

**Baldwin County Commissioners**  
**Work Session**  
**January 20, 2015**  
**5:15 p.m.**

A Work Session of the Baldwin County Commissioners was held Tuesday, January 20, 2015 at 5:15 p.m., Baldwin County Courthouse, Suite 319, 121 North Wilkinson Street, Milledgeville, Georgia with Chair Sammy Hall presiding.

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

Also Present: David McRee  
Ralph McMullen  
Cindy Cunningham

Call to Order

Chair Sammy Hall called the Work Session to order at 5:15 p.m.

Ethics Ordinance

County Attorney David McRee presented a revised draft Ethics Ordinance for the Board's discussion. He stated this draft reflects comments from Commissioners regarding the selection of a Hearing Officer. Mr. McRee reported Section 2-196 (a) specifies that the Hearing Officer shall be an individual selected by the Dean of Mercer Law School. The provision that the Hearing Officer must be a law professor was removed as requested at the last meeting.

Mr. McRee stated he has also revised the ordinance to include the statement "the Hearing Officer shall be a person of high ethical and moral character and they must be skilled in the conduct of hearings".

Commissioner Henry Craig recommended a change to paragraph three (3) of page one (1) which states that public officials be and "give the appearance of being". He felt the words "give the appearance of being" should be removed completely since public officials should be and not "give the appearance of being" independent, impartial and responsible. Commissioner Craig also stated he felt Section 2-197 (b) should be more direct and state that a complaint should address matters clearly within the scope of this ordinance.

Attorney McRee responded he prepared the ordinance to remove any involvement by Commissioners in determining whether a complaint is legitimate and should be addressed by the Hearing Officer.

Commissioner Craig expressed his concern with the ordinance in addressing legal matters versus ethical matters. He stated he felt the ordinance addresses issues of law and not ethical and moral standards for officials.

Attorney McRee stated he felt sections 2-194 and 2-195 address this concern since both these sections specify prohibitions and conflict of interest.

Vice Chair Davis recommended this matter be revisited at a later time once these details have been addressed.

Chair Hall responded this ordinance must be presented at a public hearing prior to the Board taking action; therefore, he recommended any changes should be made before the hearing is scheduled. County Attorney McRee stated he will make revisions to the ordinance, as discussed, and bring it back to the Board for discussion.

### Cable Franchise

County Attorney McRee reported that because Commissioners have, in the past, participated in the regulation of cable television service delivered in the unincorporated areas of the County, the Commission office phone number is listed on cable bills to call for complaints. The County no longer regulates cable television service delivered in the County; therefore after such time as fifty percent (50%) of the potential subscribers within an affected local governing area are being offered service by two (2) or more wireline cable service providers that hold a state or local franchise the local government may elect to discontinue receiving complaints by passing a Resolution to have their phone number removed from customer bills.

Mr. McRee stated if it is the Board's desire to proceed with removing the County phone number from cable bills he will prepare a resolution for their consideration.

Commissioners asked County Attorney McRee to prepare the resolution.

### Timber Ordinance

County Manager Ralph McMullen reported the Timber Ordinance has been discussed at previous meetings, and the County Attorney has updated the ordinance for Commissioners' consideration. He stated this ordinance must also be presented at a public hearing prior to Board action.

Commissioner Craig discussed proposed requirements for "timber harvesting and removal". He stated he felt requirements and standards should be established so individuals and firms are registered with the County for timber harvesting and appropriate permits may be issued. Bonds should be required to protect the County against road damage.

Discussion was held as to whether tree surgeons who sell firewood and wood chips to individuals would be regulated by this ordinance.

County Attorney McRee will revise the ordinance to incorporate recommendations by Commissioners and will present it at the next meeting.

### Old Business

Vice Chair Davis asked whether another tax sale has been scheduled. County Manager McMullen reported another sale has not been scheduled at this time.

### New Business

There was no new business to come before the Board.

### Adjournment

Vice Chair Davis made a motion to adjourn the Work Session at 5:55 p.m. Commissioner Henry Craig seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sammy Hall  
Chair

Cynthia K. Cunningham  
County Clerk

