

**REGULAR SESSION
TIFT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2014 (6:00 P.M.)**

The scheduled Regular Session of the Tift County Board of Commissioners was called to order by Chairman on Monday, January 13, 2014, at 6:00 P.M. in the Courtroom of the Administrative Building. Member of the Commission present including Chairman Thompson were Vice Chairman Sherry Miley and Commissioners Donnie Hester, Mike Jones, Robert Setters, Buck Rigdon and Melissa Chevers.

Chairman Thompson asked Commissioner Hester to give the invocation followed by the pledge to the flag.

Minutes: Motion approving the minutes of December 3, 2013 Workshop Session, December 3, 2013 Executive Session and December 9, 2013 Regular Session was made by Vice Chairman Miley, seconded by Commissioner Hester. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments:

Donna Pate with the City of Tifton Natural Gas Department addressed the Board with some updates of the Natural Gas and advised that this is Public Awareness Month. She also gave hand outs to each Commissioner of Public Awareness/Liaison with Emergency and Public Officials. Commissioner Chevers had a couple of questions concerning signage on some areas in her District and was advised that her concerns would be addressed by the Department.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A. TC-ZA-13-02: Request by Anna Jensen Massey to rezone 13.271 acres located at the Southeastern Quadrant of the Intersection of state route Hwy 125 North and Brighton Road from Community Commercial (CC) and Agricultural (AG) to General Business (GB) to construct a 10,000 square foot Grocery/Convenience Store and a 20,000 square foot building for Agricultural Equipment Sales and Storage D/B/A Aimtrac. The property is a portion of Tift County Tax Map 057 Parcel 038:

Todd Miller with Southern Regional Commission was present to give the staff report as he did at the Workshop Session and stated that it comes as a denial recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Committee as well as staff. Staff has reviewed the petition and determined that it is not in compliance with the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Powers and that it is not consistent with the Tift County Comprehensive Plan.

The Chairman then opened the Public Hearing. The County Attorney called the attention to postings of the Exercise for Zoning Powers and Conflict of Interest asking if anyone had a Conflict of Interest, it should be declared at this time. There were no affirmative responses to conflict.

The Chairman then asked for public comments from those in favor of the petition.

Kim Brownlee Colwell, 102 East 8th Street address the Board with comments in favor of this petition to rezone stating the two rezoning request on this parcel of land. On the 11.28 acres they plan to erect a 20,000 square foot agricultural equipment sales building for a Tractor Dealership which is a two to three million dollar investment. The corner lot will consist of approximately a 10,000 square foot country store building. Future plans of the corner are to make it appealing to the area as well as an improvement to the area. They will do a natural buffer between the project and the surrounding neighborhoods consisting of Leland Cypress trees along the sides and back of the property. There is currently a natural buffer now with existing trees and undergrowth. The owners of the tractor dealership, AimTrac Case IH have been in business for over 50 years and currently operate stores in Pinehurst, Camilla, Statesboro and Americus. They are looking to bring 18 to 22 new jobs to Tifton. They want to locate north of town because most of their customers are from Turner, Ben Hill, Irwin and Berrien Counties. Water service is available to the subject property and on-site sewage system will service the property. No public infrastructure improvements are expected or needed. The project will bring in tax dollars to Tift County. They are not expecting a problem with drainage and there will not be a large amount of

paved area. The tractors will be sitting on grass/dirt or gravel. The oil will have proper containment and covered and will be removed on a regular basis by the owner. On behalf of AimTrac and the property owner, they respectfully ask the Board's approval of the rezoning request.

Paul Massey who is the property owner spoke on behalf of the rezoning request stating many of the same points made by Ms. Brownlee.

Danny King, a local farmer in north Tifton spoke in favor of the rezoning stating that the new dealership will be very beneficial to Tift County.

Robby Rabun, President of AimTrac and Reid Jones, who is employed with AimTrac, both spoke in favor of the rezoning petition.

There were no further comments in favor of the petition. The Chairman then asked for opposition comments.

