

**JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL
MARY GORDON ELLIS EXECUTIVE BUILDING
CONFERENCE ROOM
FIRE COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 6, 2007
10:00 A.M.**

MINUTES

PRESENT:

CHAIRMAN FRED TUTEN, COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR, DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR TOM WATSON, CLERK TO COUNCIL JUDY FRANK AND LEVY FIRE CHIEF DOUG GRAHAM.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT THE ELECTRONIC AND PRINT MEDIA WERE NOTIFIED

DURING PERIODS OF DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATIONS MINUTES ARE TYPICALLY CONDENSED AND PARAPHRASED.

CALL TO ORDER:

CHAIRMAN TUTEN CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 10:00 A.M.

INVOCATION:

COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR GAVE THE INVOCATION.

DISCUSSION:

MONTHLY REPORT:

MR. WATSON GAVE THE MONTHLY REPORT WHICH IS ATTACHED AND SAID THAT HE WAS IN THE PROCESS OF FILLING THREE OPENINGS AND ALSO THE SIX NEW POSITIONS. MR. WATSON SAID THE CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN INTERVIEWED. MR. WATSON SAID HE WAS WORKING ON HIRING SIX PEOPLE TO WORK THE AMBULANCE IN CHERRY POINT AND TWO ADDITIONAL PEOPLE. CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL BE MOVED FROM CHERRY POINT TO ROBERTVILLE. MR. WATSON SAID THREE WILL BE MOVED AND ROBERTVILLE WILL BE COVERED FULL TIME. MR. WATSON SAID ROBERTVILLE HAS AN ENGINE, SO THE EQUIPMENT WOULD BE MOVED TO OTHER AREAS ONCE CHERRY POINT IS SETTLED. DOUG GRAHAM ASKED IF THAT AREA WAS GOING TO BE ANNEXED INTO HARDEEVILLE AND MR. WATSON SAID THAT IT WILL BE ANNEXED. MR. GRAHAM ASKED IF IT WAS GOING TO BE ANNEXED THEN WHY WILL THERE STILL BE THREE PEOPLE STAYING THERE. MR. WATSON SAID THEY WILL BE STAYING THERE UNTIL THE ANNEXATION IS COMPLETE, AS THE COUNTY WILL BE RESPONSIBLE. MR WATSON SAID THAT THEY CANNOT ANNEX

