PLANNING RETREAT
MINUTES
Carroll County Board of Commissioners
January 31, 2020

Michelle Morgan, Chairman
Montrell McClendon, D-1
Clint Chance, D-2
Tommy Lee, D-3
Steve Fuller, D-4
Ernie Reynolds, D-5
George Chambers, Vice-Chairman, D-6
Present = P  Absent = A

Stacey Blackmon, County Attorney
Avery Jackson, County Attorney
Susan Mabry, County Clerk
Kristy McAdams, CDCC
Alicia Searcy, Finance Director
Anne Lee, HR Director

WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER
Chairman Michelle Morgan welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. She then introduced Theron Gay who would be the facilitator for the retreat.

Mr. Gay reviewed the meeting agenda and discussion topics. He said the goals of the retreat were to update the Board on what is going on in the County now and look forward to where the Board wants to go in the future. He stated his role as facilitator was to keep the meeting running smoothly and on schedule. He reviewed several sections of the County’s Charter as it relates to the duties and powers of the Chairman and members of the Commission. The group then had a lengthy discussion as to the Board’s leadership structure, relationships, meeting agendas, the abstention of votes, Robert’s Rules of Order and the County’s administrative code.

FIRE-RESCUE UPDATE
County Fire Chief Tim Padgett presented the Carroll County Fire Rescue 2019 Annual Report which included 2019 highlights as well as 2020 department goals. He also provided Fire Rescue’s 5 Year Plan. The group discussed the different factors that affect the County’s ISO rating. They also discussed the pros and cons of the department using EMS quick response vehicles to respond to medical incidents rather than sending a fire engine and the department’s structure and staffing issues (full-time, part-time, and volunteers). Padgett said the department would like to have the Board’s approval to apply for a SAFER Grant to assist with the department’s staffing issues. Padgett also reviewed the department’s needs for the upcoming SPLOST.

FY-2019 AUDIT PRESENTATION
Julie George and Clay Pilgrim of Rushton and Company presented a report of the County’s Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019. Ms. George advised the Board that the County’s Finance staff had done a great job preparing the needed information for the audit in a timely manner allowing Rushton to issue the County’s report in early December well ahead of state’s requirements. She reviewed the financial statements explaining the government-wide statement of net position and statement of activities, the last five years of General Fund revenues and expenditures and the General Fund’s fund balance.
ZONING ORDINANCE

Community Development Director Ben Skipper and County Planner Janet Hyde discussed the County’s Zoning Ordinance. The plan is for the Commission to adopt the codified version of the current Ordinance at the March BOC meeting. Staff along with the County Attorney’s office identified several items in the current Ordinance that need clarification and cleaning up to make it more user-friendly and easier for staff to enforce. The group discussed the facts that the current Ordinance has several provisions that are out of date and or do not comply with State law. The Board will consider these recommended updates at an upcoming meeting.

The Board also discussed the difficulties and issues related to regulating blighted properties within the County.

BOARD OF ASSESSORS

James Fulford, Chairman of the Carroll County Board of Assessors (BOA) addressed the group about the activities of the Tax Assessors Office including employee transitions; technology needs; state mandates relating to revaluations; the impact of the County’s floating exemption; and issues with appeals that go to the Board of Equalization. Several Commissioners expressed concerns and unhappiness with the way the Tax Assessors Office and the way the staff treats the public. Mr. Fulford said that the BOA realized there were some issues within the department and they were working to try and resolve them.

FINANCE

Finance Director Alecia Searcy presented a mid-year review of the County’s finances. Her overall assessment included cash reserves continuing to be at historic levels, the fund balance is still up significantly from this time last year, and that all departments continue to watch expenditures closely. Ms. Searcy reviewed the proposed Budget Calendar.

The group also discussed the possibility of the County’s IT staff providing IT services to the Public Defender’s office, raises for part-time employees when full-time employees receive raises, the need for a marketing/communications person; employee evaluations; and the possibility of the County recognizing public works employees as part of the County’s public safety team.

SPLOST

The group discussed how they would like to see the monthly SPLOST financial reports presented. They also discussed the impact the restoration of the Court House would have on any undesignated funds that were currently reserved for that purpose. How to address the need for a County Administration Building both in the current SPLOST and the upcoming SPLOST was discussed. County Attorney Stacey Blackmon reviewed the timeline for the proposed upcoming SPLOST to appear on the November ballot. She stated that the official process would begin with the mayors meeting on March 18, 2020.
and the projected revenue is $117,000 total. There was a good deal of discussion about how to best educate the public about the SPLOST and how it impacts the County’s operations, as well as how it may impact taxes.

REVIEW OF AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE FEBRUARY 4, 2020 BOC MEETING

The following agenda items were reviewed and discussed:

Finance Director, Alecia Searcy presented the financial recap of County funds as of December 31, 2019 reporting revenues to date totaling $39,223,285, expenditures to date totaling $26,141,518, and a fund balance of $27,272,164. She reported that revenues were running about $3 million ahead of budget and that expenditures were slightly under budget.

10.I  **Appointment – Board of Assessors**
Commissioner Reynolds has a recommendation for appointment to the Board of Assessors that he will present at the meeting.

10.II  **Old Georgia State Patrol Post - Demolition**
Commissioner Chance advised that he had talked with City of Villa Rica officials as well as business owners and citizens and based on the deteriorating condition of the building they agreed that the Old Georgia State Patrol Post 4 building should be torn down.

11.III  **Updates and Re-Adoption of the Carroll County Official Zoning Map**
Avery Jackson reviewed the Resolution re-adopting the County’s Official Zoning Map showing all zoning changes that the BOC has approved over the past year.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion Mr. Gay adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Susan A. Mabry, County Clerk

Michele Morgan, Chairman