The scheduled Workshop Session of the Tift County Board of Commissioners was called to order by Chairman Grady Thompson on Tuesday, November 8, 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 Robert Setters and Commissioners Buck Rigdon, Mike Jones, Donnie Hester, Melissa Chevers, Mike Jones and Sherry Miley.

Public Comments: None

Appointments:

1. Judge Larry Mims was present to thank the Board for the renovations to the Courtroom. He said that it was a tremendous amount of by the County Staff and they are to be commended for their hard work and it was a team effort on the entire staff. Tommy Nash and his employees worked long and hard and are to be commended. He thanked the County Manager for his efforts with putting this project together at a much less cost than the architect they had consulted with. He also thanked the County Clerk for her efforts in the scheduling of the Commissioner’s Board room for a place to hold court during the renovations.

2. Al Potts with the Georgia Forestry Commission was present to give the Annual Report. He thanked the Board for what they do for the County and stated that we live in one of the best counties around. Each Commissioner was presented with a booklet with the facts and figures of Forest Protection, Wildfires, causes, permits issued, burning assists, rural fire defense, information, education and reforestation. The County Manager commended the spirit of cooperation we have with the Georgia Forestry Commission in our County.

Informational Items for Discussion Only:

Public Hearings: None

Items to be discussed for Regular Session on November 14, 2011:

A. Voice over IP: Al Stephenson advised the Board that Tift County’s phone network is made up of many different phone systems which are installed in the individual county buildings. Many of these systems are reaching or have already reached their end of life cycle making it difficult to find replacement parts and knowledgeable technicians to support them. These systems are at their capacity and cannot be upgraded for future growth. A request for proposals was sent out and we received multiple bids. The low bidder was Cooper Craft Communications in the amount of $68,880.92. We do a lot of business with Cooper Craft and they have recently located their offices here in Tifton and we are very pleased with their work and service they provide. Funds have been allotted in SPLOST IV for the replacement of the phone system. The Commissioners asked Al to produce a spread sheet with all the bids for their review.

B. LAN Equipment & Programming: Al Stephenson reported that Tift County is in the process of implementing a Voice over IP solution which will replace all existing county phone systems and will provide a more efficient, reliable and flexible phone system. This type of system runs over the existing county data network and requires specialized network switches. The number of switches have been identified that need to be replaced and will need to be programmed to insure both data and voice traffic run efficiently across the local area network. Staff recommends approval to purchase 8 Cisco switches in the amount of $25,739.20 and a bid from Invision Technologies out of Albany for configuring the network switches in the amount of $5,300 which is a one time fee for the configuring. Funds have been allotted in SPLOST IV for the purchase of the switches and the configuring.

C. Plant Tiftnet Fiber Contract: Al Stephenson advised the Board that Tift County’s Local Area Network utilized fiber optics provided by Plant Telecommunications running to each county building. These connections allow employees at each facility to access County servers running a variety of applications. Cooper Craft Communications was hired to run fiber form the Administration building to the Elections Building. This fiber is privately owned by the County and has replaced the fiber transport that was owned by Plant. Because of this change staff has negotiated a new contract between the County and Plant Telecommunications resulting in a reduction in the monthly cost of the leased fiber in the amount of $805. Staff recommends that Tift County enter into a contract with Plant Telecommunications for the fiber optic connections to eight county buildings plus 8 MC internet access for the amount of $5,390 per month which reflects the $805 savings.

D. Contract Services for Personal Property/Printing & Mailing Report Forms: Teresa Lupo, Tax Assessor appeared before and stated that the Assessor’s office has a history of eleven years of satisfaction with the printing services of Harris Computer. Tift County has in place a current contract with this company for printing and mailing assessment notices and tax bills. This request is for printing and mailing Personal Property Reporting Forms that are designed by the State and this vendor is an approved vendor by the State to
E. Tift Lift Substance Abuse Policy: The County Manager reported that the current Tift Lift Substance Abuse Policy was adopted in 2002 and we were notified that some small changes are required in order to remain in compliance with the Substance Abuse Policy. The policy that is in your packages meets the requirements as proposed by the Georgia Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration and need to be adopted by the Board in order to be in compliance to continue running the Tift Lift Program in Tift County.

