



**Fannin County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Jury Assembly Room  
April 11, 2017 6:00 PM**

**OPENING REGULAR MEETING:**

Chairman Stan Helton called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

The Invocation was led by Robert Graham and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Earl Johnson.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Chairman Helton noted next item would be approval of the March 28, 2017 minutes. Motion made first by Commissioner Sosebee. Second made by Commissioner Johnson; motion passed by unanimous decision. (Attachment A, 1-4 Pages)

**PUBLIC COMMENTARY:**

Marcel Osteen of Blue Ridge approached the podium. M. Osteen stated she would suggest, again, that the Agenda of the Board of Commissioners Meetings be posted on the website to allow the citizens to be aware what was going to be discussed at the meeting. M. Osteen stated the checks being signed over \$4500.00, she stated she requested approximately six or seven months ago to Commissioner Simonds, that these be read aloud (who the check is to and the amount). M. Osteen went on to say there would be no need to explain what the purpose of the check was for, just to allow the citizens to know what the \$4500.00 checks were being used for. M. Osteen stated while sitting and watching Commissioners sign the checks, it makes her wonder what they are doing with her money. The third thing was M. Osteen wanted to compliment the BOC for working on the Chamber of Commerce split and feels they are headed in the right direction. M. Osteen pointed out this matter was brought up to the Board by Jan Eaton and Ralph Garner and they were blasted by several of the Board Members for even bringing it up however, she wanted to thank them for even bringing it up and the Board Members for following through.

Joe Webb of Dial was next to the podium. J. Webb stated this was his second time addressing this meeting on the same thing this year with the subject being public safety at Aska Road and Shallowford Bridge. J. Webb referred to an incident of a child killed two years ago in McCayesville and everyone in Fannin County getting upset that the Department of Transportation didn't do anything in regards to public safety. Following this incident J. Webb stated he made public statement in regards to not only that area not being safe but the area where he lives which is Aska Road and requested public safety. J. Webb stated there was a meeting held two years ago and a motion was made that they would install public safety measures in that area.

J. Webb stated the measures taken was some noise strips and a sign that said "bump". J. Webb continued stating a year ago in public commentary he explained that the signs were still there but the "bumps" were no longer there and nothing happened. Due to matters that were more important to the Commission, J. Webb stated he waited until the new Chairman got here.

In January, J. Webb stated he asked that public safety on Aksa Rd. be considered. At that meeting, a variance was passed to allow a tourist attraction was passed with numerous, several possible illegal passing zones and other traffic violations. J. Webb stated he has spoken to the owner of the tourist attraction and that one of the Commissioners had been on site and has not responded back.

J. Webb stated he has talked to the Road Department Manager who went out on his own and looked at the site, saw that there was only a sign and no "bump". At that time, J. Webb stated the Road Department Manager removed the sign. Two weeks later, still no communication.

The three-minute limit timer alarmed before J. Webb was finished. J. Webb asked for a motion to be allowed to finished. Chairman Helton did not approve the motion.

Public Commentary closed at 6:10 PM.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Chairman Helton referred to a last minute, housekeeping item that did not get added to the Agenda. The item being an Easement Agreement between Fannin County and the Fannin County Board of Education. The purpose of the agreement is to allow the BOE to cross the property to access the agricultural-science facility. To validate the verbal agreement, there must be an official Easement Agreement. Motion made first by Chairman Helton to sign the Easement Agreement. Second made by Commissioner Sosebee; motion passed by unanimous decision. (Attachment B, 1-2 Pages)

Chairman Helton referred to the next item on the agenda, need to approve invoices over \$4,500. Motion made first by Commissioner Johnson to approve checks over \$4500.00. Second made by Commissioner Sosebee; motion passed by unanimous decision. (Attachment C, 1-16 Pages)

Chairman Helton stated item number four (4) on the agenda is to approve the Lease Agreement we have at the Sugar Creek Fire Station. The owner of the property has sold and in doing the survey realized the station overlays on the property, the new owners are allowing the County to continue at no charge. Motion to approve made first by Chairman Helton to approve the Amendment to Lease Agreement. Motion made second by Commissioner Johnson; motion passed by unanimous vote. (Attachment D, 1-2 Pages)

