

COLUMBIA COUNTY  
BOARD of COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
Minutes of  
**February 04, 2010**

The Columbia County Board of County Commissioners met in a regularly scheduled meeting at the School Board Administration Office. The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m. with prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America followed.

**Commissioners in Attendance:**

Ronald Williams (Chairman)  
Stephen Bailey  
Dewey Weaver  
Jody Dupree  
Scarlet Frisina

**Others in Attendance:**

County Manager Dale Williams  
Attorney Marlin Feagle  
Deputy Clerk Sandy Markham  
BCC Secretary Penny Stanley

**Public Comment**

For the benefit of those in attendance for the first time, the Chair announced if there was anyone who would like to address the Board on any issue that they fill out a speaker card found on the table at the doorway.

Citizen Stewart Lilker said that he has been following the county's **utility** discussions and meetings. He showed the Commission the 201 Federal **Facility Plan** that was put into place by the City of Lake City prior to any dirt being turned. He noted this book is approximately 7 pounds and is approximately 3 inches thick. He told the Board that he'd like to see something similar put into place for the county before they continue squandering tax payer's dollars without a **plan**. He reminded the Commission that the utility experts of this county are the City utility professionals. Mr. Lilker said that apparently city utility members have been formally uninvited from attending the Columbia County Utility Committee meetings. He said that City Engineer Henry Sheldon is a world class engineer who has been asked to do this type of work all over the world. He said it is ridiculous that the County would not be obtaining input from Mr. Sheldon and other city professionals.

Mr. Lilker said that he is opposed to the **dedicated connection/T-1 line** that is being proposed for IT Specialist Todd Manning's home at the cost of \$253 per month. He said that citizens should be able to address "these" issues when the topic is brought up by the Board.

Mr. Lilker opposes Columbia County's **main library** hours being reduced. He said that when he left the library tonight that there were eight people on the public computers, several visitors on laptops and parents and their children were in the building. He told the Board if they can afford to fly junkets to North Carolina for the day to look at grass then they should be able to afford to keep the library open.

*Clerks Note: See the minutes of Dec. 17, 2009 for clarification of Mr. Lilker's last comment.*

As Mr. Lilker began to leave the podium, there were other words that resulted in Mr. Lilker receiving his first warning for chatter from the Chairman. A transcript with details of the warning is attached to the original minutes as Attachment "A."

## Consent Agenda Item #14

MOTION by Commissioner Bailey to remove item #14 from the consent agenda for separate discussion. Second by Commissioner Weaver. The motion carried unanimously.

- (1) Columbia County Tax Collector – Accepting Excess Fee Distribution from Tax Collector in the amount of \$453,706.59
- (2) 911 Emergency Communication Center’s declaration of surplus property – Fellowes C-420C Cross-Cut Shredder, County Property No. #13715
- (3) Building and Zoning Department – Special Family Lot Permit – Thomas L. Harper
- (4) 911 Addressing Department – S.E. Fritzi Court – Access from SE Country Club Road
- (5) Planning Department – Request for Subdivision Preliminary Plat Approval Extension for 12 Months – SD 0181 – Southern Meadows, Phase I - SD 0182 – Southern Meadows, Phase 2 – SD 0183 – Southern Meadows, Phase 3
- (6) Utility Permit – Comcast Cable - S.W. Kirby Avenue
- (7) Utility Permit – Comcast Cable – S.W. McFarlane Avenue
- (8) Utility Permit – Windstream Florida, Inc. – S.W. Kentucky Avenue
- (9) CSX Construction Agreement – Bascom Norris Drive
- (10) Minute Approval – Board of County Commissioners/Industrial Development Authority Board Meeting – October 29, 2009
- (11) Minute Approval – Board of County Commissioners – Regular Meeting – January 21, 2010
- (12) Resolution – Adopting Updated Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan for Columbia County
- (13) External Budget Amendment – MSBU Fund – BA #09-09 – FM Global Fire Prevention Grant - \$1,750.00
- (14) Commissioner Jody Dupree’s request to be removed from the Downtown Redevelopment Committee and that another commissioner be appointed to the committee. [Removed for separate discussion.]

## Building and Zoning by County Planner Brian Kepner

Zoning Amendment - Z0518. The Board considered an application by **Jeffery and Teena Ruffo** to change zoning from Residential, Single Family -1 (RSF-1) to Commercial Intensive (CI). The property is located in District 5 on the east side of SR 47 just north of Azalea Park subdivision. The public hearing opened and closed without input.

