

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE GILCHRIST COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD MARCH 7, 2005.

The Gilchrist County Board of County Commissioners, in and for Gilchrist County Florida, convened in a regular meeting on Monday, March 7, 2005 at 1:30 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 Mitchell Gentry, Chair
Commissioner Randy Durden, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Sharon Langford
Commissioner Tommy Langford
Commissioner Kenrick Thomas

Others in attendance were: John McPherson, County Attorney, Joseph W. Gilliam, Clerk of Court, Karen Heaton, Deputy Clerk, Sam Ferguson, Director of Finance, Evelyn Meece, Julie Harrison, Pete Randolph, Delight Curtis, Stacey Brown, Lois Fletcher, Verna Mae Eady, Gene Parrish, Julia Brown, Angie Edmond, Robert Vogel, Patrick Denault, Lee Schaltenbrand, Brenda Schaltenbrand, George Shemitz, Kathy Fink, Joe Fink, Shelby Boyette II, Mike Ortiz, JoAnn Ortiz, Bud Riffle, Pete Butt, Carl Friar, Lollie Friar, Donald Thibodaux, Leon Maraugohi.

Call to Order:

Chairman Gentry called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Commissioner Tommy Langford delivered the Invocation and Commissioner Thomas led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Changes:

Additions: - 3:30 p.m., Water Bottling Plant
 - 4:00 p.m., Sue Suggs
 - 4:15 p.m., Hart Springs Diving Program
 - Zoning Policy (*County Administrator*)
 - SE 70th Avenue, Time Extension (*County Administrator*)
 - Solid Waste, Bid for DEP Permitting (*County Administrator*)

Motion by Commissioner Tommy Langford, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, to approve the agenda with the changes noted. The motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda:

Consent Agenda

- 1) Approval of Bills
- 2) Approval of Budget Entry #BE5-027, General Fund (\$2,350)
- 3) Approval of Write-Off; Invoice to the Road Dept. (\$360) from the Solid Waste Department

Motion by Commissioner Tommy Langford, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

Attorney's Report:

Ordinance, Sludge Disposal – Mr. McPherson advised that he has revised the proposed ordinance for Sludge Disposal as directed at the last meeting. He has forwarded the draft to Mr. McQueen for review. Mr. McQueen will provide a copy to Water Management for further review.

Right of Way Rental - Mr. McPherson advised a workshop for the proposed ordinance for right of way rental has been scheduled for the March 21 meeting.

Florida Rock, Use of Right of Way for Gas Pipeline - Mr. McPherson presented a draft right of way use permit for the Florida Rock Industries' proposed pipeline. He stated that a copy had been forwarded to Mr. Greg Tilden who has in turn provided a written response. The Board reviewed and discussed the draft permit. During discussion, it was suggested that #4, under 'special conditions' be deleted and that #8 read "...annually by a 1.5% cost of living adjustment..."

The Board reviewed the response from Mr. Greg Tilden, which included the following;

- (1) We can limit the use to a single 4 inch pipe and but we must have the ability to deliver gas to other users.
- (2) We need a term for which the pipe will be able to remain in place without being moved at our expense. The pipe can be covered by pavement, this is done in cities all of the time. Therefore, if the two-lane road is widened then the pipe can remain. If the road becomes a 4 lane then it probably is best to move the pipe. If the county wishes it moved within some time frame they pay the cost, after that time frame we would pay the cost. The time of 20 years would be acceptable.
- (3) The active construction site will be several miles long from survey crew to the final restoration. The permit will be located in one spot, which will most likely be some distance from where other work is occurring. As long as this is understood, this condition should work.
- (4) The cost of the inspection needs to be specified and should be included in the fee we are paying for the permit. This is what \$10,00 is to cover.
- (5) Need a provision that the rental fee is eliminated if we add customers in Gilchrist County and become a regulated utility.
- (6) Need a provision that the rental fee is in lieu of property taxes.

