

## **MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE GILCHRIST COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD NOVEMBER 8, 2004.**

The Gilchrist County Board of County Commissioners, in and for Gilchrist County Florida, convened in a regular meeting on Monday, November 8, 2004 at 1:15 p.m. in the Board of County Commissioners Meeting Room located at 210 South Main Street, Trenton, Florida, with the following members present to-wit:

**Commissioner Randy Durden, Chair**  
**Commissioner Wilbur Bush**  
**Commissioner Mitchell Gentry, Vice-Chair**  
**Commissioner Tommy Langford**  
**Commissioner Sue Suggs**

**Others in attendance were:** John McPherson, County Attorney, Joseph W. Gilliam, Clerk of Court, Karen Heaton, Deputy Clerk, Sam Ferguson, Director of Finance, Jacki Johnson, Deputy Clerk, Justin Watson, Billy Cannon, Diane Rondolet, Ron Mills, Kenrick Thomas, Burkett Neely, Jeanne Payne, Delight Curtis, Rick Dolan, Matt Johnson, Evelyn Meece, Susan Bryant, Dale Anderson, Debra Wright, Casey Carlisle, Meveree Pope, David Ward, Joseph Young, Andy Hall, Lu Young, Susie Holt, Lavaughn Sessions, Betty Bush.

### **Call to Order:**

Chairman Durden called the meeting to order at 1:24 p.m. Commissioner Gentry delivered the Invocation and Commissioner Langford led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Agenda Changes:**

Additions: (1) Jail Inspection Report  
(2) Request for the reappointment of Commissioner Durden to the Gilchrist County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

**Motion** by Commissioner Langford, Seconded by Commissioner Suggs, to accept the agenda with the changes noted. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Consent Agenda:**

- (1) Approval of Bills
- (2) Approval of Purchase Orders:
  - a. #402327, Ring Power Corp. (\$32,665)
  - b. #402462, Shands Hospital (\$15,021.68)
  - c. #402484, Alachua County BOCC (\$5,947.64)
  - d. #402485, Ring Power Corp. (\$4,717.89)
  - e. #500279, Hipp Construction (\$46,341.92)

- (3) Approval of Budget Entries:
  - a. #BE5-001, General Fund (\$8,133)
  - b. #BE5-002, Law Library Fund (\$8,133)
  
- (4) Approval of Minutes:
  - a. September 9, 2004 / Regular Meeting
  - b. September 20, 2004 / Regular Meeting

**Motion** by Commissioner Suggs, seconded by Commissioner Gentry, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

**Attorney's Report:**

Hart Springs Residence – Mr. McPherson advised he sent a copy of the lease agreement to Ms. Harrison for her review but because of the flooding she will not be able to move back in for some time. (1/637)

Poitevint v. Gilchrist County – Mr. McPherson advised that the Plaintiffs in this case have filed a Notice of Voluntary Dismissal. (1/649)

Brooks and Strickland v. Aderholts and Gilchrist County – Mr. McPherson reported that the Plaintiff's are to file a second amended complaint and a case management conference has been set for November 16 at 2:45 p.m. (1/655)

Bailey v. Gilchrist County – Mr. McPherson advised that he filed a Motion for Summary Judgement on this date.

Bailey Code Enforcement – Mr. McPherson stated that the Bailey Code Enforcement appeal is pending the outcome of the preceding court case.

Department of Juvenile Justice Funding Litigation – Mr. McPherson told the Board that a ruling in this case should be issued soon.

Gilchrist County v. Langfords – Mr. McPherson said he is still waiting for the final settlement proposal from the attorney for the Langfords.

**Division of Forestry, Annual Report:**

Mr. William Clark, Gilchrist County Forester, presented the annual report from the Florida Division of Forestry's Cooperative Florida Assistance Program for July 2003 thru June 2004.

Mr. Clark introduced Mr. Matthew Johnson to the Board. Mr. Johnson has been working with the Division in Gilchrist County since April. Commissioner Gentry asked Mr. Clark who should be contacted concerning damage to planted pines. Mr. Johnson replied that the property owner should contact him and he would come out and look at it with them and discuss their options. Recovery funds will be made available soon.

