

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

January 24, 2013

5:30 p.m.

Courthouse

MINUTES:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Charlie Baum
Commissioner Carol Cook
Commissioner Gary Farley
Commissioner Trey Gooch
Commissioner Matt Young
Commissioner Allen McAdoo, C

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ernest Burgess
Laura Bohling
Jack Black
Barbara Moser
Dawn Field
Deb Doss
Josh McCreary
Robert Arnold
Roger Moser
Piper Barlow
Lloyd Field
Ben Hilder

Angela Cotton, Brad Rayls, James Raper, Tom Walkup, Wendy Wearly, Dick Wilson, Linda Wilson, Wayne Wood, Hooper Penuel, Danny Dill, Lisa Dill, Cindy Wells, Tommie Wells, Maury Wells, Gerald Brawner, Melinda Black, Randy Jordan, Lew Cook, Chip Burnett, Robbie Robinson, Christian Wrather, Wayne Upchurch, Stanley Word, Becky Shelton

Chairman McAdoo presided and called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with six members being present at that time.

MINUTES:

"Commissioner Cook moved, seconded by Commissioner Farley, to approve the minutes of the last meeting as mailed. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

UPDATE ON MIDLAND-FOSTERVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT BUILDING:

Mayor Ernest Burgess advised the construction is 64% complete and may be finished by March 31.

UPDATE ON COUNTY-OWNED PROPERTIES:

The Committee was provided a list of County owned properties for its use and information. Commissioner Cook requested a listing including the city where the property is located.

PROPOSED NEW JUSTICE BUILDING:

Mayor Burgess advised a new Justice Building has been in discussions since before 2002 and two studies have been done but the County has built school after school and there was no funding available for other projects. The last proposal from 2008 was estimated at \$50,000,000 to \$55,000,000 with a parking garage at \$6,000,000 which would all have to be borrowed. There have not been any discussions with the Finance Director on the County's ability or capacity to borrow. Mayor Burgess advised more time is needed to gather more information on proposed school construction, revenue projections, etc. The land has already been acquired. Commissioner Farley advised the increased operating costs need to be included in any discussions as well.

Commissioner Baum inquired if any study considered moving the criminal division to the new building and keeping civil at the current building. Circuit Court Clerk Laura Bohling advised statistically the courtrooms at the current facility are too small.

Commissioner Farley inquired if night court was an option until a building could be constructed. Ms. Bohling advised she worked at the pleasure of the Judges and a night court would require clerks and security as well.

Mayor Burgess advised one scenario did leave Chancery Court in the current building. The County has spent in excess of \$250,000 on two studies and splitting the courts did not seem to be an option. Some overcrowding has been mitigated by moving the Juvenile Judge and freeing up that courtroom and Clerk's space. General Sessions has multiple staggered dockets. Additionally, Youth Services was moved and the District Attorney and Public Defender now use the old coin building to meet with clients.

Commissioner Young advised it was an injustice to citizens to not seriously review a new building. Mayor Burgess advised he would go with the current model and put it in a time frame with the School Board five year building plan and compute the debt and tax impact to present the big picture.

Chairman McAdoo questioned if the criminal portion could be moved out to the jail. Ms. Bohling advised the Clerk's Office can be amenable but she could not speak to security issues. Mayor Burgess advised there is not enough parking unless a garage is built. Sheriff Arnold advised he would like the County to see the Hamilton County facility built over twenty years ago. Ms. Bohling advised the County's plan does what Hamilton County has and will create efficiencies with new technologies. Commissioner Farley advised the County did not go to the jail when Truman Jones was Sheriff because of land issues, future construction on the jail and the Bar Association preferred the downtown location. Sheriff Arnold advised there was not enough land at the jail without buying more and building it up due to flooding. Mayor Burgess advised the County needed to reserve land for a future tower.

OTHER BUSINESS:

CHILLERS AT JAIL:

Mayor Burgess advised one of the chillers at the jail is down and it can be replaced with a new one for the cost of repairs. A budget amendment will be presented at the Public Safety Committee for the purchase. Purchasing Committee will be ask to approve the bids on the 29th. The previous bid of \$268,000 to replace two chillers is good until May 1.

"Commissioner Farley moved, seconded by Commissioner Gooch, that Property Management Committee endorse the replacement of the chillers and budget amendment. This motion passed unanimously by roll call vote."

Sheriff Arnold advised the jail still has two hot water heaters that need to be replaced.

