

**CAMDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2007 6:00 PM
COUNTY ANNEX
KINGSLAND, GEORGIA**

A special called meeting of the Camden County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, January 9, 2007, at 6:00 p.m. at the County Annex in Kingsland, Georgia.

Present: Chairman Preston Rhodes; Vice-Chair Katherine Nisi Zell; Commissioner David L. Rainer; Commissioner Stephen L. Berry; Commissioner Charlene Sears; County Attorney Brent Green; and Interim County Manager Penny Woodard.

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

Chairman Rhodes delivered the invocation.

Chairman Rhodes led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll call indicated that all Commissioners were present.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS:

None.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA:

Vice Chair Zell made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Sears and voted on unanimously to adopt the agenda.

The motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Consideration of New Jail Construction.

Discussion:

Penny Woodard stated on October 4, 2005 Captain Wesley Walker gave the Board a presentation on the possible addition of a new pod or pods to the existing jail and renovations to the existing facility. She stated that at a later date Captain Walker brought the idea of building a new jail before the Board.

Captain Walker explained that after the jail committee was formed and the project was researched, they reported that their recommendation was to construct a new facility. He

stated that an architect was hired and further research was done to find a site to construct the new facility. He stated that after proposed sites were brought to the Board they were not accepted. Captain Walker stated ultimately the decision to construct a new facility is decided by the Board of Commissioner's but the facility is there to serve the people of Camden County. He stated that Mr. Berry brought up the issue of better management of the existing facility and he explained that the new facility can be better managed and the liabilities are changing every day with housing prisoners. Mr. Walker stated there is the threat of a federal judge shutting down the existing facility due to inability to meet the standards of the Georgia Sheriff's Association.

Commissioner Berry asked how much it will cost to build a new jail.

Captain Walker stated that he was unable to give an exact figure of how much it was cost until further research is completed.

Commissioner Berry explained that the Board cannot make a decision without knowing exactly how much this project will cost the taxpayers.

Captain Walker stated that in order to determine a cost the site would need to be selected.

Commissioner Berry stated that the Board needs to make a decision tonight whether to put an initial ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) on SPLOST that will be on the ballot for March.

Captain Walker stated that he was told not to conduct any more research into the project with the architect.

Commissioner Berry asked what the yearly cost of operating a new facility would cost.

Captain Walker stated that he does not have exact figures, but a larger facility would cost more to run.

Commissioner Rainer stated that there is some indication that the ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) from SPLOST would allow the additional pods and the needs assessment does constitute the need for something to be done for expansion.

Chairman Rhodes explained that the SPLOST monies have already been voted on and that would have to be redone.

Commissioner Berry stated that the money allocated for the new jail can be divided among the cities and County. He stated that there is the possibility of SPLOST being voted down due to the money being spent on a new jail.

Captain Walker stated that some citizens have expressed to him that they would like the jail moved away from the downtown Woodbine area.

Commissioner Berry asked if it was the official position of the Sheriff's Department that there is a need for a new jail.

Captain Walker stated the Sheriff's office is not recommending one way or another the need for a new facility.

Sheriff Bill Smith addressed the Board that he was not in favor of building a new jail but there are some things that can be done to facilitate the existing jail. He stated that additional pods are a necessity.

Stephen Kelly stated that the problem is the waiting period for prisoners and they are working to form a program to have a liaison working in conjunction with the Sheriff's Department and the District Attorney's office to help speed up the process. He stated that additional pods will serve as a solution for over-population at this time.

Sheriff Smith stated that he would like to thank Captain Walker for the work that he has done with this project.

Commissioner Berry stated that the Drug Court Program is the root of the over-population problem and is a very costly program.

Commissioner Sears stated that she does not want people to think that Camden County is soft on crime and she explained that she knows it is not our place to try the case but her concern is with repeat offenders.

Commissioner Zell stated that she commends Sheriff Smith for coming before the Board tonight and explaining where he stands on the new jail construction.

Chairman Rhodes stated that he feels that the addition of the pods and managing the programs is the solution.

Captain Walker stated that he had called the U.S. Marshall service and asked if they would be able to utilize a new facility.

