

The Atkinson County Board of Commissioners met on January 21, 2021 in the Commissioner's Conference Room. The regular meeting began at 6:00 PM. Chairman Lace Futch, called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call. County Clerk Miranda Peterson called the roll. In attendance were Commissioner District #1: Buddy Willis, Commissioner District #2: Gloria Farrell, Commissioner District #3: Charlton Gillis, Commissioner District #4: Johnny Durrance, New Commissioner District #5: Tom Morris, County Attorney Jerome Adams, County Clerk Miranda Peterson, and Finance Officer Nina Lott. One of the commissioners was a couple minutes late but did not miss anything and a quorum was already established.

#### **Invocation/Pledge to the Flag**

Invocation was given by Commissioner Farrell. The pledge to the flag was by all in attendance led by Chairman Futch.

#### **Welcome to Visitors and Guests**

Chairman Lace Futch welcomed all visitors and guests in attendance. Visitors were Mitchell Davis; Cynthia White; Carol Durrance; Hope Murray; Logan Dukes; Fonda Hayes Lee; Robbie Stone; Don Murray; Amanda Murray; James Gore; Shane Busbee; Hunter Justiss; and Don Murray, Jr.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Durrance motioned to approve the December 17, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes as written. Commissioner Morris seconded. Motion carried.

#### **EMS Report**

EMS Director Mitchell Davis presented the following EMS Report for December 2020:

Atkinson County had a total of 55 calls of which 47 were transported and eight were non-transportations. These included 23 Pearson, 19 Willacoochee, 11 Axson, and two Douglas calls. There were no Air Evacs; however, there were two DOAs and seven Covid-19 positive calls.

#### **911 Board Appointment**

Chairman Futch recommended to the Board of Commissioners to keep Former Commissioner District #5 Travis Ursrey on the Tri-County 911 Board to represent Atkinson County since he had always did such an outstanding job in the past but stated the decision was up to the commission to vote upon. Commissioner Willis motioned to accept Chairman Futch's recommendation, Commissioner Durrance seconded, and the motion passed.

#### **Vice-Chairperson Vote**

Chairman Futch suggested to the Board Commissioner Farrell to replace Former Vice-Chairman/Commissioner Travis Ursrey. He stated she exhibits dedication and enthusiasm in addition to usually being readily available for her community yet again it was the commissioners' decision. Commissioner Durrance made the motion to

promote Commissioner Gloria Farrell to Vice-Chairperson, Commissioner Willis seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

**Signatures for All County Bank Accounts**

Finance Officer Nina Lott informed the Board as part of the Commissioner transition it needed to remove Former Commissioner Ursrey from all county bank accounts and replace him with someone else—which was traditionally the Vice-Chairperson—but it was its decision. Commissioner Durrance made the motion to both remove Former Vice-Chairman Travis Ursrey and replace him with the now current Vice-Chairperson Gloria Farrell on all Atkinson County bank accounts. Commissioner Morris seconded and the motion passed.

**Resolutions: Tax Commissioner Fonda Hayes Lee**

Atkinson County Tax Commissioner Fonda Hayes Lee requested of the Board the passage of two resolutions:

1. 'RESOLUTION APPROVING THE WAIVER OF CERTAIN PENALTIES AND INTEREST BY THE ATKINSON COUNTY TAX COMMISSIONER'
2. 'A RESOLUTION OF ATKINSON COUNTY, GEORGIA TO AUTHORIZE THE ATKINSON COUNTY TAX COMMISSIONER TO WAIVE CERTAIN AMOUNTS OF TAXES OWED'

Upon the request of Commissioner Morris of further explanation, Tax Commissioner Lee summed it up after a detailed discussion by simply stating the first resolution explained the situations in which she could waive specific amounts while the second would give her the authority to waive them. These would prevent citizens from having to come before the Board for adjustments. Commissioner Morris made the motion to sign both of the proposed resolutions, Commissioner Willis concurred, and the motion passed.

**EMA Office**

Due to the in-process relocation of the EMA Offices to the Old Peachtree House, the current site has had two county offices interested in the property. They were instructed to present a letter to the Board explaining their stances of why they each should be allowed its use. These were the Tax Commissioner Office and the Board of Elections. After a prolonged dialog, Commissioner Morris motioned to let the Board of Elections utilize the space. Commissioner Willis seconded and the motion passed.

**Fire Chief Robbie Stone**

Fire Chief Robbie Stone presented the Board with a packet of information regarding the Fire and EMA Offices.

1. Stipend

Chief Stone requested of the Board to approve a \$1,400.00 stipend for Registered Volunteer Fire Fighter Dalton Burkett to attend classes for eight weeks beginning next month to become a State Certified Fire Fighter. Vice-Chairperson Farrell made the motion to approve this stipend under the stipulation of staying with Atkinson County for a period of no less than two years following the successful completion and

passage of all assessments at the county's expense or repay the amount provided by Atkinson County. Commissioner Gillis seconded and the motion passed.

2. Narcan Administration

Following a lengthy debate of the legalities of Narcan use and the training of county personnel, Commissioner Gillis motioned to approve its use which was seconded by Commissioner Willis and passed. There was also a mention of having an instructor come in for free to train all emergency personnel in its proper deployment and submission.

3. Other material presented by Fire Chief Stone included the Firefighter Daily and Shift Operations, Grant Updates, and the Yearly Report.

4. Fire Chief Robbie Stone reported there were now 720 positive COVID-19 cases in Atkinson County which encompassed 99 hospitalizations and 12 deaths. It was also stated that Atkinson County now held the same percentage as Coffee County per capita on coronavirus infection rates.