Motion by Commissioner Tommy Langford, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, to approve the draft with the changes mentioned and to approve #1 thru #4 from Mr. Tilden's proposal. The motion carried unanimously.

F & F Excavation Permit – Mr. McPherson advised that he has completed the final order for the F & F Excavation Permit and provided it to Chairman Gentry for signature.

Bailey Code Enforcement Appeal – Mr. McPherson reported that Mr. Bailey has filed a new permit application, which includes the same changes he asked for previously. Mr. McPherson explained that the agreement was to have another permit application submitted by his partner. He will contact Mr. Bailey's attorney to try and get this worked out. (1/1028)

Gilchrist County v. Langford's – Mr. McPherson advised he is still waiting for the final settlement proposal from the Langford's attorney. He explained that he has received information concerning the fencing they want. Discussion was held concerning the type fencing included in the project. In the past the Board had approved replacement of fencing with like fencing. Mr. McPherson explained that for the Langford's property, this would need to be negotiated considering the fact the County is trying to reach a settlement in the eminent domain case. Chairman Gentry stated that the fence for the Langford's should also be replaced with like fence. Mr. McPherson told the Board that he would work on this issue in order to reach a settlement agreement. (1/1057)

Public Hearing / Ordinance 05-04, Speed Limit Change:

Chairman Gentry read the short title of the proposed ordinance reducing the speed limit on a portion of NW 60th Street.

ORDINANCE 05-04

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF GILCHRIST COUNTY, FLORIDA, REDUCING THE SPEED LIMIT ON NW 60TH STREET BETWEEN U.S. HIGHWAY 129 AND NORTHWEST 50TH AVENUE FROM 55 MILES PER HOUR TO 30 MILES PER HOUR; PROVIDING INSTRUCTIONS TO THE CODIFIER; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Motion by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Sharon Langford, to approve Ordinance 05-04. The motion carried unanimously. (1/1293)

Hart Springs:

Mr. McQueen presented a quote in the amount of \$15,330 from Kenyon's Pressure Washing. Mr. McQueen advised they had put out to bid for the work, which will be reimbursed by FEMA. The quote is for pressure washing and painting at Hart Springs. **Motion** by Commissioner Tommy Langford, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, to accept the bid from Kenyon's Pressure Washing in the amount of \$15,330 to be paid out of General Reserve (to be reimbursed by FEMA funds). The motion carried unanimously. (1/1530)

Pure Water Wilderness:

Mr. Mark Gluckman, Chairman of the Pure Water Wilderness Board to report on the activities of the Pure Water Wilderness Board. He recognized other members in attendance; Commissioner

Gentry, Lois Fletcher, Verna Mae Eady, Julie Harrison, Stacy Brown and Delight Curtis.

Mr. Gluckman stated that he has worked as a consultant to the SRWMD for the past 10 years and he has spent a lot of time working with local governments on nature based recreational projects and nature based tourism projects. He asked the Commissioners to provide him with any ideas they may have to enhance nature-based tourism in the County.

Mr. Gluckman presented statistics from a study carried out in 2002 for the Suwannee River Wilderness Trail. The findings of the study indicate that there were a higher percentage of tourism facilities along the Suwannee River 15 years ago than there are now. It was also found that nature-based tourism is not currently a significant factor in the local economy.

Mr. Gluckman discussed various options for funding including State and Federal Grants and partnerships. He recommended that the County choose a high profile project and seek out partnerships for that project. Discussion was held concerning the improvements to Hart Springs. The Board asked Mr. Gluckman to bring back recommendations for projects and potential partnerships. (1/1811)

Citizen's Request / Julia Brown and Angie Edmond:

Ms. Julia Brown and Angie Edmond presented a request to use the Library to hold Bible studies. Ms. Brown told the Board that they had received permission by Library staff to use the meeting room but was later told it would require approval by the County Commission.

