



Hall County Regional Planning Commission

**Wednesday, January 4, 2017
Regular Meeting**

Item 1

Creation of County Zoning Study Committee

Staff Contact: Chad Nabity

Committee to examine county's rural zoning

By Jeff Bahr

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Upon the direction of the Hall County Board of Supervisors, the Regional Planning Commission will form a committee to review the county's zoning regulations.

The supervisors directed the planning commission on Tuesday to form such a committee. Members of the county board and other people will be invited to sit in on the group's meetings.

The action followed a suggestion by Supervisor Gary Quandt to look at rural zoning in Hall County. In the past two years, Quandt noted, the county has had issues with a livestock trailer washout, a feedlot and an adult-oriented business. The county had to hire an attorney in each case, he said.

Hall County needs to look at regulations in surrounding counties, Quandt said. Maybe Hall County is too strict; maybe the county is not strict enough, he said. But study is needed.

Subdivisions are being built and commercial development occurs in area counties, Quandt said. He'd like to see some of that development come to Hall County.

Supervisors Steve Schuppan and Pam Lancaster said they've heard no complaints from county residents. But they agreed the county needs to be prepared. Hall County needs more commercial development "if we want to maintain a tax base," Lancaster said.

But "we don't want to stir up the rural community every time" a business wants to come to the county, she said.

Regional Planning Director Chad Nabity said that planning is a boring subject "unless it happens in your backyard, and then, by God, how did this happen?"

In an interview after the meeting, Nabity said that, as he understands it, the committee will specifically look at livestock regulations within the county.

The supervisors voted to add a liaison to the Regional Planning Commission.

Also on Tuesday, the board approved a collective bargaining agreement between the Hall County Sheriff's Department and Fraternal Order of Police.

The three-year contract covers the county's deputies. It was approved retroactively to July 1.

In discussing the agreement, Lancaster said it's a fair contract for the deputies "and a good deal for Hall County taxpayers."

Because it runs three years, it "provides stability and continuity in labor relations and saves the county money in the long run," she said, reading from a statement prepared by the parties involved.

The contract moves the wage scale from the current six steps to eight steps, which lengthens the period of time an employee must work to max out on the wage scale.

Employees will contribute an additional amount towards their health insurance, from the current 5 percent to 7 percent.

The wage increases are on par with those recommended by the Merit Commission and are comparable to similarly situated departments.

Before the meeting ended on Tuesday, the agreement had been signed by the union, Sheriff Jerry Watson and board of supervisors Chairman Scott Arnold.

Tuesday's gathering was the final meeting for Supervisor Dan Purdy, who's retiring from the board.

Purdy, 60, has been a board member for eight years. He and his wife, Ann, are moving to the Boelus area. He did not seek re-election because he's moving out of the county. Purdy, who represents District 2, is the board's vice chairman.

The District 2 seat will be inherited by Karen Bredthauer, who ran for the spot unopposed.