

SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

The Spalding County Board of Commissioners held a Special Called Meeting in Room 108 in the Courthouse Annex, Wednesday, January 26, 2011, beginning at 10:00 a.m. with Chairman Freeman presiding over the meeting. Commissioners Raymond Ray, Bob Gilreath and Chipper Gardner were also in attendance. Commissioner Flowers-Taylor arrived at 10:10 a.m. Also present were Interim County Manager Tim Whalen, Deputy County Manager Virginia Beams, Attorney Jim Fortune and Executive Secretary Glinda Robertson.

I. OPENING (CALL TO ORDER) – Chairman Eddie Freeman

a. Discussion on the Senior Center

It was requested that Paragon Consulting Group do a Task Order Form to present to the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Raymond Ray stated he has looked at the information available on the senior center. He stated currently they only have a study with a completion date and true cost estimates on Carver Road. They do not have anything on the other four locations which are: Cook's Shopping Center, the current senior center location, the Coca-Cola Building and the Elk's Club. There are three facilities still being looked at. Those are the Elk's Club, the Coca-Cola Building and the Cook Shopping Center.

Mr. Ray feels the commissioners do not currently have all the information they need on all properties in order to make a logical decision. He further stated this is not a tactic to slow things down. This is strictly in order to get the right information for the right reasons. He would like to make a final decision on a property within the next 60 days.

Brian Upson from Paragon was present to address the board. He was asked by Tim Whalen to prepare a Task Order Form to evaluate the three identified sites that do not have detailed information. Mr. Upson will be, along with input from the commissioners, creating assessment criteria for the properties. Example criteria are: acquisition costs, adaptability of the existing buildings for the intended use, future expansion possibilities, parking expansion, ease-of-access, proximity to the citizen base as well as other Spalding County properties, condition and impact to adjacent or surrounding properties, ability to modify the space in the future, cost of construction and the time line it will take to finish the project.

Each facility will be inspected for structural integrity. They will look at the heating and cooling system, the roof, the plumbing and the walls and determine what can be used in each building and how easy it will be to retrofit the buildings into the proposed use. Mr. Upson is requesting upon completion to have a workshop so that he can explain his findings based on the site visits. He would like to use the plans that have already been developed and try and put them into a comparative format.

Mr. Upson stated the next step would be to prepare a budget that will include demolition costs, construction costs and any soft costs. Next, they will prepare a final report and present it to the commissioners for their decision. He believes the final report will be ready by March 15th.

Commissioner Flowers-Taylor asked, "Hasn't this analysis already been done for the Cook Shopping Center?" She believes they already have the numbers for this facility and they don't need to be redone. She also questioned, out of the SPLOST monies, what was the \$120,000 spent on.

Mr. Upson explained that the problem is there are three different lay-outs. So, even though there is information on the Cook Shopping Center, he asked, "Is it what you want in the end? Does it incorporate all the needs that were set up in the original senior center concept?" He stated he does not know the answer until they look at each one.

Ms. Taylor asked how much this is going to cost. Mr. Upson stated it will be \$7,850 per building. She then asked what fund this money will come out of. Mr. Fortune stated the SPLOST fund monies can be used for this preliminary work.

Commissioner Gilreath asked if there was a list of totals and specifics as to what the SPLOST monies have paid for up to this point. Mr. Whalen stated that through October 31, 2010, the senior center expenditures out of SPLOST proceeds are:

Cropsey and Associates for Elk's Lodge prints \$4,083.55
Manley, Spangler, Smith \$42,000 for Carver Road
Manley, Spangler, Smith \$70,000 for Carver Road
Asbestos study for Elk's Lodge \$4,471

Mr. Gilreath also asked if this Task Order will include the possibility of another senior center being built down the road. Mr. Upson stated that is not currently part of the Task Order however, it should be looked at later.

Motion/second by Ray/Flowers-Taylor to accept the Task Order Form presented by Paragon Consulting Group (Project No. 11007.00 dated January 24, 2011) in order to move forward and have the information back by March 15, 2011. The fee estimate would be \$7,850 per option for a total proposed work effort to be \$23,550.00. The money is to come out of the Contingency Fund. Motion was carried with a 5-0 vote.

