



**Fannin County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Jury Assembly Room  
September 27, 2016 6:00 p.m.**

**REGULAR MEETING**

Chairman Simonds, Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Sosebee and County Attorney Lynn Doss were present.

Chairman Bill Simonds called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 PM  
Mike Collis gave the Invocation and Glenda Simonds led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Chairman Simonds asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 23, 2016 and September 13, 2016 meeting.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to reject previous bids received for the additions to Fire Station 3 and re-bid after a materials list and drawing were complete. Commissioner Sosebee made a second to the motion. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Simonds made a motion to grant a variance request from Louis J. and Catherine P. Truemper. Commissioner Johnson made a second to the motion. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Chairman Simonds called for a motion to approve the variance request from Pamela Elaine Panning. Commissioner Sosebee made a motion to grant the a variance request. Commissioner Johnson made a second to the motion. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Chairman Simonds made a motion to grant a variance request from Brandon Holloway. Commissioner Johnson made a second to the motion. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Chairman Simonds made a motion to appoint 7 members to the Joint Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Johnson made a second to the motion. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Department Heads undated the board on current events within their respective departments.

Marie Woody with Land Development stated that to date they have issued 195 building permits and it looks like the number of permits issued this year will exceed last year's total of 207.

EMA Director Robert Graham reported a total of 7161 calls to the 911 center. He stated that Revenue for August was \$114,336.20. Mr. Graham stated that they completed 550 training hours and participated in a tabletop exercise for response to infectious disease. He stated that the CERT Team just finished class for new members and they were preparing to assist with the drive by flu shots provided by the Health Department. Mr. Graham also commented on the hard work of the EMS staff answering calls on Friday night. He stated they had 8 out of town trips that day while providing an ambulance for the high school football game and responding to 911 calls.

John Scalara reported on the different programs underway at the Rec Facility. He stated that baseball was in its second week and football has about a month left of the regular season and the County would be hosting a couple games, one in the regular season and one in the first round of playoffs. Soccer program has about a month left and the travel team will be going until about the first of December. Mr. Scalara reported that at the last Rec Board meeting they sat down with the spokes person for the Fannin County travel team and was able to work out a couple issues and misunderstandings. He continued with reporting that basketball registration began the week of Labor Day and will conclude October 28th. Mr. Scalara stated that now that the house was vacant in the park they have been using the basement as the primary storage for lawnmowers and tractors and other miscellaneous equipment. He asked the Commissioners if they had talked about the use of the house. If it was going to be turned into a fest hall to be rented out or used a offices? Chairman Simonds replied that the house would be turned into offices. Mr. Scalara reported a power surge in the park that blew a couple of the lights but they were able to fix it for the soccer and the multi-purpose field and currently the baseball field is the only field affected. The Light provider is scheduled to come out to give a price on fixing the lights. Mr. Scalara asked if the insurance money for the bathroom that was destroyed had been received because he had not heard anything. County Clerk/Finance Director Rita Kirby confirmed that the funds had been received. Mr. Scalara announced

that Maria Bowers replaced Kristi Ware and was doing a good job and Seth McClure was hired to replace Bryson Thomas and was really doing a great job as well. Commissioner Sosebee asked if there was enough people out there to keep the fields going. Mr. Scalara stated that as far as maintenance yes but currently he was looking to bring Tim Towe on full time for 2017 and that was the only change for the upcoming year. Commissioner Johnson asked if they had been able to empty out the Storage trailer. Mr. Scalara stated that a little bit had been emptied and they're are trying to keep everything clean and organized and they are working everyday to empty the storage trailer. Commissioner Johnson stated that it would be a good idea to get it empty as soon as possible and to find out from Rita when the next payment is due on the trailer. Commissioner Johnson stated that the only other thing he had is when we're having any type of event in the park we need to make sure we are scheduling to have some sort of Fannin County employee there for the duration. Mr. Scalara responded yes sir. Commissioner Johnson stated whether it's Saturday, you know, because if someone goes looking for someone in the park they need to be able to find a County worker (Mr. Scalara responded yes sir) to be able to handle any problem that could come up whether it be with officials or other parents we need to make sure we have an official in the park. It don't matter if it's late in the evening or early in the morning, if we schedule an event we need to have an employee there. Mr. Scalara responded yes sir. Commissioner Johnson asked if the Commissioners agreed. Chairman Simonds stated that he agreed. Commissioner Johnson stated that was all he had.

Chairman Simonds stated that they had a little incident with some bleachers going South and coming back and that he didn't hear about that. You didn't tell me you didn't tell none of these gentleman that they were going out of town and that is County property and that is something that we just don't do. We don't let County property go to Fulton County. Mr. Scalara responded yes sir. Mr. Scalara stated that the only reason that was done was because when Commissioner Johnson and yourself visited the park about a month and a half prior the bleachers had been sitting outside for some time and I was just told if there was a way we could make money whether it was to sell them or whatever that was the reason why I rented those out. Chairman Simonds responded by saying that selling them not renting them. Commissioner Johnson asked how much did we make in rent then since you set the fee. How much did you charge? Mr. Scalara stated \$300.00 dollars. Commissioner Johnson asked if he knew who sets the fee's in this County? any idea? Mr. Scalara responded the Commissioner's. Commissioner Johnson responded exactly, but when those people don't know it's kind of hard to set the fee's. He went on to say that he would rather nothing of Fannin County's to go outside the County. If it's a County function I don't mind for it to go anywhere in this County. Would either of you? If it's a County function. But Fulton County has plenty of their own money and they can get their own bleachers as far as he is concerned.

