

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MINUTE BOOK 23, PAGE _____

JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION
February 16, 2012

The Board met this date in regular session. Present were Chairman Hines Boyd, Commissioners Betsy Barfield, Stephen Fulford, Danny Monroe and John Nelson. Also present were County Coordinator Roy Schleicher, County Attorney Buck Bird and Clerk of Court Kirk Reams

ITEM 3: Consent Agenda

1. Commissioner Barfield requested pulling item a, Approval of the Agenda, in order to table item 5(c), briefing regarding unsafe building abatement procedures, due to Attorney Shirley's illness. **On motion by Commissioner Monroe, seconded by Commissioner Nelson and unanimously carried, the Consent Agenda, consisting of the approval of the agenda as amended and the minutes of the February 2nd Regular Session, was approved.**

ITEM 5(a): Proclamation Declaring February as Fair Housing Month

2. **On motion by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Fulford and unanimously carried, the Proclamation was approved.**

ITEM 5(b): Hiring Procedures

3. County Coordinator Roy Schleicher introduced a hiring procedures packet developed by Assistant County Coordinator Henry Gohlke. Mr. Schleicher explained that this would provide a more uniform and concrete process for hiring employees. Chairman Boyd stated this was a good example of bureaucracy that was not needed in Jefferson County and was too inflexible for Department Heads. Commissioner Nelson stated that simplifying the process was good but the county would grow and he felt that the document would not take a tremendous amount of time to utilize. Commissioner Fulford concurred, stating the document was not overly burdensome and created uniformity. Chairman Boyd stated he did not want management instincts to be lost in the process. County Coordinator Schleicher stated that HR Director Tyler McNeill was reviewing the documents and Department Heads would have an opportunity to do so as well. Commissioner Barfield stated that this document would give all Department Heads consistency in the hiring process. Assistant County Coordinator Henry Gohlke stated there was a need for stability with the county's hiring procedures and certain documents needed to be kept as records. Commissioner Monroe stated that the county needed to be more thorough and he would rather have more paperwork than not enough. Commissioner Fulford commented that hiring employees was not something that was done with much frequency. Mr. Gohlke stated he would be bringing the procedures back with any revisions.

ITEM 2: Public Announcements, Presentations and Awards

4. Representative Leonard Bemby stated that, since he had been in the Legislature, he had not seen a community come together the way Jefferson County did in regards to the prison closure. He stated that he felt confidence JCI would remain open and that this was something everyone helped accomplish.

ITEM 5(d): Follow-up on Workshop with EDC

5. Chairman Boyd stated that the county had financial resources in the County Coordinator's Office to make a commitment to Economic Development. Chairman Boyd stated that new small business development was an important part of Economic Development and that government could play a major role. He asked Dr. Dallas Garrett to speak on the things he accomplished in small business development throughout his career. Dr. Garrett gave a presentation on the small business development he did in Galax, Virginia. Citizen Paul Michael stated that the county lacked a clear plan and that the county needed someone to meet with existing and potential small businesses. Mr. Michael recommended allocating funding for something in this arena. Ron Cichon on behalf of the Economic Development Council asked the Board to set aside fiscally constrained funding in support of economic development. Commissioner Fulford stated the EDC was asking the Board to get serious about economic development in Jefferson County. Mr. Cichon asked if an ad-hoc committee could be formed to work on criteria for utilizing the requested funds. Commissioner Barfield stated that she agreed with putting a committee together on how to spend money committed toward economic development and also agreed that resources could be potentially placed into small business development. Property Appraiser Angela Gray stated that the Legislative Committee came up with the idea of requesting monies for economic development and asked for a verbal commitment from the Board. Chairman Boyd stated his belief that the request was looking in the wrong place for finding revenues and that using fiscally constrained dollars could result in lower services or higher taxes in the future. He reiterated that there was money to be placed towards the economic development efforts in the County Coordinator's budget. Citizen Dick Bailar asked for the Board to make a commitment and to "put their money where their mouth was." Chairman Boyd responded that the Board would be willing to make the commitment, but he was not in favor of making the wrong commitment. Citizen Jack Carswell stated that economic development efforts should be modeled after similar communities that have been successful. Citizen Dan Schall stated that the county needed a business plan for what it wanted to accomplish in economic development. Citizen Mark Kessler agreed and stated that the county needed to look at the whole picture of economic development. Chairman Boyd recommended two committees: one to analyze the County Coordinator's job description and the other to look at criteria for spending money on economic development. Commissioner Barfield stated that not everyone on the Board wanted the Coordinator's position turned into Economic Development. She stated a desire to commit some resources to economic development but keep it out of county government. Chairman Boyd responded that the EDC did not play a coordinating role in economic development and that County Coordinators in other counties performed a coordinating function for economic development. Commissioner Fulford stated there was a need to decouple the discussion between the Coordinator's Office and economic development. Commissioner Fulford stated there was a need for developing a unified plan with all entities involved. Economic Development Director Julie Conley stated she had been begging for a plan for years and requested permission to put together a committee to develop a proposal to be submitted to the Board. Chairman Boyd stated that resources were not in place the plan would not be successful and asked that everyone keep an open mind about considering the resources in the County Coordinator's Office being utilized. Attorney Bird gave examples of previous Board's making investments towards economic development such as buying land where the prison was built and developing water and sewer along US-19 as well as the Industrial Park. He encouraged the Board to have vision and think bigger for the future.

ITEM 6(a): County Coordinator's Report / Department Head Reports

6. County Coordinator Roy Schleicher presented Department Head reports to the Board.

ITEM 6(b): County Coordinator's Report / Scheduling Workshops

7. The workshop for the Mine was set for March 12th at 10 am. The workshop for the County Coordinator's Position and Naming Opportunities for County Facilities was set for March 19th at 9 am.

ITEM 7: Citizens' Forum

8. Citizen Bud Wheeler urged the Board to be more available to meet.
9. Citizen C.P. Miller urged the Board to have more afternoon workshops in order to allow for public input.

ITEM 8: Commissioner Discussion Items

10. Clerk of Court Kirk Reams stated he would be bringing back re-financing options for the jail loan in the near future.
11. Commissioner Barfield stated that the work at the horse arena was going well and that the Big Bend Horseman's Association's first show would be March 17th. She asked the Board to consider moving Horse Arena from the Extension Department to the Parks & Recreation Department at the next meeting.

ITEM 9: Adjournment

12. The warrant register was reviewed and bills ordered paid.
13. **On motion by Commissioner Monroe, seconded by Commissioner Barfield and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.**

Chairman

Attest: _____
Clerk