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| Banks County Established 1858 Seal | **Banks County Board of Commissioners Work Session/Meeting** |
| Courthouse Annex Boardroom | 150 Hudson Ridge | Homer, GA 30547 |
| Tuesday, April 29, 2025 at 10:00 AM |
| **Minutes** |

**1.** **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Taylor Griffith called the worksession to order.

PRESENT
Chairman Charles Griffith
Vice Chairman Danny Maxwell

Commissioner Chris Ausburn
Commissioner Keith Gardiner
Commissioner Bo Garrison

STAFF PRESENT

Finance Officer Randy Failyer

Human Resources Director Arlene Ivey

County Clerk Regina Gailey

**2.** **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion to approve the agenda.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Maxwell, Seconded by Commissioner Ausburn.

Voting Yea: Chairman Griffith, Vice Chairman Maxwell, Commissioner Ausburn, Commissioner Gardiner, Commissioner Garrison

Vote: 5:0

All yea votes and the motion passed.

Chairman Griffith stated at 2:00 p.m. they will enter into executive session to consider litigation.

**3.** **AGENDA ITEMS**

**a. FY2026 Budget**

1. **Superior Court Maggie Rickman – Mountain Judicial Court Administrator**

Salaries will be combined as a monthly contract - $83,066 includes all positions

Trying to coordinate court interpreter services

Court reporting amount is Banks County only

 Mr. Failyer stated the Bailiff will may be in the Sheriff’s budget but not sure at this point.

Ms. Rickman stated there would be no circuit “Travel” budget. Chairman Griffith stated concerns that the amount for travel is not prorated as in the shared budget.

Ms. Rickman stated those within the circuit budget include Salaries & Benefits, Supplements for State Attorneys, Judges & Staff. She stated the population would be reviewed every 5 years.

1. **Juvenile Court Maggie Rickman – Mountain Judicial Court Administrator**
* Ms. Rickman stated the only change was the increase to $80,000 based on hourly rate of the attorney.

**3. Probate Court Judge Cameron Boswell**

* Judge Boswell stated they were currently hiring to replace Dottie Morris who is retiring in June
* Commissioner Gardiner asked if bilingual would be the best advantage.
* Judge Boswell yes but a certification would be required
* Commissioner Gardiner recommended checking into the possibility
* Judge Boswell agreed
* Judge Bowell stated he is requesting to use a portion of the Probate Fees for personnel salary increases. He stated without clerks – the office shuts down
* He stated he is currently looking at code to adjust fines according to state law.

**4. Public Defender**

Mr. Failyer stated the Mountain Judicial Contract is currently 17% for Banks County

 **5. Senior Center Tracie Hammond**

* **Deanna Specialty Contract:**

Ms. Hammond stated this was an annual contract where the county is paid by Deanna Specialty.

**Motion to approve the contract and to authorize the Chairman to sign the contract.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Ausburn, Seconded by Commissioner Gardiner.**

**Voting Yea: Chairman Griffith, Vice Chairman Maxwell, Commissioner Ausburn, Commissioner Gardiner, Commissioner Garrison**

**Vote: 5:0**

**All yea votes and the motion passed. *(Copy of contract filed in Attachment to Minutes Book 11-2)***

* Commissioner Ausburn stated the need to consider the age of vehicles for replacement
* He also stated a good van was needed for Meals on Wheels
* Ms. Hammond stated the travel was for senior trips and training

**6. Public Transportation Tracie Hammond**

 Ms. Hammond stated they averaged about 1,200 miles per month with 2 drivers & 2 buses

**7. Clerk of Superior Court Tim Harper**

* Mr. Harper stated he had asked for an additional part time employee but would like to change the request to full time. He stated going forward 2 staff members would be required in court.
* He said since the move to the Mountain Judicial Circuit there are efforts to clean up the caseloads from 1998-2017
* He said he would ask for an additional week of court next year
* Technology: He stated the IKON company called and said the software needed changing with no choice to decline
* He said it must be a company approved by the Clerks Authority with the one-time expense of $28,600 and ongoing yearly
* Commissioner Gardiner recommended talking to TKS first.