Mr. McQueen advised the Board that the Library is not leased out like the voting precincts. The Library may be used for public meetings but Ms. Brown has requested to use it at a time when it is closed. He stated another issue is that of separation of church and state.

It was suggested that they be allowed to use one of the voting precincts. Commissioner Tommy Langford suggested that they contact the Town of Bell about the use of the Bell Community Center. Ms. Brown said they would be willing to change to that location and that she will contact the Town of Bell. (2/350)

Clerk's Report:

Ring Power, Order - Mr. Ferguson and Mr. Mark Letherland presented a sales order for the purchase of a grader to replace the one that will roll off in August. Mr. Ferguson explained that there will be a price increase of \$7,000 effective May 1. Mr. Letherland told the Board that if the County entered into a purchase agreement now, Ring Power will sell the replacement grader at the current price which is \$157,627 with a \$100,000 buy back. **Motion** by Commissioner Durden, seconded by Commissioner Tommy Langford, to approve the purchase agreement with Ring Power. The motion carried unanimously. (2/774)

Three Rivers Regional Library System – For the Board's approval, Mr. Gilliam presented a letter to the Three Rivers Regional Library System in support of the continuation of its LSTA grant.

The grant provides literacy services to citizens of Gilchrist, Dixie, and Lafayette Counties. **Motion** by Commissioner Tommy Langford, seconded by Commissioner Kenrick Thomas, to approve the letter of support to the Three Rivers Regional Library System. The motion carried unanimously.

Housing Authority – Mr. Gilliam recalled the Commission was asked to provide names to the Governor’s Appointment Office for vacancies on the Gilchrist County Housing Authority. He stated that Mr. Carl Cornwell has expressed an interest to serve on this board and his name has been submitted. He asked if there were any more recommendations. He stated the applications may be obtained in the Clerk’s Office. Mr. McQueen advised that he had mailed a letter to each person that had submitted an application for the Planning and Zoning Board vacancies. **Motion** by Commissioner Sharon Langford, seconded by Commissioner Durden, to advertise the vacancies for the Gilchrist County Housing Authority. The motion carried unanimously. (2/945)

Audit Report – Mr. Gilliam advised the annual audit report for Meridian Behavioral Healthcare is on file in the Clerk’s Office.

Progress Energy/Public Service Commission Hearings - Mr. Gilliam provided information concerning public hearing before the Public Service Commission. These public hearings will be held as part of the Commission’s decision-making process regarding the request from Progress Energy concerning the storm cost recovery clause. Progress Energy is seeking recovery cost for extraordinary costs resulting from Hurricanes Charlie, Frances, Jeanne, and Ivan. The nearest hearing location will be in Ocala and will be held on March 15.

FEMA Update – Mr. Gilliam advised reimbursement funds in the amount of \$166,942.63 have been received from FEMA. The storm related expenditures total \$159,659 to date. **Motion** by Commissioner Durden, seconded by Commissioner Tommy Langford, to place the reimbursement funds back into the Solid Waste budget. The motion carried unanimously. (2/1120)

Surplus Sale – Mr. Ferguson advised the County’s surplus sale was held this past Saturday. The items at the microwave tower were sold for a total of \$225.05. The surplus equipment at the Road Department was sold for a total of \$10,823. **Motion** by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Tommy Langford, to place the total receipts from the surplus sale into the Road Department budget, repair and maintenance. The motion carried unanimously. (2/1215)

Water Bottling Plant:

Commissioner Tommy Langford brought up an issue concerning fencing on the property belonging to the CCDA Waters Bottling Plant. He provided photographs on the property in question and pointed out the fence is being put in along the survey line. This property borders NE 70th Avenue. Commissioner Tommy Langford suggested that the Board allow the Water Plant to keep the fence in that location.

Discussion was held concerning the set back ordinance. Commissioner Tommy Langford

explained that a portion of the road is wider at a low area in order to allow water to run off of the road. Mr. Gene Parrish told the Board that he had staked out the property survey line, which is also the deeded right of way line. He suggested the Board consider revising the set back ordinance. Mr. McPherson agreed that the ordinance is ambiguous and that revisions need to be made.

