

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Regular Monthly Meeting on Tuesday, July 11, 2023, at 5:00 p.m., in the Courtroom at the Brooks County Courthouse, located at 100 East Screven Street, Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were: Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman; Mr. James Maxwell, Vice Chairman; Ms. Myra Exum; Mr. Willie Cody; and Mr. Lee Larko. Others present were; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Ms. Kim Daniels, Human Resources; Mr. James Burchett, County Attorney; and various residents. Ms. Jessica McKinney, County Administrator, was not present due to an emergency.

Chairman called the public hearing to order at 5:00 pm.

**1. PUBLIC HEARING – Rezoning – Linda Snow – Place Manufactured Home at 536 Snow Avenue, Dixie, GA. – Sign-In Sheet Provided** - Ms. Sherry Davidson, Zoning & Code Enforcement, presented the application from Ms. Linda Snow to change the zoning of a 7-acre parcel, located at 500 Snow Ave., Dixie, GA, south of the railroad tracks in unincorporated Brooks County, more specifically described as Map No. 038, Parcel No. 0015, from R-1 Residential to Agricultural (AG) for placement of manufactured home for her daughter. Planning Commission met on June 27, 2023, and voted unanimously to approve. No one was present against the request.

Staff recommends Ag Zoning as the most appropriate zoning for the subject parcel, rather than R-1 due to the lost size and having Ag Zoning on three sides of the parcel. Ms. Davidson stated the property should have not been included, because it is outside of Dixie; and all standards are met. There were no questions from the Board. No one signed in to speak against the request. Chairman closed the Public Hearing at 5:06 pm.

**2. CALL TO ORDER** - Chairman called the regular meeting to order.  
**Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance** – Pastor Andy Daughtrey, Brooks County Ministerial Association, led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mrs. Exum, the Board unanimously approved the following minutes:

- |                                |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| A. Regular Monthly Meeting     | June 5, 2023  |
| B. FY2023-2024 Budget Workshop | June 12, 2023 |
| C. Special Called/Work Session | June 26, 2023 |

**4. INVITED GUESTS – (5 MINUTES) - NONE**

A.

**5. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES & DEPARTMENTS – (5 MINUTES)**

**A. Brooks County Fire Department – Chief Weeks** – Provided the report for June 2023 Fire Department and activities:

- Responded to 79 calls for service, 19 weather related calls, 7 MVA, 3 extrications, 8 medical, 18 canceled or no incident found, 3 structure fires, 5 vehicle fires, 6 brush fires and 10 miscellaneous.
- Fire Chief transition from Chief Ralph Catlett to Chief Ricky Weeks.
- BCFD held a promotional test and assessment for Captain. There were 3 applicants each did well; Sgt. Jarod Lanier was the top candidate and was promoted to the A Shift Operations Captain.
- Volunteers received total of 32 hours of training. The training included ropes and knots, hoisting equipment, and ventilation exercises.
- The Fire Department has reached the goal of having all Firefighters NPQ Firefighter II.
- There were no inspections for the month.
- Station 2 open house went well, had lot of positive feedback from the community.
- Fire Department assisted with the Independence Day celebration and fireworks.

**B. Zoning & Code Enforcement – Sherry Davidson – Provided report for June 2023:**

- Reported that Zoning & Code Enforcement works together well with Building Inspections & Permits.
- Reviewed 3 plats, sent out 4 Zoning approval letters, checked 15 complaints.
- Sent a citation to NextEra, had 13 residents complain regarding the noise from the solar site.
- Received 4 emails from NextEra, but nothing has been done. Went to Magistrate Court, hearing date has been set for August 25, 2023, at 9:30 am.
- Checked property on Lone Church Road per request from Commissioner Larko.

**C. Inspections & Permits – Jason Montesano – Provided report for June 2023:**

- Reported that from July 2022 to June 2023 has collected approximately \$150,000.
- Has been busy issuing permits for buildings, plumbing, electrical, new mobile homes, mechanical, new homes, a pool, and culverts. Total collected for June 2023 \$13,101.00

**6. CONSENT AGENDA - NONE**

**7. OLD BUSINESS - NONE**

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Rezoning – Linda Snow – Place Manufactured Home at 536 Snow Avenue, Dixie, GA** – Mr. Cody made the motion to approve the rezoning request by Linda Snow to change the zoning of a 7-acre parcel, located at 500 Snow Avenue, Dixie, GA from R-1 (Residential) to Agricultural (AG) for placement of a mobile home for her daughter, Mr. Maxwell, seconded. The vote was unanimous.

