The scheduled Workshop Session of the Tift County Board of Commissioners was called to order by Chairman Grady Thompson on Tuesday, January 4, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the Administrative Building. Members of the Commission present including Chairman Thompson were Vice Chairman Buck Rigdon and Commissioners Robert Setters, Sherry Miley, Melissa Chevers, Donnie Hester. Commissioner Mike Jones was out of town on business.

Public Comments:

Linda Stevens, Paula & Tommy Sullivan, addressed the Board concerning a dog issue. Ms. Stevens said they have a vicious dog in Hunter’s creek Subdivision and the dog has been picked up one time back in April when the dog attacked and killed another dog. She stated they have a signed petition from the majority of the neighborhood that they do not want this dog back in their neighborhood. Paula and Tommy Sullivan are the owners of the dog that was attacked and killed. The dog was picked up and kept for approximately 14 days. They did attend the hearing that they had but the dog was returned to the owner with no stipulations. The first time the dog got out the owner let the dog out. The second time no one knows how the dog got out. They believe the dog is going under the fence. Her children cannot be replaced and she does not feel safe letting her children outside to play because of this dog. Commissioner Hester has talked with them about the situation and he is very concerned about this issue with the dog. He wanted to know why the dog was returned. The County Manager advised that there are state laws that govern that. The dog is currently in the Animal Shelter and will remain there until such time as we can call a meeting with our Dangerous Dog Board. He will speak to and keep in contact with the Sullivans regarding this issue. The state determines the definition of a vicious dog. Sabrina and Avery Cook that live at 33 Doe Lane were present and stated that it was her grandparents that witnessed the attack of the second dog. Billy Ray Washington was present in support of the neighborhood concerning the dog issue.

Public Hearings: None

Items to be discussed for Regular Session on January 10, 2011:

A. Appointment of Vice Chairman: The County Clerk advised that it is time to rotate the Vice Chairman and that the previous minutes reads that it first goes by seniority. In the case of one or more Commissioners coming on the Board simultaneously it then starts with the Commissioner with the lowest District number. Vice Chairman Rigdon served under seniority and since three Commissioners came on Board at the same time it would rotate to the lowest District number which would be Commissioner Setters who is District 3.

B. Appointment of County Attorney: The County Manager advised that the Board has to make the appointment of the County Attorney yearly.

C. Appointment of County Clerk: The County Manager advised that the Board has to make the appointment of the County Clerk yearly.

D. Tax Refund for Henry Ross Pittman, Jr./Ara D. Pittman Family Trust: The County Manager advised that because of other obligations, he and the County Attorney has not obtained an opinion for the Attorney General on this matter yet and respectfully request that the Board table this issue for another 30 days.

E. Swimming Pool Ladder & Deck Repair – Baldwin Drive Pool: Craig Sowell, Recreation Director told the Board the ladder sockets that were installed in the original pool have corroded and began seizing up due to chemical wear and no longer work properly. When swim meets are held in Tifton the ladders must be removed and reinstalled for each meet since they encroach on swimming area for competitive swimming. We are proposing to reinstall ladder sockets and install swivel mounted ladders that can be swung out of the water or removed at swivel to reduce wear on the new sockets. County staff attempted to repair ourselves but soon found that the ladder sockets were part of a grounded system for the pool. After this discovery, we contacted Watson Pools and asked them to see if this was something they could repair. When they discovered what was involved with each socket they recommended going back to the original contractor for liability reasons and to ensure the re-grounding and installation was handled properly. The cost quote is attached with a detailed breakdown in the amount of $8,167 and can be paid out of SPLOST IV funds.

