give the County Manager, Charles Akridge, a 3% COLA.

On discussion, Commissioner Berry stated he would vote no on this motion for the same reason he voted no on the motion for the 3% COLA for county employees – the increase should be a merit increase and not an automatic COLA.

Commissioner Feller stated he believed a COLA for a new hire was not appropriate, and he could not support this motion.

Commissioner Herrin indicated the previous County Manager was given COLAs, and he would support this motion.

So voted 3 to 2,

Chairman Rainer – Yea
Commissioner Herrin – Yea
Commissioner Rhodes – Yea
Commissioner Berry – Nay
Commissioner Feller – Nay

The motion carried.

C. Approval of Joint Development Authority Contract

Commissioner Herrin made a motion and seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to approve the Joint Development Authority (JDA) contract.

On discussion, Commissioner Feller indicated he would like to see more tangible results from the JDA.

Commissioner Berry stated not enough is spent on economic development for Camden County. Commissioner Berry further indicated the JDA is very limited by the budget in which it operates, and he has suggested the JDA to propose a budget that is needed to accomplish it's goals.

Although Chairman Rainer agreed with Commissioner Berry regarding the money spent for the JDA, he cautioned the JDA on proposing budget requests that might be unrealistic.

So voted, unanimously. The motion carried.

D. Resolution Creating and Activating a Joint Development Authority of Glynn, Camden, McIntosh, Charlton and Brantley Counties; Providing for the Membership of the Authority and Related Matters

Mr. Akridge said this Resolution would support regional economic development. Mr. Akridge indicated this is a collaborative effort and would be of no cost to the County.

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion and seconded by Commissioner Herrin to adopt the Resolution, which by this reference is incorporated into these minutes.

On discussion, Commissioner Feller inquired if additional money would be needed to participate in this effort, and Mr. Bob Noble, Executive Director of the JDA, advised no money would be needed at this time.

So voted, unanimously. The motion carried.

E. Resolution regarding Coastal Incentive Grant for septic systems

Commissioner Rhodes made, seconded by Commissioner Herrin and voted unanimously to adopt the Resolution regarding the Coastal Incentive Grant for septic systems, which by this reference is incorporated into these minutes.

F. Resolution in support of Destination Camden

Commissioner Rhodes made, seconded by Commissioner Herrin and voted unanimously to adopt the Resolution supporting Destination Camden, which by this reference is incorporated into these minutes.

G. Camden Elected Officials Dinner

Chairman Rainer stated there was a consensus among the Commissioners to hold a Camden Elected Officials Dinner, however Commissioner Berry objected. Chairman Rainer recommended a motion be made to hold the dinner and the dinner be paid for with County funds.

Commissioner Herrin made a motion and seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to hold a Camden Elected Officials Dinner, and the cost of said dinner be paid for with County funds.

Commissioner Berry inquired about the cost of the dinner. Mr. Akridge suggested approving a limit of \$2,500.00. Commissioner Berry disagreed that such a dinner should be held at the taxpayer's expense and suggested having the dinner with each elected official contributing to the cost.

Commissioner Feller stated such dinners are beneficial and suggested amending the motion to provide a cap of \$5.00 per person. Chairman Rainer stated \$10.00 per person would be more realistic.

Commissioner Feller amended the motion to provide a \$5.00 per person cap and to hold the dinner at the Camden County Recreation Center, and Chairman Rainer seconded the amended motion.

Commissioner Berry stated the motion still allowed for the spending of public funds for the dinner. Chairman Rainer stated this is a worth while opportunity to foster cooperative efforts between the cities and county.

So voted 4 to 1 on the amendment,

Chairman Rainer – Yea
Commissioner Herrin – Yea
Commissioner Rhodes – Yea
Commissioner Berry – Nay
Commissioner Feller – Yea

The amendment passed.

So voted 4 to 1 on the original motion to hold a Camden Elected Officials Dinner,

Chairman Rainer – Yea
Commissioner Herrin – Yea
Commissioner Rhodes – Yea
Commissioner Berry – Nay
Commissioner Feller – Yea

The motion carried.

H. Appointment of Jimmy Johnson to the Board of Health

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Herrin and voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Jimmy Johnson to the Camden County Board of Health.

I. Re-appointment of Gerald Crummey to the Camden County Planning Commission

Chairman Rainer made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes and voted unanimously to re-appoint Mr. Gerald Crummey to the Camden County Planning Commission.

J. Re-appointment of Robert Rudolph to the Camden County Board of Tax Assessors

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Feller and voted unanimously to re-appoint Mr. Robert Rudolph to the Camden County Board of Tax Assessor.

K. Approval of Borrow Pit Lease with Mrs. Gail Carter, Cavader Harrell Road.

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Herrin and voted unanimously to approve the Borrow Pit Lease with Mrs. Gail Carter, Cavader Harrell Road.

L. Application from Fred Scott Brazell for rezoning 1.5 acres from Agriculture-Forestry to Agriculture Residential

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Herrin and voted unanimously to approve Mr. Brazell's application to rezone 1.5 acres his property from Agriculture-Forestry to Agriculture-Residential to create a residential lot for his daughter.

M. Application from Fred Scott Brazell for preliminary and final plat approval

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Herrin and voted unanimously to approve Mr. Brazell's application for preliminary and final plat approval of a 1.5 acre residential lot for a family member.