Chairman Helton moved to item number five (5) on the agenda, approval to ratify Fannin County Dilapidated Building Ordinance. Chairman Helton referred to County Clerk, Denise Duncan to explain. D. Duncan stated there were two County Ordinance that had went through both required public meetings and approved at the Board of Commissioners meeting in 2009 however, no copy of an original signed Ordinance has could be located. The second Ordinance is item number six (6) on the agenda, Fannin County Outdoor Sign Ordinance. There have been no changes to the originally approved Ordinances by the 2009 Board of Commissioners, the 2017 BOC are only signing to officially ratify what was previously done. Documentation was found showing the two public meetings and the minutes for both and can be provided for anyone wishing to see them. In addition, the updated Ordinances will be posted on the website within the next few days for everyone to view. Motion made first by Commissioner Sosebee to approve to ratify the Dilapidated Building Ordinance. Second made by Commissioner Johnson; motion passed by unanimous decision. (Attachment E, 1-21 Pages) Motion made first by Commissioner Johnson to approve to ratify the Sign Ordinance. Second made by Chairman Helton; motion passed by unanimous decision. (Attachment F, 1-6 Pages)

Item number seven (7) on the agenda is to re-appoint Ms. Kay Kendall to the Fannin County Water Authority. Chairman Helton explained her first term expires this month and the Board has requested that she be reappointed and Chairman Helton agrees with her new term being April, 2017 until April, 2020. Motion made first by Chairman Helton. Second made by Commissioner Sosebee; motion passed by unanimous decision. Commissioner Johnson inquired asked as to whose appointee Ms. Kendall was, Chairman Helton stated she was his appointee and went on to explain that D. Duncan had all this information on a spreadsheet and can provide this information to each of the Commissioners.

Item number eight (8), Chairman Helton explained Fannin County has three representatives on the Northwest Georgia Commission, the Chairman, the Mayor of the largest city which is Blue Ridge and Non-Public Appointee which is currently vacant. Chairman Helton stated he is pleased to announce that Mr. Bo Chance has agreed to be the Non-Public Appointee for Fannin County. Motion made first by Chairman Helton. Second made by Commissioner Johnson; motion passed by unanimous decision.

Chairman Helton called Mary Ann Connor with Board of Elections to the podium. At the April 3, 2017 meeting, by unanimous vote of the Board requested permission to purchase 72 new voting machines. San Diego, California has TSX machines which are the newer version of what Fannin County is currently using (TS). These machines have been used one time and been sealed since the initial use. California has since gone to a new system and will no longer being using them.

California is offering these machines to Georgia counties for \$500 per unit, \$350 machine plus \$150 licensing fee. They have not decided total shipping. The cost for the same machine new, is \$1690.00. The total cost to purchase the new TSX machines would be \$121,680. The cost to purchase the used TSX \$39,900 and this includes an estimated cost for shipping.

Fannin County has had the current machines since 2002, and they have become obsolete, very difficult to get parts for these machines. The newer version machines are much lighter, (half the weight) which will allow transporting much easier. The newer version is a lot faster which allows the results to get back quicker.

The Board of Elections currently has \$28,156.00 in their budget that can be applied towards the \$39,900.00 and would like to ask the Board of Commissioners to consider paying the difference. M. Connor went on to explain although they will be holding open until September due to counties doing their budgets at various times; it is on a first come first serve basis and she would like to get Fannin Counties name in as soon as possible.

Chairman Helton inquired as to if all the officials signed in support of the purchase of these machines. M. Connor had the document available and stated everyone was in full support and would be happy to provide a copy. Chairman Helton confirmed the amount requested from the BOC was \$11,344. Chairman Helton reviewed several other statements made by M. Connor in her previous statements in regards to the new machines weighing less, speed is faster and support from other counties.

M. Connor explained the machines will be sent to Kennesaw College prior to being sent to Fannin County to be cleaned out. M. Connor stated she has established a very good rapport with the contact in California and they are aware of her presentation to the BOC.

Chairman Helton stated he had heard enough and ready to decide and called for a motion. Motion made first by Commissioner Sosebee. Second made by Commissioner Johnson; motion passed by unanimous decision.

Robert Graham and Daryl Payne were invited to podium to present award of ambulance bid. R. Graham stated they have never had any of the trucks in Fannin County and did research with other counties and did receive positive comments. The, second highest bid had one specified they were unable to meet which disqualified them. The two lowest bids look to be very nice trucks, does not feel they can justify spending the money and purchasing the highest price ambulance when the two lower priced fit bit specifications. S. Helton inquired as to if there was any reason why the Ten-8 Fire & Safety Equipment of Georgia bid, which is \$6000.00 less than the next lowest price would not be selected, if there was anything that it did not include by choosing the lowest bid. Both R. Graham and D. Payne agreed they had not been able to find anything other than the length of time it might take for it to be delivered. R. Graham stated they were not hurting for the new ambulance and was only looking at one month extra.

