Baldwin County Commissioners
Planning Session
January 23, 2020
9:00 a.m.
Middle Georgia Regional Commission

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

Others Present: David McRee
Carlos Tobar
Dawn Hudson
Jill Adams
Cindy Cunningham

Call to Order – Chair Henry Craig called the Planning Session to order at 9:00 a.m.

Project List for County / Remaining SPLOST Funds

Assistant County Manager Dawn Hudson discussed SPLOST projects, the bond amount of $26,000,000, the amount spent to date and balance to finish each project. Discussion was held on status of each project. Administration building; Commissioners agreed allocated funds for Courthouse renovation should remain in this project line item until actual cost is finalized; Law Enforcement Center renovations; Sheriff Department vehicles; communication equipment; Health Department, Recreation (final cost of aquatics facility); economic development projects at Airport and CSH Lawrence Building; Sibley-Smith property purchase; Senior Center and Animal Shelter renovations, fire engine; public works infrastructure, equipment and match for LMIG.

Commissioners agreed not to start new projects until current SPLOST projects are completed.

Project Priorities for 2020

County Manager Carlos Tobar discussed project priorities: the need for a larger water lines to provide pressure for fire hydrant replacement in Waters Edge; replacement of fire hydrants throughout the County that can't be repaired; CSH Fire Station roof replacement; possibility of modular unit to be used for living space rather than reconfigure current building.

Chair Craig stated the County has an obligation to keep the CSH Fire Station in good repair. Commissioners asked County Manager Tobar to separate out costs for the three (3) major components – roof repair, modular unit for living quarters , and repair of concrete at the facility. Commissioners stated they want to know the cost prior to beginning any repairs/renovations at the station.

Chair Craig stated he does not want to wait to install hydrants in Waters Edge until a larger line is installed. County Manager Tobar responded that 2" hydrants would have to be used if the 2" line is left in place. Commissioners told Mr. Tobar to provide them with a cost for the project; provide them with difference in cost of leaving 2" line and installing 2" hydrants OR installing 6" water lines and using 6" hydrants.

Public Works infrastructure and equipment were discussed. Commissioners stated that Engineer Brian Wood had suggested purchasing the equipment to complete work with County employees rather than paying a contractor. What size equipment the County needs must be determined and quotes should be obtained. Assistant County Manager Hudson stated the County could lease equipment. She said comparisons must be done to show savings if the County purchased / leased equipment. Vice Chair French recommended that equipment be leased and work be done by County when possible. Commissioner Hall stated the County should not get in the situation of having to hire more employees just to do this.

Aquatics facility was discussed. County Manager Tobar reported on a proposal for the County to contract with Georgia College for $27,000 for the use of the college pool from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Commissioners discussed what type aquatic facility could be constructed with SPLOST funds and whether it could be completed by summer. Mr. Tobar reported the projected cost of a bath house, small pool, lazy river, and splash pad would be approximately $2,700,000. He suggested the facility be constructed in phases. Commissioner Hall stated Mr. Finley said contributions could be made to built a facility; however, he fells money needs to be raised before the project is started. Vice Chair French stated he felt the County needs a three (3) year agreement with the college. Commissioner Hall asked what the cost would be to build a "pool". Carlos Tobar stated it would cost approximately $80,000 - $100,000 to build a splash pad. Ms. Hudson stated another issue is the facility must be maintained as long as it is open. She stated the maintenance cost must be considered as well. Vice Chair French stated the upkeep of a pool would be more than the contract amount of $27,000. Commissioner Hall recommended a close look at all options and associated costs. Commissioner Westmoreland stated he felt the splash pad could be build with buildings and other components added at a later date. Chair Craig agreed to the phase-in approach and to pursue agreement with GCSU. He requested that a cost breakout of each phase be determined and presented to the Board. County Manager Tobar stated the DOC could possibly assist with construction.

Commissioners endorsed a three year contract with GCSU; price details for significant water feature at Walter B. Williams Park by 2020 that will be incorporated into a larger aquatic facility in the future. Discussion also included water feature at Harrisburg by 2020.

County Manager Tobar stated he will meet with Mr. Finley and Mr. Arnold of the citizens pool group to give them information about plans and what can be built within SPLOST allocation of $1,000,000. It was suggested that the master plan be made available to the public so they can be informed.

SDS - Commissioners will be given a copy of all SDS Form 2s to review prior to the next Called Meeting.

Executive Session

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to adjourn into Executive Session at 12:00 noon to discuss potential litigation. Commissioner John Westmoreland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Regular Meeting

Commissioner John Westmoreland made a motion to reopen the Regular Planning Meeting at 12:10 p.m. Commissioner Emily C. Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Discussion continued about steps regarding a proposed aquatic facility. Meeting to be held with interested parties to discuss what could be built with funds that we have; pursue agreement with GCSU for use of their pool; build splash pad that will be incorporated into a larger aquatic facility in the future; determine what percentage of any excess revenue collected could be allocated to the facility; include funding for additional phases of facility in future SPLOST.

