



**Fannin County Board of Commissioners
SPLOST Workshop/Regular Meeting
Jury Assembly Room
July 12, 2016 6:00 p.m.**

SPLOST WORKSHOP:

Chairman Bill Simonds called the SPLOST workshop to order at 6:00 PM.

Joe Webb asked the board to TSPLOST then SPLOST and 100% of SPLOST would be allocated for other capital.

Mayor Donna Whitener asked if there was any thought of TSPLOST then SPLOST and Chairman Simonds said the board is not looking to TSPLOST then SPLOST at this time.

Mayor Whitener commented on the City of Blue Ridge projects including Main Street, substations that are failing, meter replacement, the sewer plant, and recreation. Mayor Whitener said there is a parking issue that is also a health issue. Mayor Whitener said the city is grateful for anything but stated Blue Ridge is the center and the infrastructure is failing.

City Council Member Angie Arp stated if water and sewer is out there is no sales tax revenue. Arp said substations need to be replaced.

Jan Eaton inquired about the parking deck and Chairman Simonds commented that once the new public safety facility is open, they would use the fire station property as a parking deck. Eaton asked if the county will be doing both a parking deck and satellite administration buildings. Simonds said it was a possibility but the courthouse is a central location. Simonds stated the parking deck would be one level structured to allow for more at a later date.

Marcella Osteen commented that a standalone library would free up parking spaces.

Commissioner Johnson asked County Attorney Lynn Doss about capital outlay and the manner it would be approached stating he did not want to lock the county into a project.

Doss said there is specific wording that would not lock the county in for a specific project.

Commissioner Johnson commented he is not in favor of the library being on SPLOST and Chairman Simonds agreed.

Commissioner Sosebee inquired if the capital outlay must go for a new project and Kirby said it does.

Commissioner Johnson stated public safety is a need for the county as well as recreation because there are so many people coming to the county.

Kirby said the board needed to reach an agreement and have something in place soon in order to meet the timeline set by State Law.

Linda Kiker asked the board why the library is a dead issue. Kiker stated citizens have wanted a library for 20 years. Chairman Simonds said there is a library now, even though it is not the best and it does not fit to add the library to SPLOST now when there are more important things the County needs. Commissioner Johnson asked for citizens present at the meeting to raise their hands if they wanted to see the library on SPLOST.

Citizens commented on TSPLOST and allowing citizens to vote for the \$.01 increase on the ballot. Kirby said the board is outside the timeline for TSPLOST. Doss stated it is too late for the TSPLOST to be on the November ballot and the State of Georgia only allows for four elections per year, unless there is a runoff.

Osteen stated she appreciated the discussion and workshops and stated that she did not feel that adding the library to SPLOST would poison the ballot so that citizens would not vote for it. Osteen asked if there was an alternate route to get the library. Chairman Simonds stated there is not at the time.

Laura Love stated that since January over fifteen people had spoken in favor of the library at meetings. Love commented on the thought that SPLOST would fail because of the library and gave statistics that from 2004-2008 only 5 SPLOSTs did not pass and all with a library had passed.

With no further commentary, the SPLOST workshop was closed.

OPENING REGULAR MEETING:

Chairman Bill Simonds called the regular meeting to order at 6:54 PM on July 12, 2016. Chairman Simonds yielded the floor to Mayor Donna Whitener to open the City Council meeting to be held in conjunction with the Board of Commissioners' meeting for the propose of the SPLOST Intergovernmental Agreement vote. The City voted unanimously to enter into the SPLOST IGA at 7%.

Miles Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chairman Simonds shifted to approving the Intergovernmental Agreement with cities regarding the 2017 SPLOST. Commissioner Earl Johnson recused himself of the vote and stated his company is a vendor and may be again in the future for the City of McCaysville and the City of Blue Ridge. Motion to approve the variance request made first by Chairman Simonds. Second made by Commissioner Larry Joe Sosebee; motion passed by unanimous decision with Commissioner Johnson abstaining.

Chairman Simonds asked for a motion to approve the June 28, 2016 regular meeting minutes. Motion made first by Commissioner Johnson. Motion made second by Commissioner Sosebee; motion passed by unanimous decision.

Chairman Simonds moved to a discussion regarding RFP for convenience centers and a transfer station for solid waste and recycling services that was tabled from the last meeting. Commissioner Johnson asked County Attorney Lynn Doss had comments. Doss commented that the county does not currently have a standalone waste stream ordinance. Doss said the county needs to decide if additional transfer stations will be allowed and what the minimum requirements will be. Doss stated that because the county does not have zoning, it is essential the county has an ordinance. Doss said that any third party supplier would have a contract so trash can be moved safely. Doss said she had sent the document to Advance Disposal but had not received a response. Commissioner Johnson said he was happy with the numbers and they would have to wait for Advance Disposal's response. Commissioner Sosebee stated he believed the numbers would work for Fannin County Doss recommended that the discussion be tabled until a response from ADS was received. The Board agreed to table the issue until the next commission meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Clay Pilgrim from Rushton and Associates presented the 2015 audit to the board. Pilgrim said things went well during the audit. Pilgrim stated they had obtained a letter from management that nothing had been withheld for the 2015 audit. Pilgrim stated the firm had made suggestions on processes. Commissioner Johnson asked Pilgrim what advise he had given to the departments. Pilgrim commented on adjustments including EMS receivables. Pilgrim said suggestions were listed in the report as well as discussed with Kirby. Pilgrim listed deposit timeliness as one suggestion and said the firm has spoken with each Department head and elected official so nothing in the report should be a surprise. Commissioner Sosebee asked if anything had stood out from previous years. Pilgrim commended the previous audit firm for their assistance getting information and said nothing stood out. Commissioner Johnson asked if there was anything out of the ordinary and Pilgrim said that they had met with all responsible parties and he is willing to discuss anything specific but nothing out of the ordinary. Pilgrim stated the audit was not a forensic audit and was a risk based audit. Commissioner Johnson inquired about departments handling cash. A copy of the 2015 audit is included and should be considered part of the minutes.

