

The Agenda Setting Meeting of the Oconee County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, February 28, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. in the Commission Meeting Chambers at the Oconee County Courthouse.

Members Present:

Chairman Melvin Davis  
Commissioner Jim Luke  
Commissioner Donald H. Norris  
Commissioner Margaret Hale  
Commissioner Chuck Horton

Staff Present:

Administrative Officer Alan Theriault  
County Attorney Daniel Haygood  
County Clerk Gina M. Lindsey

Jeff Benko, Finance Director  
Malinda Smith, H.R. Director  
B.R. White, Planning Director  
Wayne Provost, Strategic Plan Director  
Don Oliver, Interim Parks & Rec. Director  
William White, Project Coordinator  
Todd Paschal, Chief Tax Appraiser

Media Present:

Vinnie Williams, The Oconee Enterprise  
Sara Thuerk, The Oconee Enterprise  
Merritt Melancon, Athens Banner-Herald

Chairman Davis began the meeting with a Moment of Silence. Commissioner Norris led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Salary Classification Study:** Human Resources Director Malinda Smith reported the update to the Classification and Salary Study was completed by The Archer Company to ensure county employees are properly classified and compensated.

Chip King, representing The Archer Company, stated internal equity issues submitted by the county departments were reviewed and approximately twenty positions were targeted for a more detailed job analysis and evaluation. Six of these positions had changed substantially enough to warrant a change in pay grade.

To accommodate the time schedule and provide for a fairly quick turn-around, Mr. King said the market analysis conducted for Oconee County focused on the County's overall position within the competitive market. Data was compiled in the aggregate in order to streamline management's review and facilitate the decisions as to how the County could best adjust the pay plan.

In order to determine the impact of the market on the pay plan and update the pay ranges, The Archer Company analyzed the aggregate market data to understand how the County's plan paced against the market. Mr. King stated market data and pay plans from ten jurisdictions were factored into the analysis. He explained preliminary analysis revealed that a conservative approach for adjusting the pay plan fell around 7-8% and therefore, proposed an adjustment of 7.8%. Adjustments were made to the pay plan uniformly across all pay grades. Mr. King noted if a full analysis were conducted, it is expected that the increases to the plan would be greater overall.

Commissioners Luke, Hale and Horton had several questions for Mr. King regarding the data used to compile the Classification and Salary Study for Oconee County. Commissioner Horton expressed concerns about the relationship of pay grades for law enforcement personnel. Commissioner Luke said he was hoping to look at inequities in pay within the pay grades.

Ms. Smith distributed copies of information regarding median salaries within private industry and noted the similarities in pay ranges. She discussed filling vacant positions and stated the higher pay grades were more difficult to fill.

Commissioner Norris stated the Classification and Salary Study was only to be used as a guide and remarked that the exceptional fringe benefits offered by Oconee County should also be taken into consideration.

Commissioner Norris made a motion to accept the Classification and Salary Study as presented by The Archer Company. The motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner Hale made a motion to delay action on the Classification and Salary Study to the March 7, 2006 meeting to allow time to review additional information. Commissioner Horton seconded the motion. Commissioners Hale, Horton and Luke voted yes. Commissioner Norris voted no. The motion passed.

The Board requested Mr. King provide them with the market data of the agencies compared to Oconee County that was used to compile the Classification and Salary Study.

In closing the discussion, Finance Director Jeff Benko reported the County had the current revenue receipts to fund the Study as presented.

**Jail and E911/EOC Project – Guaranteed Maximum Price:** Project Manager Wayne Wilbanks presented the proposed Guaranteed Maximum Price from New South Construction for the Jail and E911/EOC Project. Mr. Wilbanks noted the proposed GMP of \$10,668,956 does not include any value engineering reductions.

On motion by Commissioner Hale and second by Commissioner Horton, the Board unanimously approved an Agreement between Oconee County and New South Construction and authorized the 1st Amendment in the amount of \$2,000,000 for site work, concrete and associated general conditions and fees as set out as Division 2 and Division 3 in the “Guaranteed Maximum Price” Book.

On motion by Commissioner Luke and second by Commissioner Norris, the Board unanimously authorized the Chairman and Finance Director to begin preparations for a Lease-Purchase Agreement with ACCG for the funds necessary to complete the Jail and E911/EOC project.

**Property Tax Relief:** Administrative Officer Alan Theriault provided an update on discussions held by the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education regarding property tax relief to elderly citizens of Oconee County.

