The scheduled Workshop Session of the Tift County Board of Commissioners was called to order by Chairman Grady Thompson on Tuesday, February, 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 Ridgon, Sherry Miley, Melissa Chevers, Donnie Hester and Mike Jones.

Public Comments:

Brain Marlow, President and CEO of the Tifton/Tift County Chamber of Commerce was present to give the Board and update on Economic Development. He stated there are currently 11 active economic development projects under way and one company prospect would mean 500 new jobs and a decision from that company as to whether or not they will locate here in Tift County is expected by May 1st. Most other prospects would create jobs in the 25 to 50 range and someone has contacted us to look at Building 109. He stated that there is a lot of lead activity going on right now. He asked the Board how often would they like for him to come give an update and the Board agreed that quarterly would be sufficient.

Appointments:

1. Tom Carmichael with Bowen Phillips LLC was present to give the Annual Audit Report for FY 2010. Mr. Carmichael gave an Overview of the Audit and stated the County has $12 million in cash reserve that would pay for about nine months of operating. The audit reflects the county spent $25,419,000 over the course of the year which was less than budgeted. The County at the end of the fiscal year 2010 had a surplus of $1,365,000 in the general fund. The county’s total net assets increased $696,489 for the year and the total debt decreased by $791,901 during the fiscal year. The county has $89,902,268 in net assets with $24,314,770 in unrestricted net assets that can be used to meet the government’s ongoing obligations to citizens and creditors.

Public Hearings: None

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

A. Henry Ross Pittman Tax Matter: The County Manager addressed this issue with the Board and stated that he and the County Attorney has met with Mr. Pittman. He has requested some further records from the Tax Assessor’s office and they have pursued a legal opinion from the Attorney General. Mr. Pittman has agreed to postpone this matter for further information and the recommendation is to table this matter for 60 days.

B. 2011 Relay for Life Request: Craig Sowell was present to give the request for Relay for Life. Tift County has historically allowed Relay for Life to hold their Annual Event at Friendly City Park. In the past there have been no major issues or incidents during the event and historical the Board has waived all fees associated with the request. Staff request approval of the requested and waive fees.

C. Wildfire Agreement with the Georgia Forestry Commission: Al Potts with the Georgia Forestry Commission was present to give the explanation to the Board. He stated the concept to have a Community Wide Protection Plan was signed into law in 2003. This plan is required for all Federal Mitigation grants. The plan was a joint effort by Michael Coleman, Fire Chief, Vicky Hickman, Jason Jordan, Carl Fortson’s Department and the Georgia Forestry Commission. The request is that the Board adopt this as Tift County’s Protection Plan. It is at no cost to the County and will benefit the taxpayer. It just provides a vehicle in order to apply for grants.

D. Hazard Mitigation Plan Grant: Scott Bowers advised the Board that we secured the Grant to update our Hazard Mitigation Plan and is due the upgrade by May 2012. His department sent our Request for Qualifications to update the plan and four agencies responded. After discussion and interviewing references for all four companies, staff recommends awarding the project to H & H Resources out of Albany. While all agencies can meet the guidelines, H & H is the only agency that can produce the document within the allotted timeframe. Staff feels they are the best fit for Tift County and can complete the project in 9 months.

E. Jail Surcharge Item: Leigh Jordan, Finance Director advised the Board that the Jail Construction Cash Account currently has approximately $644,000 on hand and that staff would like to increase the overall Jail construction Fund budget by $100,000. This would mean an increase in revenue of $100,000 and an equal increase in expenditures. The Sheriff’s Office has made some significant changes to its’ premises in order to improve security with the addition of surveillance and video monitoring equipment. In order to complete the project without exceeding the current budget the budget amendment needs to be made. It will have a net effect of $0 dollars on the County’s overall budget.

F. Red Bird Road Improvements – CDBG Grant: This is a CDBG/ SLPOST IV Project that has been approved and the County Road Department has built the project. The contract is just for base and paving. The
CDBG Grant will put $500,000 towards this project. Bids have been properly advertised and the bid opening will be held on February 10, 2011 at 2 o’clock PM. Bids will be presented at the Regular Meeting for the Board’s consideration of awarding to the lowest bidder.

G. Courtroom Remodeling Project: The County Manager advised that the remodeling of the Courtroom in the Administration Building is a SPLOST III project. Staff has worked with the Judges on the upgrades and have come up with the presented list in the amount of $70,000 and the work will be performed with County Staff. The funding will come from SPLOST III funds.

H. Telecom Audit – Renewal of Antivirus Contract: Al Stephenson advised the Board that Tift County’s Local Area Network is comprised of 175 workstations and 12 Servers running a wide range of applications including financial, payroll, jail records and email. Since these devices are crucial components of the operation of the county and contains sensitive data antivirus and security software should be installed and maintained to insure data integrity as well as security. In March 2008 Sophos antivirus was selected and implemented to protect all county workstations and servers from antivirus and malware. The contract was 3 years and is for renewal in March 2011. The renewal with the current one we have is the most economic option. It can be funded from SPLOST IV in the amount of $17,491 for 3 year renewal.

I. Lease Agreement for the rental of the Carousel House: The County Manager stated that South Georgia Ministries has approached the County about leasing the Carousel House to aid unwed mothers. They are a non-profit organization who will be fiscally responsible for all cost incurred including initial remodeling to make the proper serviceable. The County Attorney has drawn and approved the lease agreement that is in the Commissioner’s notebooks. Mr. Carter advised that he has spoken with each Commissioner previous and individually concerning this matter.

County Manager Items:

- Advised that we need an Executive Session for personnel, real estate and legal

Commissioners Comments:

Commissioner Chevers reminded everyone that the Sock Drive will end this Friday and if anyone is interested in making a donation please give her a call.

Commissioner Hester advised that he had been reappointed as Chairman of the Public Courts and Safety Committee through ACCG. He bragged on our Sheriff and his Department along with all public safety departments, they all are doing a good job.

Commissioner Jones asked for an update on the FEMA –McInnis Mill Subdivision. Mr. Bowers advised there is some movement with it and a meeting is to be held next week and will advise the Board members.

He reported on some upcoming Legislation that we need to watch and keep check on: HB 77 – Non Profit Organizations not having to get license or alcohol; SB 10 – Sunday Sales of Alcohol; HB92 – Early Voting – cutting it down to 21 days; HB76 – Certified Retirement Community

Executive Session: Motion to go into Executive Session for personnel, real estate and legal was made by Commissioner Chevers, seconded by Commissioner Hester. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion to close Executive Session was made by Commissioner Hester, seconded by Commissioner Chevers. Motion carried 4 votes. Commissioner Miley had left the room and Commissioner Jones did not vote.

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Rigdon, seconded by Commissioner Chevers. Motion carried with 4 votes. Commissioners Miley and Jones had left the room.

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Chairman Grady Thompson, District 7  Vice Chairman Robert Setters, District 3

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Commissioner Donnie Hester, District 1  Commissioner Melissa Chevers, District 2

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Commissioner Sherry Miley, District 4  Commissioner F. W. (Buck) Rigdon, District 5

ATTEST:

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Commissioner C. Michael Jones, District 6  County Clerk