**8. Library Stacy Krumnow & Gail Hogan**

* Ms. Krumnow stated they now have outside WIFI
* Total served last year – 25,800
* She said with a 90/10 grant they would add onto the library with $900,000 from the stated being spent first and $100,000 local if needed to include 1,800 sq ft meeting space
* She said the Piedmont Regional Director Beth McEntyre is in charge of the project
* Chairman Griffith asked Ms. Krumnow to invite Ms. McEntyre to come speak at a Commission Worksession
* He then he would like to review the contract between Homer/Piedmont Regional and Banks County

**Motion to recess at 12:35 p.m. until 1:30 p.m.**

**Motion made by Chairman Griffith, Seconded by Vice Chairman Maxwell.**

**Voting Yea: Chairman Griffith, Vice Chairman Maxwell, Commissioner Ausburn, Commissioner Gardiner, Commissioner Garrison**

**Vote: 5:0**

**All yea votes and the motion passed.**

**Chairman Griffith called the meeting back to order at 1:30 p.m.**

**9. Magistrate Court Judge Ivan Mote**

* Judge Mote stated he had received the same notification that the Clerk of Superior Court had concerning a software change.
* Commissioners Garrison recommended that TKS get with department heads.

**10. Adult Education James Dumas**

* Mr. Dumas stated 20 – 30% of the county population do not have high school diplomas
* He stated there was a job fair coming in May
* He stated the need for a keypad and awning on the side door on the meeting room of the center.
* He also stated they needed a serving counter and cabinets in the room

**11. Fire/EMS Fire Chief Steve Nichols/Asst Chief Scottie Mathis/EMA April Turner**

* Chief Nichols requested the addition of 6 positions at #41 Damascus and #22 at Katfish Korner. He said this was in efforts to move away from a one-man response
* Commissioner Garrison asked the current employ count.
	+ - 7 fulltime paramedics – need 12 paramedics
		- 15 EMTs – 90 fulltime and part-time – 30 FT & 60 PT
		- Current vacancies: 20
		- Chief Nichols stated a pay increase is needed
		- Commissioner Gardiner stated he felt group insurance is a bigger draw
		- Commissioner Ausburn recommended exploring the consolidation of Homer and Banks County Departments. He said he felt it would be more efficient and productive.
* Technology: Chief Nichols stated the need for a new station computer at 6 stations

**12. EMA Fire Chief Steve Nichols/EMS Director April Turner**

* Chief Nichols stated they were short on staff – full staff is 12 – currently short 3
* Technical: Radio Maintenance, computers, cyber security, Gunby, Neatoware, CAD System GCIC – Tower/Radio sites
* Next Tower Site: Maysville
	+ May use water tank
	+ Jackson County may give space
	+ Currently 8 Radio Towers in the county
	+ 1 Radio Tower in Madison County
	+ 1 Radio Tower on Curahee Mountain

**13. Extension Service Extension Agent Susie Burton**

* Ms. Burton stated they were requesting a fulltime 12-week intern

**14. Recreation Director Kat Roberts**

* Ms. Roberts stated Field Maintenance included $85,000 Environmental Creations of the total $95,000.
* Chairman Griffith added the HVAC to the May 13th meeting for consideration
* Ms. Roberts asked for more communication when the Maintenance spends money on the building so she may keep better tabs on the budget.
* She also requested a color printer

**15. Group Health Insurance: Chairman Griffith stated getting the premiums down would help recruit employees but will spend $350,000 additional to decrease the premiums. Family coverage could be as much as $1,200/month savings for the employee. All Commissioners agreed to look at the new Group Medical Insurance for lower premiums on family coverage.**

 **b. 2025/2026 Propane Contract: Randy Failyer**

Commissioner Ausburn asked about the requirement of a monitoring device. He stated they are all required to have a monitoring device. Mr. Failyer stated the low bidder was Blossman Gas at $1.33/gallon. He further stated there were 2 local bidders that did not meet within the 4%.

**Motion to approve the low bid at $1.33/gallon with Blossman Gas with the new tank with monitoring device.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Gardiner, Seconded by Commissioner Ausburn.**

**Vice Chairman Maxwell stated with concerns with being familiar Piedmont Gas and not being familiar with Blossman Gas.**

**Voting Yea: Chairman Griffith, Vice Chairman Maxwell, Commissioner Ausburn, Commissioner Gardiner, Commissioner Garrison**

**Vote: 5:0**

**All yea votes and the motion passed.**

**4. EXECUTIVE SESSION: No executive session**

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:13 p.m.

Motion made by Commissioner Gardiner, Seconded by Commissioner Ausburn.
Voting Yea: Chairman Griffith, Vice Chairman Maxwell, Commissioner Ausburn, Commissioner Gardiner, Commissioner Garrison

Vote: 5:0

All yea votes and the motion passed.

 Chairman

County Clerk