

**CAMDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2004 6:00 PM
WOODBINE, GEORGIA**

A regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, December 7, 2004, at 6:00 p.m. in the Courtroom of the Historic 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; Charles Akridge and County Attorney Brent Green.

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

Commissioner Rhodes delivered the invocation.

Chairman Rainer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll call indicated all Commissioners were present.

WORK SESSION:

Discussion of Salary Increases for Hourly Employees – Commissioner Sanford Feller

Commissioner Feller stated that last year the Board gave staff an increase of 3% across the board which followed up a rather large increase in their cost on medical expenses. He stated that the 3% received by many of the workers was really an insignificant amount. Commissioner Feller stated that last year he suggested an \$850.00 increase across the board which would have amounted to the same \$300,000.00 that we ultimately spent. He stated that he is revisiting that issue with the hopes that the Board may give the hourly employees a \$500.00 increase in pay for the year 2005.

Vice-Chairman Herrin stated that he had discussed it briefly last year. He stated that the way he looked at it previous to this was that if you gave someone a 2.5% or 3% increase and it went down on record that it was according to the amount of money they were making per hour. If you give them \$500.00 per year, that is only a bonus and is not contingent or carried over to the previous year added to the salary. Vice-Chairman Herrin stated that he understands that the employees that are on the top of the totem pole get a lot more than the people that are on the lower end, but the only way for that person to increase their salary is to add to their salary.

Commissioner Feller stated that he felt the Finance Department could make the necessary computations so it became part of their pay and not a “bonus” to achieve the ultimate goal.

Vice-Chairman Herrin stated that he would spend time with Mike Fender the Finance Director and discuss the options with him.

Chairman Rainer stated that he thought what Commissioner Feller was talking about was a one time across the board raise added to the salary.

Commissioner Feller stated that he wanted to simply raise their pay \$500.00.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS:

Chairman Rainer removed the following items from the agenda:

Presentation by the Honorable Judge Amanda Williams regarding Drug Court;
Item 13 – A - Consideration to use the Ralph Bunche Complex for Drug Court.

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin and voted unanimously to amend the agenda.

The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA:

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

The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the minutes of November 16, 2004 with the only change being in Public Comments where it states, a member of Rising Daughter Baptist Church, it should be Robert Lee Massey, Commissioner Feller seconded the motion and it was voted unanimously to approve the minutes of November 16, 2004 with the aforementioned change.

The motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS:

A. Calendar

The December/January 2004 calendar was read.

B. County Manager's Report

County Manager Charles Akridge stated that the SPLOST project for the Maintenance Facility on Godley Road is 90% complete. They are waiting on the water and sewer bids that will be open on January 5, 2005. The project will be complete within forty-five (45) days of that date.

He stated that Camden County is featured in the December issue of *Georgia Trend Magazine*.

Congressman Jack Kingston is scheduled to be in Woodbine on Wednesday, December 8, 2004 at 11:15 a.m. to meet with the Base Realignment and Closure Committee.

The Department of Community Health sent correspondence for Camden Medical Center. The Certificate of Need for their expansion and renovation of their acute care facility has been approved which is an estimated cost of \$29,000,000.00.

The burnt out trailer on Harrietts Bluff Road that the Board of Commissioner deemed a nuisance a month ago is scheduled to be removed at the end of the week.

Letters of Commendation have been received from Oliver Miller of the Woodbine Probation Office commending Harvey Amerson and Donald Glover. Correspondence has also been received directed to Mercy Thompson commending the Road Department employees, Ms. Thompson, Ms. Vicki Aldridge and Mr. Robert Strickland from Mr. Robert Haney for their efficient work in installing a culvert.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ruben Gomez

Mr. Gomez expressed his concerns about building code specifications for developers. Mr. Gomez stated that he saw much devastation in Punte Gorda, Florida and did not want to see that type of destruction here in Camden County.

Romero Wright

Mr. Wright approached the Board regarding the American Legion Post 511's application for a liquor license.

County Manager Charles Akridge told Mr. Wright that he was only informed late on this date that the taxes had been settled and that the American Legion's application for a liquor license would be on the January 4, 2005 agenda.

This concluded the Public Comments.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Consideration of Indigent Defense Contract

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Chairman Rainer to approve the Indigent Defense Contract. The motion was unanimous to approve the Indigent Defense Contract.

The motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration to use the Ralph Bunche Complex for Drug Court

This agenda item was removed by Chairman Rainer during the Agenda Amendments.

