

Carter County Commission

Minutes of:

Buildings & Grounds Committee Zoom Meeting

March 2, 2021 6:00 PM

Members:

Isaiah Grindstaff - present

Robert Acuff - present

Mike Hill - present

Brad Johnson - present

Ginger Holdren - present

Randall Jenkins - present

Daniel McInturff - present

Thomas Proffitt - present

I. Call to Order

The Building & Grounds Committee was called to order by Chairman Isaiah Grindstaff at 9:05 pm.

II. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Mike Hill, second by Robert Acuff to approve the agenda.

Roll Call:

Randall Jenkins – yes

Mike Hill – yes

Robert Acuff – yes

Brad Johnson – abstain

Isaiah Grindstaff – yes

Ginger Holdren – yes

Daniel McInturff – yes

Thomas Proffitt – yes

All in favor, the motion was unanimously approved.

III. Approval of February meeting minutes

A motion was made by Mike Hill, second by Randall Jenkins to approve the minutes from the last meeting.

Roll Call:

Randall Jenkins – yes

Mike Hill – yes

Robert Acuff – yes

Brad Johnson – yes

Isaiah Grindstaff – yes

Ginger Holdren – yes

Daniel McInturff – yes

Thomas Proffitt – yes



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All in favor, the motion was unanimously approved.

IV. Public Comments

None

V. New Business

a. Project Manager – Mayor

Mayor Woodby stated that she had been contacted by the Parks & Rec Board about the Gap Creek Park project and their desire to get it finished. There are so many large projects she believes a project manager would benefit the county. She would like to see the current maintenance man Ron placed into the Project Manager position. She stated that he has already informally assumed the role and handles all situations that come up. She believes that he is more than qualified. She stated that she would like to see a part time employee hired that could take some of the smaller tasks. With Roy already working well with Ron a part time employee could be trained to do the light maintenance. She stated that Ron and Roy also mow at the Workforce Development Complex and that takes them away from other projects about 2 days a week.

Discussion was started about hiring a company to do the mowing and landscaping. Ginger

Holdren stated that she would like to remind the committee that several positions have been created in the last year and they need to be mindful about being able to maintain these positions.

Chairman Grindstaff asked about what had been done at the Gap Creek Park project and what needed to be done. Mike Hill contacted Chris Schuettler and asked him what the progress was. He replied that the bridge has been built and is ready to be placed, the footers for the bridge would be poured this week and it could be placed next week, if the weather holds. The fencing around the dog walk would be ready to go in next week as well and the trail the week after that.

Chairman Grindstaff agreed with Ms. Holdren that a lot had been added in the last year but may need to add a part time position to help with maintenance. Mr. McInturff added that adding a part time employee to do the mowing might be cheaper in the long run than hiring it out to a landscaping company. Mike Hill asked if the Highway Department could mow. Commissioner Mark Blevins stated that he didn't believe the highway department had any mowers. Chairman Grindstaff asked Mayor Woodby to look into estimates to have the mowing done. He agreed with Mr. McInturff that a part time employee might be cheaper in the long run.

No motions were made on behalf of the project manager. If the need arises, they will take it up later.

b. Commissioner Austin Jaynes – Potential Building Project

Commissioner Austin Jaynes came before the committee to discuss possible solutions for the planning and probation buildings. He stated that a discussion came up in the Financial Management meeting about possible new locations for the planning office. One suggestion was to move the dumpsters from the back parking lot and build an addition attached to the courthouse with the possibility of adding a second story to the one level section of the building for the archives. The probation and planning buildings could be torn down and paved for additional parking. This also solves the problem of security for the planning and archives departments. The courthouse will be a single point of entry with security at the entrance and if the other departments are outside of the main courthouse, they will be unsecured. Brad Johnson stated that this was something else to add to the list of projects. Travis Hill asked why it something couldn't be built in the big parking lot between the courthouse and the funeral home. Mr. Jaynes stated that capital funds could be used if the structure is attached to the courthouse. Chairman Grindstaff stated that space is premium in the current situation and it is a discussion that needs to be had. He also stated that the drawings are close to complete when they are finished, we

need to discuss this as well as the Handicap bathrooms on the first floor. Mr. Johnson asked if the drawings were going to be of the building or the layout of the property as well. Mayor Woodby stated that it was just the buildings. Mr. Johnson stated that as a potential project, it needed to be added to the list and possibly combined with other projects.

A motion was made by Ginger Holdren, second by Daniel McInturff to hire Shaw & Shanks to look at the options for building on to the courthouse and do a cost analysis of each option.

Roll Call:

Randall Jenkins – yes

Mike Hill – yes

Robert Acuff – yes

Brad Johnson – yes

Thomas Proffitt – yes

Ginger Holdren – yes

Daniel McInturff – yes

Isaiah Grindstaff – yes

All in favor. Motion unanimously passed.

Chairman Grindstaff asked Mayor Woodby to reach out to Shaw & Shanks for a cost to get this started. She stated that she would contact them and have Ron come to next month's meeting.

c. Recycling Center Add On – Questions

Chairman Grindstaff turned the meeting over to Vice Chair Holdren.