**Purchase New Vs. Moving Old Generator**

Since the EMA Office is moving and there have been many expenses involved in creating a more centralized locale for all emergency personnel, it has created some debate as to the emergency generator for operations. The current generator that was approved to be moved has presented numerous unforeseen issues in order to accomplish this feat including the expenses involved, reliability afterward, and logistics. Therefore, pricing was compared of moving the old, out-of-warranty generator with the options of purchasing a safer, more efficient alternative. Both of the new options for a generator would be \$5,147 from Lowe's and Home Depot respectively. Following some consideration, Commissioner Gillis motioned to purchase a new, cleaner-burning propane generator from Lowe's in the amount of \$5,147. Commissioner Durrance seconded; the motion unanimously passed.

**Quotes for Road Repairs**

Road Department Manager James Gore presented to the Board quotes he had acquired for repairs to sections of both Old Axson Road and Cogdell Road. They are as follows:

Culpepper Paving, LLC.	\$ 22,250.00
Burke Paving Company, Inc.	\$ 20,000.00
Douglas Asphalt Material	\$ 19,000.00

Commissioner Durrance motioned to conduct business with Douglas Asphalt Material, Commissioner Morris seconded, and the motion passed.

**Approval of Tom Morris to SWMA Board**

With the exodus of Commissioner Ursrey on the Solid Waste Management Agency Board, there needs to be a replacement of another commissioner. Therefore, Commissioner Gillis made the motion to appoint Commissioner Tom Morris to the SWMA Board. It was seconded by Commissioner Durrance and accepted.

**Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget**

Finance Officer Nina Lott asked the Board to amend the Fire Department’s budget to increase its dues and fees and decrease its contingencies. Commissioner Morris made the motion, Commissioner Willis agreed, and the motion passed.

**Transfer Funds to Capital Projects**

Commissioner Gillis made the motion and was seconded by Commissioner Morris to transfer the sum of \$45,000.00 from the county’s General Fund to the Capital Projects: New Jail/Courthouse Fund. The motion unanimously passed.

**Amendment to the Meeting Agenda**

Commissioner Morris made the motion to amend the current meeting’s agenda to discuss placing an ad for the New Jail/Courthouse. It was seconded by Vice-Chairperson Farrell and passed by vote.

**Placing New Courthouse/Jail Ad**

County Attorney Jerome Adams made the recommendation to the Board to consider placing an ad in the newspaper for the construction of the outer block of the New Jail/Courthouse. Commissioner Morris made the motion to do so, which was seconded by Commissioner Willis and subsequently passed by all.

**Financial Report – Nina Lott**

<i><b>Atkinson County Board of Commissioners</b></i>	
<i><b>Financial Information</b></i>	
<i><b>1/21/2021</b></i>	
General Fund (Checking)	<b>\$2,363,615</b>
Contingency Fund	<b>\$365,659</b>
Board of Commissioners CD	<b>\$51,106</b>
Jail	<b>\$25,443</b>
LMIG (Public Roads Fund)	<b>\$546,736</b>
Capital Projects Fund – Jail	<b>\$60,812</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,413,371</b>

<b>SPLOST 2017-2023</b>	<b>\$253,332</b>
<b>TIA Account</b>	<b>\$214,115</b>
<b>Disbursements in DECEMBER 2020:</b>	
<b>Clerk of Court: \$17,358</b>	<b>For November '20</b>
<b>Magistrate: \$1,334</b>	<b>For November '20</b>
<b>Probate: \$18,890</b>	<b>For November '20</b>
<b>Tax Commissioner: \$307,149</b>	<b>For November '20</b>
<b>Sheriff: \$860</b>	<b>For November '20</b>
<b>Disbursements in DECEMBER 2019:</b>	
<b>Clerk of Court: \$14,875</b>	<b>For November '19</b>
<b>Magistrate: \$1,976</b>	<b>For November '19</b>
<b>Probate: \$24,468</b>	<b>For November '19</b>
<b>Tax Commissioner: \$252,894</b>	<b>For November '19</b>
<b>Sheriff: \$550</b>	<b>For November '19</b>

Finance Officer Nina Lott stated that department budgets look good overall. A motion was made by Vice-Chairperson Farrell and seconded by Commissioner Durrance to accept the financial report as of January 21, 2021; motion carried.

**Paid Invoices**

A motion was made by Commissioner Gillis and seconded by Commissioner Durrance to accept the paid invoices as of January 21, 2021. Motion was carried.

**Old Business**

There was a discussion over the status and operations of the Atkinson County Solid Waste Management Agency; however, there were no decisions made or anything to be voted upon.

**Public Comments**

Fire Chief Robbie Stone took this opportunity to formally introduce two of the county's new Full-Time Fire Fighters jointly to the Board of Commissioners and the public. They were Shane Busbee and Hunter Justiss. They were both well-received.

**Executive Session**

6:49 p.m.: A motion was made by Commissioner Durrance, seconded by Commissioner Morris, and carried unanimously to go into Executive Session.

6:57 p.m.: A motion was made by Commissioner Morris to end Executive Session and seconded by Vice-Chairperson Farrell; motion carried.

No action was taken in Executive Session.

**Action after Executive Session**

Vice-Chairperson Farrell made the motion to approve for Martha Royals to start receiving an amended weekly salary of \$300.00 to add on the current courthouse to her cleaning duties. Commissioner Willis seconded the motion and it passed.

**Adjournment**

A motion was made by Commissioner Gillis and seconded by Commissioner Durrance to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m. Motion was carried.

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ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman Lace Futch  
Atkinson County Board of Commissioners

County Clerk Miranda Peterson  
Atkinson County Board of Commissioners

DATE APPROVED: February 11, 2021