

MINUTES

Carroll County Board of Commissioners Educational Board Development and Planning Retreat August 24-25, 2021

4500 Southern Pine Dr., Pine Mountain, GA

In attendance: Chairman Michelle Morgan, Commissioner Montrell McClendon, Commissioner Clint Chance (by phone), Commissioner Steve Fuller, Commissioner Ernie Reynolds and Commissioner George Chambers. Absent: Commissioner Tommy Lee.

Facilitator: Theron Gay

Staff: Donna Lackey, Executive Director; Alecia Searcy, Finance Director; Stacey Blackmon and Avery Jackson, County Attorneys; Ben Skipper, Community Development Director; Anne Lee, HR Director (by phone); and, Charles Pope, Public Works Director.

Guests: Matt Windom, Water Authority Executive Director, and Perry Hicks, City of Bremen Manager.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Education

Chairman Morgan provided an overview of the ARPA funding program. Carroll County has been allocated \$11,653,519.50. Commitment of funds must be made by 12/2024 and expenditures must be complete by 12/2026.

N. Carroll County - Water and Sewer Infrastructure

Matt Windom, Carroll County Water Authority (CCWA) and Perry Hicks, City of Bremen, presented a proposal request for \$6.2 million in ARPA funding for a water expansion project (\$3.9 million) and wastewater infrastructure (\$2.3 million) in the northwest portion of Carroll County, including the cities of Mount Zion and Bremen. Preliminary design recommendations were provided. Alternatives A and B included optional tank placements and pump stations (BPS) to raise water elevations to 1,460 feet enhancing pressure flows to a desired 30-35 PSI to the West Georgia Regional Airport and Mount Zion schools, as well as residential areas. A \$1 million regional CDBG will be applied for to fund 6- and 8-inch lines, pump stations, taps, etc. for underserved residential areas in and outside the City of Mount Zion at Kierbow, Lee Williams and Triplett. The plans also include interconnections with Bremen water and sewer at I-20. CCWA is prepared to move forward with a total project cost of \$9 million, plus \$1.1 million for the I-20 connector and sewer. Design/construction is anticipated to take two years. Conclusions: project would help protect public health by providing clean drinking water and services for the collection and treatment of wastewater and stormwater. In addition, the project will provide wastewater treatment to an underserved area and provide redundancies of service in the event of an outage.

New Court House 5th Floor and Screening/Security System

Under ARPA Public Health Response, recommendations were discussed for court house improvements adding enhanced COVID protections by completing 5th floor for occupation by Superior Courts, adding Public Defender's offices in building, and moving lower courts up to 3rd and 4th floors.

Specific project recommendations include \$80,000 to hire a consultant to design programming to address COVID needs for the court system; \$80,000 for Magistrate Court to update IT capabilities for online services which will be beneficial due to COVID; \$350,000 for court house COVID screening/tracing/security systems; and \$500,000 for court house and other departments to meet pandemic operational needs.

Additional funding is recommended at \$300,000 for Pathways Mental Health facility improvements to meet pandemic operational needs and Carroll County Mental Health Advocates for an additional mobile crisis response unit.

Staff will review ARPA rules as they are finalized to confirm eligibility of all the recommendations. Further action items will come before the Commission.

Planning and Zoning

Subdivision Regulations

Discussed updating the subdivision regulations to place timeframes and tighter requirements on repeated splits and time limits on new development.

Commissioners reviewed mapped lots county-wide by acreage showing 27,679 lots are less than 10 acres and 5,092 lots are more than 10 acres. Commissioner Fuller will discuss minimum lot size in Ag districts further with his colleagues, and then discuss with Avery Jackson and Ben Skipper.

Agricultural Conservation Easements

Allocation and Selection Process

SPLOST allocation for all agricultural projects (including agricultural easements, Ag Center and other agricultural projects) for the six-year period is \$1.1 million. Two applications, Stana and Stober, have met the minimum requirements for review by obtaining a letter appraisal and submitting an application, and will be presented to the Commission for funding consideration. However, there are approximately nine other owners who have indicated interest in the program. The application process needs to be revamped by staff to include initial Commission review before coming before the Board for approval.

Employee Benefits

Early Retiree Insurance

HR Director Anne Lee and Avery Jackson presented a plan requested by the Sheriff for early retirement insurance options for employees who have worked 20 years and are over 60 years old. Anne provided a roster of the estimated number of potential employees eligible thru 2037. Avery reviewed Marsh & McLennan estimates of monetary impact.

Anne was asked to poll the 22 employees who are currently eligible as to their interest and consideration of the early retirement plan. The plan, if approved, would not go in into effect until July 1, 2022.

RFPs

Theron Gay presented a draft Request for Proposal for Insurance Consultant and Brokerage Services for Property and Casualty Insurance. The selected Broker would represent Carroll County in soliciting insurance providers based on qualifications, services, and costs. The Broker contract would be for one year, with an option by the County to renew. The RFP responses would be due October 1 and insurance provider would be chosen at the December BOC meeting.

