

MINUTES FOR THE SPECIAL CALLED WORK SESSION MEETING OF THE WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD MONDAY JULY 25, 2016, AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING #1, 301 W. CRAWFORD STREET

SPECIAL CALLED WORK SESSION

The Chairman called the work session to order.

The following members were present:

Mike Babb, Chairman
Harold Brooker, Vice Chairman
Lynn Laughter, Member
Barry W. Robbins, Member
Roger Crossen, Member

Others Present:

Robert Smalley, County Attorney
Department Heads
Citizens
Press

Work Session:

Chairman Babb called the work session to order.

The Board discussed the possibility of implementing the 2% energy excise tax for manufacturers. HB 386 authorized the tax due to the exemption of sales tax on energy for manufacturers. Exempted manufacturers are eligible to receive the exemption on sales tax on energy by completing a form and submitting it to their energy provider. Finance Director Alicia Vaughn noted that the amount of lost revenue is around \$1 - \$3 million a year, the tax was phased in over a four-year period beginning at 25% and is at 100% for 2016. Having the sales tax on energy exemption for manufacturers is favorable for economic development in attracting and retaining manufacturers. The Board may implement the 2% energy excise tax by ordinance and would have to be discussed with the Cities, if any of the Cities choose not to participate the County would receive that Cities proceeds. The revenue will be dispersed between the County and the Cities based on the current LOST and SPLOST negotiations.

Chief Appraiser Ashley O'Donald reported to the Board that the tax digest was increased approximately \$30 million in 2016 however with the implementation of the Title Ad Valorem Tax which pulls motor vehicles off of the tax digest resulted in a loss of \$28 million. The TAVT tax replaces the yearly ad valorem motor vehicle tax, with the new system you pay a one-time TAVT fee and twenty-dollar tag fee for as long as you on the vehicle. The TAVT fee is set by the State at which the State receives 60% and the County receives 40% of the fee.

Fire Chief Edward O'Brien presented a False Fire Alarms Ordinance allowing 3 false alarms per residence and commercial business per calendar year, and on the fourth false alarm a fee would be imposed upon the residence or commercial business. The Board will consider this Ordinance at the next regular business meeting.

Park and Recreation Director Brian Chastain presented an amended Parks and Recreation Ordinance that will replace the entire existing Chapter 11 with a new comprehensive Chapter 11 Parks and Recreation Ordinance. The Board will consider this Ordinance at the next regular business meeting.

Joe Yarbrough Board member of the Technical College System of Georgia spoke to the Commissioners about the Georgia Northwestern Technical College campus expansion that will hopefully take place this fall. Mr. Yarbrough noted that the GNTC Campus was established in 2011 to support workforce development and provide the skills of technical jobs in Whitfield County. The number of enrolled students in 2011 was 189, today there are more than 1,000 students enrolled in various classes and have outgrown the campus. The Technical College System of Georgia is working on

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expanding the campus by constructing a new building, the project will be \$25 million for the additional classrooms and laboratory spaces to offer new programs and opportunities for jobs in the area and that the industry needs. In order for the project to be funded by the State of Georgia in the upcoming Legislative session, the TCS of GA needs to show the State that the expansion has true community support and involvement in the project. The preliminary engineering and architectural work for the site has been done with money that was budgeted in 2014, during the current fiscal year \$5 million dollars have been budgeted to go towards the \$25 million expectation. The community needs to have around a \$5 million dollar investment in order for the balance to be funded by the State. Mr. Yarbrough believes that the industrial partners in the community will help with things such as flooring and funding for laboratories. That would leave around \$2 million dollars of infrastructure in site work, grading, and stormwater, that the TCS is asking the County to provide. Mr. Yarbrough would like to affirm that the County will be able to provide this work so that he may show that support when they take this project to the State. The Board thanked Mr. Yarbrough, and will let him know what they decide as soon as possible.

Parks and recreation Director Brian Chastain informed the Board that bids were sent out for bleachers and goals at Edwards park. The Board will consider this bid at the August 8, 2016 regular business meeting.

Public Works Director Dewayne Hunt presented the Board with the recent bids of an Asphalt Roller, Skid Steer with Attachments and 2 Tandem Dump Trucks. The Board will consider these purchases at the August 8, 2016 regular business meeting.

Fire Chief Edward O'Brien presented the Board with the recent bids for Personal Protective clothing and concrete replacement at Station 1. The Board will consider these purchases at the August 8, 2016 regular business meeting.

The work session was adjourned.

MIKE BABB, CHAIRMAN
WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BLANCA CARDONA, COUNTY CLERK

DATE: / /