

**CAMDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
AND PUBLIC HEARING
ON FLEA HILL WATER SYSTEM ORDINANCE
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2003, 6:00 P.M.
WOODBINE, GEORGIA**

A regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, February 4, 2003, at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room at the Courthouse in Woodbine, Georgia

Present: Commissioner Stephen L. Berry, Commissioner David L. Rainer, Commissioner E. B. Herrin, Jr., Commissioner Preston Rhodes, County Attorney O. Brent Green, Interim County Administrator Penny Woodard.
Commissioner Sanford S. Feller was absent due to his attending certification training.

Commissioner Rainer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
Rev. Tommy Sikes, Burnt Fort Baptist Church, delivered the invocation.
Commissioner Rainer led the Pledge of Allegiance and then asked for a moment of silence for the seven Columbia Shuttle Astronauts who died when returning to earth from space.
The roll call indicated four of five Commissioners were present.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS:

Motion by Mr. Rhodes, seconded by Mr. Berry, and vote unanimously to add item 1., Resolution in Opposition of House Bill 102, which proposes that "Speeding Fines Collected on the Interstate be Turned Over to the State Treasury", and to open the meeting to Public Comments after the Public Hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING:

County Attorney Brent Green recommended that the Board waive the First reading of the Flea Hill Water System Ordinance and open the hearing to public comments.

Motion by Mr. Herrin, seconded by Mr. Rhodes, and voted unanimously to waive the First reading of the ordinance and open the hearing to public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Dr. Max Jones of St. Marys told the Board that he and other physicians and health care professionals in Camden County are concerned that the growing health care needs of residents are not being met. Dr. Jones said that the county has lost more doctors in the past five years than it has gained, as physicians cannot thrive under the current health care system. Dr. Jones said more residents are having to access health care in Jacksonville, Florida, and that most experts agree that [routine] health care should be local. Dr. Jones believes the problem stems from the mismanagement and lack of investment in Camden Medical Center/Southeast Georgia Health System, Camden Campus, by its owners, the Hospital Authority of Glynn County. Dr. Jones is worried CMC may shut its doors. Dr. Jones added that the people of Camden County are totally dependent for their local health care on the citizens and taxpayers of Glynn County. Dr. Jones and other area physicians asked the Board for support in solving this dilemma. They proposed a joint work-session with the Board for the purpose of looking at how the situation was created, and what can be done to change the ownership of the local hospital.

Mr. Rainer said he has been discussing this issue with area physicians, and proposed that the Board meet with local health care providers and the public on February 13th at the County Annex on Gross Road in Kingsland, from 7 to 9 p.m., and then meet with the Hospital Authority of Glynn County and the public on February 20th, from 7 to 9 p.m., at the County Annex Building.

- Janet Heath of the Better Hometown Woodbine Committee addressed her organization's concerns about the Board's previous discussion about diverting

SPLOST funds back to property owners. Ms. Heath stated the Better Hometown Woodbine Committee wants the County to keep its original commitment and ensure that SPLOST funds are directed to the projects which were approved by the voters, especially such projects in Woodbine as renovation of the Old Courthouse, the Old Woodbine School/Community Center, and the Ralph Bunche Center. Ms. Heath invited Commissioners Herrin and Feller to tour the Ralph Bunche Center, which serves preschoolers through the Head Start program, houses County Extension agents and the Woodbine Health Department, and serves senior citizens and the disabled. Mr. Rainer assured Ms. Heath that the Board voted to honor SPLOST projects.

- Vernon Copeland, of 397 Dover Bluff Road, Waverly, addressed the Board about Curbside service. Mr. Copeland said the service was imposed on unincorporated households a few years ago, and he believes the system is another way of collecting taxes from residents. He said Curbside rates have increased and the payment cycle has gone from an annual fee to a quarterly fee. Mr. Copeland inquired why he has to pay for a service he does not want or need. He also made out a check on the day of the Curbside bill deadline and mailed his payment one day later than the bill's deadline, and so was charged a late fee. He suggested that Curbside payments be accepted by the date of the postmark.