Mr. McPherson advised that since there is a defined right of way of 36-feet, there is enough space for the County to maintain the road in the center with a 5-foot distance on either side. **Motion** by Commissioner Tommy Langford, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, to allow the Water Bottling Plant to leave the fence at the current location due to the fact it is on the property line, and that the County continue to maintain the road. The motion carried unanimously.

(2/1272)

Public Hearing / Ordinance 05-04, Speed Limit Change (continued):

Mr. McPherson referred to Ordinance 05-04 approved earlier this meeting. He pointed out the speed limit should be changed to 40 mph instead of 30 mph. He recommended the Board reconsider the earlier motion and approve an amendment. **Motion** by Commissioner Tommy Langford, seconded by Commissioner Sharon Langford, to reconsider Ordinance 05-04. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Commissioner Tommy Langford, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, to approve Ordinance 05-04 with the revision of 40 mph instead of 30 mph. The motion carried unanimously.

Water Bottling Plant (Continued):

Mr. Patrick Dunault , CCDA Waters, presented a request for the County to construct turn lanes on CR 340 in front of the Bottling Plant. He provided a draft indicating the location of the proposed turn lanes. Mr. Dunault explained that the turn lanes are needed because of the large trucks entering and exiting CR 340.

Mr. Dunalt also requested the speed limit be reduced for that section of road to 45 mph. In addition to the speed limit signs, the company has requested the County post “trucks entering the highway” signage. **Motion** by Commissioner Tommy Langford, seconded by Commissioner Sharon Langford, to furnish the “trucks entering highway” sign and to direct Mr. McPherson to draft an ordinance for the speed limit change. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion was held concerning the construction of turn lanes on CR 340. The Board agreed that there would not be a problem with the construction of the turn lanes if CCDA Waters paid the expense. Mr. Watson suggested that the company contact a contractor to obtain a quote. The Board took no action.

Hart Springs Diving Program:

Ms. Julie Harrison and Mr. Pete Butt presented information concerning the Diving Program. Ms. Harrison reported that the revenues are not as high as anticipated because of the recent storms and flooding.

Mr. Gilliam asked Ms. Harrison if she thought the diving program would benefit if we publicized Hart Springs as Mr. Gluckman had discussed or did the Committee believe it should remain at the level it is at now. Ms. Harrison stated that if the park were included in the Suwannee River Wilderness Trail there would be more publicity and it would help increase the revenues.

Mr. Pete Butt referred to the report and discussed the progress with the Dive Program. (3/235)

EMA/County Administrator's Report:

SE 70th Avenue - For the Board's approval, Mr. McQueen presented Time Extension #4 from the Department of Transportation. Upon execution, the completion date for the agreement will be extended to April 1, 2005. **Motion** by Commissioner Tommy Langford, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, to authorize Mr. McQueen to sign the time extension. (3/512)

DOT, Engineering Study – Mr. McQueen advised the Department of Transportation has scheduled a presentation of the SR 26 Engineering Study. This meeting will be held on March 24 at 7:00 p.m.

Zoning Issue - Mr. McQueen discussed a zoning issue and asked for direction from the Board. He explained that Mr. Mark Redd recently purchased a partial lot from a property owner who sold him a 100-ft portion of a lot. He stated that the County's LDR's specify that, in a subdivision, a permit may not be issued unless the applicant owns an entire lot. Mr. McQueen discussed the possible problems that may arise if partial lots are permitted.

The question arose about the possibility of this action changing the density requirements. Mr. McQueen stated that it would not. Mr. McPherson advised that it is the normal practice of most counties and municipalities to rule that if a lot line is crossed, the development potential for both lines has taken place.