B. Consideration of Contracts for two Probation Services

Vice-Chairman Herrin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Feller to approve the contract for two probation services. The vote was unanimous to approve the contracts for two probation services.

The motion carried unanimously.

C. Consideration of Agreement with Juvenile Services for office space.

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Feller to approve the agreement with Juvenile Services for office space. The vote was unanimous to approve the agreement with Juvenile Services for office space.

The motion carried unanimously.

D. Discussion of amendments to Personnel Policy

County Manager Charles Akridge advised the Board that four personnel policy issues would be coming up on the January 4, 2005 agenda.

This agenda item was for informational purposes only and no vote was needed.

E. Workers Compensation Bid Award

Human Resources Director Penny Woodard explained the workers compensation analysis that she compiled and recommended that the Board approve a self-insured workers

compensation program selecting Covenant Group as the Third Party Administrator and Mid-West Employers Casualty as the reinsurer.

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to approve a self-insured workers compensation program selecting Covenant Group as the Third Party Administrator and Mid-West Employers Casualty as the reinsurer.

So voted 4-1

Chairman Rainer – yea
Vice-Chairman Herrin – yea
Commissioner Rhodes – yea
Commissioner Berry – yea
Commissioner Feller – nay

The motion carried.

F. Records Retention Bid Award

Vice-Chairman Herrin made a motion seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to award the bid for the records retention building to W. H. Gross Construction Company. The vote was unanimous to award the bid for the records retention building to W. H. Gross Construction Company.

The motion carried unanimously.

G. Pauline Veeren and Clifford Dunham (#R-030-04) A rezoning from Agriculture-Forestry (A-F) to Agriculture-Residential (A-R) of 7.91 acres located on Springhill Road South. The property is identified as a portion of parcel 5 on zoning/tax map 33.

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to approve the rezoning for Pauline Veeren and Clifford Dunham (#R-030-04) from A-F to A-R of 7.91 acres located on Springhill Road South. The vote was unanimous to approve the rezoning for Pauline Veeren and Clifford Dunham (#R-030-04) from A-F to A-R of 7.91 acres located on Springhill Road South.

The motion carried unanimously.

H. Steven J. Wright (#R-031-04) A rezoning from Agriculture-Forestry (A-F) to Agriculture-Residential (A-R) of 5.91 acres located at 43 Escott Road. The property is identified as parcel 36 on zoning/tax map 83.

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Chairman Rainer to approve the rezoning for Steven J. Wright from A-F to A-R of 5.91 acres located at 43 Escott Road.

The vote was unanimous to approve the rezoning for Steven J. Wright from A-F to A-R of 5.91 acres located at 43 Escott Road.

The motion carried unanimously.

- I. Kings Bay Motors (#SU-006-04) Applicant is requesting a special use permit for the outdoor display and sale of automotives. The property is adjacent to his existing car lot on Kenneth Gay Drive. The property is identified as a portion of parcel 2 on zoning tax map 108.**

Vice-Chairman Herrin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to approve the application of Kings Bay Motors for a special use permit for the outdoor display and sale of automotives. The vote was unanimous to approve the application of Kings Bay Motors for a special use permit for the outdoor display and sale of automotives.

The motion carried unanimously.

- J. Application by Vincent R. O'Connor for the retail sale of spirituous liquors, malt beverage, and wine for The Night Owl at 5155 Hwy 40 East, Kingsland, Georgia.**

Vice-Chairman Herrin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to approve the application by Vincent O'Connor for the retail sale of spirituous liquors, malt beverages, and wine for The Night Owl at 5155 Hwy 40 East, Kingsland, Georgia. The vote was unanimous to approve the application by Vincent O'Connor for the retail sale of spirituous liquors, malt beverages, and wine for The Night Owl at 5155 Hwy 40 East, Kingsland, Georgia.

The motion carried unanimously.