Chairman Helton stated if it was not putting anyone in any public danger by waiting one month and could save \$6000 he felt it would be the best decision. Chairman Helton looked to Commissioner Johnson and Commissioner Sosebee who both agreed. Chairman Helton called for a motion to go with Ten-8 Fire & Safety Equipment of Georgia to purchase the firetruck, with the lowest bid with an amount \$123,420.00. Motion made first by Commissioner Johnson. Second made by Commissioner Sosebee; motion passed by unanimous decision.

Following the bid approval, R. Graham requested permission to discuss the plans for the Public Safety Complex. Chairman Helton invited Kevin Whipple, Project Manager with R. Design Works to join R. Graham at the podium. R. Graham explained that the architect has construction documents ready to go out for bid with the modifications that were discussed at the workshop.

R. Graham then turned the podium over to K. Whipple to explain the modifications that were made. K. Whipple explained following the workshop, they met with the various county departments, who will be utilizing this facility, it was determined which program elements/areas of the facility could be removed or reduced without compromising the facilities ultimate use and longevity to reduce the facilities square foot cost and gross square footage. The result of these meetings is outlined in the Value Engineering synopsis which was translated into the revised construction documents for bidding/construction. (Attachment G, 1-7 Pages)

The square foot reduction target for the facility was around 7,000sf and K. Whipple explained they have managed to remove approximately 6,800sf from the facility. Additional savings have been realized in the complete structural redesign of the facility and as outlined in the Value Engineering document. (Attachment G, 1-7 Pages)

Chairman Helton requested to discuss the timetable on the project, stating an advertisement would need to be in the paper for two weeks beginning next week. Chairman Helton encouraged R. Graham to begin encouraging companies to start placing their bids and then have a called meeting in early May. Commissioner Johnson inquired if that would give those bidding enough time. K. Whipple stated the bidders would need three weeks to a month to get their numbers together and submitted, therefore he recommends he meet with Chairman Helton and work on a timeline. All members of the Board agreed however Chairman Helton reiterated the importance of getting the bid into the paper ASAP.

Commissioner Johnson asked K. Whipple if he would suggest 30 days for bid closing. Mr. Whipple stated he thought that would be good as he feels you do not want to rush the contractors. Commissioner Johnson went on to ask K. Whipple if he felt comfortable with the final number estimated for the cost of the complex. K. Whipple stated he did and even if the bids come in a little higher he feels the BOC should go with it and after the general contractor is in and working, they can assist with getting the numbers to where they need to be and possibly find additional cost savings.

K. Whipple went on to explain, one component of this value engineering effort was the bidding component for the rear 4,800sf fire living/training area of the facility (this 4,800sf area is included in the overall 6,800sf reduction). This area has been completely designed and documented in the revised construction documents; however, they noted this area to be included in the bid as an Add-Alternate. This will allow for the Board of Commissioners to have a line item cost for this area specifically and to be able to determine if the budget can accommodate this construction. K. Whipple stated they have broken bidding out into two (2) add-alternates as outlined in the AA-1.1 drawing in the Value Engineering document. (Attachment G, 1-7 Pages)

Commissioner Johnson inquired as to, assuming the back component is not possible, is the plan to go ahead and engineer without the back structure of the building to where in the future that could still be added on without any structural changes? K. Whipple assured the BOC assured that the way the building was being built it would be able to be added without any structural changes. Chairman Helton asked for any further questions from the BOC, with none Chairman Helton made a motion to proceed to bid for the number one Fannin County Fire Station. Motion made second by Commissioner Johnson; motion passed by unanimous vote.

Item number eleven (11), Zack Ratcliff, Public Works Director. Z. Ratcliff stated mowing started this past Monday, still using the mini track hoe, same as last year, ditching on Big Creek Road. Z. Ratcliff report now running one A boom mower and has received the rock chip spreader. The Road Department has received the sign plotter and equipment and are now in use.

Z. Ratcliff went on to request a replacement for a compact excavator, stating the one currently being used is a 2007 with 6000 hours and has many worn pins in the boom. Jeff Ledford is the operator of the machine and Z. Ratcliff states although he is a very safe and skilled operator he must keep a close eye in tight areas due to the amount of slack in the steering. Chairman Helton inquired as to if the slack had gotten worse from the previous year because it was back in 2016; Z. Ratcliff stated it had.