Mr. McQueen told the Board that the Division of Forestry had been very involved in the recovery efforts after the hurricanes and that they did a great job. (1/711)

**Road Department:**

SE 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Mr. Watson recalled at the last meeting he brought to the Board a situation on SE 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue in which a property owner had built up the road in a flooded area. Mr. Watson stated that he had contacted Water Management and found that the County will be required to place two (2) 24" culvert pipes at the location mentioned.

**Motion** by Commissioner Gentry, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to approve the installation of two (2) culvert pipes on SE 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The motion carried unanimously. (1/711)

Request from Andy Hall – Commissioner Gentry presented a request from Mr. Andy Hall concerning the repair of his driveway. Commissioner Gentry explained that Mr. Hall had opened his property to allow several land owners to move from SE 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue to SE 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This was the only way available to them to get out after the flooding in that area. Mr. Hall had used milling material for his driveway and as a result of the property owners using it over a period of time, the driveway needs to be refurbished back to its elevation. Mr. Watson said that it would take approximately 10 to 15 loads of lime rock. Mr. McPherson advised that the driveway had been used to serve a public purpose during this time and that the County could do the project based on that finding. **Motion** by Commissioner Gentry, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to restore the elevation of Mr. Hall's driveway on a one time basis due to the fact it served as a route for the property owners on SE 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue to access their property. Discussion was held concerning the distance of the driveway. Commissioner Gentry, seconded by Commissioner Langford, amended the motion to repair the portion of driveway up to the gatepost. The motion carried unanimously. (1/914)

NE 56<sup>th</sup> Place – Mr. Justin Watson related that he had received a request from Ms. Jeanne Payne for the County to trim the limbs on NE 56<sup>th</sup> Place in order for her to move a mobile home onto her property. He stated that it is his understanding that this is not a County maintained road and no one lives on the road at this time. Ms. Payne spoke to the Board and provided a copy of a deed and a survey which indicated that the road is a County Road. She said that the road had been graded within the past year and asked Mr. J.B. O'Steen to verify this. Mr. O'Steen told the Board that it had been graded within the past year. Mr. Billy Cannon, Road Department, told the Board that this road has not been maintained by the County in many years. Mr. McPherson reviewed the deed and the survey and recommended that he research the Official Records to determine if it is a County Road or not. **Motion** by Commissioner Suggs, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to direct Mr. Watson and Mr. McPherson to research the property in the Official Records and to bring back a recommendation the next meeting. The motion carried unanimously. (1/1072)

Horace Thomas Grade – Mr. Watson said he had been questioned about work on the Horace Thomas Grade in the past. He provided a map and pointed out that this is shown to be a private road. Mr. Gilliam stated that he had searched the minutes and found that

at one time the County had maintained it and that in the recent past the Board took action to maintain it. Chairman Durden suggested that the road be added to the maintenance schedule. Mr. Watson said that he would determine how often it will be needed and put it on the schedule. (1/1433)

Herbie Brown Road – Mr. Watson told the Board that he had been contacted about repairs for the Herbie Brown Road off of SW 37<sup>th</sup> Trail. He said that there is a gate at the road. Commissioner Bush told Mr. Watson that it has been taken down. Chairman Durden asked if this is the driveway that goes to Mr. Brown's house. Commissioner Bush said that there is limerock on that road and the County had put it down years ago. The Board discussed this road and determined it is not a road but a driveway. Mr. McPherson commented that there may have been a reason in the past to place the limerock there but it doesn't necessarily make it a public road. (1/1656)

Purchase Request – Mr. Watson requested approval of a purchase order in the amount of \$2,702.67 for filters. He said that he needs to purchase two (2) filters for each piece of equipment for the stock room. **Motion** by Commissioner Langford, seconded by Bush, to approve the purchase order in the amount of \$2,702.67. The motion carried unanimously.