Mr. Grindstaff stated that he had been approached about concerns about the landfill project going on since June or July of last year. Cardboard is being held for higher prices and they are trying to get a building constructed to house the overflow. Plans have gone from a fully constructed building to just a shell of a building for the time being. The bids have gone out, there have been issues but they have a good bid this time. Director Lyons has put in a purchase order, but it has been denied. Financial Director Burke explained that Commissioner Johnson came to him stating that the building projects are supposed to go through Buildings & Grounds first. Mr. Grindstaff stated that the money for this was approved more than 6 month ago. Director Burke is asking for reaffirmation that this has been approved by Buildings & Grounds. Mr. Johnson stated that during the Financial Management meeting Buildings & Grounds was not mentioned in the discussion. He stated that when you have a problem getting bids, specs should be looked at again. Ms. Holdren stated that discussions should be had but the landfill should be able to do what they need to do. Mr. Grindstaff stated that the bids are in and Director Burke just wants confirmation from Buildings & Grounds. Vice Chair Holdren asked if he needed a statement or informal discussion. Mr. Grindstaff stated discussion and motion.

A motion was made by Isaiah Grindstaff, second by Randall Jenkins to allow Director Burke to release the funds that will allow Director Lyons to proceed with the construction of the building.

Roll Call:

Randall Jenkins - yes

Mike Hill - yes

Robert Acuff - yes

Brad Johnson - yes

Thomas Proffitt - yes

Ginger Holdren - yes

Daniel McInturff - yes

Isaiah Grindstaff - yes

All in favor, the motion unanimously passed.

d. IT Request – Anthony Lawrence – network buildings together for Security and Phones

Isaiah Grindstaff brought before the committee the need to upgrade the security and phone system between the two courthouses. Right now, Charter has a private system between the two courthouses. There needs to be a formalized firewall linking the two buildings for better communication, security and monitoring. They have a quote from ITdecisions for \$1057.36 for the upgrade.

A motion was made by Isaiah Grindstaff, second by Thomas Proffitt to approve up to \$1057.36 from the courthouse security funds for the phone system upgrade.

Roll Call:

Randall Jenkins – yes

Mike Hill – yes

Robert Acuff – yes

Brad Johnson – yes

Thomas Proffitt – yes

Ginger Holdren – yes

Daniel McInturff – yes

Isaiah Grindstaff – yes

All in favor, motion unanimously passed.

Vice Chair Holdren turned the meeting back over to Chair Grindstaff.

VI. Old Business

a. Courthouse security update

Work should be finished in the next 2 weeks.

b. Election Commission roof

Two bids have come in and we are waiting for a third and it looks like it will come in under the \$25,000 mark that has already been approved.

c. Clerk & Masters door

Project is out for bids; four contractors are currently looking at the project. Pre-Bids are on March 9 and receive bids on March 16. Approvals have been obtained from HZC, State Fire Marshal and local Building Official.

d. Courthouse Floor Plans

They are currently being put together. The second and third floor are being looked at as well. She will be meeting with them about the ADA restrooms on the first floor.

e. Workforce Development Complex:

The surveyor has been released to proceed and should be complete within the next three weeks.

Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) will be done to make sure there are no hazardous materials on the site. Phase 2 will be to test the building to see if there are contaminants such as asbestos, lead based paint or other potentially hazardous materials.

f. Probation Office

The building has been vacated and everything is out of the building. Ron has assessed the building and believes it will take a lot of money to bring it up to date. He said the building was solid but needed a lot of work.

g. Courthouse Parking

The courthouse parking lots will be restriped this week or next depending on the weather.

h. Sluder Property update

Waiting for the weather to clear and dry up to continue work on the property.

i. ADA transition plan

No update

j. County Archive Dept location – former Tom Cowan office building

No update

k. Northeast state contract – Lease Proposal

A meeting was held with officials from NESCC (Northeast State Community College) Mayor Woodby, Chairman Hill and Attorney Hardin where they proposed a new lease . Ms. Holdren asked if they made any commitments for potential growth for the future? Mayor Woodby stated that they do have plans to offer new classes. Ms. Holdren asked if they asked for specifics about things they would like to see done to the building. Mayor Woodby answered that they didn't have anything specific, but they stated that there were a lot of thing that needed to be done to update the building. The college would like to propose a 5-year lease term at \$10,000 per year. Mayor Woodby stated that President Bethany Bullock expressed their desire to stay in Carter County and stated that they had plans for new classes and the desire to work with TCAT (Tennessee College of Applied Technology). Chairman Grindstaff asked what the sq. footage is that they have. Abby Frye stated 27,758 sq ft. Mr. Johnson asked if they were made aware that the county is in discussion with the Carter County School System and TCAT? Chairman Grindstaff stated that we need to know what they need from us to stay in Carter County. What can we do now to show good faith effort? Mayor Woodby stated that President Bullock mentioned paint. Travis Hill mentioned a long-term low lease and then do improvements such as HVAC, windows and new roof (mentioned in the meeting) or reinvesting the rent money to do upgrades that are needed. Dr. Acuff stated that the Board of Regents will not allow them to do upgrades to the building if they don't own the building. Ms. Holdren asked how much they pay for Johnson City and Kingsport properties. Travis Hill stated that they pay \$1000 in Johnson City and \$5000 in Kingsport. Chairman Grindstaff asked if the roof was replaced under Carter County Tomorrow? Abby Frye stated that the roof on building #1 (Workforce Development) was replaced in 2016, building #2 (NESCC) was replaced in 2014. Both with a 15-year warranty. Chairman Grindstaff spoke out of concern for the roof and if it was leaking, they should have told us. He asked Mayor Woodby if she stated what her concern was with the roof.

