

**TIFT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL CALLED SESSION
MARCH 23, 2005 6:00 PM**

**Grady Thompson, Chairman, District 7 Charlotte W. Bedell, Vice Chairman Dist 6
Donnie Hester, Commissioner, Dist 1 Frankie Mathis, Commissioner, Dist 2
Hugh Webb, Commissioner, Dist 3 John M. Huggins, Commissioner, Dist 4
Fred W. Rigdon, Commissioner, Dist 5**

**Bill Park, County Manager Glynda Hemby, County Clerk
Rob Reinhardt, County Attorney**

The Special Called Session of the Tift County Board of Commissioners was called to order by Chairman Grady Thompson on Wednesday, March 23, 2005, at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' meeting room of the Administration Building. Members of the Commission present including Chairman Thompson were Vice Chairman Charlotte Bedell, and Commissioners Donnie Hester, John Huggins, Frankie Mathis, Buck Rigdon, and Hugh Webb.

I. Water Expansion Discussion: Mr. Park gave a presentation on the proposed water system expansion. He also gave a color coded hand out showing the different alternates. When the City found out that our plan was to go down Hwy 82 and Hall Road, their opinion was that was going to cost too much money and said we needed to cross the river and tie into the city system. The staff researched this option and found it not to be economically feasible. They then suggested that a 12" line be run down Carpenter Road. The County is trying to reduce the cost of water we are presently paying to the city which amounts to about 1/3 of our water budget. Basically he explained that the city is wanting to take our SPLOST dollars to enhance the water system. The tank is in place at Springhill and will be completed in May. Mr. Park went on to explain why staff is recommending running the pipe down Hall Road by giving numbers of home and businesses already in place, the potential of future development, cheaper to cross the river, provide fire protection to places that have no protection now and other important factors. The city charges the county about .87 per gallon for water; staff believes we can produce that water for about .55 per gallon. Mr. Park advised the Board that the extended pipe price is only good until April 1, 2005. There are many questions that will need to be answered and worked out for a consolidation of water systems. The running of the pipe is a separate issue from consolidation of the systems.

Vice Chairman Bedell advised that Tim Ingram with Ingram and Watkins gave a presentation at the SDCC Meeting that she feels the entire Board needs to see. It depicts a long term consolidation of the water systems. Commissioner Mathis was also at this meeting and was impressed by his presentation, however, he feels we still do not rush into this because we could be putting pipes in the wrong places.

Commissioner Huggins questioned the driving force to run the pipes down Hall Road. He also questioned the Robert and Company contract. He was advised that the contract would be completed by May 1st. Commissioner Huggins suggested that all ties be severed with Robert and Company. We are over spending on the water system and it needs to stop. He stated that he had not had one person call him to say they needed water but certainly has had a lot of them call to say they needed their road paved or work done on their road.

Commissioner Hester questioned as to why the city was not present; and reminded that we tabled any decision on the water system until we all get on the same page. He again expressed that he wants to see the city and county come together. He agrees that we need to do something with the tank that we have spent all this money on. However, there needs to be some kind of comprehensive plan in place before any more money is spent.

Motion was made by Commissioner Huggins to authorize the County Manager to sever all ties with Robert and Company as soon as the present contract is completed, seconded by Commissioner Rigdon. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Rigdon stated that the Commission and the City need to get together and decide the best way to consolidate the water system and the attorneys can work out the legalities of it. Attorney Reinhardt stated the city is not interested in operating through a Water and Sewer Authority. The County and City managers need to get together and continue the negotiations.

Commissioner Rigdon still continues to be of the firm belief that we need a long term plan, where we will be in fifteen years, and then put together a plan to accomplish that.

Commissioner Mathis elaborated that Mr. Ingram presented a very good plan at the SDCC meeting, tying in seven different water tanks strategically placed, however he also stated that we need a comprehensive plan.

The County Manager will need to bring some options back to the table for consideration and then the City and County will have meetings jointly to discuss.

The general consensus of the Board is to leave the water expansion tabled as voted on in the Regular Meeting for 30 days.