COUNTY PROPERTY AND THEY WILL BE GIVING UP THAT TAX DISTRICT BECAUSE HARDEEVILLE WILL BE ANNEXING IT. MR. GRAHAM ASKED WHY THE COUNTY DOES NOT LEASE HARDEEVILLE THE FIRE STATION AS IT IS THE CONSENSUS OF THE PEOPLE HE HAS TALKED TO THAT HARDEEVILLE IS BEING GIVEN THE STATION SINCE IT COST \$240,000.00 TO BUILD AND THE 8 ACRES ARE WORTH OVER A MILLION DOLLARS. MR. GRAHAM SAID THAT HIS STATION IS ON ONE ACRE AND THAT IS ALL THAT IS NEEDED. MR. GRAHAM SAID THEY DO NOT NEED TWO ACRES TO OPERATE THE FIRE STATION. MR. GRAHAM ASKED MR. WATSON IF ANY OTHER JASPER COUNTY FIRE STATION WAS LOCATED ON 2 ACRES AND MR. WATSON SAID THERE WAS NOT. MR. WATSON SAID THAT THE \$250,000.00 THE COUNTY RECEIVES WILL GO TO OPERATE THE AMBULANCE IN CHERRY POINT. MR. GRAHAM ASKED IF HARDEEVILLE WILL GET THE MONEY FOR THE TAX DISTRICT WHEN IT IS ANNEXED AND MR. WATSON SAID THE COUNTY WILL GET THE MONEY UNTIL IT IS ANNEXED. MR. GRAHAM ASKED WHY THE COUNTY WOULD PAY FOR AMBULANCE SERVICE FOR THE CITY OF HARDEEVILLE AND CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID THE COUNTY MUST PROVIDE AMBULANCE SERVICE FOR THE ENTIRE COUNTY. MR. WATSON SAID AN AMBULANCE IS GOING THERE TO COVER THE GROWTH. MR. GRAHAM SAID THE CITIZENS PAY A LOT OF TAXES AND LEVY DOES NOT GET WHAT IT SHOULD GET AND HE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT THE COUNTY OWES HARDEEVILLE THAT THEY GET EVERYTHING. MR. WATSON SAID IT IS CHEAPER TO CONTRACT TO PROVIDE THE SERVICES IN THAT AREA MR. WATSON SAID LEASING THE STATION WAS DISCUSSED, BUT THEY FELT IT WAS IN THE BEST INTEREST TO SELL HARDEVILLE THE STATION SINCE THROUGH ANNEXATION THEY WILL SURROUND IT. MR. GRAHAM SAID THAT HE DIDN'T THINK TWO PEOPLE SHOULD DETERMINE THE SALE PRICE AND HE THINKS AN AD HOC COMMITTEE SHOULD HAVE BEEN FORMED TO SEE WHAT THE CITIZENS WANTED. MR. GRAHAM SAID HE FELT AN APPRAISAL SHOULD HAVE BEEN DONE. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR SAID THIS COMMITTEE DID NOT MAKE ANY DECISION, THEY ONLY MADE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL. MR. GRAHAM ASKED WHY ALL THE STATIONS EXCEPT LEVY IS MANNED 24 HRS. MR. WATSON SAID THAT WAS BECAUSE LEVY HAS A LOT OF VOLUNTEERS. MR. GRAHAM SAID THAT BECAUSE HE HAS VOLUNTEERS AND THE OTHER STATIONS HAVE DRIVEN AWAY THEIR VOLUNTEERS IS NOT FAIR AND HE FELT THE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO BE OFFERED AN INCENTIVE PLAN AND HE FELT A RETIREMENT PLAN WAS NEEDED FOR THE VOLUNTEERS. MR. WATSON SAID THAT HE WAS WORKING ON THE 1% MONEY AND TRYING TO GET THAT RESOLVED. MR. GRAHAM SAID THAT VICE CHAIRMAN JONES TOLD HIM THAT IT CANNOT BE DONE. MR. GRAHAM SAID IT WOULD GIVE THE VOLUNTEERS A BETTER INCENTIVE TO COME BACK IF A RETIREMENT PLAN WAS OFFERED. MR. WATSON SAID THERE WERE CURRENTLY TWO PEOPLE ASSIGNED TO LEVY 12 HOURS PER DAY AND THAT A STATION IN THE NORTH WAS NOT MANNED TO KEEP PEOPLE IN LEVY. MR.

GRAHAM SAID HE DID NOT BUY THAT. MR. WATSON SAID THAT HE FINISHED HIS PART OF THE LEVY CONTRACT AND IT SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY SEPT. 11, 2007 AND READY TO SIGN IF AGREED UPON. CHAIRMAN TUTEN ASKED IF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY WOULD BE PRESENT AND MR. GRAHAM ASKED TO BE ALLOWED TO REVIEW THE CONTRACT PRIOR TO THE MEETING. MR. WATSON SAID THAT THE ATTORNEY SAID THE CONTRACT WAS COMPLETE. MR. GRAHAM ASKED ABOUT THE ORDINANCE FOR LEVY. MR. WATSON SAID THAT THE CONTRACT IS NOT LINKED TO THE ORDINANCE AND THE ORDINANCE WILL HAVE THREE READINGS AND A PUBLIC HEARING AND THAT THE COUNTY CAN DO ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER. MR. WATSON SAID THAT HE WOULD LIKE THE COUNCIL MEMBERS TO REVIEW IT PRIOR TO THE 11TH. CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID HE FELT EVERYTHING WOULD BE CLEARED, BUT HE WAS ADVISED BY MR. FULGHUM THAT IT WOULD BE READY, BUT IT WOULD NOT BE SIGNED. CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID HE WAS READY TO PUT THIS TO REST AND THAT WHATEVER NEEDED TO BE DONE HAS TO BE DONE. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR AGREED.