- K. Consideration of Tax Release Applications.**

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to approve the tax release applications of:

- Jason Simkins, Digest Year 2004
- Chantal Akridge c/o Robert Altman, Digest Year 2004, Bill No. 19
- Chantal Akridge c/o Robert Altman, Digest Year 2003, Bill No. 17
- Chantal Akridge c/o Robert Altman, Digest Year 2002, Bill No. 20
- Faye Messick, Digest Year 2004, Bill No. 1583
- Faye Messick, Digest Year 2003, Bill No. 1604
- Faye Messick, Digest Year 2002, Bill No. 3261
- Michael B. Redwine, Digest Year 2004, Bill No. 1951
- Michael B. Redwine, Digest Year 2003, Bill No. 1961
- Michael B. Redwine, Digest Year 2002, Bill No. 2081
- Michael B. Redwine, Digest Year 2001, Bill No. 2491

- Michael B. Redwine, Digest Year 2000, Bill No. 2368
- Michael B. Redwine, Digest Year 1999, Bill No. 1715
- Michael B. Redwine, Digest Year 1998, Bill No. 1666
- Joseph Perry, Digest Year, 2004, Bill No. 015160
- Barloworld Fleet Leasing LLC, Digest Year 2004, Bill No. 001010
- Thomas Blount, Digest Year 2004, Bill No. 1677

So voted 4-1

Chairman Rainer – yea

Vice-Chairman Herrin – yea

Commissioner Rhodes – yea

Commissioner Berry – yea

Commissioner Feller – nay

The motion carried.

L. Review of Public Defender Contract

County Attorney Brent Green stated that the County currently funds and has contacts with Attorney Clyde Urquhart to provide indigent defense. Under the new State law, the system that we spoke about earlier, will be taking over January 1, 2005. He stated that Mr. Urquhart is currently in the budget through June 30, 2005. Attorney Green stated that negotiations had gone on with Attorney Urquhart and we are under a Supreme Court case Shelton v. State of Alabama, in which we are required to provide public defender services in our Magistrate and Probate courts. Attorney Urquhart may be willing to do that under an hourly rate and stay in the budget. Mr. Urquhart would bill the County by the hour. Attorney Green stated that any litigation that he does that is outside his regular retainer is billed at \$100.00 per hour and in the new public defender system will pay \$65.00 per hour to appointed attorneys plus expenses. Attorney Green stated that we need to provide this service and Attorney Urquhart has expressed a desire to continue to do that on a limited basis compared to the work he was doing. He spoke with Mr. Lane with Indigent Defense and he informed Mr. Green that they would be taking over all preexisting cases that are not conflicted with his agency. Attorney Green stated that Mr. Urquhart has served Camden County for 19 years.

Attorney Urquhart stated that it was his proposal that he stay on the health insurance program and bill the County on an hourly basis for probate and magistrate court services. He stated that he did not anticipate that amounting to many hours. He stated that he would also encourage people to request jury trials so it would be handled through the State system.

Chairman Rainer asked Attorney Urquhart at what hourly rate he would agree to bill the County.

Attorney Urquhart stated that he would agree to split the difference between \$65.00 and \$100.00, so that would be \$85.00 per hour.

Chairman Rainer stated that they would cancel the current contract and keep Mr. Urquhart on an as needed basis at the rate of \$85.00 per hour.

Attorney Urquhart stated that he would bill the County per case as requested by the Magistrate and Probate Courts.

Vice-Chairman Herrin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Feller to cancel Mr. Urquhart's current contract and enter in an agreement with Attorney Urquhart for his services based upon his billing the County at an hourly rate of \$85.00 per hour for Magistrate and Probate Court cases. The vote was unanimous to enter in an agreement with Attorney Urquhart for his services based upon his billing the County at an hourly rate of \$85.00 per hour for Magistrate and Probate Court cases

The motion carried unanimously.

M. Nominations for Sex Education Instructional Materials Review Committee.

County Manager Charles Akridge suggested Diana Smith, Penny Woodard, Audrey Mitchell, Donna Woodard and Staci Bowick as nominees for the Sex Education Instructional Materials Review Committee.

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to nominate Diana Smith, Penny Woodard, Audrey Mitchell, Donna Woodard and Staci Bowick for the Sex Education Instructional Materials Review Committee. The vote was unanimous to nominate Diana Smith, Penny Woodard, Audrey Mitchell, Donna Woodard and Staci Bowick for the Sex Education Instructional Materials Review Committee.

The vote carried unanimously.

N. Approval of Budget Calendar

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to approve the 2005 Budget Calendar. The vote was unanimous to approve the 2005 Budget Calendar.

The motion carried unanimously.

O. Resolution to Adopt new Planning Commission Terms to run Concurrent with Board of Commissioners Terms

This agenda item was to inform the Board that this Resolution would be on the January 4, 2005 agenda so it could be posted in the Tribune & Georgian.

This agenda item was for informational purposes only and no vote was needed.