Mr. Rainer said the Board would review his concerns and get back to him.

- Mallory Horne, of Waverly, commented about the unfairness and strictness of Camden County's subdivision regulations. Mr. Horne suggested that the Board revise the current subdivision regulations, to allow growth to occur more easily. He also stated that most surveyors in the County are unaware of what guidelines are required, according to current subdivision regulations.

Mr. Rainer said the Board has discussed revising the subdivision regulations, and will review the issue.

- Mary Byers of Flea Hill Place addressed the Board about the new County-owned water system to be installed in her subdivision later this year. Ms. Byers commented that her water bill is two to three times more costly than Kingsland's or St. Marys' water fees, and she is concerned about the expense of her family's water usage. Ms. Byers asked why the cost was more in the County than in the cities and how the County calculated the proposed water rate fees for the new system. She also asked the Board if the County would hook up sewer lines in the Flea Hill area at some point in the future. Ms. Byers understands Flea Hill residents are not being charged by the County for water at the present time, as the County is currently paying \$30 a month to have the old Flea Hill Water System tested, to ensure it is safe.

Mr. Berry explained that the water fees were set to help the County break even on the cost of building and maintaining the system. The County cannot use tax dollars to pay for constructing the system. The \$30 a month testing charge is minimal, and will be paid back by the users once the system is up and running. He furthered stated that the County was directed by the State of Georgia to get into the water business. Mr. Berry added that when more homeowners hook up to the system, the monthly fees will go down.

- Mr. William Small, of North Camden County, asked when his dirt road – Jack Small Road - would be paved and if the sewers under the road would be cleared of debris. Mr. Rhodes asked Mr. Small what the County could do to help, that they have not already done. Mr. Berry said there wasn't much chance of the County paving the road, as it is not a main road and the population on the road is small. Mr. Berry added that it costs \$450,000 a mile to pave a road; therefore there is only so much paving budget to go around. Mr. Small was told that if Jack Small Road becomes a connecting road or the population along the road increases greatly, then the road will be placed on a list for paving. Mr. Rainer said Road Superintendent Larry Lampe will inspect the road, and maintain it as a dirt road and clean out the culvert if needed. Mr. Rhodes said the Board is in the process of reviewing which roads should be on the priority paving list.
- Mr. Mickey Carnes of Waverly told the Board he has experienced difficulties with the Planning and Building Department. Mr. Carnes cut 5.2 acres from his property with which to build his mother a house. He said he was denied the building permit and the family's efforts to build the house have gone on for several years. Mr. Carnes said he was told by Planning and Building that if he built on 5 acres or less, he could have the building permit. Mr. Berry said he was curious as to why Mr. Carnes cut out 5.2 acres, as the extra .2 acreage kicked in the zoning regulations. Mr. Carnes said that's

just the way the survey/plat came out. Planning and Building Director Frank Etheridge said the issue was not about amount of acreage. Mr. Etheridge said Mr. Carnes' mother came to the office in 2001, and that she may have misunderstood information she received from staff. Mr. Etheridge added that his staff saw the recorded deed/survey just over a week ago for the first time, and found that the property would be considered a major subdivision under the current regulations. It is considered a subdivision because there is a private road on one end and an easement coming off the main road. Mr. Etheridge said Mr. Carnes needs to come to the office for a formal application, and that there is a routine process that must be followed. Mr. Carnes' request needs to come before the Planning Commission first, and then it will come to the Board. Mr. Carnes was not pleased that the property in question was considered a subdivision under the regulations. Mr. Rainer told Mr. Carnes that there has been some discussion about revising the County's zoning and subdivision regulations. Mr. Rainer reiterated that Mr. Carnes can bring his request before the Planning Commission and then before the Board. Mr. Berry told Mr. Carnes that there is a law in place and that the Board cannot ignore the law. Mr. Herrin said he believes Mr. Carnes was given conflicting information. Mr. Rhodes said there has been a miscommunication as to what is expected and what is required. Mr. Rhodes suggested Mr. Carnes and Mr. Etheridge meet to resolve the situation. Mr. Carnes said the problem was the time limit. Mr. Rainer asked Mr. Etheridge if his department could expedite Mr. Carnes' request. Mr. Berry suggested the Planning Commission hold a special meeting to review Mr. Carnes' request. Mr. Etheridge said he would contact the Planning Commission Chairman to have a special meeting scheduled.

