

WORKSHOP

SEPTEMBER 9, 1996

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, met in a regular workshop on Monday, September 9, 1996, at 8:30 A.M., in the Commission Boardroom of the Walton County Courthouse.

The following Board members were present: Chairman Gordon Porter, Vice-Chairman Virginia D. Pridgen, Commissioner Charles C. Harris, Commissioner Gerald Wilkerson, and Commissioner Rosier Cuchens, Jr. The Board's Administrative Supervisor, Ronnie Bell, was also present.

Chairman Porter called the meeting to order.

Tom Powell, Executive Director of the Economic Development Council (E.D.C.), advised the Board that he was approached by Frank Anderson and Sue Rushing regarding a business they propose to establish in Walton County. They requested that the E.D.C. support their efforts to obtain an ad valorem tax exemption for the new business from the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Powell stated that the proposed business can increase county tax revenues even with an exemption to ad valorem taxes; therefore, the E.D.C. does recommend that the Board grant the exemption. The Board agreed to advertise for a public hearing to consider an ordinance exempting ad valorem taxes for a period of ten years for A.A.A. Truss Inc. as requested. The hearing will be held on October 8, 1996, at 8:40 A.M. This item will be placed on the consent agenda.

Mr. Powell presented an update on Blue Ridge, The Item Company.

Jennifer Howard, representing Rosemary Beach, appeared before the Board to request permission to place signs naming each of the coastal lakes along Scenic 30A. Ms. Howard stated that the signs have been approved by the Scenic 30A Business Association. The Board agreed to place this item on the consent agenda.

Mr. James Grasswick appeared before the Board to request assistance regarding a severe drainage problem on Lagrange Road located in District 5. Commissioner Cuchens stated that Mr. Grasswick lives in a low lying area. The Board agreed to direct Ronnie Hudson, Public Works Director, to look at the problem.

Mr. Hudson presented a proposed agreement with Fairbanks Scale Company to recalibrate and inspect the scales at the Landfill at a cost of \$400.00 per year. The Board agreed to place this item on the consent agenda.

Mr. Hudson presented the estimated cost for placing turning lanes on Walton Road, at approximately \$14,400.00, paving from Highway 83 to Juniper Lake Road, at approximately \$64,500.00, and paving a parking lot at Maude Saunders Elementary School, at approximately \$7,200.00. Commissioner Wilkerson stated that he feels the School Board will help with the cost of the two school projects. The Board agreed to proceed with advertising for bids on the three projects. This item will be placed on the consent agenda.

Greg Preble, representing Preble-Rish Engineering Firm, appeared before the Board to present a bridge replacement program for Walton County. Mr. Preble stated that out of a total of 132 bridges owned and maintained by the Board, 100 are wooden. Mr. Preble presented his recommendation regarding constructing a concrete bridge as opposed to a steel bridge from rail cars. Mr. Preble stated that concrete bridges are more expensive to build than steel bridges, but the long term maintenance is more cost effective. Lengthy discussion followed. The Board agreed that they would like to review plans for both style bridges along with a cost analysis.

Ronnie Bell, Administrative Supervisor, stated that the advertising notice is prepared for Request for Qualifications for a County Engineering Firm.

Don Brock with Preble-Rish stated that the C.D.B.G. road paving project is ready to be submitted to D.C.A., then to advertise for bids.

Commissioner Harris advised of a drainage problem on German Club Road. The District 1 road crew put burms on the right-of-way to help correct the problem.

Mike Barker, Public Safety Director, requested permission to purchase a portable 60KW Generator to be used at the special needs shelter. Mr. Barker submitted three quotes. The lowest quote is from American Generator Company for \$19,323.00 with a warranty. The Board agreed to waive the bid procedure and purchase a 1995 60KW portable generator from American Generator Company in the amount of \$19,323.00. This item will be placed on the consent agenda. The funds will be taken from the Emergency Management Trust budget.