SE 70<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Commissioner Suggs asked Mr. Watson if he had found out anything about SE 70<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Waccasassa). Mr. Watson said that they had drilled the road and found that there is not enough milling on top, it would be necessary to remix it to bring the base up. Discussion was held concerning the options to repair the paved portion. It was suggested that the Road be taken up and graded. **Motion** by Commissioner Gentry, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to allow Mr. Watson to tear it up and start grading it again. The motion carried unanimously. (1/1072)

Commissioner Bush asked Mr. Watson to contact Mr. Brown and let him know what the Board had decided about his road. Commissioner Gentry asked for clarification on the differences between the Herbie Brown Road and the Hoarce Thomas Road and the decisions that were made. **Motion** by Commissioner Suggs to do the same thing for Mr. Browns Road as for Mr. Thomas' Road. For clarification, Chairman Durden read a portion of the minutes from the meeting held on December 2, 2002:

*“Commissioner Gentry mentioned that he received a phone call from Mr. Horace Thomas regarding the road to his property. Though this road has not been maintained by the County for several years, Mr. Thomas requests the Road Department bring in a few loads of limerock and grade it. He does not want the County to maintain it on a regular basis but only periodically. Discussion was held regarding the status of the road being a private road or a County road. Mr. Martin explained the County built the road and maintained it for many years. After Mr. Thomas retired from the County, he had asked the Road Department to stop maintenance on the road. Mr. McPherson advised if the county never formally abandoned the road, it is still considered a County road.”*

Mr. McPherson explained that these roads were questionable but the difference is the Thomas Road was constructed by the County and maintained for a period of four years,

making it a County road. It appears that Mr. Browns Road may have been constructed by the County but it was not maintained for any period of time. The motion made by Commissioner Suggs died for a lack of a second.

**Citizen's Request / J.B. O'Steen:**

Mr. O'Steen offered comments about Ms. Payne's request concerning NE 56<sup>th</sup> Place. He told the Board that the road gives him and his brother and sisters access to property that they have there and it is the only road with access to his property. He said that his Father bought the property, 160 acres, in 1914 and the road has been in existence since. At one point in the past the County put in rock and maintained the road.

Mr. O'Steen stated that he had requested to meet with the Commission in order to discuss the sludge that had been dumped behind his property. He said that it has affected their water and it still smells bad. He said that he is having the well checked on this date. Mr. O'Steen introduced Mr. Burkett Neely from Fort White and asked him to discuss this issue.

Mr. Neely told the Board that he first became aware of the situation when the sludge started flowing down the Santa Fe River in front of his house. He found out that Mr. O'Steen had discovered where the sludge was being stored. The County Code Enforcement Officer went to the property and took photographs. It appeared that the sludge was being stored on the property, not spread. Mr. Neely told the Board that he had researched the requirements for storage and this property owner had not followed them. He suggested that letters be sent to DEP in Tallahassee requesting that the County be notified regarding permits issued for the storage of sludge.

Mr. McPherson stated that this issue presents two (2) questions, whether the County has an obligation to do something and can the County do something since this is a dispute between private parties? He stated the only obligation the County had, and did, was to take action to stop the property owner from bringing any more sludge to the property. However, if the County decided to take further action to have it cleaned up, it would be allowable because of potential impact to the public. Mr. McPherson stated that he did not know what action the County could take and that it would first be the responsibility of the private property owner (who dumped the sludge) to bear the expense of the cleanup.

Mr. McQueen told the Board that DEP has stated that the dumping of the sludge was permitted, it was proper and it was acceptable. The permitting agency for DEP has never acknowledged a violation. On the other hand, the County and the citizens have contended that it was improper, the County should have been notified and the area should have been protected. DEP maintains that the it has the regulatory authority to permit it and that the property owner is in compliance with the permit.

Mr. Neely said that when he made inquiries at the Suwannee River Water Management District, he was told that this is a DEP issue. Mr. Neely stated that the regulations that

the property owner violated were the Federal EPA but that the EPA had delegated the authority to DEP.

Commissioner Gentry mentioned the EPA currently has a lawsuit against DEP pertaining to the nitrates in the rivers. He asked Mr. McPherson if the County could request EPA to file a similar case against DEP for this issue. Mr. McPherson replied that it might be an option due to the fact DEP is not fulfilling its obligation under its delegation of EPA's Rule 503. Chairman Durden asked Mr. McPherson to bring back more information to the next meeting and to find out who the County can contact for assistance in this matter. Mr. McPherson suggested that he also prepare a draft ordinance to address the disposal of sludge.