Z. Ratcliff proposed the purchase of a Kubota Compact Excavator KX057.4 with a 12" and 36" bucket and thumb; this would include a 2-year extended warranty, purchased through Government contract pricing at \$64,050.00. Z. Ratcliff stated Andy with Mason Tractor was present at the meeting and available for questions.

Chairman Helton inquired as to if this would benefit with efficiency. Z. Ratcliff stated he knows that it was due to recently borrowing the Water Authorities equipment two days ago and J. Ledford expressed to him how much faster he could complete the job. In addition, the proposed equipment being purchased is two steps larger than what the Water Authority uses.

Chairman Helton deferred to County Attorney, Lynn Doss to explain Government contract pricing. Attorney Doss explained no bid was required with Government contract pricing with items under \$100,000.00. Chairman Helton looked to input from Commissioner Sosebee who agreed this equipment has been needed for years and asked what would be done with the old one. Z. Ratcliff stated it would be used until it "falls apart".

Commissioner Johnson stated he is fine with the size of machine however he questions how it would be pulled. Z. Ratcliff stated as he has been going through and cleaning out, he has found a trailer that is large enough to pull it. Commissioner Johnson stated if Z. Ratcliff has it all worked out.

Commissioner Johnson inquired as to if had a cab, Z. Ratcliff confirmed it had a cab. Commissioner Johnson voiced his personal dislike with cabs as he feels some people would tend to be lazy and production slow due to being warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Chairman Helton stated he did not feel that Z. Ratcliff

would allow that to happen. Z. Ratcliff stated because of who the operator of the piece of equipment was, he had no concerns and went on to state he had seen J. Ledford in the recent storms working and getting soaking wet and he didn't slow down. Commissioner Johnson stated he does agree the equipment is needed.

Commissioner Johnson went on to say, while on the subject, wanted to check and see if all members of the Board were on the same page that when it was time to purchase the next round of vehicles, they would be heavier, larger such as 450-550, snow plows, trailers, etc. Everyone agreed.

Chairman Helton inquired as to when he thought he could get the new equipment. Z. Ratcliff deferred to Andy with Mason Tractor who stated "tomorrow". Chairman Helton made a motion for the purchase of a Kubota Compact Excavator KXX057-4 in the amount of \$64,050. Motion made second by Commissioner Sosebee; motion passed by unanimous vote.

Prior to Z. Ratcliff leaving the podium, Chairman Helton pointed out that compared to last year, the amount spent on overtime hours for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter had been significantly less. Chairman Helton stated he realizes there had been weather issues last year but there had been more this year, maybe not as severe.

Z. Ratcliff stated the amount spent on overtime last year was \$21,319 for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter compared to this years \$11,965.00. Z. Ratcliff stated rather than having everyone come in, he calls help in on an as-needed basis and send them home when they are done they go home. In addition, improved communication with 911 when there are events. Chairman Helton commended Z. Ratcliff for the improvements and making the department more efficient.

Chairman Helton referred to Commissioner Johnson about his desire to discuss further on the future needs of the Fire Department at a Workshop. Commissioner Johnson stated he felt it should include the future needs of Road Department, Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Management. A discussion between the Board as to when they would like to have the Workshop, what was needed, etc.

Chairman Helton asked Robin Gazaway, Financial Director to head up this project and contact each of the mentioned department heads and ask them to make a list of their future needs. R. Gazaway was also asked to gather figures as to what is left in the budget for the remainder of the year.

Chairman Helton asked County Clerk, D. Duncan to include on the April 25 Agenda to include – Plan a date for Workshop, stating this date should be set based on how much time the department heads and finance director will need to gather their information.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

N/A

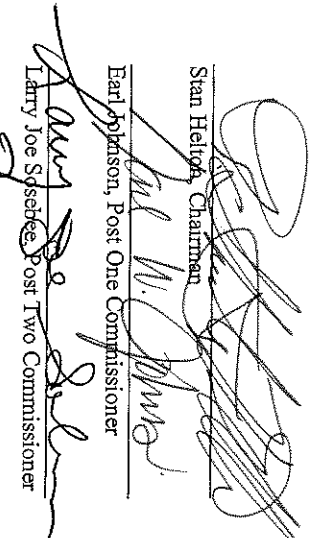
**CLOSING:**

With no further business, Chairman Helton called for a motion to adjourn at 7:02 PM. Commissioner Sosebee made first the motion to adjourn. Motion made second by Commissioner Johnson; motion passed by unanimous decision.

Stan Helton, Chairman

Earl Johnson, Post One Commissioner

Larry Joe Sosebee, Post Two Commissioner



Attest:

Denise M. Duncan, County Clerk