Mr. Barker presented copies of two letters from David Miller in Bay County regarding fire protection in the Steel Field/Bunker areas. Mr. Miller stated that Bay County is still interested in providing mutual aid response for the areas, but believes it is time to consider some form of a formal mutual aid agreement. Mr. Miller stated that there are two ways to approach

this matter: either a mutual aid agreement providing for a cost per response or through a service contract with a flat fee for a specific period of time. The Board agreed to request a cost from Bay County.

Mr. Barker presented a completed Environmental Statutory Checklist for the C.D.B.G. funds for Beach Restoration. Mr. Barker stated that he has been advised by the State Department of Labor that this project must begin in order to receive funds. The deadline is October 1, 1996 and an extension has already been requested. The Board agreed to begin as soon as possible.

Mr. Barker requested to hire a part-time 911 dispatcher which he has an opening for. The Board agreed to hire Shawn Vest as recommended. This item will be placed on the consent agenda.

Malcolm Patterson, Executive Director of the South Walton Tourist Development Council, presented a recommendation from the Council to reappoint Jim Rester and Pat Potter to serve on the Tourist Development Board.

Shirl Williams, Assistant Administrator Supervisor, presented an agreement from Onyx Group for digitizing maps for Walton County. The cost for the South Walton Maps is approximately \$16,500.00. The Ecosystem Management has agreed to pay \$5,000.00 and the Board of County Commissioners will pay \$2,500.00 of this cost. The Board agreed to place this item on the consent agenda.

Mrs. Williams advised that Kent Bass, Code Enforcement Officer, has begun to red tag beach storage boxes.

The Board discussed implementing an occupational license for Walton County.

Mr. Bell presented a letter from Grace Bell, representing Catherine Harrison, the owner of Lot 16 in Holiday Shores. Ms. Harrison stated that Commissioner Cuchens agreed that by placing a culvert under the road in the middle of her lot, drainage was not being handled according to the plat provided and approved by the County. Drainage was to be handled on an easement between Lots 2 and 3 and Lots 20 and 21. Ms. Harrison has talked with Freddie Bishop and he said he would start closing off the culvert and repairing the lot back to its original state. As of this date, no work has been begun.

Mr. Bell advised of a request from Chief John Miller of the Mossy Head Volunteer Fire Department regarding the purchase of six sets of personal protective gear. The cost of each set of this gear is \$440.00, for a total cost of \$2,676.00. The Board agreed to place this item on the consent

agenda.

Mr. Bell presented a letter from Sam Patti, President of Bay Bridge Landing Homeowners Association, regarding the hazardous conditions at the intersection of U.S. 98 and Forest Drive. Commissioner Cuchens suggested to direct Mr. Patti to the Department of Transportation.

Mr. Bell presented a resolution adopted by the Walton County Chamber of Commerce concerning the Holiday Road issue.

Mr. Bell opened the one bid for the County owned clay pit located off Webster Lane. The bid was from Robert Harrison in the amount of \$1,500.00.

Mr. Bell advised the Board of the new minimum wage law to become effective October 1, 1996. The wage increases to \$4.75 per hour. Mr. Bell asked if the 3% cost of living raise is to be added to the current salary of those making between \$4.25 and \$4.75 or to the new minimum wage amount. The Board agreed to table this matter.

Mr. Bell presented a plaque from the Hadji Temple recognizing the generous contributions to the Hadji Paper Crusade supporting the Shriners Hospital for crippled and burned children.

Mr. Bell presented a 5 year contract from Business Records to provide information for the tax rolls on the Mossy Head Volunteer Fire Department and Driftwood M.S.B.U. The cost is \$11,000.00 per year. The Board agreed to place this item on the consent agenda.

Mr. Bell advised that Secretary Ben Watts, from the Department of Transportation, stated that he would help the County in enforcing weight limits on State and County roads.

Commissioner Harris advised of a drainage problem caused by a County road onto private property located on German Club Road. The District 1 road crew constructed a burm and placed sod on the backside of the burm to help correct the problem. The Board directed Mr. Hudson to look at the problem.

There being no further business, Chairman Porter adjourned the meeting.

APPROVED: _____

Gordon Porter, Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Catherine King, Clerk