

**GORDON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION MINUTES
JUNE 6, 2017**

The Gordon County Board of Commissioners held a Work Session Tuesday, June 6, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. in the main court room of the Gordon County courthouse.

MEMBERS PRESENT

**BECKY HOOD, COMMISSIONER
CHAD STEWARD, COMMISSIONER
NORRIS SEXTON, COMMISSIONER
KEVIN CUNNINGHAM, COMMISSIONER
M. L. BUD OWENS, COMMISSIONER**

OTHERS PRESENT

**JIM LEDBETTER, COUNTY ATTORNEY
ANNETTE BERRY, COUNTY CLERK
MEDIA
125 GUESTS**

Chairman Hood called the meeting to order.

Chairman Hood asked for a motion to open the public hearing for comments from the public regarding the amendment to the Unified Land Development Code concerning poultry operations in Gordon County.

County Attorney Jim Ledbetter spoke to the Board and the audience and gave the history of the Unified Land Development code regarding poultry operations and how it has come to be the document it is now. Attorney Ledbetter advised the Board that there are several people signed up to speak regarding the amendment to the code for poultry operation, he then read the rules to be followed regarding participants who wish to speak at the public hearing.

Attorney Ledbetter then called Russell Bryant, the first person signed up to speak. Mr. Bryant spoke in favor of the proposed amendment to the code for poultry operations and gave a list of negative impacts that chicken houses have.

Mr. Robert Gwynn spoke to the Board in favor of the amendment and stated that he would like limits of one mile or one and a half mile from a home for a chicken house to be built. He cannot sit on his porch and drink his coffee in the morning due to the odor of a close by chicken house.

Mr. Doug Jones spoke in favor of the amendment and asked what future and what industry do you want in Gordon County and City of Calhoun. Poultry houses are saturating the county and soon every vehicle passing through on I-75 will be passing without stopping because of the unpleasant odors. He asked, what kind of county and city do you want.

Mr. Eddie Smith spoke in favor of the amendment and his opinion is that we are being overrun with poultry houses in Gordon County. We have way too many chicken houses in residential neighborhoods. These are not mom and pop businesses, this is an industry.

Mr. Mark Owens spoke in opposition to the amendment, there are too many hoops to jump through, there will be irreparable harm done to families and others involved as support personnel of a poultry operation. If each person applying for a permit has to go to the Board and there are twenty people there opposed against the one person applying, it's not going to work fair. This is encroaching on individual rights of the land owner. Thank a farmer when you have your next meal, keep in mind chickens have to be grown by someone.

Mr. Adam Williams spoke in opposition to the amendment, only about 2% of poultry operations in Gordon County are receiving complaints about them. 99% to 100% of chicken farms are family farms. The 2% are hurting the other 98% of operations who are being found guilty without due process.

Mr. Michael Williams spoke in opposition to the amendment, studies show that after 50 feet, any dust from a poultry operation is gone. The Board needs to get all of us together and come up with a sound, factual solution where all parties can support it.

Mr. Jacob Williams spoke in opposition to the amendment, this ordinance won't correct the perceived issues, need mutually agreeable solutions. Everybody needs to work together to solve the problem.

Mr. Kevin Holsomback spoke in opposition to the amendment, it will not address where the problems really are. Don't make others have to have strict code to go by when the complaints are really only about a few operations. The amendment will make it almost impossible to build a chicken house in Gordon County.

Mr. William Dillard spoke in opposition to the amendment, he has grown chickens for 25 years and in those 25 years he received only one phone call complaining about his chicken operation. Vote no on the amendment or we will have imported chickens and excessively high imports of chickens come in to Gordon County.

Mr. Clay Brown spoke in opposition to the amendment, mismanagement is the problem. Mismanagement of chicken houses causes smells, there needs to be rules to handle these situations.

Mr. Scott Bone spoke in opposition to the amendment, don't change the ordinance because of one or two farms. Vote no on this amendment.

Mr. Brian Grogan spoke in opposition to the amendment, he is opposed and asks Board to vote no on the amendment. The part about an applicant having to come before the Board and they hear each applicant's request to build. The applicant may have several against his getting a permit and none in favor. The farmers and chicken growers have to have more than 40 acres now to make enough money to raise a family on. I don't like anyone telling me what I have to do to my property, I buy it, I pay for it and I sweat for it.