MOTION by Commissioner Frisina to approve Z0518 [Ordinance #2010-3]. Second by Commissioner Bailey. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Eminent Domain Resolution No. #2010R-03**

County Attorney Feagle explained that the Eminent Domain Resolution for the acquisition of this certain piece of property is no longer needed for the wastewater treatment facility. He reported the needed contract has now been signed. No action was taken.

### **Consent Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Weaver to approve the Consent Agenda unless there are items to be pulled or clarified. Second by Commissioner Frisina. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Reduction of Operating Hours at the Main Public Library**

The County Manager explained that according to Librarian Debbie Paulson, since the staff layoffs in October 2009, she has had a difficult time sufficiently staffing the public service desks and has advised that staff is stretched too thin to provide adequate assistance to the patrons.

The County Manager said that the county has received several calls offering input, concerns and suggestions regarding the library's operating hours. The library staff has worked together to pinpoint the busiest and least busy times of the day/week. Ms. Paulson has requested permission to adjust the hours of operation to reduce the open hours by nine (9). The proposed hours of operation:

Monday 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.	Tuesday 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.	Wednesday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m
Thursday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m	Friday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m	Saturday 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Sunday 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.		

The County Manager said the county did not cut library funds for the current year, but the state cut funding significantly. He reminded the Board that they were provided with financial information from the state earlier in the week that indicates library funding will likely be eliminated. If that happens, it will be a \$300,000 loss for Columbia County libraries. From all appearance, there will be an even bigger problem to address with the libraries next fiscal year.

MOTION by Commissioner Dupree to accept the recommendation. Second by Commissioner Bailey. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Dedicated Data Connection through AT&T**

County Network Specialist Todd Manning has advised the Board that his Alltel Air Card, which is currently his only source of connectivity to the county facilities, is no longer a viable option for connectivity, because the bandwidth and latency (speed) is too slow.

Mr. Manning has asked that the Board consider a dedicated connection for his home where he can monitor systems. Mr. Manning feels this could greatly increase his response times, and would increase the quality of maintenance needed for the networks and systems which require attention 24/7.

The proposed dedicated data connection from AT&T has a startup cost of \$1,300 and will impact the budget by \$3,024 per year. The County Manager said it is important to understand that Mr. Manning is now paid overtime when he has met his maximum hours and is then called to go to the courthouse after hours, at night and on the weekends. Therefore, some of the expense can be off-set by the overtime hours. The County Manager said that they believe that extending the dedicated connection is important enough that they are willing to reduce other areas of the particular budget this will be paid from to insure the budget is not negatively impacted. The County Manager said that he has been told that this is not uncommon among I.T. staff working in other governmental sectors to be able to monitor the systems at home.

MOTION by Commissioner Weaver to approve. Second by Commissioner Frisina. The motion carried unanimously.

### Utility Committee Recommendations

The Utility Committee met on January 26, 2010 and made the following recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners:

1. Establish Public Hearing dates for the adoption of the following ordinances:
  - a. Utility Service Area Ordinance
  - b. Utility Connection Ordinance

MOTION by Commissioner Weaver to schedule the public hearing date for March 11, 2010, at 7 p.m. Second by Commissioner Frisina. The motion carried unanimously.

County Attorney Feagle said a public hearing notice is scheduled to begin running tomorrow. It is too late to cancel that notice, but he will re-advertise with the March 11<sup>th</sup> date.

2. Approve changing all service drops from  $\frac{3}{4}$ " diameter pipe to 1  $\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter pipe. This will allow for "double" meters, which will result in less future maintenance costs and reduce costs in meter reading. Service drop locations will be determined in the field. Any meters identified in the current plans not used will be placed in inventory for future use.

MOTION to approve by Commissioner Weaver. Second by Commissioner Bailey. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Approve the following route changes to the main water distribution line:
  - a. On the western side of U.S. 441, parallel the south and west property lines of Scaffs, Inc. property in lieu of paralleling U.S. 441 to Howell Road.

MOTION by Commissioner Frisina to approve. Second by Commissioner Bailey. The motion carried unanimously.

- b. Create a "loop" north of Howell Road. This loop will serve the existing commercial businesses from the rear of their property in lieu of from the front. The front is congested with other utilities.

MOTION by Commissioner Bailey to approve. Second by Commissioner Frisina. The motion carried unanimously.

- c. Serve the existing commercial businesses in the NE quadrant with a rear lot lateral extended from the main on SR 238. The front is congested with other utilities.

MOTION by Commissioner Weaver to approve. Second by Commissioner Bailey. The motion carried unanimously.