P. Second Reading and Adoption of an Ordinance to Amend Chapter 70, Section 6, No Wake Zones to Include Maiden Creek.

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to waive the reading of the Ordinance to Amend Chapter 70, Section 6, No Wake Zones to Include Maiden Creek. The vote was unanimous to waive the reading of the Ordinance to Amend Chapter 70, Section 6, No Wake Zones to Include Maiden Creek.

The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to adopt the Ordinance to Amend Chapter 70, Section 6, No Wake Zones to Include Maiden Creek. The vote was unanimous to adopt the Ordinance to Amend Chapter 70, Section 6, No Wake Zones to Include Maiden Creek.

The motion carried unanimously.

Q. Approval of a borrow pit lease between Camden County Board of Commissioners and Mr. Joe Miller of Joe Miller Road.

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Chairman Rainer to approve a borrow pit lease between Camden County Board of Commissioners and Mr. Joe Miller of Joe Miller Road. The vote was unanimous to approve a borrow pit lease between Camden County Board of Commissioners and Mr. Joe Miller of Joe Miller Road.

The vote carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Personnel

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes, and voted unanimously that this Board enter into closed session as allowed by O.C.G.A. § 50-15-4 at 6:49 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 Courtroom of the Historic Courthouse 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 Vice-Chairman Herrin. The vote was unanimous to reconvene the meeting at 6:58 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.

No action was taken.

Vice-Chairman Herrin made a motion to give the County Manager a 10% raise, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes.

Vice Chairman Herrin stated that it was his opinion that when the Board hired Mr. Akridge, they started him at a salary that was underpaid for the position. He also expressed that he has done a super job as County Manager. Vice-Chairman Herrin also stated that he felt that after the first of the year that the Board should change his title to County Administrator to give him more authority to handle county business as it should be handled and as the previous administrators have had the authority to do.

Commissioner Berry stated that he did not think that the Board should be doing this because it is not on the agenda to indicate that the Board is about to allocate \$6,700 of public money and raise an employee's salary by 10%. Commissioner Berry stated that he felt that this issue should be placed on the next agenda and give notice to the public. He also stated he believed that to give a 10% raise to one employee when no other employee is getting a raise sends a horrible message to the workforce. He stated that he is totally against this.

Chairman Rainer stated that the Board has done this in the past and that the Board of Commissioners has it in their authority to grant the raise and that he had been thinking and planning to make some recommendations for raises for the entire employee staff. He stated that taking into consideration the starting salary, which was a very low starting salary, and we all said from day one that we would start the salary at a low amount so we could increase the salary. Chairman Rainer stated that he remembered stating himself that if an individual is willing to prove him or herself by starting at a lower salary then that person can be rewarded in time to bring the salary to a suitable level. He stated that he believes Mr. Akridge has done everything that the Commissioners have asked of him. He commended Mr. Akridge for the job he has done.

Commissioner Berry stated that he did not vote to hire Mr. Akridge and he had a difference of opinion on who to hire at that time. Commissioner Berry stated that he

believes that Mr. Akridge has done a fine job of representing some members of the Commissioner, not entirely all of us and that there is some reward coming from that tonight. He stated that he felt there were serious questions about performance. Mr. Berry asked where the \$6,700.00 was coming from to increase the salary.

County Manager Charles Akridge stated that \$5,000.00 is in the budget. The remainder would be an appropriation by the Board.

Commissioner Berry asked where the difference was going to come from.

Chairman Rainer stated that it could come from contingency or it could come from the percentage of the budget that is spent vs. what is allocated.

Commissioner Rhodes expressed that he believes that Mr. Akridge serves at the pleasure of the Board. Commissioner Rhodes also stated that the position that Mr. Akridge holds also includes the position of Planning & Building Director. He stated that he believes that Mr. Akridge has proved that he is capable of doing the job of County Manager and of Planning & Building Director. In addition, Commissioner Rhodes stated that there has been tremendous growth in Camden County since Mr. Akridge has been here, especially in the north end of the County. He stated that felt it was only right and fair to make the decision to increase his salary.

So voted 4-1-1

Chairman Rainer – yea
Vice-Chairman Herrin – yea
Commissioner Rhodes – yea
Commissioner Berry – nay
Commissioner Feller – abstained

The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by Commissioner Rhodes, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to adjourn the December 7, 2004 meeting. The vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David L. Rainer
Chairman

Diana Smith
Executive Assistant/Clerk