

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday, October 2, 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; Mr. Willie Cody; and Mr. Lee Larko. Ms. Myra Exum was not present. Others present were; Ms. Jessica McKinney, County Administrator, Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Ms. Kim Daniels, Human Resources; Mr. Jason Kemp, County Attorney; and various residents.

1. PUBLIC HEARING – NONE

2. CALL TO ORDER - Chairman called the regular meeting to order at 5:03pm.

Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance – Pastor Willie Freeman, Brooks County Ministerial Association, led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On the motion by Mr. Cody, seconded by Mr. Larko, the Board unanimously approved the following minutes:

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| A. | Regular Monthly Meeting | September 11, 2023 |
| B. | Special Called Meeting/Work Session | September 25, 2023 |

4. INVITED GUESTS – NONE - (5 MINUTES)

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

A. Brooks County Fire Department – Chief Weeks – Chief Weeks provided report for September 2023 for activities/projects with the Brooks County Fire Department:

- Responded to 60 calls for service, 4 trees down, 16 medical calls, 11 canceled or no incident found, 4 structure fire, 2 vehicle fire, 0 power lines down, 5 brush fires, 5 fire/smoke alarms, 11 motor vehicle accidents, and 2 other incidents.
- Training included Core Competency, Driving training, incident command, radio communications, ventilation, ground ladders, fire hose, survival newly promoted Officer, NIMS.
- The engine bay at Station 2 is up and has Electricity. The gas company assured that the heater would arrive in one week from date ordered and installed as soon as it gets in. Which is not the case, it took over a week to get it in and did not install until September 29th. Have all the paperwork to send to ISO as soon as the heater is installed.
- **Update:** Spoken with Chief Yates, Morven Police, on September 26th, and he stated that he is working with Ms. Hampton, 911/EMA Director, regarding dispatching calls. Chief Yates stated he has submitted paperwork to GFSTC and awaiting to hear from the agency. During a previous conversation with Ms. Hampton and Chief Yates, she advised him they would have to get radios and a

channel programmed for Morven. Director Hampton also had a similar conversation with the Mayor and a Council member from Morven.

- Chief Weeks provided a proposed Automatic Aid Agreement for the Board's review.

B. Brooks County Road Depart – Amy Hart – Provided report for September 2023:

- Steady working with skeleton crew, the Department is down to eight employees as of Thursday.
- There are three motor grader operators and four regular employees.
- Some road projects were completed by Curtis Head, Jr.
- CWS met with employees and the employees were pleased to have the meeting.
- The new Road Department Contract is in process. They are in the hiring process.

C. Brooks County 911/EMA – Director LaToya Hampton – Ms. Hampton provided an update for September 2023:

- Conducted a ride around last Monday with FEMA, GEMA and SBA, 22 homes were evaluated: 11 major damage, 4 destroyed, and 7 minor or affected.
- GEMA called on Tuesday, they are sending information to FEMA and feel strongly they should declare as well; but we have 28 others to evaluate.
- 25 submitted after the ride and three calls to 911.
- SBA met Wednesday at 10:00 am with different municipalities.
- Calls are continuing to come in asking about debris and trees down. The last call On home damage was submitted last Wednesday to the State.
- Debris pickup amount as of today at 2:00 pm, was about 40% done and 60,615.3 cubic square yards picked up, 12,000 hanging limbs cut and 670 leaning trees.
- To be declared a large project by FEMA, has to be \$1 million dollars; and we are well into that with debris alone and with other damages about \$2.3 million dollars.
- If projects are expedited to be declared by FEMA, could possibly receive one-half of the funds ASAP, maybe with 5 days to one month versus seven months or more if done regularly.

6. CONSENT AGENDA – NONE

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Tax Assessors – Board Appointment – The Brooks County Tax Assessors Board informed the Board of the expiring term for Mr. Ralph Manning, December 31, 2023, and requested to re-appoint or appoint someone to serve. The Board tabled this topic during the September regular meeting to run an ad in the Quitman Free Press for two weeks to allow citizens to apply if they wish to do so, by submitting a resume. There were no resumes received. Mr. Ralph Manning was re-appointed to serve on the Tax Assessors Board for a three-year term on a motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Larko. Mr. Manning's term will expire December 31, 2026. The vote was unanimous.

B. Board of Health – Board Appointment – Six Year Term – Toni Brinson - Brooks County Board of Health, submitted a request to the Board to consider appointing Ms. Toni Brinson to a six-year term. Ms. Brinson currently serves as the Consumer Advocate of Brooks County Board of Health. After discussion, the Board agreed to run an ad in the Quitman Free Press for two weeks for any citizens that may be interested in serving on the Board of Health. No resumes were submitted. On the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Cody, the Board unanimously approved the re-appointment of Ms. Toni Brinson to the Brooks County Board of Health as Consumer Advocate for a six-year term. Ms. Brinson's new six-year term will expire December 31, 2028.