F. Airport Authority Board Appointment: The County Clerk advised the Board that David Bryan’s term on the Airport Authority will expire at the end of the year. She stated that she had discussed this with Dr. Anderson who is the Chairman of the Airport Authority and it is his recommendation that Mr. Bryan be considered for reappointment to this position. She also had an email from Mr. Bryan and stated that he would like a favorable consideration of reappointment from the Board. There are no other applications on file. This is for a four (4) year term.

G. Rental Lease for Head Start Start: The County currently leases a facility on Lower Brookfield Road to coastal Plain Area Economic Opportunity Authority which houses the Head Start Program at no cost to them. Per the current lease agreement all utilities are paid by the tenant and also stipulate that the tenant will be responsible for all maintenance as well as any insurance required however to date the County insures the building and performs basic maintenance on the premises. The lease references a five year lease beginning November 1, 2011 and ends October 31, 2016. Staff recommends the Board revise the lease to our standard lease term of three years with one year firm so that the County has the option to review the lease and make changes as necessary on an annual basis. Staff also recommends the County adhere to the lease document and seek annual reimbursement for the cost of insuring the premises and require the tenant to perform maintenance that may be required. The County Attorney address this issue with the Board and recommends that the Board give him the opportunity to clean up this lease some and make it compatible and be in consist with other lease we currently hold. He would recommend the Board consider tabling this issue at the Regular Meeting to allow him time to revise the lease and put it back on the Agenda for the December meeting for the Board to consider.

County Manager Items:
- The County Manager advised the Board that staff has been contacted by the Board of Education explaining that they have an uprising Wrestling Team however they do not have adequate space to accommodate this sport and they would like to talk to us about the use of the Old Gym located on 2nd street. This building has been previously occupied by private folks, Softball Academy of the South under contract on a 50/50 split. Economic times have put a damper on this activity and it is no longer feasible to continue this arrangement. We are negotiating with the School Board for the use of this facility under maintenance in lieu of contract arrangement. They will take care of the maintenance, pay electric bills and etc.

Jason Jordan gave the following updates:

Request for Qualifications of Architect Services have been sent out with a return deadline date of November 21st. This is for the E-911 Center and the renovations at the Road Department

Wood Duck and Drake Lane have been completed. Golden Road has been cleared, utilities are being relocated and this project is moving along. This project is a part of our One GA Grant. The next project will be the TC Gordon, Palmetto and Cusseta which is our CDBG Grant Project.

The new Football Storage Facility has been completed and is working out very well. At the upcoming Turkey Bowl we are expecting around 75 teams and around 33 teams from the District Event all of which will be played on the fields at E. B. Hamilton Complex for 5 straight days. This is a big undertaking, it takes all staff and departments working together to make this event happen and be a success. Commissioner Rigdon stated this is a very good run event, very organized and it is good for the community. The teams always ask to come back here year after year and that makes a statement in itself. The County Manager commended Craig Sowell and Jason Jordan for their work and cooperation together on these projects and events at the Recreation Department. Commissioner Jones echoed the comments.

The upgrades to Mott Litman Gym have been completed

Reported that 7 of the 10 demolition of the houses in McInnis Mill Subdivision have been completed. Staff is averaging one house per day from the start of the demolition to putting it in the landfill. The average cost to put the demolition in the landfill is around $5,000 per house which is much cheaper than we expected. The brick, blocks and concrete is being hauled and stockpiled at the Road Department.

Commissioners Comments: None

Executive Session: Motion to go into Executive Session for legal matters was made by Commissioner Rigdon, seconded by Commissioner Setters. Motion carried unanimously.
Motion to close Executive Session was made by Commissioner Chevers, seconded by Commissioner Rigdon. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Thompson adjourned the meeting.

Chairman Grady Thompson, District 7

Vice Chairman Robert Setters, District 3

Commissioner Donnie Hester, District 1

Commissioner Melissa Chevers, District 2

Commissioner Sherry Miley, District 4

Commissioner F. W. (Buck) Rigdon, District 5

ATTEST:

Commissioner C. Michael Jones, District 6

County Clerk 11/8/2011