

CLAYTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Regular Business Meeting
7:00 P.M.

January 4, 2011

POST SUMMARY MINUTES

PRESENT: Chairman Eldrin Bell, Vice-Chairman Wole Ralph, Commissioner Sonna Singleton, Commissioner Michael Edmondson, Commissioner Gail B. Hambrick, and Clerk Shelby D. Haywood.

1. Chairman Bell called the meeting to order.
2. Invocation was led by Captain Jose Marquez of the Jonesboro Salvation Army Corps. Pledge of allegiance to the flag was led by Chairman Bell.
3. Amended the agenda by deleting item #6 (HEARING: Discussion of cause for removal of a Housing Authority Board member) due to a notification timing issue and rescheduling it to the January 18, 2011 Regular Business Meeting; adding Resolution 2011-08 (A Resolution to appoint the Clerk of the Superior Court of Clayton County, Georgia to serve as the Clerk of the Magistrate Court of Clayton County, Georgia; to set compensation [\$500.00 a month] for such services; etc.); holding item #14 (Resolution 2011-07 – Authorizing the Chairman to pursue designation of Clayton County as an Independent Workforce Investment Area by the State of Georgia, with the authority to operate its own Workforce Investment Act Program); and conducting an Executive Session on litigation, personnel, and property offer issues. The agenda was adopted, as amended, as all commissioners had copies before them. Vote unanimous.
4. Approved the December 21, 2010 Regular Business Meeting minutes. Vote unanimous.
5. Approved the nomination of Commissioner Wole Ralph to continue to serve as the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. The motion carried 4-1; Commissioner Edmondson opposed.
6. Rod Gray, Director of Central Services, presented the following items which resulted in these actions:
 - 1) Approved a bid (RFP Pkg. #10-30; 10/26/10) for an annual contract for Commissary Services at the Clayton County Jail. The evaluation committee, consisting of county representatives from the Sheriff's Office, Parks and Recreation Department, and Clayton County Prison, has reviewed the proposal and recommends awarding the contract to Aramark Correctional Services, LLC located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania with the highest score of 458.40. Vote unanimous.

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2) Approved a bid (RFP Pkg. #10-38; 11/23/10) for the Clayton County Transportation and Development widening of Woolsey Road. The bids for this project were evaluated by Jeff Metarko, Director of Transportation and Development, and his staff. Their recommendation is to award this project to The Lion's Group, Inc., located in Forest Park, Georgia, whose firm submitted the lowest bid of \$698,581.03. This project will be funded by a combination of GDOT and SPLOST funds. Vote unanimous.

7. Approved Resolution 2011-01 providing for the designation of persons authorized to sign checks on the bank accounts of Clayton County; to authorize the Clerk to furnish the depositories of Clayton County public funds with a copy of this resolution together with the required specimen signatures (Board of Commissioners). Vote unanimous.

8. Approved Resolution 2011-02 prescribing the depositories of public funds for Clayton County. Vote unanimous.

9. Approved Resolution 2011-03 providing for the authorization of the Director of Finance to deposit Clayton County funds into the Local Government Investment Pool. Vote unanimous.

10. Approved Resolution 2011-04 providing for the designation of persons authorized to sign checks on a bank account of Clayton County; to authorize the Clerk to furnish the depositories of Clayton County public funds with a copy of this resolution together with the required specimen signatures (District Attorney's Office/Witness Transportation Arrangements account). Vote unanimous.

11. Approved Resolution 2011-05 to recognize the years of service of Police Canine Chaz; to grant a conditional gift for his remaining years; and to provide for his retirement from active service. Vote unanimous.

12. Approved Resolution 2011-06 authorizing Clayton County to accept a donation (\$1,000.00) from the Wal-Mart Foundation on behalf of the Clayton County Parks and Recreation Department. Vote unanimous.

13. Approved Resolution 2011-08, a Resolution to appoint the Clerk of the Superior Court of Clayton County, Georgia to serve as the Clerk of the Magistrate Court of Clayton County,

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Georgia; to set compensation for such services; to provide an effective date of this resolution; and for other purposes. Vote unanimous.

(NOTE: On behalf of the Board, Chairman Bell recognized the presence of Jacqueline D. Wills; the new Clerk of Superior and Magistrate Courts, in the audience. He congratulated Ms. Wills on her recent appointments.)

Chief Staff Attorney Michael Smith requested that the Board conduct an Executive Session following the Regular Business Meeting on the aforementioned subjects noted in the amendments to the agenda. The Board generally consented to do so.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Kevin G. Jamison greeted the Board and read this statement into the record:

Letter to the Board of Commissioners of Clayton County

Good evening to you the Board of Commissioners, Chairman Bell, and to all that are in attendance. My name is Kevin Jamison and I am here on behalf of the Concerned Seniors of your senior centers. We have joined together to ask you to clarify for us the validity of our paid membership fees that began 7/1/10 and expire 6/30/11. We respectfully ask that the county honor the paid legal contract/document that reflects these dates.