Mr. McQueen advised that the lot in question had been split from a nonconforming lot in the first place. He cautioned that any decision made concerning this situation would set a precedent for future properties. The Board took no action and directed Mr. McQueen to notify the applicant that the issue would need to be brought before the Board for approval. (3/654)

Department of Transportation; Rosemary Woods and Debra Miller:

Ms. Debra Miller, DOT project manager, and Ms. Rosemary Woods, PBS&J Consultants, presented information concerning the kickoff meeting for the SR 26 project. The meeting will be held on March 24 at the Trenton Elementary School.

Ms. Woods discussed the different phases of the project and explained that the next step is the

Project Development and Environmental Study (PD& E Study). Public meetings and meetings with the Commissions and municipalities will be held throughout the project in order to obtain public input. She asked that the Commission nominate five (5) persons to serve on the Citizens Advisory Committee by March 28.

Workshop, Fire Special Assessment:

Mr. McQueen recalled at the last meeting the Board adopted a resolution electing the uniform method of collection for special assessments. He presented the proposed nexus considered by the Board the previous year.

Fire Assessment Valuation

- 1) Single Family Residence.....\$70.00
- 2) Commercial Property (Minimum \$100)
 - Up to 10,000 sq. ft..... .05 per sq. ft.
 - Over 10,000 sq. ft.....(\$500 base plus) .01 per sq. ft.
- 3) Vacant Property, by Parcel (Minimum \$10)
 - Less than Five Acres.....\$10.00 Minimum
 - Ten Acres up to Forty Acres.....\$1.00 per acre
 - Over Forty Acres.....(\$40 base plus) .12 per acre
- 4) 301 Sites (Hazardous).....(\$500 plus) .01 per sq. ft.

Mr. McQueen also presented the proposed Fire Budget for FY 2005/2006.

Personnel Services	\$279,500
Including dispatch & fire personnel	
General Fire	\$ 86,000
Insurance; operations of 4 County depts.	
Fire Contract	\$ 50,000
Cities of Trenton and Fanning Springs	
New Trucks & Equipment	\$205,000
Capital Building & Equipment	\$ 25,000
Cost of Collections	\$ 33,000
Reserve	<u>\$ 35,000</u>
Total	\$713,500

Chairman Gentry called for public comment.

Mr. Lee Schaltenbrand, Assistant Fire Chief, Spring Ridge VFD, read a statement expressing his concerns for the fire services in Gilchrist County. He asked the Commission to pass a special assessment in order to provide better training, more staff and updated equipment. He also expressed the need to expand the EMS Department. He explained that many times both

ambulance units are unavailable.

Mr. Joseph Fink, Spring Ridge VFD, told the Board that he has worked over 42 years in both professional and volunteer departments. He described the risks that are taken everyday by volunteer fire fighters and stated that they deserve the County's respect.

Dennis Jerauld, citizen near Spring Ridge, stated that he met the Assistant Chief when he responded to a fire at his residence. He stated that there was one truck and two firefighters, that were first to arrive on the scene. Mr. Jerauld believes that there should be an incentive for firefighters to joint, as well as for the residents. He stated that he, as a resident, has encountered problems with his insurance company due to the distance from what the insurance company classifies as a "real fire department". Mr. Jerauld stated that he believes everyone should adopt a special assessment and that everyone should pay their share. He stated that the County needed to look into the equipment owned.

Bud Riffle, Fire Chief at North Gilchrist Volunteer Fire Department, discussed the age and condition of the fire trucks. He stated that if he could have responded faster, the home could possibly have been saved. He discussed paid fire fighters and incentives for volunteers.

Ray Earl Thomas, Jr., resident, questioned the Board about the use of the \$300,000 fund that the County has. Mr. McQueen stated that workman's compensation insurance had to be paid before any truck leaves a station, and that the County is divided into 6 regions. He made discussion on the division of the County into Regions, the budget funds allotted to each region, and the requirement in spending any of the \$300,000. Mr. McQueen stated that it requires about \$5,000 to fund one fire fighter. He also discussed the general fund, workman's compensation insurance for each person.