Chairman Simonds shifted to a variance request from Joshua Thomas. Motion to approve the variance made first by Commissioner Sosebee. Second made by Commissioner Johnson; motion approved by unanimous vote.

Chairman Simonds moved to adopting a resolution calling for the imposition of SPLOST. Motion to adopt the resolution made first by Commissioner Sosebee. Second made by Commissioner Johnson; motion passed by unanimous decision.

Chairman Simonds shifted to approving the contract for geotechnical engineering services for the new public safety complex. Commissioner Sosebee asked Doss if she had read the contract and Doss responded she had not. Commissioner Johnson commented that this was something that had to be done before building and made first the motion to approve the contract. Commissioner Sosebee made second the motion. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

Chairman Simonds moved to approving invoices over \$4,500.00. The board reviewed the invoices and motion to approve invoices made first by Commissioner Johnson. Second made by Commissioner Sosebee; motion passed by unanimous decision.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY:

Marcella Osteen stated she agreed with the auditor and asked the board to look into changing process and procedures; Osteen gave an example of the website. Osteen asked the board to announce the checks over \$4,500 to the public. Osteen stated she was disappointed it looked like there probably would not be a library and stated she feels it is disgusting the library is stuck in a corner. Osteen commented on a commissioner saying he would not be known for a tax increase. Osteen asked the board to let the people decide for themselves about a library and do not take on the maintenance of private roads. Osteen asked the board not to label the citizens.

Sandra Daughtry said the last meetings had left a foul taste in her mouth. Daughtry stated she wanted to hear from the Road Department at the last meeting but the department head was not present and he did not send anyone in his place. Daughtry commented on the chairman's absence from the last meeting and that no other commissioner explained his absence. Daughtry asked if the investigation into using vacation and holiday time to acquire overtime had been dropped and commented on transparency to the public. Daughtry said there is no information given to the public regarding the \$4,500 checks and the public was not given figures during the last SPLOST workshop. Daughtry commented on Commissioner Johnson reprimanding tax payers.

Debbie Holcomb asked Commissioner Johnson if he knew the difference in a workshop and a meeting as well as the difference in discussion and commentary. Holcomb commented that Commissioner Johnson had opened discussion with Commissioner Sosebee during commissioners' commentary and stated he lost his cool when a citizen asked a question after raising her hand and had been called on by Commissioner Sosebee. Holcomb said she expected more professionalism from Commissioner Johnson.

Ralph Garner stated that even though he works with the Fannin Focus his comments are his own. Garner stated Commissioner Johnson and Commissioner Sosebee had promised to investigate the Road Department scam and asked for an update. Garner stated if the department heads are involved the proper response would be to fire and replace. Garner stated Commissioner Johnson should be mindful of questions from citizens and stop flaring at citizens. Garner said that Commissioner Johnson held dialogue with Commissioner Sosebee during commissioners' commentary and not the SPLOST workshop. Garner stated he appreciated Commissioner Johnson questioning the auditor.

Joe Webb said there was a public records request that had been put in after the second May meeting and the information was late and stated there was not information yet. Webb stated that there was not a list on projects as of the previous Friday and according to the worksheet, the two projects are only an administration building and parking deck. Webb made a public records request and asked that the projects list be sent to all newspapers and to him.

With no further comments, public commentary was closed.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTARY:

Chairman Simonds stated the next meeting is on an election day and made a motion to suspend the next meeting. Commissioner Johnson made second the motion; motion approved by unanimous request.

Chairman Simonds said he did not see a reason they could not read the checks over \$4,500 aloud and said they would start reading them.

Commissioner Sosebee stated he had followed up and went to the Road Department the day after the meeting. Commissioner Sosebee stated they had put a stop to the overtime and the employees must work 40 hours before receiving overtime pay. Commissioner Sosebee commented on the audit being clean and in order.

Commissioner Johnson had no further comments.

Chairman Simonds asked the board if executive session was needed and they agreed it was not.

Chairman Simonds asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion made first by Commissioner Sosebee. Second made by Commissioner Johnson; motion approved by unanimous decision.

William C. Simonds, Chairman

Earl Johnson, Post One Commissioner

Larry Joe Sosebee, Post Two Commissioner

Attest:

Rita D. Kirby, County Clerk