- d. Extend a lateral on the east side of U.S. 441 north from the southern most directional drill location to serve existing commercial businesses in the SE quadrant of I-75/U.S 441.

MOTION by Commissioner Bailey to approve. Second by Commissioner Frisina. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Downtown Redevelopment Committee**

The Board considered Commissioner Dupree's request to be removed from the committee and another commissioner appointed. Commissioner Dupree will still serve on the committee, but will do so as a business person in the community.

MOTION by Commissioner Weaver to accept Commissioner Dupree's request. Second by Commissioner Bailey. The motion carried unanimously.

The Chairman appointed Commissioner Frisina in Commissioner Dupree's place.

### **Interest Rates**

County Manager Williams said it seems that the near trend in the financial market is interest rates will increase, particularly in the bond market. He said programmed in the county budget this year is revenue to be derived from either a bank loan or a bond issue that primarily deal with Old Wire Road and Herlong Road. The County Manager said it would be wise for the county to stay ahead of the rates and consider moving forward with shopping to see what the market has to offer.

MOTION to begin the shopping process by Commissioner Dupree. Second by Commissioner Bailey. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Clarification**

The airline tickets for the trip taken at the first of the year to CoopersTown, North Carolina was charged to the IDA. He said that the two Board's should have been given an opportunity to review and approve the expenditures in advance. The County Manager asked if the trip should be classified as a Tourist Development Project or an Economic Development Project. The Board said it should be split equally between the two.

MOTION by Commissioner Weaver to split the cost. Second by Commissioner Dupree. The motion carried unanimously.

## Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Dupree passed along many of the local contractors have asked that Commissioner Dupree thank the Board on their behalf for the action taken on having a **licensing inspector**.

Commissioner Dupree said there has been some apparent confusion because the Board did not **invite** some key staff from the City of Lake City to attend the **Columbia County Utility Committee Meeting**. He said there is some truth to that but offered clarification. The commissioner said two council members from the city have been appointed to the Utility Committee and are invited to each meeting.

Commissioner Dupree said at the onset of the meetings, utility staff of the City was invited to the meetings to offer their expert advice on the issues the county was facing with the water plant. He said the staff knows a lot and they served the purpose for which they invited them. Subsequent meeting notices that went out did not specifically invite staff, because the city did not want to request their presence just for the sake of having them there. He said that city staff is always welcome at the Utility Committee Meetings held by the County.

He said that a lot of people have been brought in to help with the utility project. He mentioned Walt Graham, Kevin Kirby, John Colson, Billy Dow, Commissioner Frisina and Commissioner Bailey. He thanked them for their passion for the project and hard work.

Chairman Williams explained to the Board that there is still an on-going issue with **Ms. Parnell on Collins Lane**. He said she still does not have power. The Chair asked for permission to clear the right-of-way and to prep the right-of-way to Ms. Parnell's home for the power line. He said that she has been waiting since August to get power to her house.

Attorney Feagle said that Collins Lane is a public road and the adjacent property owner seems satisfied with the action of the Board. The County has the right to maintain the public road. He said that for the Board to take this action, they must find a public purpose for doing so. Attorney Feagle said that it is his understanding the purpose is for clearing and maintaining the county right-of-way.

MOTION by Commissioner Weaver to approve clearing the right-of-way. Second by Commissioner Frisina. The motion carried unanimously.

The Chairman advised that if anyone has an item to be placed on the agenda for the upcoming **joint meeting** between the City and the County, that it must be submitted to the City two weeks in advance.

Chairman Williams asked that the issue of storage be added on the Chairman's agenda. He said that he wants closure brought to the **storage issue**.

Commissioner Bailey asked if the Clerk of the Courts has ever given his "official" recommendation of "where he wants to be?" The County Manager said that he had.

Commissioner Weaver said the issue of the **Montgomery building** is to be taken up at the first March meeting. He said that it would be appropriate to address storage at that meeting as well. Chairman Williams said that he wanted the **Clerk of the Courts** to be present at that meeting.

Chairman Williams reported that he and the Sheriff attended the **Weed and Seed Meeting** earlier in the day. He said that the County will administer the grant and since Michelle Crummitt is the grant writer at the current time for the County, that staff schedule her to attend the next meeting so that she can make herself familiar with the project.

Chairman Williams directed the Clerk to have the minutes reflect **Mr. Stew Lilker** was given his first warning by the chairman between 7:00 and 7:15 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

ATTEST:

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P. DeWitt Cason  
Clerk of Circuit Court

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Ronald Williams, Chairman  
Board of County Commissioners