N. Application from Stephen W. Patch, Waterfront Group Georgia, LLC, for rezoning 75 acres from Agriculture-Forestry to Residential-1 and 125 acres from Agriculture-Forestry to Agriculture-Residential

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Herrin and voted unanimously to approve the application from Stephen W. Patch, Waterfront Group Georgia, LLC, for rezoning 75 acres from Agriculture-Forestry to Residential-1 and 125 acres from Agriculture-Forestry to Agriculture-Residential.

O. Application from Mark and Kendra Giddens, by and through their agent Marilyn Horne, for preliminary and final plat approval

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Chairman Rainer and voted unanimously to approve the application from Mark and Kendra Giddens, by and through their agent Marilyn Horne, for preliminary and final plat approval.

P. Final Plat Approval for Creekside Oaks Subdivision – Phase I

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Herrin and voted unanimously to approve final plat approval for Creekside Oaks Subdivision – Phase I.

Q. Approval of Tax Release Applications

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Herrin and voted unanimously to approve the following Tax Release Applications:

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Property:</u>	<u>Year:</u>	<u>Relief Granted:</u>
Susana Gonzalaz	135K-0-013	2002	\$ 1,796.31
Larry Copeland	1988 Ford F8F	2003	146.30
Larry Copeland	1988 Ford F8F	2002	126.32
Southern CrossGardens	Comm Pers Property	2002	263.20
Tyco Capital	Comm Pers Property	2002	281.75
Spectrasite Communications	Comm Pers Property	2002	1,173.22
Coleman Peavy	Personal Boat	2001	117.18
Coleman Peavy	Personal Boat	2002	125.90
Citizens State Bank	26x64 Horton MH	2003	10.00
Charles P. Notter	161C-2-011	2003	735.82

R. Resolution to Condemn property of Winding Road

County Attorney Brent Green advised there is a boundary dispute regarding some of the property in the Winding Road S.P.L.O.S.T project.

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion and seconded by Commissioner Herrin to adopt the Resolution condemning property of Winding Road, which by this reference is incorporated into these minutes.

On discussion, Commissioner Feller stated the City of St. Marys should fund the condemnation of the property. Mr. Larry Lampe, Road Department, advised Commissioner Feller the property in question is located in the county.

So voted, unanimously. The motion carried.

S. Final Plat Approval for Sanctuary Cove at St. Andrews Sound, Phase I, Section B

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion and seconded by Commissioner Herrin to approval the Final Plat for Sanctuary Cove at St. Andrews Sound, Phase I, Section B.

Commissioner Feller asked if the infrastructure improvements were all on-site improvements, and Mr. Akridge advised it is a private waste water treatment plant and water infrastructure on the property.

So voted, unanimously. The motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Personnel

Commissioner Rhodes, seconded by Commissioner Herrin, and after discussion from Commissioner Berry advising the public action may be taken after reconvening, voted unanimously that this Board enter into closed session as allowed by O.C.G.A. § 50-15-4 at 7:30 p.m., and pursuant to the advice by the County Attorney, for the purpose of discussing personnel matters.

That upon conclusion of the discussion or deliberation in the closed session portion of the meeting that this body enter back into open session, open to the public, at which point an

announcement will be made in the Commissioner's Meeting Room that this Board is back in session.

That upon coming back into open session that this body ratify the consensus taken in closed session; and

That this body, in open session, adopt a resolution authorizing and directing the Chairman to execute an affidavit in compliance with O.C.G.A. § 50-15-4, and that this body confirm the acts of the Board in closed session were as required by law and approved by the County Attorney.

RECONVENE:

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes and unanimously voted to reconvene the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

Chairman Rainer signed the affidavit as required by O.C.G.A. § 50-15-4(b). The original copy of the affidavit immediately follows these minutes and a copy is on file in the Executive Assistant's office.

Chairman Rainer stated the County Manager's evaluation was completed, his overall evaluation is satisfactory, and he is eligible for a merit increase between five (5) and ten (10) percent.

Commissioner Feller made motion and seconded by Commissioner Berry to give the County Manager, Charles Akridge, a five (5) percent merit increase.

So voted 1 to 4,

Chairman Rainer – Nay
Commissioner Herrin – Nay
Commissioner Rhodes – Nay
Commissioner Berry – Nay
Commissioner Feller – Yea

The motion was defeated.

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion and seconded by Commissioner Herrin to give Mr. Akridge a ten (10) percent merit increase.

Commissioner Berry stated he listed his objections to Mr. Akridge's performance in great detail in his written evaluation of Mr. Akridge as well as conveyed those objections to Mr. Akridge personally, and due to his objections, Commissioner Berry advised he would vote no on an increase at this time.

Commissioner Feller indicated he would vote with the majority on this motion, however, would have preferred another evaluation procedure in six (6) months.

Commissioner Rhodes stated for the record that the ten (10) percent is a budgeted item.

Commissioner Herrin stated Mr. Akridge took the Administrator job at a lower rate of pay, and he believes Mr. Akridge is doing an excellent job. Additionally, Commissioner Herrin stated the Assistant County Administrator was not filled, and Mr. Akridge is also performing the duties of Planning and Building Director, which has provided a great savings for Camden County.

So voted 4 to 1,
Chairman Rainer – Yea
Commissioner Herrin – Yea
Commissioner Rhodes – Yea
Commissioner Berry – Nay
Commissioner Feller – Yea

The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by Commissioner Rhodes, seconded by Commissioner Feller and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David L. Rainer
Chairman

Jodi M. Galloway
Executive Assistant