Joseph Carter addressed the Board on behalf of clients in opposition to the rezoning request. He gave each Board Member a Position Paper in Opposition to the rezoning request TC-ZA-13-02. He asked the Board to follow along as he went through the booklet beginning with Statutory Authority, giving the O.C.G.A laws concerning the zoning powers. He has reviewed the investigations that are required as well as the Tift County Comprehensive Plan and the requirements of both and found that it is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan that the Board of Commissioners have adopted for Tift County. He gave some property size comparisons and gave examples of large businesses in Tift County such as Lowes Home Improvement, Eighth Street Middle School, Harvey's Supermarket Shopping Complex located on Highway 41 and Tift Regional Medical Center. The package also contained an AG/CC to GB Analysis to show what type of businesses would or could be allowed in General Business Rezoning areas with many of them not being permitted in an AG/CC zoning classification as the property is right now. The package also contained picture illustrations. In his closing remarks he stated that the applicant has failed to satisfy the 6 factor test considered by the planning and zoning commission resulting in a vote to deny the application. The applicant cannot pass the 11 standard test as required by the Tift County Unified Development Code and after analysis; the South Georgia Regional Commission recommended the denial of this application. The purpose of zoning standards and land use development plan is to insure that the development of lands within any given community are consistent and designed to enhance and protect the quality of life for its residents. In this case, residents of the area in question built their homes, bought their homes, or chose to remain in this area because the same has been designated as a Residential Character Area and the proposed development would destroy the residential character of this area.

Jan Paulk addressed the Board in opposition to the rezoning request. She stated that her property is directly across the street from the property in this application for rezoning. She is very much opposed to a tractor dealership being placed on the property and is very much concerned about the lighting of the area once a dealership is erected at that location.

There were no further comments and the Chairman closed the Public Hearing.

Vice Chairman Miley addressed the audience stating that the Board of Commissioners do not want to see the dealership go the Turner County as opposed to Tift County. We needed some tools to guide us therefore staff spent a lot of time creating the Tift County Comprehensive Plan and they did a good job. They provided us with the tools; we adopted it and must stick to it. It has been a very tough decision.

Commissioner Jones stated that we have had many zoning issues that hit home. We understand that change does happen, we have State Route concerns for growth however we are charged with doing what is best for Tift County as a whole and as a Board we try to do this.

There were no further comments and the Chairman called for the motion. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Miley to deny TC-ZA-13-02 rezoning request from Anna Jensen Massey, seconded by Commissioner Chevers. Motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA:

B. Appointment of County Attorney: Motion was made by Commissioner Hester to reappoint Anthony Rowell of Hall, Booth, Smith, PC Firm for another year as County Attorney, seconded by Commissioner Setters. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Appointment of County Clerk: Motion was made by Commissioner Hester to reappoint Glynda Hemby as County Clerk for another year, seconded by Commissioner Jones. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Appointment to Southern Regional Commission to replace Ronald Nixon: The Chairman opened the floor for nominations. Commissioner Setters nominated Brian Marlow. There were no further nominations and the Chairman closed the nomination process. Motion was made by Commissioner Setters to appoint Brian Marlow to the Southern Georgia Regional Commission Council, seconded by Commissioner Chevers. Motion carried unanimously.

E. New EOC/911 Concept: Motion was made by Commissioner Setters to approve the EOC/911 Concept and authorize the Architect to release for cost estimate bids, seconded by Commissioner Jones. Motion carried unanimously.

F. Motorola Radio System Change Order: Motion was made by Commissioner Rigdon to purchase the dispatch furniture for the new EOC/911 Facility through a Motorola Radio System Change Order as recommended by staff in the amount of \$138,574 to be paid from SPLOST funds, seconded by Commissioner Chevers. Motion carried unanimously.

G. Set Qualifying Fees for 2014 Election: Motion was made by Commissioner Hester to set the Qualifying fees for 2014 Election within the regulations set forth by Georgia Law as provided by Staff, seconded by Vice Chairman Miley. Motion carried unanimously.

H. Forest Lakes Water System: Motion was made by Commissioner Rigdon authorizing the Chairman to endorse the Quit Claim Deed of this water system over to the City of Tifton, seconded by Vice Chairman Miley. Motion carried unanimously.

County Manager Comments:

- The County Manager briefly discussed a letter recently received from the Tift County Board of Education showing interest in entering into an Interlocal Agreement with Tift County for use and cost share of the Tift County Recreation Pool. The County Manager, County Attorney will be meeting with the School Superintendent and other official and staff involved and will keep the Board abreast of this request and bring it to the Board when it is ready for action by the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioners Comments:

Commissioner Chevers asked about the purchase of tickets for the MLK Breakfast and reminded everyone that the Sock Drive started today and will be accepting donations through February 7th. An event has been planned at Copeland Park on Saturday, February 8, 2014 to distribute the collections and invited all to attend.

Vice Chairman Miley stated that she has enjoyed serving on the Commission Board for 2 terms and announce her plans to seek re-election for a third term.

Commissioner Jones announced that he will be seeking re-election for a third term.

Commissioner Setters announced that he will be seeking re-election for a third term.

Executive Session: None

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

Commissioner Donnie Hester, District 1

Commissioner Melissa Chevers, District 2

Commissioner Robert Setters, Dist. 3

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

Commissioner C. Michael Jones, District 6

Attest: _____
Glynda Hemby, County Clerk
12/13/2014