

## GRADY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### MEETING MINUTES

May 7, 2024, Meeting

The Grady County Board of Commissioners met on May 7, 2024, at 9:00 am for a regular meeting. Commissioners Ray Prince, Keith Moyer, LaFaye Copeland, Phillip Drew, June Knight, County Administrator Buddy Johnson, Finance Director Holly Murkerson, County Clerk John White, County Attorney Gabe Ridley, Recreation Director Becky Bracewell, and Chief Richard Phillips were present.

Mr. Moyer asked Mr. Drew to open with prayer and the pledge to the flag.

Motion by Mr. Drew, second by Mrs. Knight to amend the agenda to add a presentation by Mr. Ridley and FA051-24. The motion was approved.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

Yancy Maxwell, 1404 Tired Creek Rd

Mr. Maxwell shared a letter he received from Jane Harrison concerning the dirt roads in Grady County. He also mentioned that someone had trenched in an intersection of Vereen Bell Road, and it had not been repaired.

Michael Cook, 184 Carr St

Mr. Cook stated there is a dangerous situation on Trinity Road. He stated the ditches are grown up and need to be dug. Thomas Road is still filled with dirt. He also stated people were worried about their mailboxes on Lower Hawthorne Trail with the paving. Mr. Moyer stated there were only two mailboxes that are brick that will have to be moved.

#### PRESENTATIONS

ISO Ratings – Chief Richard Phillips

Chief Phillips reviewed the ISO ratings with the commissioners. He stated we are currently at a 5/5X rating. He reviewed what makes up the ratings and stated he is working hard on the water shuttle process so hopefully we can get the ISO rating down to a solid 5.

Recreation Department – Becky Bracewell

Mrs. Bracewell presented the Batting Cage Project to the commissioners. She stated this will be paid with donations and she is ready to move forward with the project.

FA051-24 Motion by Mrs. Copeland, second by Mr. Prince to move forward with the Batting Cage Project and to allow Buildings and Grounds to do the electrical work for the batting cages. The motion was approved.

Mrs. Bracewell provided an update on the tournament held last weekend and stated it was a success.

Lawsuit Response – Gabe Ridley

Mr. Ridley gave an update on the litigation. There were questions that were raised in a lawsuit brought by Mrs. Betty Godwin concerning an Open Records Request. That request had to do with the Animal Control Department and Best Friends Dog Rescue. In July of 2022, Mrs. Godwin filed suit in Magistrate Court to recover part of the money she was charged for her open records request. Mr. Ridley reached out to Mrs. Godwin to try and settle the lawsuit and she refused. Mrs. Godwin then dismissed her original complaint and refiled it. She was then personally suing Mr. Johnson, Mr. Ridley and Mr. White. As the county attorney was now a part of the lawsuit, Mr. Raleigh Rollins was asked to defend the case. It was decided to let Mrs. Godwin have her day in court so she could present her case. A trial was held on the merits of the case, and she made her arguments to Judge Lamb who has no connection with Grady County. After hearing the case, Judge Lamb ruled in favor of the county. Mrs. Godwin had the opportunity to file an appeal to a different court and chose not to file the appeal. Mrs. Godwin also has three other lawsuits pending. One against Mr. Johnson for \$2.5 million, one against Mr. Drew for \$5 million, and one against Mr. Dorsey for \$3 million. All three arise from public comments about how the county is run. Mrs. Godwin made comments about county employees salivating like Pavlov's Dogs over the potential raises and Mr. Johnson addressed her comments. Mr. Ridley stated he felt like the county had a very good chance of winning all three lawsuits. Mr. Ridley does not feel you should pay someone for a frivolous lawsuit. Or insurance carrier agreed we should defend the lawsuit and agreed to hire Raleigh Rollins to defend the lawsuits. Mr. Rollins has filed a motion to dismiss each lawsuit and is requesting for attorney fees to be paid for all cases. Hopefully the county will recover some of the attorney fees that have been paid. The question has been asked why the county is paying the fees for

the lawsuits for the three individuals. Mr. Ridley stated that County Governments are targets for frivolous lawsuits and they must be defended. Mr. Moyer stated the county does budget for such lawsuits. Mr. Ridley did respond to a comment concerning the lawsuits on Cairo Swap and Shop, but the comment was removed.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Calendar of Events was reviewed.

Public Hearing Tired Creek Land District Ordinance 6:00 PM May 7, 2024 at the Grady County Courthouse.

Regular Board Meeting on May 21, 2024 at 6:00 PM.

#### **CONSENT ITEMS**

Motion by Mrs. Knight, second by Mrs. Copeland to approve:

C032-24 Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from 04/16/2024.