LASCASSAS CONVENIENCE CENTER:

"Commissioner Young moved, seconded by Commissioner Farley, to suspend the rules to allow Commissioner Jack Black to speak. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

Commissioner Black advised the Lascassas Convenience Center presently leased from Peachtree will close February 24 and community meetings have been held to discuss options including buying land, leasing another location, using eminent domain, putting the bins on land the County already owns or negotiating with Peachtree for the current site. There has been no land offer from anyone. Commissioner Black advised this will cause a burden on the citizens and desperate measures calls for action. The cost to relocate a convenience center is \$100,000. Mayor Burgess advised he thought it was unwise to relocate the center to County owned property as it will interfere with one of the few recreation programs in the County. Mayor Burgess advised he thought the County should try to reach an agreement with

Peachtree to buy the current site. Commissioner Young advised he thought Peachtree was strong arming the County and did not want to deal with the owner. Mayor Burgess advised Peachtree is willing to discuss purchase and he wanted the Committee endorsement of the concept.

"Commissioner Gooch moved, seconded by Commissioner Cook, to endorse the concept to purchase the Peachtree property where the current convenience center is located with the Mayor to negotiate and additionally to see if the lease can be extended for an indefinite period of time."

Mayor Burgess advised the County has looked for an alternate site for the convenience center for years with no success.

Commissioner Young advised the relocation to the County owned property could be made attractive with fencing and landscaping.

Josh McCreary of the County Attorney's Office was ask to explain the lease with the Lion's Club and advised the same was adopted September, 1999 and is a fifty year lease but does allow the County to terminate the same with a thirty day written notice.

The County owned property in question has a walking trail and playground.

Commissioner Black advised he previously charged Mac Nolen to find a site to locate the boxes on.

Commissioner Gooch inquired if Peachtree would enter into a month to month arrangement.

"Commissioner Farley moved, seconded by Commissioner Young, to allow members of the audience to address the Committee. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

Linda Wilson addressed the Committee on concerns regarding the proposed site as it will decrease property values and with the location of the ball fields the prevailing winds will carry the odors which would kill the use of the ball fields as well as the adjacent fish fry the volunteer fire department holds.

Robbie Robinson advised the current spot is the right spot. Games are Friday night and all day on Saturday with children everywhere mixing people with trash and he had a concern a child would get hurt.

Stanley Ward, President of the Elementary PTO, advised Mac Nolen had told him of safety concerns with the school zone and creating an attractive nuisance with kids from the adjacent subdivision.

Danny Dill advised he wanted to move the site to the school because they were no better than Walter Hill and it worked at Walter Hill.

Piper Barlow advised trash is not healthy while children playing ball is and it was not worth saving a couple of dollars. Smell and safety are concerns.

Lisa Dill advised the new site would be accessed from Highway 96 and would be fenced so there was not a safety issue.

Melinda Black advised her ancestors gave the land for the school and there was an agreement with former County Executive Nancy Allen that when it was no longer used for a school it would be used for the fire department, ambulance, police, Lion's Club, etc. and she

did not think her ancestors would approve of a convenience center.

Lloyd Field advised Peachtree cannot justify the price they are asking and he suggested eminent domain or a local task force could be established to determine options.

Wayne Wood, President of the ball fields, advised there are multiple driveways and it would be confusing to the public. The BFI fields are leased to a travel team and they do not have as many kids using them but it does smell. Mr. Wood recommended negotiating with Peachtree or finding other property.

Wayne Upchurch advised to either loose the ball fields or shell out a lot of money but it seemed the best deal was to look elsewhere.

Lew Cook advised no one has measured the property and it is not wide enough and although he appreciated the offer to relocate the playground and walking trail there is no place to put it and in excess of \$20,000 was spent on the playground.

Randy Jordan advised the relocation would take out the rock fence.

Brad Rayls advised he was not for buying the Peachtree property unless the County could get it for \$100,000 due to being strong armed.

Commissioner Black advised the Peachtree owner previously priced the site at \$350,000.

Jason Agee advised to let the notion of strong arming go and open negotiations to try to reach a fair price and suggested a letter of intent.

"The motion to endorse the concept to purchase the Peachtree property with the County Mayor to negotiate and additionally to see if the lease could be extended for an indefinite period of time passed unanimously by roll call vote."

Chairman McAdoo advised there was not enough time to bring the matter back to the Property Management Committee. Commissioner Farley advised he had confidence in the Mayor. Commissioner Young advised the Mayor could address the matter at the Commission meeting.

There appearing to be no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman McAdoo declared the meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

ALLEN McADOO, Chairman