C. Heritage and Candleglow Project – The Board discussed this project during the September meeting stating it is a hit and miss and left in a mess; do not have the workforce. The roads are on the paving list, the County is trying to get done and save money. The County Engineer has spoken to Reames about a Change Order to complete the road project and provide a quote for the cost; but had not gotten the information to the Engineer; but should have the quote by next week. The Board unanimously tabled this item on a motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Cody until the Work Session.

D. GDOT – Speed Zone Ordinances – Updating Existing Speed Limits – Sheriff Dewey

This item was tabled by Mr. Larko, and seconded by Mr. Cody, to allow the Sheriff to get additional information.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Empress Road and Johnson Short Road – The County is working on caution lights for the intersection of Empress Road and Johnson Short Road. Knights Ferry Road and Old Madison Road and other intersections in the County will be added later. The Engineer provided quotes from Corbett Electrical Construction to install flashing beacons at the intersection. The quotes included Knights Ferry Road @ Old Madison Road, but due to not being on the agenda, the Board could not discuss. The quotes provided two options: Option 1 @ \$6,281.00 per unit (8 units) and total price of \$50,248.00, which included solar advanced warning signal and sign mounted on 16' 4X4 pressure treated post. Option 2: @ \$41,500.00 per unit (2 units) and total price of \$83,000.00, which included intersection signal includes: (4) red flashing heads, (4) yellow flashing heads, solar charger, battery, and enclosure. The Board chose Option 1: The cost was split for only Empress Road and Johnson Short Road, for 2 units with lights @ \$6,281.00, totaling \$12,562.00, which is in the authorization amount for County Administrator. Due to Corbett Electrical Construction being the only company in the area for intersection signals, this project was not put out to bid. The Board will determine other intersections in each district and put a bid packet out for bid.

B. Ratification of Amendment to Debris Removal Contract – The Debris Removal Contract was presented the Board due to being amended for the continuing emergency need to continue without ceasing the work necessary to make county roads and bridges

passable and rights-of way safe for the citizens of Brooks County. County Administrator received the call while on vacation of the need for the amendment to the contract for an increase. The contract amendment was increased from \$1,000,000.00 to \$2,500,000.00 and the source of funds for the contract needs to be designated. Mr. Maxwell made the motion to ratify the Contract Amendment for Emergency Debris Removal increase to \$2.5 million, a match of 15% for the County, totaling \$375,000.00; and funds will come from the TSPLOST account, Mr. Cody seconded; the vote was unanimous.

C. Use of Courthouse Grounds – MLK Committee – Commissioner Maxwell – This item was deleted from the agenda, per Mr. Maxwell.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS – (5 MINUTES)

A. Susie Davis – Why Was Brooks County Left Out to be Toured and Assessed by the Governor? – Was not present.

B. David Grimm – Problem with Ditch Drainage – Driveway Repair – Was not present.

C. Eloise Smith & Hugh Hampton – Old Thomasville Road and Ham City Road – Road Improvements – Ms. Smith addressed the issues on Old Thomasville Road and Ham City Road, stating that water crosses the road and creates problem for citizens in wheelchairs; and emergency vehicles cannot get in and they cannot get out. Mr. Cody commented that he has addressed this issue numerous times. Also, informed Ms. Smith the County has entered into a contract for services with the Road Department, and hopefully, the issues will be taken care of soon. The Board thanked Ms. Smith for bringing the issue to the Board.

D. Di Whitfield & Belinda G. Patrick – Ms. Whitfield and Ms. Patrick appeared to address their concerns/issues on Blue Springs Lane, including ditches, drainage and part of the road being left undone. The road was paved in 2019 but was not widened. The Board stated it would be placed on the 2024 LMIG list.

E. Fannie Gibbs – Historic Preservation, Cemeteries & Economic Development – Commitment to Assist and Financial Support. Was not present.

Ms. Barbara Daughtrey had a question to address to the Board. Chairman allowed her two minutes, on the motion by Mr. Larko, seconded by Mr. Cody. Ms. Daughtrey had a question regarding the division of property. The Board directed her to Mr. Jason Montesano, Building & Inspections.

10. ADMINISTRATION/ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATES

A. County Administrator Updates – None

B. Commissioners Notes/Comments

- **Lee Larko (District 1)** – No comment.
- **Patrick Folsom, Chairman (District 2)** – No comment.
- **Willie Cody (District 3)** – No comment.
- **Myra Exum (District 4)** – Not present.
- **James Maxwell, Vice Chairman (District 5)** – No comment.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION - NONE

12. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Maxwell made the motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:50 p.m.; Mr. Larko seconded.

Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman

Ms. Jessica McKinney, County Administrator

Ms. Patricia A. Williams, Clerk