Eddie Stikes – Elk's Club

Mr. Stikes stated part of the reason they are looking to sell the property is that in the 50's and 60's the lodge had over 900 members. Today, they have less than 300 members. They simply have too large of a facility for their purposes. Mr. Stikes stated the facility is easy and safe to get to; a nature trail could be developed; it has a large pool with a new pump; there is 13,900 square feet inside; there is 12.95 acres; there are tennis courts and a horseshoe pit; there would be a place for a computer lab and an exercise room; there is a large hardwood floor ballroom; and the facility has a large commercial kitchen. There is a basement with 5300 square feet. There is an out building on the property that is currently providing income and could do so for the county as well.

Mr. Stikes believes this property will allow the senior citizen center to prosper for many years. Originally the Elk's Club was asking for \$1.2 million dollars. Mr. Stikes states they are prepared to reduce the number to \$950,000. He along with others have been authorized to negotiate with the county on this property. Mr. Stikes believes this is a location that can be moved into very quickly and give the seniors what they have asked for.

Mr. Gilreath asked what the monthly utility costs are for the Elk's Club. Mr. Stikes stated the utility bill runs around \$2,500 in the fall and winter. It goes up some in the summer. He further stated the county would want to put in new HVAC as the current one is an old system.

Mr. Gilreath stated in the past he has been adamant about placing the senior center on Carver Road. He further stated that after looking very closely at this, he believes the Elk's Club has a lot to offer. He added, "We have done a great injustice since I have been on the board by not completing this center sooner."

Ms. Taylor suggested having Louis Greene put together a survey sheet and making it available to the seniors over a week to ten days using the ten criteria items on the Task Order Form provided by Paragon Consulting to identify what is important to the seniors. Mr. Greene agreed to do this.

Motion/second by Ray/Gilreath to approve Jim Fortune to negotiate with the Coca-Cola Building owners and the Elk's Club on a final acquisition price of both properties to bring back to the Board. This will be in conjunction with the Paragon Task Order Form. Motion was carried with a 5-0 vote.

Motion/second by Flowers-Taylor/Ray to ask the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the Director of Parks and Recreation to put together a survey sheet making it available to the seniors using the ten criteria items on the Task Order Form provided by Paragon Consulting to identify what is important to the seniors. The survey results should be completed and returned to Mr. Upson by February 4th at 5:00 p.m. Motion was carried with a 5-0 vote.

Dan McLean – Spalding County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Mr. McLean stated he does not know what happened with the Carver Road site. A sign was placed at the site stating it was going to be the future home of the senior center. He is ready for a decision to be made. Mr. McLean stated, "As I sat here and listened today, we're taking three locations and taking the plans for Carver Road to see if they will work into these three locations. It's my understanding that we have already paid for the cost estimate on Carver Road." What he would like to see done is that along with these three locations and their cost estimates, find out how much it would cost to build on the site at Carver Road. He thanked the commissioners for all that they do.

Ms. Taylor asked to discuss a housekeeping item. She has always had an issue with having meetings in the morning. She feels like the general public does not have access to what is being said. She stated that apparently there is not a process in place for setting these Special Called Meetings. She would like to have ground rules in place for how the commissioners are to be contacted and how the meetings are scheduled. She further stated she was not notified of this meeting date and when she found out about the meeting asked that it be moved to 6:00 p.m. She is very disappointed that she was not asked what her schedule was.

Mr. Freeman stated that Ms. Taylor had called him last week and asked for the Special Called Meeting. He spoke with the other commissioners and the meeting was set up. He stated that according to a recent conversation with Ms. Taylor she indicated she was taking a new position at her job and would no longer have problems getting off. He told Ms. Taylor he did not wish to exclude her from anything. He stated the meetings are set up to take care of the county's business...and the people's business. He further stated, "We need to have meetings when we need to have meetings."

Ms. Taylor stated since she requested the meeting, someone should have asked her what time was good for her.

Mr. Ray stated he believes the comments being made can be made between two commissioners versus the entire public. He stated a poll should be facilitated with each of the commissioners to see what time is best for each of them. He believes this can be handled among themselves without taking up the time of the citizens.

Mr. Gardner stated that commissioners should be polled as to their availability for special meetings. They also need to be responsible so that if they get a message or an email polling them about a possible meeting, they need to respond to it.

II. ADJOURNMENT

Motion/second by Commissioners Ray/Gardner to adjourn at 11:10 a.m. and carried by all.

Chairman

Interim County Clerk

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