Mr. James Ware spoke in favor of the amendment. Mr. Ware stated he is familiar with surrounding counties and asked "what is the attraction for building chicken houses in Gordon County". There are a number of poultry operation that are not going in other counties that are coming to Gordon County. Poultry houses are not pleasant neighbors, people and chicken houses do not mix. We are not asking that the chicken houses be torn down, we just want to control the grown of them. If it was apartments or hotels, we have to keep them in proportion to the population of our county.

Mrs. Judith Ralston spoke in opposition to the amendment, even though her family grows chickens, she has comes to the table from both sides of the situation. The amendment has so many stipulations that it makes us in the business a little scared, like, what is our future going to be. How challenging is it going to be for our families in the future to run our family farms. I Want my son to be able to take over some of our farm when he comes back from college. Please vote no on the amendment.

Mr. Warren Thomas spoke in opposition to the amendment, times have changed, the supposedly family farm on Goat Road, if this is a family farm, they must be related to the Kennedys. These size farms need to be in an industrial park because this is an industry, not a family farm.

Mr. Mike Giles, with the Georgia Poultry Federation has concerns with the conditional use permit approach, the comprehensive nutrient management plan, notice requirements, buffer zone too much left to the Board of Commissioners, and odors require a professional engineer to certify. Mr. Giles pledged to work with Gordon County for a good compromise.

No other persons signed up to speak. Commissioner Sexton made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Owens seconded the motion and Commissioners Sexton, Owens, Cunningham, and Steward voted aye. Public Hearing closed.

The Board discussed the items on the Regular Meeting agenda and made no changes or additions.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to adjourn the Work Session and go into the Regular Meeting. Commissioner Owens seconded the motion and all voted aye.

There being no further business, the Work Session adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Becky Hood, Chairman

Annette Berry, County Clerk

**GORDON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 6, 2017**

The Gordon County Board of Commissioners held their Regular Meeting on Tuesday, June 6, 2017, beginning at 6:25 p.m. in the main court room of the Gordon County Courthouse.

MEMBERS PRESENT

**BECKY HOOD, CHAIRMAN
CHAD STEWARD, VICE CHAIRMAN
KEVIN CUNNINGHAM, COMMISSIONER
NORRIS SEXTON, COMMISSIONER
M. L. BUD OWENS, COMMISSIONER**

OTHERS PRESENT

**JIM LEDBETTER, COUNTY ATTORNEY
ANNETTE BERRY, COUNTY CLERK
MEDIA
APPROXIMATELY 85 GUESTS**

Chairman Hood called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Invocation was led by Rev. John Allen. The pledge of allegiance was led by Chairman Hood.

Commissioner Steward make a motion to open the public hearing for the budget. Commissioner Cunningham seconded the motion and Commissioners Steward, Cunningham, Sexton, and Owens voted aye.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017/2018 RECOMMENDED BUDGET

Laura Dobson spoke to the Board and asked that the Animal Control Department use their left over budget money from the 2016/2017 budget year to fund low employment income citizens' animal's spay and neuter certificates.

Susan Fassnacht spoke to the Board and asked for the Board to approve a task force to be involved in operation of the Animal Control Department.

No one else signed to speak during the public hearing. Commissioner Owens made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Sexton seconded the motion and Commissioner Owens, Sexton, Steward, and Cunningham voted aye.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Commissioner Sexton read the list of employees with anniversary hire dates in June. Commissioner Steward drew the name of County Employee of the Month Melody Lee.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Hood asked if there are any additions, omissions, or deletions to the Minutes for the Special Meeting and Board Strategic Planning Meeting February 4, 2017, the Work Session May 16, 2017, and the Regular Meeting May 16, 2017. Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Owens seconded the motion and Commissioners Cunningham, Sexton, Owens, and Steward voted aye. Motion approved.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Chairman Hood announced that the Administrator's Report will be incorporated into the minutes by copy of the report from Interim Administrator Ledbetter.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORT

None

CONSIDERATION OF UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

SECOND READING OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE UNIFIED LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE FOR DRY LITTER POULTRY OPERATIONS

Attorney Ledbetter advised that this is the second reading of the proposed amendment to the Dry Litter Poultry Operations code. The options for the Board are a motion to approve, a motion to deny, or a motion to table the matter until the Board has a chance to digest those comments from tonight's public hearing. Attorney Ledbetter reminded the Board that there is a moratorium in place and there may be some people that are having to put their plans on hold waiting for the moratorium to be lifted. He promised to give it his time and attention to try to resolve the amendment by the June 20th meeting.