10-minute break (8:10 – 8:20)

Continuing discussion:

Chairman Grindstaff asked if the committee wanted to act on the lease term? Mayor Woodby stated that she could ask the representatives from NESCC to come to next month's meeting to discuss. Ms.

Holdren asked what they were paying per year now and do they pay insurance? Abby Frye stated that they pay \$177,066 per year and the county pays insurance on the building and they carry insurance on the contents, they also pay a portion of the utilities based on sq. footage. Travis Hill stated that he believes they are not using all the building but take the entire building. Mayor Woodby stated that that was correct. Ms. Holdren asked if that is true then would they be open to talk with Carter County Schools and TCAT? Chairman Grindstaff relayed that Dr. McAbee has concerns about using the same building that the college uses. If they are blocking the use of part of the building but not paying for it then this is a problem. Mr. Johnson stated that the committee needs to sit down with them and Shaw & Shanks. Mayor Woodby told the committee that she would email them the contract. Ms. Holdren stated that she believed they were paying too much for the age and condition of the building. The county has placed the price of \$5 per sq. foot on the rest of the property. This is less than the \$6.38 per sq. foot they are paying now. She would like to see a price of \$2.50 per sq. foot. This would be \$69,395 per year and they pay utilities. Mr. Johnson reminded the committee that we still need to know what they need from the county. Travis Hill asked if we have an estimate to replace the windows and the HVAC? Chairman Grindstaff stated that Shaw & Shanks is going to get estimate on what is needed. But it is not unreasonable to go back with a counter, suggested by Ms. Holdren. The county could do things like paint and change out lights to improve the look of the building and show them that we are interested in getting things done but we are waiting on the drawings to know what need to be done. Chairman Grindstaff stated that he would also like to know if there is an issue with the roof. Mr. Johnson stated that if we are going to have to borrow money to do some large renovations to the building it needs to happen now while interest rates are at their lowest. Travis Hill suggested a 5-year outlook. Do we need to borrow or reinvest money taken in. Ms. Holdren asked Attorney Hardin if some things needed to go into the lease to protect the county. Chairman Grindstaff asked if the committee would like to send them a counteroffer and invite them to come to the next committee meeting. Attorney Hardin stated that the committee can suggest, but an acceptable offer would have to come from the full commission. NESCC can come to the meeting and the committee can negotiate but the full commission will have to approve. Mr. Jenkins stated that he believed a good starting point was the \$2.50 per sq foot. Chairman Grindstaff suggested that the committee send them some numbers and conditions and let them come back with what they need. Travis Hill suggested that the offer start at \$3.00 per sq foot and give the Mayor some room to negotiate. Mike Hill stated that he would like to see a list of the new offerings they are looking at. Mayor Woodby stated that she would reach out and see if they will negotiate.

l. Chamber of Commerce building

No update

m. Workforce Development Complex as a CTE site for Carter County Schools

The surveyor has been released to proceed and should be complete within the next three weeks. As for the Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), once we have the survey, we will solicit prices for consideration for the ESA. This is a look into the site's history and activities on the site to determine any likelihood of the presence of hazardous materials. As soon as the Phase 1 ESA is finished, and the floor plans are verified the process will start to have the buildings tested for hazardous materials.

n. Shaw and Shanks work on Clerk & Masters new door

The project is out for bids, four contractors are currently looking at the project. There is a Pre-Bid on March 9 and receive bids on March 16. Approvals have been obtained from HZC, State Fire Marshal and local Building Official.

VII. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Jaynes informed the committee that the Sheriff told him about an issue with the jail exterior needing to be pressure washed. It looks like mold and discoloration at the top of the building. Ms. Holdren asked if this were something that would need to be moved on at this meeting. Chairman Grindstaff stated that it did not need anything now but will have to be looked at to see what needs to be done. He will ask the Sheriff for estimates and bring it back to the committee.

Daniel McInturff asked for an update on the Chamber of Commerce Building and have we gotten an amount for the building. Mayor Woodby stated that she would be meeting with Daniel Estes on Thursday and would need to get someone in to look at the structure. No there was no amount yet.

VIII. **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Ginger Holdren, second by Randall Jenkins.

Roll Call:

Randall Jenkins – yes

Mike Hill – yes

Robert Acuff – yes

Brad Johnson – yes

Thomas Proffitt – yes

Ginger Holdren – yes

Daniel McInturff – yes

Isaiah Grindstaff – yes

All in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Gwen Crowe