- Quentin McArthur of Flea Hill said he feels that the Flea Hill residents are financing the County's water system. Mr. McArthur was under the impression that the new system would be in the \$50,000 range to install and operate, at the time the residents agreed to work with the County in getting a new system in place. He read the draft saying the system would cost \$150,000 to build, and that the residents' would pay a monthly fee of \$54 a month for water. Mr. McArthur asked how the County went from \$50,000 to \$150,000. Mr. Berry said the added construction cost allowed the system room to expand, so the rates would decrease per user. Mr. Rainer informed Mr. McArthur that the Board eliminated the \$54 fee, and that the Flea Hill residents would not be billed until their meters were in. Mr. Berry informed Mr. McArthur that the costs would be greater if the Flea Hill residents tried to install another private system. Mr. Herrin commented that it was not his wish for the County to get into the water system business, period. Mr. Herrin did not understand why the County agreed to build a water system. Mr. Berry informed Mr. Herrin that the State of Georgia instructed the County to do so. Mr. Herrin asked if the residents willingly accepted the County's proposed water system. Mr. McArthur told the Board that the State gave Flea Hill residents a choice; pay to install their own [community] system to replace the old one, or accept a system from the County. According to Mr. McArthur, residents thought it would be easier to allow the County to take over the system that was in place. Mr. Rainer said taxpayers cannot pay for the new system, rather that the users must pay for the installation and maintenance of the system. Mr. McArthur asked to see the new system's cost figures, and the Board said Planning and Building could accommodate his request.

PRESENTATION: None

WORK SESSION:

- SPLOST Priorities

Facilities Management Superintendent Harvey Amerson briefed the Board on the SPLOST Priorities list, with the Maintenance Building and Records Building listed as project priorities. Mr. Amerson requested authorization to purchase the requested properties in order to begin these projects.

Mr. Amerson said that the cost to purchase a building from Bennett Logging Company in Woodbine for the County's Maintenance Building would be \$150,000, and that the cost to renovate the existing buildings would be \$160,305, a total of \$310,305 for the project. The project was budgeted \$525,000 in SPLOST funds. Mr. Amerson stated the County would save an estimated \$214,695 by having his staff do most of the labor in-house.

Mr. Amerson said this proposal would meet the needs of Facilities Management, and would provide space for storing the County's new voting machines. The department would need 90 days after acquiring the property to complete the project.

The Records Building will be about 4800 square feet in size, and its construction/renovation will start about three to four months after the Maintenance Building project is completed. The existing building, which used to house classrooms, will be renovated to match the new Courthouse in architecture. Courthouse records will be stored in this climate-controlled facility.

- Preliminary Budget Information

Finance Director Mike Fender presented the Board a summary of the County's projected financial status and estimated budget cuts. Mr. Rainer said he would like to cut the upcoming fiscal year's budget by 2.2 %. Mr. Rainer said he would be meeting with County department heads on Monday, February 10, 2003, to begin the budget process.

Mr. Berry commented that if Durango Georgia Paper Company/Gilman would pay the \$800,000 it owed in taxes, the County would be \$500,000 ahead.

Mr. Rainer said the country is experiencing an economic crisis, and that everyone, school systems and county governments, must tighten their belts.

1. Approval of Minutes for January 21, 2003 Commission Meeting

Motion by Mr. Rhodes, and seconded by Mr. Herrin, and voted unanimously to approve the minutes for the January 21, 2003 Commission Meeting, as amended by the Clerk.