The Board discussed the date of the meeting they would work toward to pass the amendment and following the discussion Commissioner Steward made a motion to table the second reading until the first meeting in July. Commissioner Owens seconded the motion and Commissioners Steward, Owens, Sexton, and Cunningham voted aye. Motion passed

Attorney Ledbetter commented that the Board needs to consider that the moratorium expires shortly and the Board may have to extend it for a couple of weeks. The first meeting in July is July 11 and after further discussion with the Board, Ledbetter requested that the Board extend the moratorium to expire on July 11, or sooner if the issues with the amendment are resolved by the June 20th meeting.

Commissioner Owens made a motion to extend the moratorium, if necessary, with an expiration date of July 11, to allow additional time to come up with a reasonable amendment to the code. Commissioner Sexton seconded the motion and Commissioners Owens, Sexton, Steward, and Cunningham voted aye. Motion passed.

RE-APPOINTMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FOR LARRY ROYE FOR A FOUR-YEAR TERM ENDING MAY 31, 2021

Chairman Hood advised that this is the re-appointment of Larry Roye to the Development Authority for a four-year term expiring May 31, 2021.

Commissioner Steward made a motion to approve the re-appointment of Larry Roye. Commissioner Cunningham seconded the motion and Commissioners Owens, Steward, Cunningham, and Sexton voted aye. Motion passed.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN GORDON COUNTY AND THE CITY OF CALHOUN, CITY OF FAIRMOUNT, CITY OF PLAINVILLE AND TOWN OF RESACA TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO CONDUCT MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Chairman Hood advised that this is an intergovernmental agreement between Gordon County and the City of Calhoun, the City of Fairmount, City of Plainville and the Town of Resaca to provided election services to conduct municipal elections. Attorney Ledbetter advised that the cities reimburse the county for the cost of the election and indemnify the county in case there is any mistake in the election. Also, that this does have a term of 25 years, but he advised that we can terminate it sooner if either party desires to.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve the agreements. Commissioner Steward seconded the motion and Commissioners Owens, Steward, Cunningham, and Sexton voted aye. Motion passed.

DECLARATION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY FOR MISCELLANEOUS LIST OF PROPERTY TO BE SOLD AT AUCTION

Chairman Hood advised that this is a Declaration of Surplus Property for a miscellaneous list of the property to be sold at auction.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve the declaration of surplus property. Commissioner Steward seconded the motion and Commissioners Cunningham, Owens, Steward, and Sexton voted aye. Motion passed.

AMENDMENT TO THE LEASE PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH GOVERNMENT CAPITAL CORPORATION FOR TH E-911 CAD SYSTEM

Chairman Hood advised that this is an amendment to the Lease Purchase Agreement with Government Capital corporation for the E-911 CAD system. Attorney Ledbetter advised that this does not change the amount of money that we will pay under the lease. The County is making this amendment for budget purposes, where we can make partial payments for the last couple of months this fiscal year, and then for the full funding for next fiscal year when the new budget takes effect on July 1, 2017.

Commissioner Owens made a motion to approve the amendment to the lease purchase agreement. Commissioner Cunningham seconded the motion and Commissioners Owens, Cunningham, Steward, and Sexton voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Steward made a motion to go into Executive Session for Personnel. Commissioner Sexton seconded the motion and Commissioners Steward, Cunningham, Owens, and Sexton voted aye.

EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR PERSONNEL MATTERS

Board members, County Administrator/Attorney and County Clerk adjourned to a conference room in the Courthouse for the Executive Session. Executive Session began at 6:45 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Board members gathered back in the main courtroom to go back into the Regular Meeting.

Commissioner Owens made a motion to close the Executive Session. Commissioner Sexton seconded the motion and Commissioners Owens, Steward, Cunningham, and Sexton voted aye. Motion passed. Executive Session closed at 7:05 p.m.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting. Commissioner Steward seconded the motion and all voted aye.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Annette Berry, County Clerk

Becky Hood, Chairman