Mike Collis with the Road Department reported that 18-20 roads had been scraped and 1850 tons of gravel had been spread. He also reported that the part time trash pickup employee's and been in the Cut Cane area and picked up 137 bags of trash. Mr. Collis reported that all the mowers were still out mowing everyday and that they had applied dust control to 20-30 roads and are continuing to patch various roads. He also stated that road signs continue to go missing.

Ken Petty Maintenance Supervisor reported that they are catching up. Station 13 generator switch has been replaced and he is in the process of getting an estimate of the bathroom out at Tom Boyd park. He stated that the shingles need to be replaced on the house at the park and need a roof on the jail.

Claire Barton reported on the different programs held by the library over the summer and the overall use of the library during August.

John. Drullinger Animal Control Supervisor reported that they took in 41 dogs. 33 of those dogs were either taken by Tri-State, reclaimed or adopted. Mr. Drullinger reported on the dangerous dogs that have been in the facility over a year as well as possibly installing guillotine doors to allow more outside time for the dogs and a safer environment for the employee's when cleaning cages. Commissioner Johnson inquired about the dangerous dogs and if they've been there so long then something needs to be done and he suggested that the current Ordinance be followed. Discussions regarding the current Ordinance and placing guillotine doors ensued by the board. Commissioner Johnson made a motion to follow the Ordinance that is in place. Additional discussion regarding updating the Ordinance took place. Commissioner Johnson withdrew his motion. Commissioner Sosebee made a motion to work on the Animal Control Ordinance. Motion died for lack of a second.

Keith Nicholson corrected his previous report of July CO's stating that they actually had 15 issued. He stated that he had done 124 electrical inspections and 46 site evaluations and 12 CO's have been issued for the Month of August and gave been turned over to the Tax Assessors Office.

Fire Chief Larry Thomas reported 104 fire calls and 36 rescue calls for the Month of August and stated that they had assisted 3 elementary schools with their water day. He also reported that next month starts their public education and he went on to report that he had met with GSP regarding long line helicopter rescues.

Rita Kirby Financial Director reported that the 2017 budgets are being worked on and to date the General Fund balance was \$4,979,949.83, SPLOST Capital \$1,270,253.69 and SPLOST Roads \$2,290,901.81. At this point 77.4 percent of the current General Fund budget has been spent which is a little over but that percentage will decrease once the SPLOST Roads Fund and 911 fund reimburse the General Fund for Salaries. Ms. Kirby reported that Revenues were on track and that the lodging tax collections are \$78,000.00 above last year's collections. Commissioner Johnson asked what the average monthly collection was for SPLOST Capital and Ms. Kirby stated that is was around \$35,000.00 to \$40,000.00 a month at 10% of the overall collection.

Commissioner Sosebee asked what roads were next on to be paved. Mike Collis from the Road Department stated that they were in the process of getting Aska Road ready for paving. Commissioner Sosebee remarked on a pretty bad bump in a curve on Madola Road that needs to be fixed before bad weather sets in.

Invoices over \$4,500.00 were signed off on by Commissioner Johnson and Commissioner Sosebee.

#### Public Commentary

Joe Webb Thanked the Commissioner's for the decision made regarding Fire Station 3. Mr. Webb also stated that for the last 2 meetings he has asked the Commissioner's what buildings were going to be built and how much they were going to cost under the new SPLOST referendum.

Marcella Osteen suggested that minutes be placed on the website as soon as they are completed. She also offered herself as a candidate to be placed on the steering committee for the comprehensive plan update.

#### Commissioner's Commentary

Chairman Simonds had no comment.

Commissioner Sosebee had no comment.

Commissioner Johnson gave an update on his meeting with Chamber of Commerce President Jan Hackett regarding the Lodging Tax. He stated that at one point in time that this board felt that the Lodging Tax should be split 50-50 but after to speaking to Ms. Hackett and in the interest of a compromise, instead of the County taking a full one percent in 2017 maybe take a half percent for 2017 and re-evaluate at the end of the year to see if the has had a positive or negative effect on the marketing and tourism and if it is feasible take an additional half a percent at that time to equal the one percent. Commissioner Johnson stated that Ms. Hackett felt that taking that approach would be better and workable but of course she would have to take it to her board. Commissioner Johnson asked how the other two Commissioners felt about it and stated that his proposal is that we take half a percent then re-evaluate. Chairman Simonds stated that they are already in their 2017 fiscal year. He confirmed with Commissioner Johnson that what he was proposing is that they take a half percent now and another half percent in one year. Commissioner Johnson stated a half percent now and another half percent in a year because the Chamber's concern is how it's going to impact their marketing. Commissioner Johnson stated that the Chamber needed to know how this board feels before they can act. He went on to state that if we are going to take an additional portion then we need to outline where we are going to use that money and earmark projects that the money is being used for but it is up to the two of you as to what you feel. Commission Johnson stated that was what he had on talking with the Chamber.

Chairman Simonds stated that he felt that 50-50 is the way it should be and that people know where Blue Ridge is. He stated that he felt like \$750,000 dollars is plenty at this stage of the game and that the County didn't take anything for 4 years. Chairman Simonds asked for some numbers to be put together to see what a half a percent will do.

Commissioner Sosebee stated that we need to revisit this at the next meeting.

Additional conversation regarding the lodging between the commissioner's took place with Commissioner Johnson confirming that it was the feeling of the other two Commissioners that they wanted to take the full percent all at once. Chairman Simonds stated that he wanted to look at the numbers first.

With no executive session needed Chairman Simonds called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Sosebee made the motion. Commissioner Johnson made a second to the motion. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

---

William C. Simonds, Chairman

---

Earl Johnson, Post One Commissioner

---

Larry Joe Sosebee, Post Two Commissioner

Attest:

---

Rita D. Kirby, County Clerk