Certified letters were mailed to every Commissioner and we were present on December 21, 2010; however, one of our fellow senior members made a statement and it was not addressed.

In closing, I would like to state that the seniors have bonds and their relationships are invaluable. We ask to get clarity on several issues. I ask that other alternatives are explored to ensure that membership dues are fair for in-county and out-of-county seniors and that they will not have to worry about food, medicine, and now increasing membership fees.

We stand together as we respectfully trust you, the Commissioners, to make sure that the seniors are heard and that we are all satisfied with the final results.

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We thank you in advance and, please, we ask that we get clarification (about those who have paid for these services)...not knowing the validity of their paid membership fees.

Thank you in advance,

The Concerned Senior Members of the Clayton County Senior Centers.

2. Aisha Abdur-Rahman affirmed that she was an out-of-county member of the Frank Bailey and J. Charley Griswell Senior Centers. She was present to express her personal concerns and the members' concerns of both of these senior centers. At a minimum, these concerns are three-fold. First of all, Ms. Abdur-Rahman had a concern about the sudden announcement of the fee change. On or about December 15, 2010, she was informed that her fee (an amount of \$10.00 per senior center which she had already paid) was increasing to \$180.00 per senior center. Not only was her fee increasing, but her husband's fee as well. Collectively, their fee went up from \$40.00 a year to 180% of that number. That announcement specified that the fee change would be effective January 1, 2011 (whether anyone liked it or not), and the manager specifically told her that those fees would be enforced. Ms. Abdur-Rahman stated that she has heard a number of things since then concerning what would or would not happen. The suddenness of the announcement, however, was very disturbing. None of the seniors whom she knew participated in the decision-making of this announcement. She understood that it was ultimately the Board's job to decide how county funds should be spent, but maybe the Board had missed an opportunity. Comparatively, a senior center is not like a day care center. Senior centers have retired policemen, retired teachers, retired homemakers, retired lawyers, retired doctors, etc. The collective knowledge of the people who populate senior centers is tremendous and invaluable. That knowledge could be potentially invaluable to this Board; therefore, the seniors should have been able to sit down with the Board and discuss this membership fee increase. Per Ms. Abdur-Rahman, Clayton County Senior Centers "have it going on." That is why she is a member of this county's senior centers and not Fayette County's senior centers (where she lives). She loved participating in this county's senior center programs. Currently, everyone is going through a financial crunch and trying to deal with it. Senior citizens, particularly, are dealing with it themselves, with their children, and with their grandchildren. It would have been better if seniors had been given an opportunity to sit down with this Board and attempt to reach a decision that would have been satisfactory to all concerned.

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3. Oliver Williford identified himself as the small business owner of Uncle Bob's Discount Store on Highway 138. He was concerned about zoning and planning issues in this county, particularly on Highway 138. As a small business and property owner in Clayton County, Mr. Williford voiced that it is very discouraging when the laws are written in a way that disallow a business to operate. In these extreme economic times, he believed the law should be interpreted by the "spirit of the law" and not literally (especially when the business is in compliance in all other areas). He just wanted to bring this subject to the Board's attention because he has tried extremely hard to get Planning and Zoning to listen to him and keep his business afloat. Due to this economy, however, Mr. Williford expressed that it is very difficult to get financing to do anything outside of building something to the business. He reiterated that he just wanted to bring his concern to the Board's attention.

Chairman Bell thanked Mr. Williford for his comments and noted that the Board would take his concerns under advisement.

Regarding those individuals who had spoken against the senior center membership fee increases, Chairman Bell stated that the subject would be a part of the Board's discussion in Executive Session tonight.

The Board made a motion to go into Executive Session in the Commissioners' Conference Room to discuss litigation, personnel, and property offer issues at 7:17 p.m. Vote unanimous.

Following the Executive Session (which adjourned at 8:13 p.m.), the Board made a motion to reconvene the Regular Business Meeting in the Commissioners' Boardroom at 8:14 p.m. Vote unanimous.

Upon reconvening, Chairman Bell informed the audience that the county's legal counsel had given the Board advice regarding the senior center membership fee increases. On behalf of the Board, he requested that Chief Staff Attorney Michael Smith make a statement at this time.

Mr. Smith stated that the Board had decided to look into the matter of the senior center membership fee increases and Mary Byrd, Director of Senior Services, would be issuing a statement with directions regarding the matter on tomorrow, January 5, 2011. The statement will be in writing and made available for all seniors.

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On another issue, the Board approved a personnel request set forth by the District Attorney's Office. District Attorney Tracy Graham Lawson requested that the Task Force Investigator position in her office be classified as a permanent non-exempt employee at the same pay scale as an Investigator I. This classification would allow any of her investigators to be assigned to a Federal/State/Local multi-jurisdictional task force to be paid overtime by the Task Force to which they are assigned. This Task Force usually uses federal funding for task force personnel overtime, with no overtime cost to the county. Vote unanimous.