

## **BAKER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

### **Minutes**

**January 17, 2012**

The Baker County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Scheduled Meeting with the following members present:

Chairman B. Gordon Crews  
Commissioner Mark Hartley  
Commissioner Jimmy Anderson  
Commissioner Adam Giddens  
Commissioner Michael B. Crews

Also present:

County Clerk Al Fraser  
County Attorney Terry Brown  
County Manager CJ Thompson

Chairman Gordon Crews called the meeting to order and led in the flag ceremony. Commissioner Adam Giddens led in prayer. Commissioner Jimmy Anderson moved to approve the regular agenda and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Adam Giddens. Motion carried unanimous. Commissioner Adam Giddens moved to approve the consent agenda and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Michael Crews. Motion carried unanimous.

Chief Judge Martha Lott addressed the board concerning the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Master Plan for the courthouse block. She asked when the board would be taking the next step forward and asked that they not shrink from their responsibilities. Commissioner Michael Crews asked what would be a reasonable time frame? Judge Lott responded whatever reasonable amount of time it takes to get the job done, I ask you to act. Chairman Gordon Crews expressed he has been on this board during the entire project and felt this board is working toward that goal. He further stated these are tough economic times and we are looking at other buildings in the county we might be able to renovate. Chairman Gordon Crews stated the board is looking at every avenue and trying to come up with a feasible plan. Commissioner Adam Giddens suggested could the board form a committee task force or possibly workshop the project? Commissioner Jimmy Anderson stated he has already done some investigating of sites that might be good for us, but for right now the county cannot afford to go out and build a whole new site. He stated he did want to honor the board's commitment in the MOU but we need time to work on the issues. A loan amount per Commissioner Anderson to complete the project would be somewhere in the neighborhood of \$1million and not \$500 thousand. Commissioner Mark Hartley stated he felt forming a committee would be a good idea to look at every option. Commissioner Michael Crews stated we received \$800,000 thousand dollars with this MOU and to date we have spent \$111,000 on the property already. So after spending that we are now saying we are not sure with this site and plan? We can borrow money cheaper today and pay the loan off with the rent we receive from the Post Office. Commissioner Michael Crews reminded the board of their commitment to move forward when he was Chairman and they were all in agreement at

that time. Our architect Eric Kasper gave us an estimate of around \$1.4 million to complete the project. Chairman Gordon Crews said he respects Commissioner Michael Crew's point of view and not in disagreement, but thought it is wise to look into this. Loosing the \$14,000 month rent from the Post Office is not a good plan and I think we should investigate and look at every option. Commissioner Michael Crews said some things are obvious and I do not think the Post Office is going to move. Commissioner Adam Giddens said he agrees with what you are saying and what worries him is we should investigate the options before diving in. Commissioner Michael Crews said we already left the diving board.

Jack Baker, President of Baker Properties told the board this discussion has left him bewildered. He pointed out the county is already \$2.2 million in the hole this year and is appalled at Judge Lott's request. He suggested asking the judge to give back the old jail and moving 50 county inmates in there. Per CJ Thompson county inmates could not be moved back into that facility. Commissioner Michael Crews pointed out the cost per inmate if moved back to the old jail would still run about \$72 per inmate per day and we now pay \$82 per day.

Attorney Terry Brown questioned Judge Lott is there any eminent need for the jail now and can we use it? Judge Lott stated it is important for sufficient holding cell capacity in the courthouse and the adjacent jail. Terry Brown questioned would the judge be willing to renegotiate the needs of the jail and start using it again for county trustees? Judge Lott stated she did not know she would need to look at the Memorandum of Understanding.

Sharon Padgett asked why the judicial system did not take over the Sheriff's Annex when it was vacated and suggested the county could make the Ag Center work. She also asked if the judge would be willing to renegotiate the ten year plan. She also pointed out there were plenty of vacant buildings in the county and she would rather be bruised than broken Mr. Crews.

Chairman Gordon Crews instructed the county manger to arrange a meeting for further discussions. CJ Thompson informed Judge Lott he would be working on getting a meeting established and should be able to report back at one of the two meetings in February.

John Bellovich approached the board with concerns regarding the Department of Corrections facility being constructed on US 90 west of Sanderson. He had concerns of it being privatized upon completion by the State and requested the board pass a Resolution in support of it staying a state run correctional facility. Commissioner Jimmy Anderson stated he supported the Resolution and would like to have the document by Legislative Day. Chairman Gordon Crews instructed the county manager to prepare the Resolution.

CJ Thompson presented the second amendment to the Memorandum of Agreement for the RACEC Catalyst Site. Darryl Register explained when the 2<sup>nd</sup> MOA was prepared a

scrivener's error occurred regarding the Suwannee County parcel identification numbers which has now been corrected and incorporated in this MOA. Commissioner Adam Giddens made the motion to approve the amendment to the MOA and the motion was second by Commissioner Mark Hartley. Motion carried unanimous.

CJ Thompson led in the discussion regarding possible changes in the hours of operation at the local collection sites. Chairman Gordon Crews stated he was interested in changing the hours of operation and it could be a cost savings to the county. He added even if the hours were cut 5 to 10 hours per week it would not fix the deficit but will help. Josh Woods representing Southeastern Services said he could have his employees at the collection sites log trips per person at each site and report back to the board. Commissioner Adam Giddens stated he appreciated Josh making the suggestions considering it would be taking money out of his pocket. Josh Woods stated he would get back with the board and he and CJ would meet to discuss further ideas and suggestions.

CJ Thompson updated the board regarding the SHIP program status. He reported the paperwork per an audit was not completed appropriately and he recommends not building any SHIP houses yet. Chairman Gordon Crews asked is there any time frame on the funds being expended? CJ responded we have a three year time frame to spend the money we received this year. CJ informed the board he has requested help from the State to audit the records and they said they should be able to give us 14 hours to help us. Chairman Gordon Crews commented getting things in order could take a while but get it right.

Charlie Lantz, 9138 Pine Top Road Glen St Mary came before the board stating he had problems with his dirt road. He stated Georgia power trucks are coming in and out of the road with no regards to children playing or the school bus. Commissioner Mark Hartley stated he asked Robert Fletcher to look at the road and the road department had done some repairs already close to the railroad tracks. Commissioner Michael Crews said the trucks are contractors for Clay Electric and they are trimming power lines. Chairman Gordon Crews stated the board would look into their operation and talk with them and they should fix the road. CJ stated he was looking into the situation already. Commissioner Jimmy Anderson said he would like for the company to be contacted regarding the situation. Commissioner Mark Hartley requested Robert Fletcher be notified to look into the situation.

Chairman Gordon Crews reported the county has received a refund check in the amount of \$28,400 from Florida Municipal Insurance Trust (property insurance carrier Florida League of Cities) due to the county not having a property claim last year.

Commissioner Jimmy Anderson moved to adjourn. Meeting adjourned.

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Al Fraser, Clerk to the Board

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B. Gordon Crews, Chairman