**JEFF DAVIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**WORKSHOP**

**MARCH 02, 2020**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Chairman Ricky Crosby, Commissioners James Benjamin, Brad Crews, Hank Hobbs and Vann Wooten, Administrator Keith Carter and Clerk Sherri Lytle.

Sheriff Preston Bohannon was present to discuss a new jail. He said “It’s been discussed for 20 years ever since Jimmy Boatright was sheriff. The problem hasn’t went away, it’s just gotten worse”. Sheriff and Chief Deputy Keith Rea had an architect and contractor to come down a few months ago and they met with Chairman Ricky Crosby and Administrator Keith Carter and one of the issues then was how we are going to pay for it. Sheriff said “If we can’t afford a jail we just need to say “we can’t afford a jail” and move on. If we can’t afford it with this, what are we going to do to get by without it? If it can’t be built and we have to house out of town with the average number of our inmates it would end up costing about 1.1 million dollars a year. We feel over confident that we have figured out how to pay for this jail and not raise taxes. This is with SPLOST and some money from E911 cell phone fees the county wasn’t receiving for some time. The money for cell phones has to go toward E911. We had asked for a 120 bed jail 4 years ago and the cost was approximately $9 million. We reduced it to a 90 bed jail and the cost was going to be $6 million. Now, for a 90 bed jail the price has increased to 8.2 million. We will have approximately 2 million SPLOST dollars to put down by the time the project begins. We collect money from inmate housing, jail staffing act and add-on fees that can go toward the jail. E911 can only be used for E911.

The sheriff had Jim Ingram (Studio 8 Architects) to draw a set of plans and had Dublin Construction Co. to give us a cost estimate. After much discussion, the Board agreed and instructed Sheriff Bohannon to proceed and solicit two other architects to provide us a bid for the design and have Jim Ingram (Studio 8 Architects) to resubmit one on his letterhead without Dublin Construction Co. on it.

Joint Development Director Andrea Taylor was present to discuss proposals submitted to the Joint Development Authority for Phases 5 and 6. She gave each commissioner the proposed schedules. Each phase is proposed to be 107 megawatts with each phase being a total of an $85 million investment. They haven’t purchased land for phase 6 yet, but they do have an option to purchase for phase 6. Silicon Ranch has proposed a PILOT Payment of $159,708.00 with normal taxation after 25 years. The total for the first 25 years is $3,992,700. Andrea said “Silicon Ranch said this was 65% but J.D.A. disagreed”. The Joint Development Authority approved 50% abatement for 17 years. Andrea plans to present phase 5 to the Board at the next regular meeting. Commissioners Brad Crews suggested that we should vote now for future solar projects so we’ll treat everybody the same as long as it is a 50% abatement for 17 years and if it is a certain size. Anything smaller we would have to renegotiate. Andrea said something else you to need to consider is how much land you want taken up by solar. When they complete phases 5 & 6 you’re looking at over 5000 acres of land in solar. Commissioner Hank Hobbs pointed out that the Board needs to think about the 15% claw back because this will change our tax dollars tremendous.

Chad Hofstadter was present to discuss the J.A. Yawn Road. He gave a quick update on 2019 LMIG and which is for Post Road and Barney Road. He said “This will be out for bid in approximately 45 days. We got some more money from GDOT. Y’all got another $525,000 in LMIG. Using our discretionary T.I.A. plus the $525,000 we have a shortfall of $350.000 to fund J.A. Yawn Road. We need two districts of their 2020 LMIG to fund J.A. Yawn Road”. Commissioner James Benjamin stated he thought the 2019 was supposed to be the Hallspur Road instead of Barney Road. He would like for it start at Towns Bluff Road and go to Hwy. 221. Chad said that it could be changed. Chad commended Chairman Ricky Crosby, Commissioners James Benjamin and Vann Wooten for going to Atlanta and meeting with GDOT to get the extra money. Chairman Crosby and Commissioner Benjamin said he would give their 2020 LMIG up for the J.A. Yawn Project. Chad stated that GDOT said the J.A. Yawn Project has to begin this year.

Chairman Crosby informed the Board that we need to get a list of roads for striping.

Commissioner Hank Hobbs suggested using crush and run on the first 100 feet on dirt roads when you first turn off of a highway.

Commissioner Vann Wooten stated that speaking with GDOT that they may consider taking over a county road that leads from one major state highway to another state highway. He wants to check into it for the Post Road from Highway 221 to Highway 341 in Graham but will need Appling Co. to go along with it due to a portion of Zoar Road being in their county.

**Adjourn 3:32 p.m.**

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Sherri Lytle, Clerk Ricky Crosby, Chairman