

Upson County Board of Commissioners
June 28, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Chairman Blackston calls the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. All Commissioners were in attendance. County Attorney Heath English was also in attendance. The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Ellington.

Minutes

A motion was made by Comm. Spraggins, with a second from Comm. Ellington, to adopt the minutes from June 14, 2016 regular meeting. The motion carries.

Commissioner Wilder – Yes Commissioner Ellington – Yes
Chairman Blackston – Yes
Commissioner Spraggins – Yes Commissioner Hudson – Yes

Public Comments

Roger Pinion, 409 N. Church Street, read the following letter to the Commissioners.

1. As tax-paying citizens, our expectation is that the county commissioners would have called a meeting or meetings with the affected businesses and residents to discuss the US-19 N road expansion the DOT has planned.
2. The so called negotiations are not negotiations at all but rather the State coming in with a figure already determined with no interest in what the business owner thinks their property is worth. Any rumor that the businesses are being well compensated for their property is just a rumor.
3. As county residents, our expectation is that the county commissioners would support the businesses by insuring the DOT is offering fair deals (they are not). We feel the commissioners should have been-- at any and all meetings with the DOT and those affected showing their support. We elect the commissioners to represent us and we have seen no representation from the county thus far during this project.
4. Some of the businesses are now being told the "negotiations" are being turned over to an outside consultant. A fraction of this money could be used to offer the businesses a fair deal. That is tax-payer money and if the State's representatives are not competent enough to fully negotiate with the businesses then the State should replace them with someone who is qualified to do so vs throwing OUR money over to a strong-arm consultant whose focus will be intimidation. That's government waste and speaks to the lack of preparation and skills on the State's side.

WE ARE PREPARED TO TAKE THE NECESSARY MEASURES FOR THE FOLLOWING REQUESTS AND EXPECT THE SUPPORT OF OUR ELECTED COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.

5. The businesses and citizens in this area are asking for public water and sewer installation during this project.
6. The businesses and citizens are asking for a turn lane at US-19 N and Franklindale Road. We don't see the need for a median at all but rather a turn lane through the entire project which would have less impact on traffic in the affected areas. The lack of a turn lane here will result in unnecessary traffic congestion in both the North & South lanes and make it very inconvenient for the folks working and living and doing business in this area.
7. We are asking the commissioners to get involved going forward and support us in our efforts to insure the State is transparent with the dollars they are offering and can back them up with supporting documentation. The State's failure to do this indicates they are not being forthcoming.
8. The businesses and citizens affected by this project (as well as the rest of us) will have to live with the end results and we pay for the right to have input into those results. Therefore; we are asking the city and elected county commissioners to support us in the requests outlined here. They are all reasonable and will benefit all of us.
9. We hope to have a strong advocate in the Mayor and others living in our community as they work for the DOT and should be able to assist in our efforts.

Thanks

Jay Davidson, owner of the Fish Peddler, stated that he attended the meetings for the planning of the project on Hwy 19 N but didn't get an opportunity to have much input. He stated that Mr. Pinion had been around to the business owners and he is the spokesperson for them on the project.

New Business

- a. The Griffin Judicial Circuit Budget decreased 16.9% from \$176,673.00 in 2016 to \$146,885.00 2017. Mr. Wayne Sandefur explained that for the 2016 budget the board approved the previous year budget because nothing had been submitted. They discussed that any amount that is owed to the County should be reimbursed before the first quarter payment is made, or they payment should be reduced.

A motion was made by Comm. Spraggins, with a second from Comm. Wilder, to approve the Griffin Judicial Circuit's Budget for \$146,885.00. The motion carries.

Commissioner Wilder – Yes Commissioner Ellington – Yes
Commissioner Spraggins – Yes Commissioner Hudson – Yes
Chairman Blackston – Yes

The Public Defender Budget increased 1.8% from \$365,402.00 in 2016 to \$372,136.00 2017. The budget is up due to the caseload.

A motion was made by Comm. Wilder, with a second from Comm. Spraggins, to approve the Public Defender's Budget for \$372,136.00. The motion carries.

Commissioner Wilder – Yes Commissioner Ellington – Yes
Commissioner Spraggins – Yes Commissioner Hudson – No
Chairman Blackston – Yes

The DA Griffin Judicial Circuit Budget increased 42% from \$200,143.00 in 2016 to \$284,355.00 2017. The board would like to meet with the DA's office about the increase.

A motion was made by Comm. Ellington, with a second from Comm. Wilder, to table the DA's Budget. The motion carries.

Commissioner Wilder – Yes Commissioner Ellington – Yes
Commissioner Spraggins – Yes Commissioner Hudson – Yes
Chairman Blackston – Yes

The McIntosh Trail CSB Counseling Center Budget remained the same at \$75,000.00.

A motion was made by Comm. Spraggins, with a second from Comm. Ellington, to approve the Counseling Center's Budget. The motion carries.

Commissioner Wilder – Yes Commissioner Ellington – Yes
Commissioner Spraggins – Yes Commissioner Hudson – Yes
Chairman Blackston – Yes

The Health Department Budget remained the same at \$200,873.00.

A motion was made by Comm. Spraggins, with a second from Comm. Ellington, to approve the Health Department's Budget. The motion carries.

Commissioner Wilder – Yes Commissioner Ellington – Yes
Commissioner Spraggins – Yes Commissioner Hudson – Yes
Chairman Blackston – Yes

Pine Mountain Library's Budget increased 3.1% from \$176,138.00 in 2016 to \$181,638.00 2017. The board would like to meet with the Library about the increase.

A motion was made by Comm. Spraggins, with a second from Comm. Ellington, to table the Health Department's Budget. The motion carries.

Commissioner Wilder – Yes Commissioner Ellington – Yes
Commissioner Spraggins – Yes Commissioner Hudson – Yes
Chairman Blackston – Yes

The Department of Family & Children Service Budget remained the same at \$40,000.00.

A motion was made by Comm. Spraggins, with a second from Comm. Wilder, to approve DFCS Budget. The motion carries.

Commissioner Wilder – Yes Commissioner Ellington – Yes
Commissioner Spraggins – Yes Commissioner Hudson – Yes
Chairman Blackston – Yes

County Manager, Commissioners and County Attorney Comments

County Manager Jim stated that they will be accepting bids for the Retention Pond behind the Civic Center. The cost for the plans will be \$250. There are air conditioner issues at the Senior Center, Civic Center, Old D.O.T and the Auditorium the total cost to fix all of them is \$28,739.

Commissioner Wilder stated that the building for the Lincoln Park Volunteer Department is complete. The electrical and landscape has to be completed.

Commissioner Spraggins had no comments.

Commissioner Ellington had no comments.

Commissioner Hudson had no comments.

County Attorney Heath English had no comments.

Chairman Blackston had no comments.

Executive Session

A motion was made by Comm. Spraggins with a second from Comm. Ellington at 6:30 to exit regular meeting into executive session for personnel.

A motion was made by Comm. Ellington with a second from Comm. Spraggins at 7:34 to exit executive session back to regular meeting.

Adjournment

Comm. Wilder made a motion to adjourn at 7:35 pm, with a second by Comm. Spraggins to adjourn the meeting.

Chairman Rusty Blackston

Commissioner Steve Hudson

Commissioner Frank Spraggins

Commissioner Lorenzo Wilder

Commissioner Ralph Ellington

Jim Wheeless, County Manager