Mr. Thomas questioned Mr. McQueen regarding residents of the City of Fanning Springs, Town of Bell and City of Trenton being exempt, with the exception of the Town of Bell. Discussion was made regarding commercial buildings within the municipalities, and the Board's intention to spend the assessment money.

Mr. McQueen stated that it is essential to have good response and resources. He stated that if you contacted 15 different insurance companies, you will receive 15 different ISO ratings. Mr. Thomas stated that he contacted his insurance company, and that water source is an issue for insurance reduction. He also made discussion concerning the size and division of a parcel of land.

Mr. Thomas asked where the money is going to come from, and how much money EMS or Fire have in surplus. He stated that the Board is getting ready to place an unfair burden on the citizens who use the service the least. Commissioner Sharon Langford stated that many counties have paid EMS and Fire Stations.

Commissioner Durden suggested the Mr. McQueen explain why the County is going to a special assessment. Mr. McQueen stated that currently the County funds EMS under a special assessment, and that the State of Florida Supreme Court has determined that the special

assessment needs to be attributed to the property.

Carl Frier, resident of the Spring Ridge area, made comments regarding a 911 call he made and his appreciation to EMS for their response and effort.

Bruce Thompson, resident, stated that he agreed with Ray Earl Thomas, Jr. on almost every aspect. He discussed equipment conditions, call response, citizens in rural areas, and he stated that he is in favor of the assessment. He said the sooner the better.

John R. Thomas, resident and former Commissioner, discussed the budget figures that were discussed earlier in the meeting. He stated that he feels that there is money in the budget to provide some of the incentives and equipment needs that the assessment is suppose to cover. He discussed structure fires, and taxing of vacant land. He questioned impact fees being increased to fund the need for fire department improvement instead of taxing the current residents more. Commissioner Durden stated that the impact fees are on the agenda for March 21, 2005.

Mr. Thomas questioned where the extra \$100,000 from the figures given earlier being spent. Mr. Gilliam states that \$87,358 has been put into the budget to fund one position, covering salary, benefits, FICA, life and health insurance, and workman compensation is included. Mr. Thomas asked who was filing the positions. Mr. Gilliam stated that action was taken at the last Board meeting to finalize the job description to advertise. Mr. Thomas questioned why the money was placed in the budget in October and almost six months latter, no job description has been approved.

Commissioner Durden discussed the reason that the Board had not finalized a decision, and stated that the Board had not come up with an agreeable plan to date. He reviewed some of the original assessment figures, and stated that the five Board members have not come up with a final proposal.

Johnny Taylor, resident and family farmer, feels that the County is taxing the citizens, and that if the taxes continue to increase, he will not be able to reside here. He stated that if the County wants houses side by side, they are on the right path.

Commissioner Sharon Langford asked Mr. McQueen why the county could not spend the \$197,000 state Revenue, to repair or replace equipment as needed. Mr. Ferguson explained that the fund is an operational fund, and the SBA holds the remaining in reserve, allowing the fund to draw interest for the County. He explained that the money is moved, when needed, to pay expenses, and that the money in this fund can only be used for fire.

Scott Akins, resident and business owner, questioned if the cities have optioned out, and the Board explained that at this point yes, but their decision will come at a later date. Mr. McQueen explained the city fire department, and what the County provides. Mr. Akins stated that his understanding of the assessment is that the residents outside the cities and landowners in the County will basically be the ones funding the fire costs. Discussion was made regarding reimbursement and the benefit to the County to have County firefighters fight Forest fires.

Shelby Boyette, resident, stated that his residence burned and Spring Ridge did respond in a timely manner, and said some valuables and photos were able to be saved. He stated that he has the utmost respect for firefighters, and he is willing to pay an assessment to keep his family safe.

Michael Faulk, resident, questioned the level of protection the current proposal will provide for the County. Discussion was made regarding the plan and proposed needs.