**B. Tax Commissioner – Contract for Services – Collect Taxes for City of Quitman**– Mrs. Becky Rothrock, Tax Commissioner, appeared for Board approval of the annual

Contract for Services to collect taxes for City of Quitman. The Contract has been changed from annually to three years. The approval/ratification of the Contract for Services was unanimously approved on the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Cody.

**C. Board Appointment – Planning Commission** – The Brooks County Planning Commission has a vacancy on their Board to replace Mr. Tom Eggers. According to the By-Laws, the appointments are not District driven, but at the pleasure of the Board they would like someone close to it. One resume was received from Mr. Jeff Cummings. Ms. Sherry Davidson, Zoning & Code Enforcement, recommended the Board table this item until the next meeting in August to review the submitted resume. Mr. Maxwell motioned table the item until the August regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Larko. The vote was unanimous.

**D. IOMC – Beer & Wine Permit – Annual Charity Event for Back to School** – An agenda request for a Beer & Wine permit was submitted by Brian King for their two-day back to school event on August 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 starting at 9:30 am Friday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, and ends Saturday, August 12<sup>th</sup> at midnight. This event is held annually by the IOMC. This year they will donate the funds to the school instead of book bags due to teachers needed help with supplies. On the motion by Mrs. Exum, the Board unanimously approved the two-day permit for Beer & Wine at the annual back to school event held by the IOMC, Mr. Larko seconded.

**E. Resolution Needed – Regarding HB 311 – Local Governments May Provide Tax Relief in Disaster – Commissioner Larko** – At the request of Mr. Larko, this item was placed on the agenda for discussion. The Resolution would provide tax relief when a national disaster is declared. County Attorney advised that the requirement is after damage is done if damage effects one of Brooks County citizens. It would assure Brooks County that if a disaster occurred, we could take advantage of property tax reduction. The property tax relief authorized by this legislation is only available to property destroyed or significantly damaged in a federally declared disaster area. County Attorney further stated that the Board cannot proactively enter into a Resolution before a disaster, but the discussion is a result of a Commissioner working for citizens of Brooks County. No action was taken.

**F. Home Offset Exemption** – Requested by Mr. Larko for discussion. This topic was tabled for the August regular meeting.

**G. Senior Income Based Exemption** – Mr. Larko requested this topic for discussion. County Attorney explained there are income-based exemption for seniors aged 62 and age 65, the educational fund can be taken off the tax bill. The application process is done thru the Tax Assessors Office. This topic was tabled and will further discuss at the August regular meeting.

**H. Pavo Fire Station** – This item was tabled until the next meeting on the motion by Mr. Maxwell and seconded by Mr. Cody. Vote was unanimous.

**9. PUBLIC COMMENTS – (5 MINUTES)**

**A. Paul Gates, Jr. – Advertising for Open Positions on Elections Board** – Mr. Gates submitted a request to address the advertisement of Board appointments. He had questions, 1) Are there rules written governing the Commissioners? 2) Do you have rules written governing the Elections Board? 3) Who does the Board represents? 4) Can the Board create term limits? 5) Can Board members be removed? Mr. Gates stated no notice is given to citizens and nothing reported in the Quitman Free Press. He further commented that radio stations do free public service announcements. Mr. Gates reminded the Board he is still trying to get the Barney voting precinct back.

**B. Steve Schreck – East Brooks VFD – No Notice to Relocate** – Mr. Schreck submitted a second request to appear regarding there being no notice to relocate East Brooks VFD. He complained of no signs being posted, no advertising, no notice and violating the sunshine law. He further stated the East Brooks VFD is trying to reopen.

**C. Steve Schreck – Road Repair & Maintenance – Clean Culverts & Proper Water Flow**  
Mr. Schreck requested to appear to address concerns regarding road repair and maintenance, culverts needing to be cleaned. Chairman explained that the Road Department currently has a skeleton crew and are behind with road maintenance and cleaning culverts. Chairman further explained that the Board is working diligently to resolve the issue.

**11. ADMINISTRATION/ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATES**

**A. County Administrator Updates**

**B. Commissioners Notes/Comments**

- **Lee Larko (District 1)** – Commented on the loss of Mr. Arthur Moore, Brooks County Democratic Party, and wanted to acknowledge his contributions.
- **Patrick Folsom, Chairman (District 2)** – Commented on love and prayers for everyone.
- **Willie Cody (District 3)** – No comment.
- **Myra Exum (District 4)** – Commended the Road Department for their work with having a limited staff, and to be compassionate.
- **James Maxwell, Vice Chairman (District 5)** – Commented the Chairman said all needed to be said. There is a lot of water from the rain. He gets calls about roads.

**12. EXECUTIVE SESSION - NONE**

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Maxwell made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:25 p.m.; Mr. Larko seconded.

Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman  
Ms. Patricia A. Williams, Clerk  
Regular Monthly Meeting

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