F. Request from Ambrose King for use of Recreation Facility for MLK Day: This is a yearly request from the Tifton/Tift County Branch NAACP for the Martin Luther King Celebration activities planned for January 17th. Tift County has historically waived fees associated with this event since it has community wide impact. This request includes waiving any and all fees including security requirements, rental fees, supervisory cost, concession fees, etc. in conjunction with the activities planned at Mott-Litman field and gym located at 2425 Emerson O’Bynes.
G. Interact E-911 CAD System Upgrade: Scott Bowers, 911 Director told the Board that the current CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) system needs software/hardware upgrade which hasn’t been done in four years. The system assists the dispatcher in locating addresses, giving directions to first responders, provides accessibility to crucial data in a timely fashion and allows the dispatchers to exchange information while handling other responsibilities. The current software platform version that we are operating on is 5.7 with the new software platform being version 6.2. The current software/hardware is dated; therefore we are having a lot of hiccups and we can’t afford that. Bowers stated that he has been working with Al Stephenson on the upgrades and he has helped him be able to save some money on the upgrade. Mr. Stephens is going to be able to do a lot of the upgrade in house and they have been able to cut the cost basically in half. The funding for this project can be paid from money collected through E-911 services.

H. Bridge and Culvert Repair: Jason Jordan advised the Board that Tift County has 71 major bridges and culverts that are inspected bi-annually by the Georgia DOT with the reports being sent to the Road Department. The reports show that 62 of the 71 structures have deficiencies and we are presenting 10 to you that are the most critical. Most of the damage that has occurred to these structures was the result of high volume of water we received in 2008 flood event. Staff recommends the Board allow Southern Concrete to repair the 10 structures at a price of $19,832 each. Water levels are low enough for the work to be completed quickly. Failure to do so before another large rain event could cause complete loss of structure and or loss of any Federal Emergency relief funds since we were notified of the problem areas. The repairs can be paid for from SPLOST IV.

I. Rate Increases for Tift County EMS: Craig Grace, EMS Director advised the Board that Tift County has not increased our rates for ambulance service since 2002. The billing service that we use has recommended that we increase our rates. As Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance reimbursements increase, we are beginning to see the gap between charges and reimbursements close. If we fail to increase our rates, we will begin to lose possible revenue from insurance carriers. Staff recommends approval of Tift County EMS rate increases with annual increases contingent upon and equal to any increase in the Medicare reimbursement rate. The EMS Director provided a Proposed Rate Increase for 2011 with current amount, the proposed amounts and the company averages. EMS collects about two thirds of the operating cost of the service.

J. New Excavator Lease: Jason Jordan advised the Board that the Road Department has been in a lease with Yancy Caterpillar for the last 5 years on the present excavator. The lease will expire on March 10, 2011 however the lease was for 5 years/5000 hours and the machine has approximately 5350 hours on it now. Yancy has agreed that there will be no penalty for the overage of hours and the buy back is $81,000. Staff recommends the Board enter into a new lease agreement with Yancy for a new excavator for 5 years/6000 hours with a buy back of $79,000 at the end of the lease. The payment of the new excavator will increase $217.19 from the current payment. The total new payment amount will be $1,938.40 per month

K. Interlocal Agreement and Resolution for SPLOST V: The County Manager reminded the Board of the scheduled called meeting of the Governmental Entities for tomorrow (Wednesday) night at 6 PM. This meeting will be for the final discussion of the Interlocal Agreements and the SPLOST V referendum. It will be on the January 10th Agenda for consideration of adoption. We will need to be able to walk out of the meeting tomorrow night with the ability to prepare the wording of all documents that will be on the table for adoption on January 10, 2011 which is our deadline date in order to put it on the March ballot.

**County Manager Items:**
- Reminded the Board of the Annual Chamber Banquet on January 27th @ UGA @ 7PM

**Commissioners Comments:** None

**Executive Session:** None

Chairman Thompson adjourned the meeting.

Chairman Grady Thompson, District 7
Vice Chairman Fred W. (Buck) Rigdon, District 5
Commissioner Donnie Hester, District 1
Commissioner Melissa Chevers, District 2
Commissioner Robert Setters, District 3
Commissioner Sherry Miley, District 4

_ATTEST:_
Commissioner C. Michael Jones, District 6
County Clerk