

Regular Meeting
February 15, 2024

The regular meeting of the Macon County Board of Commissioners was held on Thursday, February 15, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. with Commission Chairman Oliver, Vice-chairman Melvin, Commissioner Felton, Commissioner George, Commissioner Haugabook, County Attorney Coogle and Accounts Receivable Clerk Edmonson in attendance.

Chairman Oliver called the meeting to order, and Vice-chairman Melvin gave the opening prayer.

Vice-chairman Melvin stated he had missed the last five or six meetings due to illness and he wanted to thank everyone for their prayers during his continued bout with cancer.

Chad Yoder- Fire Department events

Chad Yoder, Fire Chief gave an update on the Brooks Road Fire station and stated that the final inspection for their certification is pending. The fire department had received a Forestry Grant that was a 50/50 matching grant and that they were going to purchase fire hoses. The fire department is writing an AFG grant for apparatus and equipment. Chad stated the funding for fire department may be cut out next year and asked the Commissioner to contact their representatives to ask for the continued funding of the AFG grant. The City of Perry has donated a brush truck to Macon County. The brush truck will be located at the Brooks Road fire station. Chad stated that the fire department was planning on having the Fire House Bash on May 18th and stated they were asking for permission and input on the event. Chad gave the history of the event. He stated the event began after Darrell Plank died in the line of duty. The event is funded through donations. The event lets people see how the fire house works. There are activities for the kids, demonstrations by the firefighters, Air Evac, etc. Commissioner Felton asked if the donations were run through the county accounts. Chad said he understood it had been done through the county and through a 501 c (3). It is better for the funds to be run through the county and Chad said he had no problem with that. Commissioner George asked if any funds were given to the Plank family. Chad said they ran into a problem with that because there is not fund raising on County Property. Commissioner George asked if there was a way to give to the Plank family. Commissioner Haugabook stated individuals could give a gift, but it can't be called a donation because donations are tax deductible. Commissioner Haugabook stated they need to set up a 501 c (3) for injured firefighters and their families to distribute funds. The Commissioners were in favor of the bash. No vote was taken.

Discuss gymnasium for Recreation Department

Vice-chairman Melvin stated there was an Old SPLOST project that needed to be completed. There are funds in the amount of \$600,000 that is designated for the construction of a gymnasium, however that is not enough. He had been working with David Parrott and Pickle construction on this project. He was proposing to put the building in the north corner where there is currently grassed parking. This will be a multi-purpose building and will be designed with expansion in mind. The building will need to be certified so it can be used as a Red Cross shelter. Vice-chairman Melvin stated the Roquan Smith foundation will meet with the County on February 24, 2024, to discuss a possible grant from the foundation. Vice-chairman Melvin mentioned there may be a possibility of using ARPA funds. Commissioner Felton asked if they had thought about transportation to get the kids from Marshallville and Ideal. Vice-chairman Melvin stated he had asked Dexter about the number of participants from Marshallville and Ideal. Commissioner Felton stated we have to consider the cost of maintaining the gym and the staffing costs. Vice-chairman Melvin stated tournament and rentals would be used to generate revenue.

Discuss letter to request round about at SR26/49

Vice-chairman Melvin stated he had mentioned to County Manager Starling about sending a letter to Representative Patty Stinson requesting a roundabout at SR49/26 so she can request assistance from the Department of Transportation. Commissioner Haugabook stated they need to make sure it has a wide enough radius for the big

trucks. Commissioner George made the motion to send the letter to Rep. Stinson, seconded by Commissioner Haugabook and carried unanimously.

Approval of updated Macon County Maintenance Policy for Transit Vehicles

Commissioner Haugabook made the motion to approve the updated vehicle maintenance policy for the operation of the transit vans, seconded by Vice-chairman Melvin and carried unanimously.

Discuss Roads & Bridges

Chairman Oliver stated there are not enough employees at the Road Department to get the job done. Road Superintendent Brian McDonald stated if he had 2 employees it would be good but 4 would be better and that they would need to perform more than one job. Brian stated they would be required to obtain a CDL license within 90 days of hire. Commissioner George stated they need to look at the budget before they decide how many and what to pay. Brian needs to discuss this with the County Manager and develop a plan.

Discuss goals for Whitewater Creek Park

Chairman Oliver stated he would like to see the park develop into a wildlife sanctuary type place. He asked if DNR would have to approve the wildlife designation and what the process would be. Chairman Oliver inquired about the Garden Clubs plans for the park. He stated he wants it to be native plants and trees. Park Manager Bruce Call stated that camping had increased and that he would like to get the community involved in the plans for the park. He stated he would like to have the buildings opened by April and he would like to have some type of grand re-opening.

Discuss solid waste fees

Chairman Oliver asked what the Commissioners thought about lowering the solid waste fee to \$20 or \$22. Commissioner George stated he wanted to see the collection data. Commissioner George and Commissioner Felton want to wait until we see if we can get it on the tax bills. Chairman Oliver stated we would revisit this at a later date.

Public Comment

Easter Tookes came to say seniors and disabled people that have very little garbage should not be required to have carts. Commissioner Haugabook told her she could be on a medical walk-up list, and she does not want this. She stated she burns her trash with her leaves. Commissioner Haugabook told her this was illegal.

EMA Director Roy Yoder came to give an update on the rain/water level. He stated the river has already crested and is receding as of 6:00 p.m. No shelters were opened because they were not needed and because we do not have a red cross certified shelter. If we build a new gym this can serve as a shelter.

Resolution to move into executive session for personnel matters

Commissioner Felton made the motion to approve the Resolution to move into executive session for personal matters, seconded by Commissioner Haugabook and carried unanimously.

Chairman Oliver reconvened the regular meeting. Vice-chairman Melvin made the motion to raise Tarshea Riley's hourly rate to \$25.00 per hour, seconded by Commissioner Felton. Motion carried by a vote of three for (BM,RF,CO) and two against (BH,MG).

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There being no further business, Commissioner Haugabook made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Felton and carried unanimously.



Carl Oliver, Chairman