

THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORKSHOP

The Board of Commissioners of Effingham County, Georgia, Mr. Wendall Kessler Chairman, Mr. Steve Mason, Vice Chairman, Mr. Forrest Floyd, Mrs. Vera Jones, Mr. Reginald Loper and Mr. Phil Kieffer met in a Keep Effingham Beautiful Overview workshop at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 20, 2013 in the Commissioners' Meeting Room at the Effingham County Administrative Complex.

PERSONS ATTENDING THE MEETING

Mr. Toss Allen, Interim County Administrator, Stephanie Johnson, Interim County Clerk, Mr. Adam Kobek, Community Relations Director, Mrs. Joanna Wright, Finance Director, Ms. Rushe Hudzinski-Sero, Human Resources Director, Mr. Ed Myrick, EMA Director, Mr. Linwood Seckinger, Mr. Donald Caines, Mr. Craig Johnson, Ms. Patty Roberds, Mr. Charlie Kea, Mr. Jack Garvin, Ms. Gigi Rigsby and Mr. Pat Donahue, Effingham Herald

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kessler called the meeting to order.

Keep Effingham Beautiful Report (01): Mr. Donald Caines explained the report to be a summary and asked if there was any additional information the Board wished to see in the (agreed upon procedure) draft report. A list of questions had been compiled by some members of the Board to Mr. Donald Caines.

On April 11, 2000 Keep Effingham Beautiful, Inc. was registered with the State for incorporation. On July 9, 2005 the entity was administratively dissolved. A bank

account was opened on December 31, 2007 naming Connie Burns and Wanda Price as authorized signers of the account per the information received from Branch Banking & Trust (BB&T). There were no other signers on the account to date. The officers of Keep Effingham Beautiful, according to the Secretary of State Website, were: Connie Burns, CEO, Thomas Kirkland, CFO, and Danielle Valcort, Secretary.

The account was opened in December 2007 with a \$1000 payment from the Effingham County Board of Commissioners. The \$1000 was provided as payment of a contract for services. The services proposed to be provided were for environmental services.

Finance Director Wright explained the \$1000 payment was charged out of Department# 51 in the early years. In subsequent years was charged in part from the Sanitation Department through invoicing awards for environmental services.

Mr. Donald Caines mentioned the Keep Effingham Beautiful account was not a County account but operated by County employees, on County time and in a County facility. Because the account is a nonprofit and not a County account the entity could not be tracked without knowledge of its existence.

A particular vendor was paid from the Sanitation account in the amount of \$32,420 for merchandise. A rebate check in the amount of \$13,320 was issued from the vendor and deposited into the Keep Effingham Beautiful account.

Finance Director Wright explained currently there are purchasing cards and purchase limits are enforced to prevent such transactions from taking place.

Mr. Donald Caines confirmed at least \$64,774.83 was improperly deposited into the Keep Effingham Beautiful account. From the time of Connie Burns' death to the date the account was closed there was no indication of improper disbursement.

Finance Director Wright stated on March 14, 2013 funds in the amount of \$12,817.20 were reimbursed to the County from the Keep Effingham Beautiful account.

Mr. Donald Caines stated there appears to be no present or past employees who have misappropriated funds. The cost for the Keep Effingham Beautiful summary report is less than \$10,000.


There was further discussion on information contained in the report or proposed to be included or revised in the report. All revisions or inclusions will be emailed to the Chairman to submit to Mr. Donald Caines.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5:09 p.m., the workshop adjourned.



Wendall Kessler, Chairman



Stephanie Johnson, Interim County Clerk