Stuart Fuquay, resident, questions if the cities will have to pay, and discussion was made on population and the number of residences within the County. Commissioner Sharon Langford provided data regarding the County and city population.

Leon Daringoney, resident Spring Ridge area and Volunteer Firefighter, stated that firefighters do a lot more than just response to a fire. He mentioned that grass fires can get out of control and endanger residences, and that we need to look down the road 5 or 10 years, to consider the needs in the future.

Linda Walker, EMS Director, agreed that volunteer fire fighters back up the ambulance calls, and that there is a need for equipment. She stated that EMS responds to over 2,000 calls per year, and soon the County will need a third ambulance station. She stated that currently there are 12 paid full-time ambulance employees, two secretaries and herself. She said that adding a third ambulance will required adding six more ambulance employees for the County. She said thought needs to be given for future growth, for fire and EMS.

Scott Akins, resident and business owner, questioned how many paid EMS on duty 24 hours, 7 days a week, and questioned cross training between EMS and fire. Discussion was made considering cross training as an option, and the Board stated that maybe it needed to be looked at.

Pete Butt, Spring Ridge Volunteer Firefighter, stated that he also owns a business in the County, and that he owns property (including vacant property and timber), and his wife is also a firefighter. He stated that he is hopes that the County is moving to a higher level. He stated that he feels the assessment is a fair way to accomplish the need for the County.

Mr. Philman, Alachua County EMT Firefighter, questioned if the County had looked at High Springs Fire Department, and discussed other fire departments' personnel. He stated that there may be fire fighters from surrounding areas that may consider a part-time position here, and suggested that the Board check into that possibility.

Don Alexander, Spring Ridge Volunteer Firefighter, questioned cross training of EMT and Fire Fighters, and the chemical residue on firefighters.

Randall Roberts, Sr., resident, stated that he feels this is not the time and place for the fire assessment, and asked where the proposed station would be located within the county. Mr. McQueen mentioned that the County had tried to budget for a building in Bell, but that staffing and training is a problem. Mr. Roberts stated that he would support the assessment if the service would be available to everyone, and everyone pays their fair share.

Bruce Thompson questioned if the Board had researched Bondage with financial institutions, to inquire on money to repair and purchase of equipment.

John Thomas stated that the question is money, and questioned why. He stated that he does not mind paying for his house, but questioned the benefit of the 80 acres behind his residence that is not adjoining. He stated he does not understand taxing vacant land, and until the County can show how they will spend the money, it is hard to agree.

Lee Schaltenbrand, Volunteer Firefighter, stated that it is apparent that fire protection is not a priority for some people within the County, but states that the firefighters are asking for the minimum. He mentioned that the Division of Forestry counts on the County firefighters to assist them during fire season, and does not agree that the County firefighters cannot handle brush fires.

Bud Rifle stated that he has been coming before the Board for 8 years for fire funding, and suggested that revising a portion of the assessment to make the plan more agreeable to find an alternative.

Commissioner Thomas stated that he has lived in the County all his life and can remember when there was not even EMS service here. He said that someone saw the need for EMS, and made the initiative. He stated that if the County does not take an initiative with fire, the County will be left behind and will not be able to catch up, and save lives.

Commissioner Tommy Langford thanked the public for coming to the workshop, and addressed John Thomas' comments regarding the unfilled position with the County. He stated that the County needs trainees and he mentioned that there is a shortage of volunteers.

Chairperson Gentry thanked the public participation, and stated that it is a big responsibility, taking a lot of their time. He said there is a need to improve what the County has now, personnel, personnel gear, and equipment.

Commissioner Sharon Langford stated that she feels the County needs to switch the one mil to a special assessment, and the EMS special assessment to one mil. She mentioned other county data regarding population, vacant property and residences.

Commissioner Durden stated that everyone is under the same opinion that the County needs fire services. He stated that the Board needs to decide what service the County wants to provide, how much the County wants to improve it, and decide how the County is going to collect it.