CHERRY POINT FIRE STATION:

MR. WATSON SAID THAT THE PLAT WAS GOING BACK TO HARDEEVILLE FOR APPROVAL. CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID THE COUNTY WAS NOT GOING TO SELL THE 8.8 ACRES. MR. WATSON SAID THAT HE AND MR. FULGHUM PARED DOWN THE AMOUNT OF LAND.

DETENTION CENTER:

MR. WATSON SAID THAT MR. BENJAMIN WAS APPOINTED AS THE NEW JAIL DIRECTOR AND THEY WERE NOW LOOKING FOR A DEPUTY DIRECTOR. MR. WATSON ALSO DISCUSSED THE NEED TO EXPAND THE DETENTION CENTER AS THE COUNT HAS BEEN OVER 100. MR. WATSON SAID THAT RONNIE MALPHRUS CONTACTED THE DETENTION CENTER ARCHITECT TO GET AN ESTIMATE OF WHAT IT WOULD COST TO EXPAND. MR. WATSON SAID THAT MR. BENJAMIN HAS BEEN LOOKING INTO MODULAR UNITS THAT ARE COMPLETE AND THEY WOULD HOLD 10-50 PEOPLE AND COST FROM \$80,000.00 TO \$100,000.00. MR. WATSON SAID THAT THE MODULARS MEET ALL THE SECURITY REQUIREMENTS. MR. WATSON SAID THAT PRIVATIZATION OR A REGIONAL DETENTION CENTER DID NOT GO WELL. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR ASKED HOW MANY PRISONERS DID THE CURRENT DETENTION CENTER ACCOMMODATE AND MR. WATSON SAID 100 PRISONERS AND FOR EVERY 10 NON-VIOLENT PRISONERS ONE OR TWO GUARDS WERE NEEDED. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR ASKED WHAT WAS THE CURRENT DETENTION CENTER'S RATED CAPACITY AND MR. WATSON RESPONDED 108 TO 140 PRISONERS. MR. WATSON SAID THAT THEY HAVE KNOWN FOR ABOUT ONE YEAR THAT MORE SPACE IS NEEDED AND AS THE AREA GROWS SO WILL THE HEAD COUNT OF PRISONERS. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR

ASKED ABOUT THE MUNICIPALITIES AND THAT THEY PAY NOTHING TO HOUSE THEIR PRISONERS. MR. WATSON SAID THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT IT NOW, BUT IT IS A VERY SENSITIVE SUBJECT, HOWEVER, ANY AGENCIES ARE PAYING A PER DIEM. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR SAID THAT THE ADMINISTRATION NEEDED TO WORK ON GETTING THE MUNICIPALITIES TO PAY. CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID HE AGREED WITH COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR. MR. WATSON SAID HE HAD A BRIEF DISCUSSION CONCERNING THIS. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR SAID BOTH THE MUNICIPALITIES ARE TAKING PRISONERS THERE FREE OF CHARGE AND IT NEEDS TO BE DISCUSSED, CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID HE FELT THEY NEEDED TO PAY. MR. WATSON SAID THEY WERE ALSO INVESTIGATING OTHER COST SAVING MEASURES.