2. Reports:

Ms. Woodard reviewed the Board Calendar for February/March 2003.

Ms. Woodard reviewed the status of appointments:

- Interim EMA Directors
Administration recommends Assistant Fire Chief Mark Crews and Sheriff's Deputy Dan Lewis be appointed to serve as Interim EMA Directors
- Bryan-Lang Historical Library Board of Directors Appointments
Re-appointment of Catherine Adams – her term expires 2-20-03
Re-appointment of Bebe Williams – her term expires 2-20-03
Re-appointment of Mary J. Stevens - her term expires 2-20-03

Mr. Rainer informed the Board that a follow-up meeting on Green space, which included officials from the three Cities and the Green space Committee, would be held on Wednesday, February 12, 2003, at the County Annex in Kingsland. Mr. Rainer felt the meeting went well and that the process was moving forward.

3. OLD BUSINESS: None

4. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Appointment of Interim EMA Directors

Motion by Mr. Herrin, seconded by Mr. Rhodes, and voted unanimously to approve the appointments of Assistant Fire Rescue Chief Mark Crews and Lt. Dan Lewis of the Camden County Sheriff's Office as Interim EMA Directors.

Mr. Berry asked if the new Interim EMA Directors would receive compensation for their extra duties. Mr. Herrin said yes, that what was left for the year of the budgeted \$8,000

annual salary for the EMA Director position would be split between the two interim directors.

b. Re-appointment of Bryan-Lang Historical Library Board of Directors

Motion by Mr. Rhodes, seconded by Mr. Herrin, and voted unanimously to approve the re-appointments of Catherine Adams, Bebe Williams, and Mary J. Stevens to the Bryan-Lang Historical Library Board of Directors.

c. Lease Renewal, Gwendolyn Edenfield

Motion by Mr. Herrin, seconded by Mr. Rhodes, and voted unanimously to approve the lease renewal for the Edenfield property for the Camden County Fire Rescue station in Kingsland.

d. Tax Release Request from the City of Woodbine

Motion by Mr. Rhodes, seconded by Mr. Rainer, and voted unanimously to grant the action recommended by the Camden County Tax Commissioner.

e. Road Department Business

- Authorize Chairman's signature of GDOT contracts/Temple Church Road and Escott Road
- Georgia Power Encroachment Agreement
- Acceptance of Right-of-Way deed to Taft Road, Ms. Rosa Way
- Acceptance of Right-of-Way deed, Parcel 3, Lamapadoshia Road, Steven McClain and Cathy Lanier
- Drainage Easement, New Hope Baptist Church

Motion by Mr. Berry and seconded by Mr. Herrin, and voted unanimously to accept all Road Department Business.

f. Resolution, Short Term Work Program

Motion by Mr. Herrin, seconded by Mr. Rhodes, and voted unanimously to adopt the Short Term Work Program developed by the Camden County Solid Waste Department for inclusion in the County's Comprehensive Plan.

g. Flea Hill Water System Ordinance, First Reading

Motion by Mr. Rhodes, and seconded by Mr. Rainer, and voted unanimously to waive the first reading of the Flea Hill Water System Ordinance.

h. Georgia Historical Marker Request

No action taken.

i. SPLOST Priorities

Motion by Mr. Rhodes, seconded by Mr. Rainer, and voted unanimously to authorize the purchase of the site for the Maintenance Building for \$150,000 and to authorize Buckley and Associates to begin the architectural drawings for the Records Building.

Mr. Herrin asked if an appraisal of the property had been made. Mr. Rainer said there was not time to have an appraisal. Mr. Berry said from every indication that the County was getting the property for a good price.

j. Woodbine Fire Station

Mr. Rainer said that Fire Rescue Chief Danny Daniels believes he can save enough money in the unincorporated budget to cover the cost of renting the Woodbine Fire Station from the City of Woodbine. The lease agreement would begin January 1, 2003, and end December 31, 2004. Mr. Rainer said the County should do this to help the City of Woodbine, as the city lost funding during the LOST negotiations.

Mr. Berry asked where the money for rent would come from, as the unincorporated county budget was tight and there were no contingency funds available. Mr. Berry also stated that paying rent to the City of Woodbine for a building that was built with federal tax dollars was a bad idea, and that his constituents would not want their County taxes to support a city government. Mr. Berry suggested taxing the Woodbine Fire District to pay for the Woodbine fire station would be a fair alternative.

Chief Daniels told the Board that his department would “make a diligent effort” to increase unincorporated revenues through the fire rescue services billing system that was adopted in July 2002. Chief Daniels stated that the money will come from insurance companies. Chief Daniels added, when asked by Mr. Berry what would happen if not enough money was raised from insurance payments, the rent money would then come from contingency funds as it has in the past.

Motion by Mr. Rainer, seconded by Mr. Rhodes, and voted to accept a two-year lease agreement with the City of Woodbine for the Woodbine Fire Station. The County will pay the City of Woodbine \$1,250 a month to rent the building.

So Voted, 3 to 1

Mr. Berry – nay
Mr. Rainer – yea
Mr. Herrin – yea
Mr. Rhodes - yea

k. Planning Commission Recommendation

Planning and Building Director Frank Etheridge informed the Board that the Planning Commission met January 29, 2003. The Commission re-nominated Chris Murray as its Chairman and Jerome Guinn as its Vice-Chairman.

- Mallory Horne as agent for James H. Middleton requests a preliminary and final plat approval for a major subdivision. Mr. Horne proposes to divide 21.06 acres into a 6-lot subdivision with a minimum lot size of 3 acres per lot. The property is located north of Oscar Road and east of River View Lane in the Agricultural-Residential Zoning District and is identified as a portion of Parcel 25-B on Zoning/Tax Map 74.
- Mallory Horne as agent for James H. Middleton and Edmond C. Bennett requests a preliminary and final plat approval for a major subdivision to be known as Bennett Subdivision. The property is located north of Oscar Road about 1329.27 feet beyond the curve in Currie Drive which lies 2281.25 feet north of the intersection of the centerline of Oscar Road and Currie Drive. The property is a portion of the O.P. Middleton Estate and is identified as a portion of Parcel 25 on Zoning/Tax Map 74.
- Mallory Horne as agent for Mary Anne Horne requests a rezoning of 21.3834 acres from Agriculture-Forestry to Agriculture-Residential. His plans are to develop a mini-farm type subdivision. The property is located at the northwest intersection of the Old Dixie Highway and the old S.C.L. railroad bed. It is identified as a portion of Parcel 1 A2 on Zoning/Tax Map 62.
- Johnnie King for Annie B. King requests a rezoning of about one-acre from Agriculture-Forestry zoning district to the Multi-Family

Residential (R-2) zoning district in order to replace an existing home on the lot and have the new home meet the zoning setback requirements. The property is located at 59 Old Granger Circle and is identified as Parcel 18 on Zoning/Tax Map 78-E.

Motion by Mr. Rhodes, and seconded by Mr. Herrin, and voted unanimously to accept the Planning Commission Recommendation to approve the above requests.

1. Resolution in Opposition of House Bill 102, which proposes that “Speeding Fines Collected on the Interstate be Turned Over to the State Treasury.”

Mr. Berry stated that House Bill 102 proposes to take about \$700,000 in revenue a year that Camden County collects in fines for offenses committed on the Interstate, and turn this money over to State coffers. Mr. Berry stated that the Board opposes the bill because it is Camden County EMS, Fire Rescue and the Sheriff’s Office who service the Interstate highways in Camden County.

Motion by Mr. Herrin, and seconded by Mr. Berry, and voted unanimously to adopt the Resolution in Opposition of House Bill 102.

5. Adjournment (7:45 p.m.)

Motion by Mr. Rhodes, seconded by Mr. Herrin, and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

David L. Rainer
Chairman

Denise Etheridge
Executive Secretary/County Clerk