Mr. McPherson stated that the Board needs to have one more workshop before coming up with a proposed ordinance. Discussion was made regarding reviewing other counties. Mr. Gilliam suggested that the Board needs to decide to include vacant property, not to include vacant property, so that figures can be put together. He stated that the Board needed to direct the Clerk and County Administrator in one direction or another.

Mr. McQueen discussed essential components to whatever plan adopted by the Board. Chairperson Gentry asked Mr. McQueen to put together figures and provide those figures to the Board, and asked each Commissioner to decide on what level of service is needed, and bring it to the Board.

Mr. McPherson suggest that the level of service and the price work hand in hand, and stated that maybe the Board should direct him to draw up a draft ordinance to go with the draft brought to the Board last time. He also suggested the County look at the benefit to the property.

Scott Akins stated the maintenance of the equipment and incentives for volunteers should be included in the proposal, and Pete Butt agreed.

Georgia, volunteer firefighter, stated that a full-time station would be the best thing for the citizens of the County, reducing the distance and travel time to the station in addition to wait time of the dispatch before paging another fire department.

Chairperson Gentry announced a Fire Workshop will be held Monday, March 28, 2005 at 5:00 p.m.

Compliance, Solid Waste Facility:

Mr. McQueen requested permission from the Board to allow bids to be taken for compliance issues with compliance and the Solid Waste facility.

Motion by Commissioner Durden, seconded by Commissioner Tommy Langford, to receive bids on the compliance issues for Solid Waste Facility. Motion carried unanimously.

Courthouse Addition Proposals:

Mr. McQueen advised the Board that 6 proposals had been received so far, and Mr. Gilliam stated that the proposals will be reviewed and bring the top three before the Board.

Disposal of Hurricane Debris:

Commissioner Durden advised the Board of Trubey Fowler's need to dispose of debris from the hurricane, and requested waiving of fees if the debris is delivered to Bell.

Commissioner Tommy Langford also advised the Board of the same need for Diane Forshaw.

Motion by Commissioner Durden, seconded by Commissioner Sharon Langford, to waive fees of Mr. Fowler and Diane Forshaw to dispose debris from Hurricane damage in Bell. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Sharon Langford: advised the Board regarding placing a "trucks entering" sign on

Waccassa Road at the location of sand removal. She also advised the Board of the offer from Mitchell Philman to train volunteers.

Commissioner Durden: did not present a report.

Commissioner Thomas: advised the Board of his trip to Suwannee County with Justin Watson and Billy Cannon to inspect their method of grading roads. Discussion was made regarding their method, and the offer of a demonstration.

Commissioner Tommy Langford: stated that there was a cancellation of the Sludge Meeting on March 10, 2005 in Suwannee County.

Commissioner Tommy Langford also discussed Waccassa Plantations and their plans on the property, permitting issues, ordinance issues, and the requirements of impact fees. He stated that he had received more letters regarding barking dogs and loud noise, and discussion was made regarding a Noise Ordinance. Lastly he asked for Board input on a request for support enforcing the Child Support Law, and discussion was made.

Chairperson Gentry: discussed CR 340 and including it within the addendum. Discussion was made regarding the widening of the road and the shoulder of the road without violating D.O.T. standards, County liability, and liability due to poor maintenance.

Motion by Commissioner Durden, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, to direct Lee Mills make an alternate bid for widening CR 340, from Hwy 129 to the Dixie County line. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Gentry also discussed widening CR 232, and placing it as a high priority in next year's SCOP Program.

Motion by Commissioner Sharon Langford, seconded by Commissioner Tommy Langford, to widen CR 232, from Hwy 47 to SR 26, on next year's SCOP Program as priority. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

Public Participation: None.

Adjourn:

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Tommy Langford, seconded by Commissioner Sharon Langford, there being no further business, Chairperson Gentry adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Mitchell Gentry, Chairman

Joseph W. Gilliam, Clerk