II. Carpet Bids for the Clerk of Court: Bids were solicited and received as follows:

South Georgia Floor Covering	\$3,999.20
Glynn Hendricks Interiors, Inc.	\$4,840.52
Cottle Flooring	\$4,984.96

Motion was made by Commissioner Huggins to accept the low bid in the amount of \$3,999.20 from South Georgia Floor Covering to have carpet put in the Clerk of the Court's offices, seconded by Commissioner Mathis. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Ceramic Tile Bids for Behavioral Health Building: Bids were solicited and received as follows:

South Georgia Floor Covering	\$ 9,976.00
Glynn Hendricks Interiors, Inc.	\$12,032.00
Cottle Flooring	\$14,066.45

Motion was made by Commissioner Huggins to accept the low bid in the amount of \$9,976.00 from South Georgia Floor Covering to have ceramic tile installed at the Behavioral Health Building, seconded by Commissioner Hester. Motion carried unanimously.

County Manager Items: Mr. Park gave hand outs on the current SPLOST figures and a listing of the Agencies we co-fund with the city with their budget requests. He stated we will need some direction on these figures. The city has requested that we co-fund a Special Events Coordinator they are proposing to hire. County staff does not recommend this. The City is also trying to implement a Façade Grant Program where they can get a 50/50 match. They are trying to have \$20,000 available where they can get that much in a match grant and they are asking the County to fund one half of this. They also want to increase the Main Street Program by two positions and are asking us to support Hometown Holidays in the amount of approximately \$35,000 each. This is not a staff recommendation.

Commissioner Rigdon stated that any money we could offer to support the Façade Program would be very effective in the downtown area.

Mr. Park stated that we held the line on Red Cross because there are seven other counties they serve of which none of these counties other than Tift County contribute.

Ruth's Cottage has presented a large increase. The Board needs to consider going to the Board of Education to ask them to put some funding into the library. The County supports the largest portion of the funding there while the School Board only contributes about 2%. Motion was made by Commissioner Mathis appointing Commissioner Rigdon

to address this with the Board of Education, seconded by Vice Chairman Bedell. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioners Items:

Vice Chairman Bedell addressed the Board on roads and road paving. She has reviewed some facts and figures and we have been waiting to see if we can get matching funds from the Department of Transportation however, we are getting no where. She suggest that the Road Committee meet and come up with some recommendations on roads we have rights-of-way on and move in the direction of getting some road paved with the SPLOST dollars we have. We presently have about 15 miles of rights-of-way obtained. She agreed to call a meeting of the Road Committee next week and bring recommendations back to the Board for consideration. Ms. Bedell stated that she thought it was time we go out and start paving roads.

Vice Chairman Bedell also addressed the Board on a letter received from the Governor's office with a request for a decoration that would depict something Tift County stands for so that it can be placed on the State Christmas tree. She also addressed the parking in the front of the building. Mr. Park advised that a memo has already been set out addressing the parking issue.

Public Comments: Mr. Donald Adcock addressed the Board with his concerns on the water system, stating the Commissioners had been blinded by the promise of lower insurance rates as a result of an increase in fire protection. He said that the county had money to spend on water but no money to pave the road that runs by his house.

Ronald Nixon also spoke very briefly to the Board.

Larry Riner addressed the Board on the proposed text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance concerning corner lots of property with pivot irrigation systems. He has some reservations about this amendment; the County now has a three acre rule in place and would like to see it continue.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion was made by Commissioner Hester to go into Executive Session under OCGA 50-14-3(6), seconded by Commissioner Huggins. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion to adjourn Executive Session was made by Vice Chairman Bedell, seconded by Commissioner Hester. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Hester, seconded by Commissioner Rigdon. Motion carried unanimously.

Grady Thompson, Chairman

Charlotte Bedell, Vice Chairman

Donnie Hester, Commissioners

Frankie Mathis, Commissioner

Hugh Webb, Commissioner

John M. Huggins, Commissioner

Fred W. (Buck) Rigdon Commissioner

Attest:

County Clerk