Mr. Gilliam advised that the Legislative Delegation Hearing has been set for December 2. He recommended that this issue be brought to the delegation for assistance. Ms. Diane Rondolet told the Board that she had been contacted by a resident who has photographs of the sludge on his property. He advised her that he will bring in the photos and an affidavit for her records. She recommended that this type documentation be obtained from others for evidence.

Chairman Durden told those present that the Board will continue to pursue this issue and that Mr. McPherson will bring back additional information and a recommendation. (1/2384)

### **Clerk's Report:**

Chamber of Commerce – Mr. Gilliam referred to a letter from Jim Troke, President, Chamber of Commerce, requesting the reappointment of Commissioner Durden to the Chamber's Board of Directors. It was suggested that action be taken on November 22 at which time the Chairman will make the committee appointments. (2/540)

Storm Invoices – For the Board's approval, Mr. Gilliam presented invoices for storm expenses. The invoices totaled \$28,102.57. **Motion** by Commissioner Suggs, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to approve payment of the invoices as submitted. The motion carried unanimously. (2/568)

Legislative Issues – Mr. Gilliam referred to a letter he drafted to Senator Rod Smith and Representative Dwight Stansel listing the Legislative Issues for the upcoming session. (2/600)

Request from Casey Carlisle – Mr. Gilliam presented a letter from Mr. Carlisle requesting information. Mr. Carlisle asked for the names of those named as "staff" at the public hearing for the Nextel tower. Mr. Gilliam advised that this has been answered. The second question concerned a right of way at the Center Hill Cemetery. Mr. Carlisle asked that consideration be given to giving the right of way to the Cemetery since it is not being used. Mr. Gilliam said that he researched the right of way and found that it is at the boundary of Deer Run Subdivision. It was listed as a dedication for right of way. The

Property Appraiser advised him that it is not listed on the tax roll. It is the determination of First American Title Company that the County owns the 40-ft strip on the West side of the subdivision. Mr. McPherson stated that he did not agree with the title company because the dedication of the right of way was never accepted by the County and the County has never used it. The fact that it was dedicated to the public on the plat does not transfer title to the County. **Motion** by Commissioner Gentry, seconded by Commissioner Suggs, to allow Mr. McPherson to contact Mr. Casey Carlisle concerning the ownership of the right of way. The motion carried unanimously.

Solid Waste Bill – Mr. Gilliam presented an invoice from the Solid Waste Department in the amount of \$40.20 for the removal of the carpet in the Board of County Commissioners Building. He advised that this expense will possibly be reimbursable by FEMA. **Motion** Commissioner Suggs, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to approve payment of the Invoice in the amount of \$40.20. The motion carried unanimously. (2/1051)

Small County Coalition – Mr. Gilliam presented an invoice from the Small County Coalition in the amount of \$1,802 for annual dues. He explained that the budgeted amount is \$1,720 and requested approval to pay the increase. **Motion** by Commissioner Suggs, seconded by Commissioner Gentry, to approve the payment of the invoice in the amount of \$1,802 which includes an increase in the amount of \$82. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gilliam advised that the Small County Coalition has requested the appointment of two (2) Commissioners and one (1) staff member to it's Board of Directors for 2004-2005. **Motion** by Commissioner Suggs, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to appoint Commissioner Gentry to the SCC Board of Directors with Commissioner Langford serving as an alternate. The motion carried unanimously.

Refund Checks – Mr. Gilliam presented a copy of a check in the amount of \$1,289.36 from Sheriff Turner and a check from the Clerk in the amount of \$88,189.44. These checks represent reimbursement of excess funds from the previous budget year. (2/1186)

Bids for Financing – Mr. Ferguson presented the bids received for the financing of the new Caterpillar motor grader with a loan amount of \$51,262.

•	Tri-County Bank	5.45%
•	Drummond Community Bank	5.95%
•	Capital City Bank	\$3.67%

**Motion** by Commissioner Suggs, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to accept the bid from Capital City Bank for the financing of the Caterpillar motor grader at 3.67%. The motion carried unanimously. (2/1242)

Renewal Contract for Health Department – Mr. Gilliam requested approval of the contract with the Florida Department of Health for the Gilchrist County Health Department.

**Motion** by Commissioner Suggs, seconded by Commissioner Gentry, to approve the

contract for the operations of the Health Department for FY 04-05. The motion carried unanimously.

