

GRADY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING WORKSHOP MINUTES

August 25, 2020 Meeting

The Grady County Board of Commissioners met on August 25, 2020 at 1:30 pm for a Workshop Meeting for Chicken House Ordinance. Commissioners Keith Moyer, June Knight, Ray Prince, Phillip Drew, County Administrator Buddy Johnson, County Clerk John White, and Code Enforcement Director Brian Harrison were present. Commissioner LaFaye Copeland was not able to attend.

Mr. Moyer called the meeting to order.

Mr. Moyer asked John White to give the invocation and pledge to the flag.

Motion by Mr. Drew, second by Mr. Prince to approve the agenda which was amended to include New/Unfinished Business. The motion was approved.

Ordinance Review:

Chicken Houses

Mr. Prince stated that he has done research with surrounding counties and the difference is they have zoning. Mr. Prince states that he was told they must go in front of the Zoning Board to approve the chicken houses and that gives the neighbors the opportunity to voice their concerns for the zoning change. It was stated that Mitchell, Colquitt, and Thomas Counties have zoning. Decatur and Early do not have zoning.

Mr. Harrison stated they must be calling chicken houses industrial rather than agriculture and by doing that, they would be adding another step to the process.

Mr. Drew stated that the City of Cairo sends their zoning change request to the Regional Commission for review and then it comes back to the City Planning Commission and then to the City Council.

Mr. Moyer asked about a review board and Mr. Harrison stated that was only in place with regards to a disagreement with the building standards and that board has not been used in years.

Mr. Buddy Davis was in the audience and was recognized by the chair to speak.

Mr. Davis stated he had a friend in Mitchell County who was in the chicken business and he was able to get letters of support from the adjoining landowners and get his chicken houses built. Mr. Davis states that due to the smell from the chicken houses around him, he is unable to sit on his porch if the wind is from the Southwest. He stated there are improvements to his property he would like to make but is unwilling to do so due to the smell from the chicken operation. Mr. Davis stated it is lowering the value of his property.

Mr. Johnson made sure that Mr. Davis had the telephone number to the Georgia Department of Agriculture of 404-656-3665 so they could inspect the issues and complaints concerning the chicken operation.

Mr. Davis states that when they burn, it is horrible.

Mr. Harrison stated that one complaint has been made to the Department of Agriculture on Wednesday, August 19, 2020 and they are waiting to hear back from them on a response.

Mrs. Knight asked if there was a limit on the number of houses in a single operation and she was told no.

Mr. Prince suggested we move the limit to 2,000 feet from the nearest residence and that if you are an existing operation and one of the houses is destroyed by fire or natural disaster that you be allowed to build the house back.

Mr. Harrison stated that chicken houses add a significant amount to the ad valorem tax base.

Mr. Moyer stated that if done correctly, the operation should have little to no smell and he would like to give the state enforcement option a six-month opportunity and see what results we get.

Motion by Mrs. Knight, second by Mr. Prince to increase the set backs to 2,000 feet from the nearest residence, 500 feet from the right of way, and 250 feet from the property line and that existing operations be able to rebuild if destroyed by fire or natural disaster. Yes – Knight, Prince; No- Drew, Moyer. The motion did not pass.

Mr. Johnson stated that the board may want to let Mr. Harrison, Mr. Ridley, and himself to get together and work on some language for the ordinance change.

Mr. Buddy Davis asked the board to think about the existing landowners. He suggested that the board look at the UGA Poultry Science recommendations for Poultry Operations and putting them into the Ordinance. He stated that would help his situation.

Mr. Harrison stated he would have to dedicate someone full time to monitor chicken houses if those requirements were added.

Mr. Moye suggested a compromise of 1750 ft from a residence, 300 feet from the right of way and 250 feet from the property line.

Mrs. Knight does not feel this will do anything, so no motion was made, or vote was taken.

Discussion continued and Mr. Johnson was instructed to get with Mr. Harrison and County Attorney Ridley and bring two options to the board at the meeting on September 1, 2020 meeting. An option with no changes and an option with the 2,000 ft from residence, 500 ft from the right of way and 250 ft from the property line.

New/Unfinished Business:

FA0059-20 Motion by Mr. Prince, second by Mr. Drew to name Marcus Starling as Grady County's representative for the Selective Service Board. The motion was approved.

Mr. Moye recognized the passing of Mr. Harold Ragan who served Grady County as an educator and a Stated Senator.

Mr. Johnson stated that the joint meeting with the Lake Authority was cancelled for September 1, 2020.

Mr. Johnson stated they should have the tax digest any day now.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Knight and second by Mr. Drew. The motion was approved.

KEITH MOYE, CHAIR

PHILLIP DREW, VICE-CHAIR

RAY PRINCE, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

JOHN WHITE, COUNTY CLERK

JUNE KNIGHT, COMMISSIONER

LAFAYE COPELAND, COMMISSIONER