

The Banks County Board of Commissioners held a called meeting on January 21, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. in the board room of the Banks County Courthouse Annex. Present were Chairman Milton Dalton, Commissioner Joe Barefoot and Commissioner Rickey Cain. The purpose of the meeting was for a kickoff meeting for the new year and the new Chairman of the Board.

### **1. Call To Order**

Ch. Dalton called the meeting to order.

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

Comm. Barefoot made a motion to approve the agenda. Comm. Cain seconded. Two aye votes and motion carried.

### **3. Public Safety Director**

Ch. Dalton stated on January 13, 2009, the Commissioners discussed in executive session the immediate need for a Public Safety Director who had been trained in emergency services. Concern was expressed as to the County's possible liability in the public safety area based upon reports received by the County. No official vote was taken in the executive session. The County Attorney, after being asked by the Chairman, did not think that an announcement was necessary since the position was temporary and necessary to fill an immediate need of the County and would be advertised within the next ninety (90) days. After further review of the Open Meetings Act the County Attorney has advised the Commissioners that even though this is a temporary position to fill an immediate need as provided in the personnel policy and procedures of the county, there should be an official vote on the temporary position in an open meeting until the position is advertised and candidates interviewed. Ch. Dalton then made a motion to hire John Creasy as temporary Public Safety Director for a period of 90 days effective January 14, 2009 in order to allow adequate time for the advertisement of the position and the interviewing of qualified candidates. Comm. Barefoot seconded. Comm. Cain stated he was opposed to the motion and stated the economy was not in good shape at this time and a hiring freeze was approved at the January 19, 2009 meeting. He also stated that the departments were urged not to do any unnecessary spending. He stated he would reconsider this at budget time and stated concerns with revenues being down and does not want to raise taxes for this purpose. Comm. Barefoot stated the reason for the appointment was the need. E911/EMA Director Deidra Moore asked for clarification of which departments Mr. Creasy would be over. Ch. Dalton stated Fire and EMS only. Citizen Bobby Caudell expressed concerns with taxes and asked why, if there was a need, this position was not hired before now and why is the department out of compliance. Comm. Cain stated he had checked and was not aware of any areas the department is not in compliance. Ch. Dalton stated this was not a new position. Two aye votes and motion carried.

### **4. General Discussion**

Comm. Barefoot asked the department heads to reduce each budget for FY2010 by 10%. Ch. Dalton agreed and stated lower revenues are what had caused the request as well as the spending reduction and hiring freeze. Ms. Moore asked if the hiring freeze applied to refilling vacancies. Comm. Cain stated yes and that hiring within could be done. Public Utilities Director Steve Reece stated he had just lost a certified Class II water plant operator and stated that overtime would have to be used to cover the vacancy. Comm. Cain instructed Mr. Reece to hold off with hiring at this time. Citizen Bev Thompson also expressed concerns with taxes and the down economy. Comm. Cain stated if things are not better soon, position elimination may be a possibility in July 2009.

### **Adjournment**

Comm. Barefoot made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:06 a.m. Comm. Cain seconded. Two aye votes and motion carried.

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Chairman

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County Clerk

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