Mr. Theriault read a letter dated February 22, 2006 from Board of Education Chairman Christine Franklin stating the Oconee County Board of Education agrees and endorses action to provide such property tax relief to elderly citizens by exempting those citizens 65 years of age or older who have an adjusted gross income of less than \$40,000, 100% from county, school and school bond taxes, and, for those citizens 65 years of age or older with an income at or above \$40,000, to freeze their county and school taxes.

On motion by Commissioner Luke and second by Commissioner Horton, the Board voted unanimously to ask our local legislative delegation to submit local legislation to provide property tax relief as follows:

1. For Senior Citizens who are aged 65 years and above on January 1, 2008 who have an approved Homestead Exemption and who demonstrate a household Federal Adjusted Gross Income of less than \$40,000, a 100% property tax exemption from all School and County ad valorem taxes affecting not more than five (5) contiguous acres that includes their principal residence, effective January 1, 2008, and
2. For Senior Citizens who are aged 65 years and above on January 1, 2008 who have an approved Homestead Exemption with a household Federal Adjusted Gross Income of \$40,000 or more, shall have the taxable value for both School and

County ad valorem taxation frozen on not more than five (5) contiguous acres that includes their principal residence, at the taxable value established January 1, 2008 until such time as legal title to said property changes hands or the Homestead Exemption is removed.

The County Attorney was directed to prepare the necessary resolution for submittal to our local legislative delegation.

**Central School House and Heritage Park:** Kim Argo, Cultural Affairs and Recreation Advisory Committee Chair, presented two recommendations from the Committee regarding the placement of the Central School House at Heritage Park.

Recommendation No. 1 - The Central School House be placed at the spot or in close proximity to the location presently proposed for the museum at Heritage Park with the understanding the proposed museum site be relocated to a reasonable site to be recommended by the committee at a later date.

Recommendation No. 2 - The Heritage Park Original Master Plan of 2004 be readdressed and that all construction documents and any other pertinent documents be brought to the Board of Commissioners for reconsideration.

Following discussion on the location of facilities and costs to redesign the master plan, the Board charged the Cultural Affairs and Recreation Advisory Committee to meet with the original design firm, Williams and Associates, and obtain more definitive information regarding costs for reformatting the Heritage Park Master Plan.

**Street Light Tax District – Brookhaven Subdivision:** On motion by Commissioner Hale and second by Commissioner Luke, the Board unanimously approved the creation of Street Light Tax District No. B-3K-L1 for Brookhaven Subdivision. ***See Documentation in Ordinances and Resolutions Book No. 16.***

**Tabling of Zoning Matters Policy:** Planning Director B.R. White presented a proposed policy for the tabling of zoning matters. The policy would set deadlines for tabling rezoning items for the Board of Commissioners and the Planning Commission and would provide a mechanism for tabling of zoning related matters for exceptional and unusual circumstances when the deadlines cannot be met. Mr. White stated the policy serves to provide notice to the public in advance of items that will be tabled and not heard at the regularly scheduled meeting and also provides a means to finance the cost associated with the tabling and re-advertising of the zoning related matter. By consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda for March 7, 2006.

**Naming of Health Department Building:** Chairman Davis reported the Oconee County Board of Health recommended that signage be placed at the Oconee County Health Department to designate the facility as the “Carrie Marsh Building” in memory of Ms. Marsh’s thirty years of service to the citizens of Oconee County and surrounding counties. The Board of Health has requested the Board of Commissioners allow a 30-day period for public comment regarding the naming of the facility. By consensus, this item will be placed on the consent agenda for March 7, 2006.

**Old Bogart Library:** Administrative Officer Alan Theriault reported the City of Bogart has requested the Oconee County Board of Commissioners transfer ownership of the old Bogart Library building (a/k/a old Mental Health Facility) to the City. The City would like to make improvements to the building and utilize its space.

On motion by Commissioner Norris and second by Commissioner Hale, the Board unanimously authorized the Chairman and the County Attorney to execute a quitclaim deed to the City of Bogart as per the City Council’s request.

**Creekside Development – Quitclaim Deed:** County Attorney Daniel Haygood explained Creekside Development Properties V, LLC transferred certain common areas within the Creekside community to Oconee County as a condition to its obtaining approval for the development. It has since been determined that this conveyance was made in error and the Board of Commissioners has been asked to release any interest in these common areas. By consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda for March 7, 2006.

**March 7, 2006 Agenda:** The agenda for the March 7, 2006 meeting was read by County Clerk Gina M. Lindsey.

There being no further business, on motion by Commissioner Horton and second by Commissioner Luke, the meeting was adjourned.

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County Clerk

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Chairman

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Date