



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Work Session

MINUTES

December 3, 2015

10:00 a.m.

Commission Conference Room – Ste. 168

Chairman Jones called the Work Session to order at 10:00 a.m. Commissioner Becky Denney and Commissioner Jerry Barnes were present.

Items for Discussion:

- 1) GebCorp Pension Plan – Chairman Jones stated that for about a year the Board has been looking at the County’s pension plan. Kale Hodges with GEBCorp was present to go over the proposed amendment to the Defined Benefit Plan and Proposed adoption of a 401(a) and 457(b) Plan for Pickens County Government. The Amendments as of January 1, 2016, 1) to change the benefit multiplier from 1% of Average Monthly Compensation times years of Credited Service PLUS \$36 time Credited Service to 2% of Average Monthly Compensation times all years of Credited Service (including Credited Service before the change) with a 30 year maximum for Credited Service; 2) to close the Plan to new participants; and 3) to add mandatory pre-tax employee contributions. Employees under the present plan will contribute 5% pre-tax dollars. The Board proposes adoption of a defined contribution plan for employees hired After January 1, 2016. Employees will contribute and the county will match up to 2.5%. Mr. Hodges stated that 401(k) s can be rolled over into the Defined Benefit Plan. The Board was asked by Chief Magistrate Judge Allen Wigington to please consider changing the age for retirement from 65 to 55 with 25 years of service. Example given: If an employee begins working for the County at age 20 and works for 30 years the employee is then 50 years of age yet would have to work until age 65 for full retirement benefit. Judge Wigington stated that the 2% was definitely something that needs done at this time. He and Sheriff Donnie Craig both stated that getting good employees and keeping them is hard to do. Good benefits play a very important role in keeping good employees. Chief Deputy Jeff Hall expressed the same concern regarding retirement age. Probate Judge David Lindsey agreed with Judge Wigington’s statement. Sheriff Craig said he knows it is the Board’s decision, but all Elected Officials want to work together on this. Chairman Jones thanked the Elected Officials for their support and is glad they can all work together. Commissioner Denney asked Mr. Hodges if it is to the current employees’ advantage to stay with the present plan and he said “yes”. She also asked about**

the trend for early retirement and he said “no” – not the trend because of the need for insurance. Medicare isn’t available until age 65.

CFO Faye Harvey asked Mr. Hodges if in a couple of years things look better can the plan be amended to age 55 with 25 years of service and Mr. Hodges replied “Yes”. Mrs. Harvey stated that she feels that the proposed Amendments are the right thing to do at this time.

There were several questions from county employees. Ray Bowyer of Big Canoe Signals asked where the funds get invested, and Mr. Hodges replied that the trust is set up for the pension plan and it is governed by a Board of Trustees. \$1.1 billion is held in that trust – equities, small, moderate, aggressive, stable value – it is a mix. The Defined Contribution – Target Date Funds – American Funds – Schwab Index, Vanguard, Met Life. The employee chooses and a financial advisor helps the employee make the decision. Several questions were asked by county employees and answered by Mr. Hodges.

2) **Qualifying Fees for County Elections in 2016**

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 21-2-131; the governing authority sets qualifying fees for County Offices to be filled in the 2016 Election. The Board of Commissioners will set the fees in their December 17, 2015 Board meeting and they will be published in the legal organ after adoption as well as recorded with the December 17th Minutes.

There being no further discussion, the work session was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

These Minutes were approved at the December 17, 2015 BOC meeting.

Commission meetings are videotaped and may be viewed at www.knowpickens.com.