An optional Marketplace Selection Process was discussed which is similar to a “football draft” model with 2 or 3 brokers seeking proposals from different carriers. Research shows that this is not a common approach (none in Georgia), would not meet the December deadline, and cost ratios are not favorable. For example, Broker A might only have the opportunity to seek a quote from the best carrier for property insurance and Broker B might only have the opportunity to seek a quote from the best carrier for casualty insurance; therefore, the County would miss out on the opportunity to have the best carrier for each type of policy.

The draft RFP as presented will be considered at the September BOC meeting. Chairman Morgan recommended staff representation on Proposal Review Committee to include Danny Yates (PW), Kristy Elliott (Finance); Sheriff’s Rep; Jesus Hernandez (Facilities); Tim Padgett (EMA); and Theron Gay as facilitator.

Community Partner Update

Commissioners listened to the Tanner Health System COVID update.

Millage Rate

Finance Director Alecia Searcy presented the Tax Digest and 5-year History for review. The additional funding gained will allow for additional expenditures to address County needs. Carroll County’s millage rate continues to be much lower than neighboring counties. No members of the public attended the first public hearing on the millage rate. Two more public hearings are scheduled on 8/26/21. The commissioners discussed the option of a partial rollback. The millage rate will be voted on at the August 31, 2021 special called meeting.

ARPA continued

Expenditures will include Water and Sewer infrastructure, Public Health Response and Revenue Loss estimated to be \$4 million. Staff will seek ACCG review of the estimated revenue loss calculation. Broadband allocation will be TBD.

It was agreed that for the Water/Sewer project, Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA) will be required with Mount Zion and Bremen regarding zoning and annexation. If Mount Zion is a participant in the

funding, an IGA will be required regarding annexations. The IGA with Bremen will require that Bremen rezones and/or maintains commercial/industrial zoning in the project area within their city limit. If the City of Mount Zion does not participate in the CDBG grant, the County will be responsible for the CDBG application. An Intergovernmental Agreement with CCWA will also be required.

DAY 2 - August 25

Chairman Morgan opened the second day of retreat with an update on staff and that she is pleased to announce she will be recommending Donna Lackey as the new County Clerk and Dianne Roberts as a Deputy Clerk at the September BOC meeting.

IGA Public Works

Grading and Paving Projects for Entities other than Carroll County

Charles Pope shared the 48 year history of project partnerships with various public entities with billing of materials and labor. Partnerships are reciprocal with the school systems, UWG, cities, libraries, GDOT, etc. When a request is received, Charles assesses the County's ability to do the work. Commissioner Reynolds presented an option for the County to start charging for indirect cost allocation by percentage of project budget. There was not a consensus to add this charge because the amount would likely be minimal and the other governmental agencies provide benefits to the County as needed without adding indirect costs (loan equipment, etc.).

Charles presented a vehicle replacement schedule for review. There are currently 118 vehicles in the county fleet with over 100,000 miles. Donna Lackey provided an update on the Rural Transit Van system with current ridership of 800 per month. She will be working with Three Rivers RC to develop a plan for van purchasing/replacement when the vans reach 150,000 miles.

Charles will be presenting a request for new mowing tractors and excavators at the September meeting. He will ask all bidders to provide a service commitment/agreement if available. Future Public Works RFPs will include requests for information on service commitments (when applicable).

Other Commissioner Topics

McIntosh Reserve

Commissioner Reynolds presented an offer by Coweta realtor Pik Parks of Mottola & Parks to donate a 20 acre island across the river from McIntosh Reserve located within Coweta County. The Commissioner suggested a disc golf park to be accessed by ferry or something similar on the island. Stacey Blackmon confirmed an environmental assessment and title work conducted by the County would be required as part of a title transfer. The Commission discussed risks/costs/benefits of proposed donation, including lack of access (except by boat), liability, lack of jurisdiction of our public safety, labor, maintenance and operations. A bridge is not feasible at this location. The donation will be considered at the October meeting, but Commissioner Reynolds was asked to find out from Mr. Parks if (1) he is willing to include his existing access easement over neighboring land to a public road on the Coweta side, and (2) discuss

why he prefers a donation to Carroll County rather than to Trust for Public Land or Chattahoochee River Keepers.

Commissioner Reynolds asked if there was interest in pursuing private/state funding for purchase of 30 acres out of a 500 acre tract adjacent to McIntosh in order to provide the opportunity for a possible future foot bridge across the river to connect to the Chattahoochee Bend State Park. Friends of McIntosh Reserve has recommended the project. He has had discussions with local leaders, as well as Senator Matt Brass who is interested in supporting GDNR grant monies. Chairman Morgan stated the bridge has been a part of the Chattahoochee River Corridors master plan. Approval by the Corp of Engineers would be needed for the project. Commissioner Reynolds was tasked with researching the interest of the land owner to only sell 30 acres, the purchase price, and potential private and state funding.

Villa Rica Fire Station

Clint Chance asked about the status of the Villa Rica Fire Station construction. Chairman Morgan requested that Commissioner Chance and Tim Padgett finalize the proposed project description for the RFP (number of bays, etc.). This would need to be sent to Avery Jackson to include in the RFP to be ready for discussion at the October Commission meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM