

**CAMDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2006 6:00 PM  
KINGSLAND, GEORGIA**

**A regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, June 6, 2006, 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 Sanford Feller; Commissioner Stephen L. Berry; 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 that all Commissioners were present**

**AGENDA AMENDMENTS:**

Chairman Rainer recommended the following agenda amendments:

Addition of the following items under New Business:

- L. Consideration of Authorization of Rental Space for Public Defender's Office.

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to approve the recommended agenda amendments.

**The vote was unanimous to approve the agenda amendments.**

**MOTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA:**

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

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to approve the regular meeting minutes of May 16, 2006 with a change to New Business Item B to reflect the person who made the motion and the commissioner who seconded the motion.

**The vote was unanimous to approve the regular minutes of May 16, 2006 with the changes.**

## **WORK SESSION:**

### ➤ Discussion regarding St. Marys Airport Relocation:

Chairman Rainer stated that on May 23, 2006, Mayor Eskridge sent the Board of Commissioners a letter regarding this issue. He stated that there are two points that stand out in the letter which are that St. Marys will not be responsible for funding the construction of the new airport and paying to move the current tenants to the new site and secondly that the council is not willing to sell the current airport site and use the sale proceeds to pay the expenses. Chairman Rainer stated to St. Marys Mayor Roland Eskridge that what the commission has to consider is that based upon the statements of the FAA they will not participate building a second airport and they would hold the city accountable for the monies earned off of the airport if there was a new airport built unless that money was in some way appropriated from another source.

Mayor Eskridge stated that Sea Island Corporation has given the impression that they possibly would give more land that what was needed for the airport and the extra land would be for an industrial park for the county to allow the county to sell the land to help build the new airport. He stated that from what he understands, Sea Island is interested in helping to fund the airport. He stated that during a recent trip to Washington D.C., the airport situation was discussed. Mayor Eskridge stated that there were indications that there is funding being worked on to pay for the airport. He stated that it is his understanding that there is money to fund the airport but that it would have to come from Washington.

Chairman Rainer stated that he agrees that it was indicated that it might be possible if there was additional land that was sold and the money was raised in addition. He stated that based on the letter from the City of St. Marys, the city would not want to be involved in any way in those two areas.

Mayor Eskridge indicated that was correct. He stated that they wanted to find out from the commissioners if they were interested in having a county regional airport.

Chairman Rainer stated that he believes this places the situation with the Board of Commissioners to decide what they wish to do regarding a new airport. He stated that it is his understanding that the City of St. Marys wants to know if the Board of Commissioners will take the initiative to get a regional airport and find the funding while not using the monies used from the sale of the St. Marys Airport. He stated that he feels that they need to open the lines of communications with the FAA to determine their position on this issue if one airport closes and another is built about the availability of funds. He stated that there is a certain percentage that is still required locally. Will the FAA allow the county to offset that or will the county still have to sell enough property to get what the appraisal is of the airport in St. Marys. He stated that he has not heard any answers to those questions to date.

Commissioner Rhodes stated that if St. Marys is going to get out of the airport business then it should be a regional airport and that they should be viable players in that. He asked what they could do legally regarding the guidelines of the FAA.

Attorney Green stated that he did not know what the FAA would require or the procedures that would have to be gone through. He stated that an Authority could be set up.

Chairman Rainer stated that the first thing that they need to do is decide if they want to do this or not.

Commissioner Berry stated that a question that they need answered is if the FAA is going to fund this airport independent of St. Marys contributing the value of that real estate.

Mayor Eskridge stated that the FAA will not fund an airport. He stated that the Federal Government is who we would have to look at for funding. He asked if the County Commissioners could make a decision regarding working with the cities as a group to see if we could get a regional airport and funding. He stated that Gull Weaver would be willing to help spearhead this project.

Vice-Chairman Herrin stated that if it is built near Woodbine that it should be a regional airport and that with Ms. Weaver, the mayors and the chairman working together it is good idea to see what they can find out about setting up the airport and the funding.

Mayor Eskridge stated that with everyone working together on this airport project that we should be able to get Washington to fund the airport.

Chairman Rainer stated that we need to find the answers to the questions regarding what is going to happen with the valuation of the existing airport, how much money are we going to come up with, etc. He stated that he endorses working with the cities to find these answers.

Commissioner Feller stated that it was his understanding that the FAA was underwriting all the expenses at the airport such as the runways and construction, the airport per se. Then the money coming from the sale of the St. Marys airport property was supposed to fund the moving and the construction and rental space for the current tenants at the St. Marys airport location. Now, because the City of St. Marys does not want to close the airport the FAA has withdrawn the money, is that correct.