Court Operations – Mr. Gilliam presented a purchase order in the amount of \$5,947.64 to the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter court costs.

**Motion** by Commissioner Gentry, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to approve the purchase order in the amount of \$5,947.64. The motion carried unanimously. (2/1320)

Gilchrist County Foster Parents Association – Mr. Gilliam presented a request from the Gilchrist County Foster Parents Association requesting a donation in the amount of \$400.

Mr. Gilliam pointed out that this item was not included in the FY 04/05 budget. The Board took no action.

Small County Coalition – Mr. Gilliam referred to the letter from the Small County Coalition and pointed out that in addition to a County Commissioner, the appointment of a staff contact person is requested.

**Motion** by Commissioner Suggs, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to appoint Ron McQueen to serve as the staff contact person to the Small County Coalition. The motion carried unanimously.

Purchase Order, Ring Power – Mr. Ferguson presented a purchase order in the amount of \$37,382.89 to Ring Power for the skid steer loader. **Motion** by Commissioner Suggs, seconded by Commissioner Gentry, to approve the purchase order to Ring Power in the amount of \$37,382.89. The motion carried unanimously. (2/1511)

### **EMA/County Administrator Report:**

Small County Road Assistance Program – Mr. McQueen referred to a letter from the Department of Transportation concerning the Small County Road Assistance Program. The contracts have been fully executed and the County may proceed with the CR 319 resurfacing project and the CR 340 project. Chairman Durden asked Mr. McQueen to invite Mr. Lee Mills to attend the next meeting to discuss which paving project should begin first. (2/1543)

Light at SE 70<sup>th</sup> – Commissioner Suggs asked Mr. McQueen for the status of the light at SE 70<sup>th</sup> and SR 26. He replied that he has contacted the Department of Transportation and the cost to replace the light will be in excess of \$10,000. Repairs are pending more information from the insurance company of the driver responsible for the accident. (2/1691)

Recovery Operations Report – Mr. McQueen advised that 29 trailers have been placed at Ellie Ray's Campground for temporary housing. He stated that 996 residents have applied to FEMA for assistance. Mr. McQueen explained that many of the roads around Waters Lake are still inaccessible and as soon as the water recedes the Road Department will begin repairs. (2/1783)

### **Commissioners Reports:**

**Commissioner Suggs** related that she had talked to Mr. Kenrick Thomas about the current issues before the Small County Coalition.

**Commissioner Gentry** discussed the need to widen CR 340 and CR 319 and stated that it may be possible to have the Road Department bring in the lime rock. He suggested that these roads also be addressed by Mr. Mills at the next meeting. (2/2459)

**Commissioner Gentry** asked Mr. Watson if it would be possible to grade the roads with flooding up to the flooded area on either side. He suggested this might relieve some of the frustrations the community is currently experiencing. Mr. Watson replied that a grader is in the Waters Lake area on this date.

**Commissioner Langford** stated that he has enjoyed working with Commissioner Suggs and Commissioner Bush the past two years and that he wished them the best in the future.

**Commissioner Langford** advised that there are still concerns about the roads at Waters Lake and that he is continuing to work with the residents.

**Commissioner Bush** expressed that he has enjoyed working with the County and County Officials for the past 12 years.

**Commissioner Durden** recalled that the Board had discussed the need to review the sign regulations. He suggested that this be scheduled on the agenda for a future meeting. Mr. McPherson stated that he and Mr. Chumley had already prepared revisions to the LDRs regarding signs and that it has already been reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Board. The Board agreed to schedule this for an upcoming meeting. (3/100)

Mr. Justin Watson presented a purchase order to Kincaid Products in the amount of \$2,222.04 for the disposal of storm debris. **Motion** by Commissioner Bush, seconded by Commissioner Langford, to approve the purchase order in the amount of \$2,222.04. The motion carried unanimously. (3/204)

### **Evaluation, County Administrator Position:**

Commissioner Suggs stated that she had not had an opportunity to conduct an evaluation with Mr. McQueen other than over the phone. She commended the work he has done for the County. She expressed concern that he may have too many responsibilities for the job.

