

The Russell County Planning Commission / Russell County Commission

**Joint Meeting**

September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014

4:00 P.M. EST.

The Russell County Joint meeting was called to order. Members present for the Planning Commission were: Vice Chair David Ellis, Wanda Lamb, Attorney Walter Gray, Gary Head, and Bill Friend. Commission Members present were: Chair Peggy Martin, Vice Chair Cattie Epps, Gentry Lee, Tillman Pugh, Ronnie Reed and Chance Corbett. Members of the Sewer Authority were also in attendance. The County Administrator LeAnn Horne kept the minutes.

David Ellis opened the meeting with a discussion of a letter sent to Commission describing 2 options for sewer systems for county areas. One option is decentralized systems and the other a conventional system. The cost of these systems is \$ 4 million (conventional) and \$1 million (decentralized). The purpose of this meeting is to discuss a third option and a goal of attracting commercial retail into Fort Mitchell area.

Mr. Ellis highlighted a meeting he had with James McGill, Mark Clark and Goodwyn, Mills and Caywood concerning the installation of septic tanks for commercial growth as some Florida utility departments have done for continued retail growth. Water usages of a Fort Mitchell grocery as well as some in the Ladonia and Crawford areas have been reviewed. It seems to be feasible to install septic tanks for smaller businesses when they are constructed, keeping a huge amount of money from being spent for businesses that decide not to locate in county areas. A percentage of sales tax money made from these businesses will be allocated to a fund for county sewage projects. The Sewer Authority will bill the businesses that have county septic tanks and the Authority will maintain the tanks. Later this revenue can go toward installation of decentralized systems in the county without borrowing to do so. Septic tanks that have been installed can later be converted to decentralize systems only losing use of field lines that have been installed. Contracts will be made with business owners at time the septic tanks are installed for conversion to the decentralized systems.

James McGill discussed contract hook-ups and listed responsibilities of the owners and county. He also noted the time frame for tank installations and business limitations that county owned sewer tanks could provide. The State Health Department would approve the design not ADEM. Tanks will have grease traps and are to be pumped based on requirements set by the firm that reviews the tanks. Tanks should be pumped every 90 to 120 days. This type septic tank can accommodate buildings between the 10,000 to 13,000 square foot ranges. Cost of construction of these septic tanks is about \$30,000 and pumping will cost approximately \$250.00 per 1,500 gallon. Soil test will still be done before construction to determine the size of septic tank to be constructed.

Commissioner Pugh asked if the tanks will also be offered to established businesses or only for new construction and will this only be offered in certain areas of the county. He

talked about how it may be beneficial for installation of this type septic tank to be in one area so eventually a line could tie them all together.

James McGill stated that if there was a trailer park with a failing tank within a mile, they could have a county owned septic tank installed.

The systems will not make a lot of profit but revenue generated will benefit the county in commercial growth and will be a beginning to decentralized systems in the county.

David Ellis, who is the manager of the Fort Mitchell Water System, discussed the beginning of the Fort Mitchell Water System and its growth without tax payers' money.

Commissioner Pugh and Administrator Horne discussed requirements for an account with designated revenue for sewer projects.

Commissioner Corbett asked at what point the county would install a septic tank for a business and who would be responsible if the customer should not follow county rules for the septic tank and allowed grease to fill the tank.

Mr. Ellis stated the tank would not be installed until the company began construction on the property. The contract will list rules set for use of the septic tank and if those rules are not followed then the company will be fined.

Commissioner Epps asked what is needed from the Commission at this time.

Mr. Ellis stated that the Planning Commission and the Sewer Authority are looking for support from the Commission as well as approval of the first step in a plan for a sewage system in the Fort Mitchell area. The Chamber of Commerce is requesting authorization of a grocery store study which will take 3 to 12 weeks to complete.

Chair Martin stated this meeting will have to adjourn due to the work session that will begin in 15 minutes. Another joint meeting could be set.

The meeting was adjourned.