The scheduled Workshop Session of the Tift County Board of Commissioners was called to order by Chairman Grady Thompson on Tuesday, September 4, 2012, 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, Commissioners Mike Jones, Donnie Hester, Sherry Miley, Buck Rigdon and Melissa Chevers.

Public Comments: None

Presentation of Alzheimer’s Proclamation: Chairman Thompson read and presented the Proclamation to Bonnie Sayles proclaiming the Month of September as Alzheimer Awareness Month in Tift County. Ms. Sayles spoke briefly to the Board about what they do, gave phone numbers for persons needing assistance to contact, gave the location of their office and gave a hand out of information on upcoming Alzheimer’s Events in South Georgia. She thanked the County Clerk for making the arrangements for purple flowers to be placed on the Courthouse lawn for the Month of September in recognition of Alzheimer Awareness Month and allowing the placement of a purple ribbon on the front door of the Administration Building. She invited everyone to come participate in the Alzheimer’s Walk to be held on September 29th.

Appointments:

1. Mr. Jack Abbott asked to address the Board concerning the New River Canal: He came to give an update on New River Canal and stated that on April 3, 2012 he brought a petition signed by explaining the many concerns by citizens that live along the canal. Problems caused by standing water and excessively high water in the canal and vegetation growth in the water. He never had any response. Three weeks ago he ran into Grady Thompson and basically what came out of the conversation was that the County was not going to be able to do anything about it. Three weeks later he called Mr. Carter’s office and on the third day his call was returned by Jason Jordan. He was very helpful in explaining the County’s position that being you cannot precede toward a solution without involving other agencies. Corp of Engineers has to issue permits and EPA and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources all with justification. Reasons he feels the County could issue justification are 1) loss of timber because of standing water; 2) destruction of wildlife habitat; 3) Health risk caused from stagnant water along with pollution being washed down river during flooding; 4) sanding water blocking access to adjoining land and 5) possible flooding as far back up stream into Tifton as what happened on August 8th flooding. That was a bad situation but it could have been worse.

He gave three questions that he would like to have answered by the Board:
1. What is causing the excess water and the vegetation growth in and around the canal
2. How can normal water flow be accomplished and controlled
3. What is the county’s responsibility in solving this problem

Mr. Abbott gave some more history of the New River Canal and read some portions of some minutes as far back as 1990 which was 10 years after the completion of the canal. Commissioner Miley stated that she had some dealing with this same situation a couple of years ago and worked with Jason Jordan on this same problem and they got nowhere but she knows it is a serious situation.

Ms. Eunice Mixon was in the audience and also gave some history on the issue. It is the lay of the land and we don’t have a river the water doesn’t have anywhere to go. When you have manmade water added to the existing situation and the fact of more population now, the water simply does not have any where to go. The problem lies below the Lower Brookfield Road.

The Chairman advised that we will take this under advisement and now proceed with the meeting.

Public Hearings: None

Items to be discussed for Regular Session on September 10, 2012:

A. Surplus Vehicles at the Road Department: In the absence of Jason Jordan, the County Attorney advised the Board that staff is recommending the surplus of three trucks at the Road Department which are of no use to the County because of them being in bad shape and requiring expensive cost for repairs. The three trucks are 1999 Ford 150, 1993 Ford 250 and a 1986 Chevrolet C30 Flat Bed. The recommendation is to surplus and dispose of the three trucks using the normal surplus disposal method which is to place them on GovDeal.com.

B. Recommendation to extend Mid-State Striping Contract for other Roads in Tift County: In the absence of Jason Jordan, the County Attorney advised that the company that was awarded the DOT Signage and Striping Contract last month has agreed to honor the unit prices in the contract and stripe 20.55 miles of roads in the County that are not eligible for the grant. The roads selected by County Staff are in need of striping in order for the public to be able to see at night and rainy weather. A list of the roads was attached to
C. Beer License for Doc’s Food Mart on GA Hwy 125 South: The County Clerk advised that application has been made from Irshad Mohammad for Beer License for Doc’s Food Mart located at 367 GA Hwy 125 South. The application has been properly processed with Criminal History and Fingerprints and comes with an approval from the Sheriff.

