

Baldwin County Commissioners
Called Meeting
June 17, 2019
5:30 p.m.

A Called Meeting of the Baldwin County Commissioners was held Monday, June 17, 2019 at 5:30 p.m., Baldwin County Courthouse, Suite 319, 121 North Wilkinson Street, Milledgeville, Georgia with Chair John Westmoreland presiding.

Members Present: John Westmoreland
Henry Craig
Emily C. Davis
Tommy French
Sammy Hall

Also Present: David McRee
Carlos Tobar
Dawn Hudson
Cindy Cunningham

Call to Order

Chair John Westmoreland called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Chair Westmoreland welcomed everyone to the Joint Meeting with the Baldwin County Board of Education.

ESPLOST / TSPLOST

Dr. Noris Price, Superintendent of Schools, reported the Board of Education currently has an EPSLOT that will expire in 2021. She stated this is the fifth ESPLOST, and the BOE is looking at the needs for a sixth ESPLOST with a referendum targeted for March 2020. Dr. Price reported the Board of Education would be determining which projects would be included in the upcoming ESPLOST.

Vice Chair Henry Craig stated he felt it would not be a good idea to have both the ESPLOST and TSPLOST on the same ballot because of the possibility of one tax having a negative impact on the other.

Dr. Price stated there is a great need for public transportation in Baldwin County. She stated graduates can't get jobs or further their education because they don't have transportation.

Discussion was held regarding actions at the State level to identify additional funding sources for transit programs in rural Georgia. MG-RC Executive Director Laura Mathis stated legislation was introduced last year in an effort to combine resources statewide for transportation programs; however it did not make it out of the General Assembly. GDOT has partnered with a private firm to conduct a study of transportation in rural Georgia. Dr. Price encouraged everyone to contact the legislative delegation to advocate at the State level for funding for rural transportation.

Other transportation means were discussed including a future bike trail to the colleges and GCSU West Campus, possible partnership with GCSU to utilize their transit system, and a joint task force to address transportation needs.

Efforts to educate the public on the benefits of TSPLOST and ESPLOST were talked about. Everyone stressed the importance of educating the public on the successes of past ESPLOST and the benefit of the continued tax, as well as, the approval of a TSPLOST.

Aquatic Center

Commissioners and staff discussed the goal of the Aquatic Center and whether it would be for swimming lessons and recreational use or competitive swimming and other type programs. Commissioners said this is an opportunity to partner with the school system and work together in this effort. Commissioner French stated the partnership with the schools could possibly incorporate swimming in their curriculum.

The type of facility, indoor for year-round use or seasonal use was discussed. Possible locations, construction costs, maintenance costs and operational costs were also discussed. Once costs can be determined, these decisions could be made. Dr. Price stated she felt the best location for the facility would be Walter B. Williams Park rather than school property.

Board of Education members stated they would like to explore the idea of partnering on an aquatic center. However, they felt the City and all schools should be included as a community effort. Dr. Price will be the contact person for the Board of Education regarding this matter. She stated community meetings must be held on this project, as well as other ESPLOST and TSPLOST projects, in order to have the support of the community.

Partnering Opportunities

County Manager Tobar discussed the use of school buses for 4-H program trips. Currently, the BOE provides the bus and the 4-H program/County pays for the cost of a driver and the mileage per trip.

2020 Census

MG-RC Executive Director Laura Mathis discussed the upcoming 2020 Census. She outlined the purpose and goal, pre-enumeration activities, ways of responding to the questionnaire and the timeline associated with the various steps to ensure a complete count. Ms. Mathis stressed the importance of the census information to the County.

Mr. Tyrone Smith, US Census Recruiting Assistant for Baldwin County, reported he would be in the County to hire full-time and part-time workers to assist with conducting the census. He stated the qualifications for workers are: at least 18 years old, be registered for selective service, be US citizen, have social security number and email address.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Hall made a motion to adjourn the Called Meeting at 8:00 p.m. Vice Chair Craig seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

John H. Westmoreland
Chair

Cynthia K. Cunningham
County Clerk