

The Regular Meeting of the Oconee County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, March 1, 2005, at 7:00 p.m., in the Commissioners Meeting Chambers, Oconee County Courthouse.

Members Present:

Chairman Melvin Davis
Commissioner Jim Luke
Commissioner Don Norris
Commissioner Margaret Hale
Commissioner Chuck Horton

Staff Present:

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

Matt Forshee, Planning & Economic Development
Jeff Benko, Finance Director
Gary Dodd, Utility Director
Chris Thomas, Assistant Utility Director
William White, Projects Coordinator

Media Present:

Vinnie Williams, The Oconee Enterprise
Mike D'Avria, Athens Banner-Herald

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

Minutes: On motion by Commissioner Horton and second by Commissioner Norris, Minutes of the February 1 and February 22, 2005 meetings were approved as distributed.

Water Re-use Standards: On motion by Commissioner Norris and second by Commissioner Horton, the Board unanimously approved an amendment to the Water and Wastewater Standards to include standards and specifications for re-use water systems. There were no public comments on this matter.

See Documentation in Ordinances and Resolutions Book No. 15.

Rezone Request #4321 – RJC Land Development: The Board held a public hearing on Rezone Request No. 4321 by RJC Land Development, Inc., ± 34.052 acres, located on Hwy. 53, from A-1 to R-2 MPD.

Andrea Jones, representing the applicant, stated the request was being made along with a Variance request to increase the amount of commercial land over the maximum allowed, due to a reduction in residential density in the amended concept plan. She noted green space buffers were incorporated along the perimeter property as well as around the existing pond and around Regina Brown's home which will remain in the center of the site. The development will include 45 single family residences and 14 commercial/office buildings.

Adjoining property owner Mike Floyd spoke in favor of the Rezone request. He said he was also speaking for two other adjoining property owners, Ben Bridges and David Ellis, in that they approved of the amended concept plan.

Speaking against the rezone request, Bob Kraeling, Scot Harben and Karan Burgdorf expressed concerns with the environmental impact and increased traffic. John Duffett said 35 acres was not large enough for an MPD development and asked the Board to place a moratorium on new home building. Charles Baugh questioned if the applicant had filed a disclosure of interests in campaign contributions. (*None was required.*)

Judson Huff, representing Regina Brown, requested a conditional requirement of the rezone that the developer provide for mutual and reciprocal access and utility easements for Mrs. Brown's property, before any land disturbing activity was undertaken.

On motion by Commissioner Norris and second by Commissioner Hale, the Board unanimously approved Rezone Request No. 4321 by RJC Land Development, Inc., ± 34.052 acres, located on Hwy. 53, from A-1 to R-2 MPD, with conditions, for a residential master planned development (Grove Park). **See Documentation in Ordinances and Resolutions Book No. 15.**

Variance Request #4322 – RJC Land Development: The Board held a public hearing on Variance Request No. 4322 by RJC Land Development, Inc., ± 34.052 acres, located on Hwy. 53, to allow for an increase in the percentage of commercial space. On motion by Commissioner Hale and second by Commissioner Luke, the Board unanimously approved Variance Request No. 4322, with conditions. **See Documentation in Ordinances and Resolutions Book No. 15.**

Oconee River Resource Conservation and Development Council: On motion by Commissioner Hale and second by Commissioner Luke, the Board voted unanimously to appoint William E. "Bubber" Wilkes as county representative and Kate McDaniel as alternate to the Oconee River Resource Conservation and Development Council for a four-year term, expiring December 31, 2008.

Farmland Protection: On motion by Commissioner Norris and second by Commissioner Horton, the Board voted unanimously to commit \$75,000 in the FY 2006 Budget to implement a Farmland Protection Program, provided matching funds are obtained.

Property Tax – Senior Citizens: The Board held a discussion on property tax concerns of Oconee County senior citizens. Tax Commissioner Harriette Browning provided information on the 2004 tax digest and addressed the Board on several homestead exemption options. By consensus, the Board directed Administrative Officer Alan Theriault to explore these options with the Tax Commissioner and the Tax Appraiser and the effects on the tax digest.

Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority Revenue Bonds: On motion by Commissioner Hale and second by Commissioner Horton, the Board unanimously approved the adoption of the Supplemental Bond Resolution and authorized the Chairman to execute the Supplemental Contract for the Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority Refunding Revenue Bonds, Series 2005.

Consent Agenda: On motion by Commissioner Luke and second by Commissioner Norris, the Board unanimously approved the following Consent Agenda item:

- **Land Application System Permitting and Engineering:** Approved the proposal by Precision Planning/Jordan Jones & Goulding to assist with the preparation of permits and reports as required by EPD to potentially upgrade the Rocky Branch Land Application at a negotiated price of \$94,800, to be funded by the Utility Department Enterprise Fund.

Citizen Comments: Mike D'Avria announced he was leaving his reporting position with the Athens Banner-Herald and expressed his appreciation to the Board of Commissioners, staff and county citizens. Ashley Hood noted her concern with run-off issues. Jerry Price stated senior citizens need relief from school taxes.

Executive Session: On motion by Commissioner Luke and second by Commissioner Norris, the Board adjourned into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation.

On motion by Commissioner Norris and second by Commissioner Luke, the Board adjourned Executive Session.

On motion by Commissioner Hale and second by Commissioner Norris, the Board voted to go back into Regular Session.

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

County Clerk

Chairman

Date