Chair Craig stated this project should be a top priority. He stated Recreation Director has asked that other Recreation projects not be forgotten. He asked where funds would come from to do the other needed projects at the Recreation Department. Ms. Hudson responded that if the Recreation Department Regular Budget is managed properly, other projects could be paid from the Regular Budget.

Mr. Tobar presented a proposed increase of $.50 in Golf Course Fees in all categories. Commissioners requested a comparison of rates of surrounding counties. Recreation Committee to discuss proposed fee increase with Manager Kyle Wall.

Provision of concessions at recreation events was discussed. Chair Craig proposed that Director Traci Rollins survey surrounding areas to determine cost.

Commissioners Davis and Hall agreed to work to address various issues of Recreation Department.

Mr. Tobar stated Engineer Brian Wood is getting information for a proposed TSPLOST. Chair Craig stated he felt that if SDS is not resolved the County could not consider TSPLOST in

November. County Attorney McRee responded the upcoming November election will have a high voter turnout. He wondered if this would be the best time to have a TSPLOST on the ballot or have it when a low voter turnout is expected. Mr. Tobar stated he would look at statistics on elections. Chair Craig stated the referendum must be very specific; each road, bridge, culvert, etc must be listed along with the cost. Help must be enlisted from citizens to promote TSPLOST. Make presentation at civic groups and Eggs & Issues and get information on success of TSPLOST from MG-RC and CVIOG.

Transit – County Manager Tobar reported he serves on Committee to address transit systems. He highly favors a regional transit system. Mr. Craig recommended consulting others such as Mr. Fraley who operate vans to see if it is advantageous to work together to improve transportation. Mr. French stated every effort should be made to improve the transit system for the County. Mr. Hall recommended looking at privatization and feels we should not waste time on trying to get a Regional system. Ms. Hudson stated money the County spends currently on 5311 program could be used to help with privatized system. Chair Craig and Vice Chair French will look into ways to provide more effective transit system.

Project Priorities Beyond 2020

Quality Zones / Character Maps / Land Use Codes need to be developed.

Update CIP – Seven (7) year plan with Department Heads. Develop a Comprehensive Plan that will address what we want community to be in the future. Begin "Joint Efforts" and set goals that can be accomplished.

Mr. Tobar said there are grants that can be used to redevelop urban areas. Vice Chair French said the County needs to address blight. If we do not get grants to revamp areas in the County, incompatible areas must be addressed. Ms. Hudson stated the County needs to be ready for future growth and the associated costs that will come with it. Set criteria for growth needs. Mr. Hall wants to hear about opportunities available for house. Bring Land Bank up again. County Attorney should prepare for another land sale for properties.

Elections – Previous discussions have been held on staggered terms for Commissioners. Chair Craig proposed staggered terms and request local legislation to begin process. Mr. Westmoreland agrees with staggered terms. Mr. Hall stated he does not feel it will make a difference as to the operation of the County. Mr. French has issue with changing boundaries for Chair to be elected at large. Mr. McRee stated district lines will be changed in 2021 after 2020 Census. Reapportionment office will do that based on census tract information. Preference of Board to pursue staggered terms: Davis – No; French – No; Hall – Yes; Craig – Yes; Westmoreland – Yes. Preference of Board to pursue Chair elected at large: Davis – No; French – No; Hall – Yes but only with staggered terms; Craig – Yes; Westmoreland – Yes.

County Surveyor – Judge Blackwell has recommended Board request local legislation to make County Surveyor appointed position rather than elected position.

Commission Meeting Agendas - Chair and County Manager set Agenda. Nothing should be added to Agenda without knowledge of Chair and County Manager. Only significant events that are countywide will be placed on Agenda for presentations/recognition.

Chair Craig proposed that each Commissioner ask an individual from their respective district to deliver invocation.

Old Business – Ms. Hudson stated it is not common practice for media to be present when contractor, architect and Commissioners have a walk through at County facility. This does not have to be published. ACCG conferences and other meetings for training, etc. do not have to be published.

Mr. French stated he thinks we should focus on landscaping at the entrance of facility; possible trail. Discussion of car wash situation. County owns property all way to Sonic. City to TV lines to see if there is another option for car wash hookup to sewer.

DPH – State will not agree for Health Department to connect to their sewer lines. Not feasible to tie in to line behind property. $80,000 approximate cost to put in hook up. Mr. Hall - Health Department will have to pay for this cost.

New Business – Future discussion: Open House at Administrative Building and once Courthouse renovations are complete. Make Time Capsule at Administrative Building a "community event".

Adjournment - Motion by Commissioner Westmoreland, seconded by Commissioner Hall to adjourn at 3:15 p.m. Passed unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Henry R. Craig
Chairman

Cynthia K. Cunningham
County Clerk