C033-24 Ratify the vote to repair the transmission on EMS M-1 for \$12,600.00.

C034-24 Approve the copier lease from Rumbles for Magistrate Court.

The motion was approved.

#### **FORMAL ACTIONS**

FA046-24 Motion by Mrs. Copeland, second by Mr. Prince to approve Taylor Benefit Resources to serve as the county's Third-Party Administrator. The motion was approved.

FA047-24 Motion by Mrs. Knight, second by Mrs. Copeland to approve adding a 457-Roth plan for employees through ACCG. The motion was approved.

FA048-24 Motion by Mr. Drew, second by Mrs. Copeland to approve the bid from Onyx for the Aquatic Center for \$984,000.00. The other bid was from CCH Construction for \$1,045,000.00. The motion was approved.

FA049-24 Motion by Mrs. Knight, second by Mr. Drew to approve the Vehicle Damage Claim Form. The motion was approved.

FA050-24 Motion by Mrs. Knight, second by Mr. Prince to apply for the 2024 LRA (Local Road Assistance) for Grady County. No match is required. The motion was approved.

#### **NEW/UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

County/City Aquatic Center Agreement – Mr. Johnson updated the commissioners on a potential agreement with the city to help cover the overage of the cost of the Aquatic Center at the 39% rate in the original SPLOST Agreement. It will also ask the city to cover the Water and Sewer cost for the Aquatic Center.

Administrator Matters - Mr. Johnson reviewed the TSPLOST projects and what has been accomplished with TSPLOST. Mr. Johnson also reviewed how the \$25,000.00 was used to improve the road to the lake.

Commissioners Matters – Mrs. Knight wants to see something in writing for Ridge Road and if we have so extra money somewhere, Union Springs needs repair. Mrs. Copeland stated Adams Lane needs attention as well.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

None

#### **REPORTS**

- A. Attorney's Report – None
- B. Animal Control 04-24
- C. Roads and Bridges 04-24
- D. Code Enforcement 04-24
- E. Tired Creek Lake 04-24
- F. Buildings and Grounds 04-24

#### **RESOLUTIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, AND AGREEMENTS**

Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting Agenda

May 7, 2024, 9:00 AM

- I. Executive Duties
  - A. Call to Order – 9:00 AM
  - B. Invocation/Pledge
  - C. Adoption of Agenda
  - D. Public Comments
- II. Presentations
  - ISO Ratings for Grady County – Chief Richard Phillips
  - Recreation Department Information – Becky Bracewell
  - Lawsuit presentation – Gabe Ridley (amended)
- III. Correspondence
  - A. Calendar of events

Public Hearing Tired Creek Land District Ordinance 6:00 PM May 7, 2024 at the Grady County Courthouse.

Regular Board meeting on May 21, 2024 at 6:00 PM

- IV. Consent Items – (One motion)

C032-24 Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from 04/16/2024.

C033-24 Ratify the vote to repair the transmission on EMS M-1 for \$11,400.00.

C034-24 Approve copier lease from Rumbles for Magistrate Court

- V. Formal Actions

FA046-24 Approve/Disapprove Third Party Administrator for our health insurance.

FA047-24 Approve/Disapprove adding a 457-Roth plan for employees through ACCG.

FA048-24. Approve/Disapprove Splash Pad bids.

FA049-24 Approve/Disapprove Vehicle Damage Claim Form.

FA050-24 Approve/Disapprove to apply for the 2024 LRA (Local Road Assistance) for Grady County. No match is required.

FA051-24 Approve/Disapprove moving forward with the batting cage project and to allow Buildings and Grounds to do the wiring for the batting cage. (amended)

- VI. New and unfinished Business
  - County/City Splash Pad Agreement
  - Administrator Matters
  - Commissioner Matters

- VII. Executive Session
  - None

- VIII. Reports

- a. Attorney's Report
- b. Tired Creek Lake 04-24
- c. Animal Control 04-24
- d. Roads and Bridges 04-24
- e. Code Enforcement 04-24
- f. Buildings & Grounds 04-24

- VIII. Adjournment

Individuals with disabilities who require certain accommodations to allow them to observe and/or participate in this meeting, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meeting, or the facilities are required to contact the ADA Coordinator at 229-377-1512 promptly to allow the County to make reasonable accommodations for those persons.

The motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Knight and second by Mr. Prince. The motion was approved.

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Keith Moye, CHAIR

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JUNE KNIGHT, VICE-CHAIR

ATTEST:

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RAY PRINCE, COMMISSIONER

JOHN WHITE, COUNTY CLERK

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Phillip Drew, COMMISSIONER

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LAFAYE COPELAND, COMMISSIONER