Commissioner Gentry advised that he had met with Mr. McQueen a few weeks ago and that he had completed the evaluation form. Commissioner Gentry read a prepared statement as follows;

Mitchell Gentry

## Evaluation of County Administrator

The position of County Administrator serves Gilchrist County in an efficient manner. It allows one person to take care of and resolve day to day matters in regard to personnel, and operations of all departments placed under this position. It also provides continuity of work and coordination between departments in cases where it is useful or necessary. It is the most cost efficient way to fill the position. The cost to Gilchrist County is presently funded through the State of Florida, and a change in this position would nullify this agreement, and the cost would be borne by General Fund Budget of Gilchrist County.

It should be pointed out that no person is going to perfectly perform the duties in a manner that another person believes they should be accomplished, let alone a five member board. It is my evaluation that Mr. McQueen meets the qualifications of County Administrator, and exceeds my expectations for this position.

Commissioner Langford stated that he had conducted an interview with Mr. McQueen and learned a great deal about the responsibilities of the County Administrator and that Mr. McQueen is probably overqualified. Commissioner Langford told the Board that there are problems that should be addressed such as personnel issues, and problems with communication and with public opinion. He stated that he believes the problems are due to the workload that Mr. McQueen has and that the Board should consider changes to the responsibilities. He said that he has provided an evaluation that will be placed in Mr. McQueen's personnel file. Commissioner Langford explained that he had prompted the evaluation due to the input he has received from the public and that the Board has the responsibility to look into the complaints. He stated that Mr. McQueen is doing a good job but at the same time he believes there are changes that need to be made.

Commissioner Bush told the Board that he had not met with Mr. McQueen to do a formal evaluation but that he has evaluated his work over the past 10 years. Commissioner Bush stated that Mr. McQueen has fulfilled his obligations. He suggested that the Board consider hiring additional personnel if it will help relieve some of the work load. Chairman Durden related that he had not carried out an evaluation but that he has worked with Mr. McQueen on a daily basis for the past eight (8) years that he has served on the Board. He stated that Mr. McQueen has assisted him with many issues and has provided a lot of support. He said that if Mr. McQueen has too many responsibilities it is because they have been placed on him by the Board of County Commissioners and that some of these have been resolved by the Planner position and by hiring Mr. Mills and Mr. Wiggins. Commissioner Durden said that he has never had an issue with Mr. McQueen that he could not discuss with him and reach a resolution.

Mr. McQueen told the Board that he appreciates the candor and the honesty. He said that the position has always been a challenge.

**Old Business:**

(None)

**New Business:**

(None)

***The meeting recessed at 4:15 p.m. for a Retirement reception in honor of Commissioner Bush and Commissioner Suggs.***

***The meeting reconvened at 4:40 p.m.***

Chairman Durden announced that this meeting is the last meeting that Commissioner Bush and Commissioner Suggs will serve on the Board prior to their retirement. He stated that both Commissioners have served the County in this capacity for the past 12 years.

Mr. Gilliam expressed appreciation for having worked with Commissioner Bush and Commissioner Suggs for the past eight (8) years. He said that they will be missed and he wished them well in the future.

Commissioner Gentry, Commissioner Langford and Mr. McQueen each commended the Commissioners for their service to the County and their assistance. Mr. Gilliam read a memo received from Mr. D. Ray Harrison expressing regret for not being able to attend and wishing them the best.

Judge Philman, Susan Bryant, Marvin Weaver and Sheriff Turner each made statements congratulating the Commissioners upon their retirement and commending them for their service to the County.

Chairman Durden presented a plaque to Commissioner Suggs in recognition of her 12 years of service to the County from 1992 to 2004. Commissioner Suggs expressed appreciation to all of those who have supported her while she served as the first woman Commissioner in Gilchrist County.

Mr. Lavaughn Sessions addressed those present concerning the integrity and hard work Commissioner Bush, his son-in-law, has contributed to County. He discussed the challenges that face public officials and commended Commissioner Bush for his efforts to do what is best for all concerned.

Chairman Durden presented a plaque to Commissioner Bush in recognition of his 12 years of service to the County from 1992 to 2004. Commissioner Bush thanked all of those present and expressed his love for Gilchrist County and its citizens.