D. Appointment to the Region Four Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities Board: The County Clerk reminded the Board that some time ago this issue was brought before the Board when Mr. Roosevelt Russell’s term expired and he did not wish to continue serving for health reasons. The staff from this Agency has continued to call the office requesting that the Board appoint someone to this Four Region Board so that Tift County would have representation. Currently there are no applications on file for this position and the County Clerk asked the Board to review the packet of information provided explaining what this Board is about and to consider someone they may know that would be interested in serving on this Board. A member of the Community Service Board cannot serve on this Board. The County Clerk and Commissioner Chevers will work together to try and find someone willing to serve Tift County in this capacity.

E. Recommendation from SDCC for Proposed Rate Increase Structure for Garbage Collection: The County Attorney advised that on August 24, 2012, the SDCC held a meeting which was the first in about four years. The City of Tifton Manager, Larry Riner, presented a Proposed Increase to the current Solid Waste Collection rates. The SDCC approved the proposed increases and now forward the same Proposal to the Board of Commissioners with a recommendation to approve the increase in rates for Solid Waste Collection.

F. Contract for Inmate Medical Care: The County Attorney told the Board that we contract yearly with a third party service to provide Inmate Medical Care. Currently our contract is with Southern Health Partners and the Sheriff’s Office has decided to continue this relationship with one change. Previously the contract included a doctor as part of the overall care plan but this year the Sheriff’s Office is recommending two contracts; the first with Southern Health Partners that will include all items covered last year except those requiring oversight by a physician. The second contract with Dr. James Graham will cover all services requiring a doctor. Staff feels the County will received better service contracting for a physician separately, ultimately helping control additional cost when an inmate is transported outside of the jail for care. Approving the combined contracts will result in a $2160 in savings over last year’s single contract. At the time of this meeting the documents for both of these contracts were not complete in reducing the cost in the contract from Southern Health Partners and the Attorney advised there is a little more work to be done on the contracts. Even though the contract is at its renewal date, they have agreed to continue working under the same situation until the contracts can be revised with the changes. As a result, staff will be removing this item from the Agenda until the October Meeting or after further research staff my recommend removing it from the Agenda and allowing the Sheriff to negotiate the contract as long as it is within his approved budget.

G. Resolution for EIP Grant Application: The Board was advised that all the documents have not been provided to staff for the submission of this EIP Grant. In discussions with Darrell Wiggins he has requested that this item be removed from the Agenda until the October Meeting for action by the Board.

County Manager Comments:

- Craig Sowell advised the Board that a Work Force Agreement request from La Fiesta Del Pueblo, which is an event that we provide bleachers for every year at designated locations. It was not submitted until after the Agenda was set for this meeting and the Agreement requires both the County Manager and the Chairman’s signatures. He asked for direction on how the Board wanted to handle these types of yearly events as it relates to the Work Force Agreements. He just wanted to make the Board aware of it so that if it is decided to be brought before the Board, it would be an add on for the Regular Meeting Agenda. In the absence of the County Manager at this meeting, Craig will discuss this with him upon his return as to whether we will make it an addition to the Agenda if deemed necessary.

- The Board was reminded of the Emergency Preparedness Fair to be held Saturday, September 8th from 10 AM to 2 PM at the Tift Multi-Purpose Building

- The County Clerk advised that the Pepper Festival in Omega will be Saturday, September 8th; the Chairman has been provided an all terrain vehicle from John Deere and will ride in the parade if any other Commissioners would like to join him.

- The County Clerk advised the Board that when the final changes and corrections were made to the renewal of the Property and Liability Insurance Premium there were some discrepancies which have been corrected resulting in a credit back to the County in the amount of $13,208. This reduced the 2012-2013 Premium from the approved $320,795 amount after reimbursements from the Development Authority and the Library to $283,810

Commissioners Comments:

Commissioner Chevers thanked the County Clerk for having their Agenda Books prepared in a timely manner.
Commissioner Miley reported her concerns about the rumors about the moving of the Diagnostic Lab in three to four years to Athens. This is a very serious economic blow to this county and she would like to request that everyone find out more about it and call the Legislators know that we very much need to keep this lab here in Tift County.

Commissioner Miley also commented on the fact that she had heard a rumor that the County is discussing with the City about combining law enforcement and she wants to know if it is true. The County Attorney stated it is absolutely not true and you cannot just do that. The Attorney is of the belief you have to have a referendum for this issue.

Executive Session: None

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Chevers, seconded by Commissioner Hester. Motion carried unanimously.

__________________________  ____________________________
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 9/4/2012