U.S. Marshall Tom Roberts stated that their department negotiates a price to house prisoners with the sheriff's department and there are monies that can be utilized from the Federal Government to offset the cost of a new facility. He stated that he has thirteen (13) deputies in forty-three (43) counties and that the U.S. Marshall's have a Memorandum Agreement with several counties to pay \$21.00 an hour for two (2) sheriff's deputies to escort an individual to court to offset the shortage of U.S. Marshalls. He stated that he hopes the Board will take this into consideration when making their decision.

Commissioner Berry made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Zell to deny the construction of a new jail.

Discussion:

Commissioner Berry stated that he was concerned with the way the current wording in the SPLOST documents shows the allocation of funds for the jail.

Attorney Green stated that he recommends that the agreement be amended to reflect the changes.

Commissioner Berry withdrew his previous motion.

Commissioner Berry made a motion to not build a new jail facility and likewise not add on to the existing jail either and promptly renegotiate with the cities with what to do with the ten million dollars (\$10,000,000), holding back whatever monies that are needed to do repairs on the existing jail.

There was no second to the motion causing the motion to die.

Commissioner Rainer made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Zell to deny the new jail construction and to allow the ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) that was allocated towards that project to be decided on by the cities.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. Consideration of W & D Right-of-Way Agreement – Water & Sewer

Commissioner Berry made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rainer to table the W & D Right-of Way Agreement until the changes are made to the agreement.

Attorney Fleming Martin stated that due to factors beyond Diane Sapps control there has been a timeline placed on this project to furnish utilities to the Dover Bluff area.

Diane Sapp stated that they received a permit from the County in November and they are ready to move forward. She explained that the two (2) developers, Maiden Creek and Bridge Pointe, are awaiting services.

Commissioner Berry stated that the County wants an input in determining where the lines will be placed on the right-of-way and the rates for the services. He explained that the County would entertain a franchise agreement to better determine these stipulations.

Mr. Martin stated that the previous discussions of a franchise agreement had been turned down by the County and the Sapps are open to negotiations.

Commissioner Berry stated that the matter could be negotiated out in a day's time. Diane Sapp stated a full set of plans was provided to the County that showed the exact location of where the lines would run.

Chairman Rhodes stated that the negotiations need to take place and that Attorney Green would discuss these issues with them.

Commissioner Sears stated that she was recently provided these documents and she needed more time to review the agreement. She stated that she agreed that the County needed to have a say in where the lines are placed and what rate is set.

Commissioner Berry stated that there is a Board of Commissioner's meeting scheduled for the following Tuesday and as long as the negotiations are complete the agreement can be placed on that agenda for approval.

Ms. Sapp stated that the JDA was going to provide these services and that fell through so they have stepped up and prioritized the situation.

Commissioner Berry stated for her to provide the information by Friday for it to be placed in the packets and voted on Tuesday night.

Attorney Green stated that the Road Department has approved the engineering documents for this project and he will need some guidance from the Board regarding the franchise fee.

The motion carried unanimously.

C. Call for SPLOST Special Election March, 2007.

Mr. Green explained that there were some changes that needed to be made pertaining to the Resolution and he is asking the Board to approve the call for SPLOST Special Election with the amended changes.

Vice-Chair Zell made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rainer to approve the amended Resolution regarding the call for SPLOST Special Election March, 2007.

Discussion:

Commissioner Berry stated that there would need to be input from the cities and changes made pertaining to the ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) allocated for the new jail that has been denied.

The motion carried unanimously.

D. Consideration of Construction Change Order to Complete Super Elevation of Old Jefferson.

Commissioner Sears made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Zell to approve the construction change order to complete super elevation of Old Jefferson.

The motion carried unanimously.

Ken Taylor approached the podium and requested permission to address the Board.

Chairman Rhodes granted Mr. Taylor permission to speak.

Mr. Taylor stated that he was aware that recently Brunswick had to turn down SPLOST due to the timeline and he counted only forty-nine (49) days including holidays.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by Commissioner Sears, seconded by Vice-Chair Zell to adjourn the January 9, 2007 meeting. The vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 7:46p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Preston Rhodes, Chairman

Diana Smith, Executive Assistant/Clerk