**Public Participation:**

Mr. Joseph Young, 1839 SE 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue, addressed the Board concerning the flooding

in the Waters Lake area. He recalled that an issue concerning SE 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue and work done by Mr. Bryan Bonnell was discussed at the last Commission Meeting. Mr. Young explained that Mr. Bonnell had assisted the community by working on the road and contended that the Commission had not acknowledged his efforts or helped the community. He contended that the concern at the last Board meeting was the fact that Mr. Bonnell had stopped the flow of water and that when Suwannee River Water Management was called, Mr. Bonnell was not notified so that he could be present at the site when it was inspected. Mr. Young stated that as far as he knew, no one with the County had even thanked Mr. Bonnell.

Commissioner Gentry told Mr. Young that immediately after the last meeting, he visited Mr. Bonnell to discuss it with him and that the County had been involved in the efforts to help the community. Commissioner Gentry stated that he had acknowledged Mr. Bonnell's efforts and thanked him for it. Commissioner Langford stated that he too had called Mr. Bonnell personally and thanked him.

Mr. Young asked the Commission why there were no contracts in place for emergency work. He also discussed the conditions of SE 17<sup>th</sup> Trail. Chairman Durden replied that provisions have been made to bid out the emergency work for the culverts and for some of the road repairs, however, he explained that Water Management will not allow any of the work to be permitted until the water has receded.

Discussion was held concerning some of the citizens allowing residents to use their property for access. Because of problems with heavy traffic, these persons have recently put gates up. Commissioner Mitchell affirmed that this is the case and that the combinations to the locks have been provided to emergency management and emergency personnel.

Mr. Harold Pope contended that the County Commissioners have not been out to assist the residents in that area since the storms and flooding and that no one has been in contact with them to see what is needed. He commented that this will be remembered at the next election.

Mr. Andy Hall told the Board that initially he had allowed people to use his property for access but after about a month everyone started using it and caused a lot of damage to his yard. He has put up a gate but all of the families that need to use it have the combination. Mr. Hall also asked the Board if consideration could be given to reimburse Mr. Bonnell for some of the work that he did due to the fact he spent a lot of his time on the road and used his own equipment. Chairman Durden stated that if Mr. Bonnell would submit an invoice it would be brought to the next meeting.

Ms. Susie Holt expressed concern about access being available for emergency vehicles. She stated that in the few minutes it can take to unlock a gate a life may be lost. She also pointed out that it is difficult for some of the elderly residents to get out and open a

gate.

Mr. Bryan Bonnell suggested that the Board do something about closing SE 17<sup>th</sup> Trail. He explained that this road has a dangerous drop along the edge that is filled with water.

Mr. Bonnell also asked the Board to consider putting in an automatic gate out there so that the elderly will have easier access.

Mr. Billy Cannon, Road Department, told those present that everyday a County Commissioner and Mr. McQueen call the Road Department about the issues out there and that anytime a resident calls they respond. Mr. Harold Pope contended that the residents should not have to call that it is the Road Departments duty.

Mrs. Lu Young stated that she has called the Sheriff numerous times regarding heavy trucks along Hwy 47 and nothing is done. The trucks are traveling through areas that are closed to the public and coming through her yard.

The Board heard additional comments from Mr. Casey Carlisle, Mr. Harold Pope and Ms. Susie Holt about the problems with traffic in the area.

Mr. Justin Watson told the Board that there have been barricades placed at the deep spots on 17<sup>th</sup> Trail and that the Department is continuing to inspect the roads to see what can be done. He said that "road closed" signs have been placed out there but have been removed.

Mr. McQueen told the Board that he will be attending a meeting with FEMA and he will try to find out if a temporary repair can be done on SE 17<sup>th</sup> .

Commissioner Langford stated that he would like for everyone to understand that he has been very concerned with the situation at Waters Lake and that he has been in contact with Mr. Bonnell and tried to assist. He said that he has been to Waters Lake almost everyday.

Mr. Bonnell asked that something be done about closing off SE 17<sup>th</sup> Trail. Mr. Watson said that he would place barricades at the road as soon as possible.

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Suggs moved to adjourn at 6:15 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bush and carried.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Mitchell Gentry, Chairman

Joseph W. Gilliam, Clerk