Mayor Eskridge stated they are funding the operation of the St. Marys Airport.

Greg Bird stated that the St. Marys airport is a participating FAA airport. The FAA helps at a 95% level for airport improvements, the state at 2.5% and the local at 2.5%. He stated that they have been doing this and just redid a runway in 1999. He stated that as far as the new airport is concerned, there is a lot of misunderstanding. He stated that the FAA has stated that they would fund it at 95% and then stated that they would charge St.

Marys and they would have to sell the current property and put the proceeds toward the construction of the new airport. He stated that this is his understanding from a letter received from the FAA although there are some people who disagree. He stated that when the federal government put money into an airport, they build the airport and there are strings attached. Therefore you cannot arbitrarily close the airport without penalty.

Commissioner Feller stated that the long term economic advantage of having an airport might be very dramatic for Camden County, but short term in his opinion would be to support the effort providing that the money for the airport, its infrastructure and its connecting ability to the road arteries would have to be privately funded. He stated that where the funding came from is irrelevant, but he does not want the taxpayers of Camden County paying for an airport. He stated that beyond that, he believes that there should be a Board to move the plan forward. He stated that he believes that a County Commissioner and the City Mayors should be on this Board so it is not delegated to those who are not elected officials.

Chairman Rainer stated that if this does not come at a cost to the taxpayers he would support this airport, but at this time we do not know if that is possible. He stated that this issue needs to be resolved.

Vice-Chairman Herrin made a motion to set up a Board that includes Chairman Rainer, the Mayors and Gull Weaver to research this issue, seconded by Commissioner Berry and voted unanimously to set up the Board.

**The vote carried unanimously.**

➤ Discussion regarding Performance Bonds – Commissioner Feller

Commissioner Feller asked if there are various bonds required for various aspects of construction during building in Camden County.

Senior Planner Loretta Riggins-Hylton stated that this was correct, a bond or letter of credit.

Commissioner Feller asked various developers make promises to their future residents. Do we exact any performance bonds or letters of credit, or anything of that nature, to guarantee that the various improvements such as pools, social halls, things of that nature that the developer guarantees to the prospective buyers?

Ms. Riggins-Hylton stated that the areas that they require bonds, letters of credit, etc. for are for roadways, lights, water/sewer, and other infrastructure.

Commissioner Feller stated that a person who contacted him stated that this was in the law as well. He stated that to him it sounds like an agreement between a land owner and

land buyer and would be a private litigation matter. He stated that he just wanted to get this issue cleared up.

**REPORTS:**

**A. Calendar**

The June/July 2006 calendar was read.

**B. County Manager's Report:**

Chairman Rainer asked Finance Director Michael Fender to speak to the commissioners regarding the proposed FY06/07 budget. He stated that the commissioners had before them documents regarding anticipated revenue and proposed expenses for the budget. He stated that he has asked Mr. Fender to ask each department who has a \$50,000.00 or more increase in their budget to detail those increases. Chairman Rainer stated that the initial proposed budget was in excess of \$30,000,000.00 and we have gone back to several departments for their cuts. He stated that the proposed budget now is \$26,123,585.00 which would require the county to go into the fund balance a little over \$3,000,000.00. He stated that we should have a clear picture of the increases over \$50,000.00 as to what those increases are for each department. Chairman Rainer stated that he is proposing setting up a meeting to go over that information.

Mr. Fender stated that he needs to know a date to set up a meeting for the departments to meet with the commissioners. A date of Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 was set for a work session regarding the proposed budget.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Vernon Copeland

Mr. Copeland addressed the Board and stated that on several occasions he has approached the Board regarding County meetings being held in places other than Woodbine. He stated that over 20 years ago the Planning & Building Department was moved to Kingsland on what was to be a temporary time. He stated that over 20 years later Planning & Building is still in Kingsland. Mr. Copeland stated that he does not believe it is fair to those who live on the north end of the county to have to drive all the way to Kingsland when Woodbine is considered the middle of the county. He stated that all the citizens of Camden County should be treated equally and the north end residents are not because they have to drive much farther than those who live in the southern end of the county. He asked why the Board of Commissioners meetings were now being held in Kingsland instead of Woodbine. He stated that if it is because of renovations, why the meetings could not be held in the new courthouse.

Commissioner Berry stated that the reason the Board of Commissioners meetings were being held in Kingsland was due to the fact that the administrative building was being demolished and that until a new building was built, the staff would have to move into the

historic courthouse. He stated that the commissioners did look into using the new courthouse, but that would require paying deputies overtime to man the courthouse because the courthouse cannot be open without security.

Tony Montenegro

Mr. Montenegro of Liberty National Insurance addressed the Board and stated he had received a letter from the county that the payroll deduction agreement with Liberty National had been cancelled. He stated that he wasn't aware of any problems and if there were that they could be fixed. He stated that if payroll deduction is stopped 70-80% of those employees who have Liberty National Insurance would not keep it. He asked the Board to allow them to fix the problems and keep the payroll deduction agreement.

Chairman Rainer stated that Mr. Montenegro would need to speak to Human Resources Director, Penny Woodard regarding this issue as it is her decision to make.

Commissioner Feller asked if they could receive a memorandum from Mrs. Woodard regarding the reasons for canceling the payroll deduction agreement with Liberty National.

Both Chairman Rainer and Vice-Chairman Herrin stated that had spoken to Mrs. Woodard prior to the meeting regarding this issue and were satisfied with the reasons and explanation that she gave to them regarding this issue and suggested that Commissioner Feller do as they did and contact Mrs. Woodard regarding this matter.

This ended Public Comments.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**None.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Consideration of canceling July 4, 2006 Board of Commissioners Meeting.**

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to cancel the July 4, 2006 meeting due to the county offices being closed and the July 18, 2006 meeting due to elections and have one meeting in July on July 11, 2006.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**B. Consideration of allowing qualified candidates running for County Commissioner to be given copies of Proposed FY 2007 Budget – Commissioner Feller.**

Commissioner Feller made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Berry to provide qualified candidates running for County Commission copies of the proposed FY 2007 Budget and Amendments free of charge.

Commissioner Berry asked Commissioner Feller why he wanted to do this.

Commissioner Feller stated that he feels the candidates should have a copy so that they can speak regarding what the budget entails.

Commissioner Berry stated that the Budget is available through the Open Records Act and that anyone can get a copy, but that he did not think that they should get it for free just because they were running for county commission and everyone else would have to pay for it.

**So Voted:**

**Chairman Rainer – nay**

**Vice-Chairman Herrin – nay**

**Commissioner Rhodes – nay**

**Commissioner Berry – nay**

**Commissioner Feller – aye**

**C. Consideration of Resolution to move County Commissioner’s Month Meetings to the County Annex Building in Kingsland.**

Vice-Chairman Herrin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to approve the Resolution moving the County Commissioner’s monthly meetings to the County Annex in Kingsland while the new administrative building is being constructed.

Discussion: Commissioner Berry stated that the reason that the meetings were going to be in this location is because it is the only place that they can meet that can house a significant number of people rent free. He stated that to use the new courthouse would mean having to pay deputies overtime for security purposes.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**D. Consideration to Permit Maiden Creek to Modify its Performance Bond.**

**No action was taken.**

**E. Consideration of Budget Amendments for Fiscal Year 2006.**

Vice-Chairman Herrin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to approve the Budget Amendments for Fiscal Year 2006.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**F. Consideration of Maintenance Costs in Lieu of Rent Agreement with Gateway Behavioral Health Services.**

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to approve the Maintenance Costs in Lieu of Rent Agreement with Gateway Behavioral Health Services.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**G. Consideration to rename and accept Borrow Pit Lease from Cypress Investments located off Owens Ferry Road.**

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to rename and accept Borrow Pit Lease from Cypress Investments located off Owens Ferry Road.

**The motion was approved unanimously.**

**H. Consideration of Approval of Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Community Affairs and the cities of St. Marys, Kingsland, and Woodbine and Camden County.**

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Chairman Rainer to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Community Affairs and the cities of St. Marys, Kingsland and Woodbine and Camden County.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**I. Consideration of Reappointment of Alan Masters as well as a new nomination for the Coastal Workforce Investment Board.**

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to reappoint Alan Masters and nominate Brent Green for the Coastal Workforce Investment Board.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**J. Consideration of Acceptance of Drainage Easement from Terrence and Vivian Holmes, 1150 Bristol Hammock Circle.**

Vice-Chairman Herrin made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to accept the drainage easement from Terrence and Vivian Holmes of 1150 Bristol Hammock Circle.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**K. Consideration of Ella L. Waye for a Consumption on Premises of Spirituous Liquors, Malt Beverages and Wine License for the Club Romero located at 1606 Colerain Road.**

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to approve the request of Ella L. Waye for a Consumption on Premises of Spirituous Liquors, Malt Beverages and Wine License for the Club Romero located at 1606 Colerain Road.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**L. Consideration of Authorization of Rental Space for Public Defenders Office.**

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to authorize rental space for the Public Defenders Office.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion made by Commissioner Feller, seconded by Vice-Chairman Herrin to adjourn the June 6, 2006 meeting. The vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

---

David L. Rainer, Chairman

---

Diana Smith, Executive Assistant/Clerk