E-911:

MR. WATSON SAID THAT THEY WERE STARTING TO GET READY FOR THE NEW CENSUS AND THAT THEY HAVE TO PUT A FACE WITH EACH ADDRESS IN THE COUNTY AS A PRECURSOR TO THE CENSUS. MR. WATSON SAID THAT ANOTHER PERSON WILL NEED TO BE BROUGHT IN AND THAT THEY WERE LOOKING AT A MOUNTAIN OF DATA AND VERIFYING THAT THE ADDRESSES WERE GOOD ADDRESSES AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DECIDES HOW TO DO THE CENSUS. MR. WATSON SAID THAT THE COUNTY WOULD HAVE 180 DAYS TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS AND THAT HE WAS TRYING TO COORDINATE WITH THE MUNICIPALITIES SO THAT THE CLOCK STARTS AT THE SAME TIME THROUGH OUT THE COUNTY. MR. WATSON SAID THAT EVERY ADDRESS WAS WORTH \$80.00 TO THE COUNTY. MR. WATSON ALSO SAID THAT GRANTS ARE SOMETIMES DETERMINED BY POPULATION.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID THAT MR. BENJAMIN WAS TALKING ABOUT BRINGING IN SOME INMATES FROM COLUMBIA TO USE AS A LABOR FORCE, BUT THE COUNTY WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR EXPENSES. MR. WATSON SAID THAT CURRENTLY THEY COULD NOT AFFORD TO BRING ANYONE TO JASPER COUNTY FROM COLUMBIA. CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID THAT MR. TERRY HAS BEEN GETTING 5-6 WORKERS EACH WEEKEND. MR. WATSON SAID THEY JUST DID NOT HAVE ANYMORE ROOM RIGHT NOW.

DOUG GRAHAM SAID THAT SOMETIMES THERE ARE BOUNDARY CONFLICTS WITH LEVY AND HARDEEVILLE AND HE SAID HE ASKED MR. FULGHUM TO TALK TO SHANE HAYNES ABOUT PUTTING UP CITY LIMIT SIGNS.

DOUG GRAHAM SAID THAT MR. KITTY ISSUED TWO BUSINESS LICENSES TO COMPANIES THAT DID NOT HAVE A FIRE INSPECTION AND THAT HE INFORMED MR. FULGHUM OF THIS ON TUESDAY AT THE COUNCIL MEETING.

DOUG GRAHAM DISCUSSED THAT THERE WERE 2 LINES THAT WERE NOT UP TO THE FIRE CODE FOR HYDRANTS. MR. GRAHAM SAID THE HYDRANTS IN OSPREY

LAKES NEEDS TO BE 500 FEET APART AND THEY ARE 1200 FEET APART. MR. GRAHAM SAID HE SPOKE WITH DEAN MOSS ABOUT THIS AND AN ENGINEER WAS TO GO OUT AND CHECK ON IT. MR. GRAHAM SAID HE HAS LEFT MESSAGES WITH THE ENGINEER, BUT HIS CALLS HAVE NOT BEEN RETURNED.

DOUG GRAHAM SAID HE SPOKE WITH MIKE DUMAS ABOUT THE HYDRANTS AT OSPREY LAKES AND PRINCE COURT NOT BEING UP TO CODE. MR. GRAHAM SAID THE HYDRANTS ON A DEAD END STREET NEED TO BE 400 FEET APART AND THEY ARE NOT. MR. GRAHAM SAID SOMEONE NEEDS TO BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE. MR. WATSON SAID HE WOULD MAKE SOME CALLS AND CHECK INTO THIS.

MR. GRAHAM SAID THE OLD APOLLO CLUB DID NOT HAVE A FIRE INSPECTION PRIOR TO A BUSINESS LICENSE BEING ISSUED. MR. WATSON SAID HE WOULD CHECK INTO IT.

MR. GRAHAM SAID THAT HE MADE A CALL REGARDING NOISE AND THE PEOPLE WERE GIVEN A TICKET AND HAD TO PAY \$500.00.

CHAIRMAN TUTEN SAID MR. MOSS TOLD HIM THE COUNTY HAS A MACHINE TO MEASURE THE NOISE. COUNCILMAN BLACKSHEAR SAID THAT WHEN HE WENT TO THE DAYS INN HE COULD HEAR THE NOISE AND DIDN'T NEED ANYTHING TO MEASURE IT.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:45 A.M.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

JUDITH M. FRANK, CCC
CLERK TO COUNCIL

FRED TUTEN
FIRE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN