

County Commissioners Discuss Salem Road Bridge Project, Annexation At Work Session

*Tommy Camp,
Staff Writer*

County Engineer James Emery gave the Troup County Commissioners an update on the Salem Road Bridge project Friday morning at the Commissioners' work session.

Emery told the Commissioners that the design phase of the project has been completed.

The new bridge will be a two-span facility with trusses that will be similar to those that adorn the old bridge, but with no height (steel overhead in the

trusses) restrictions. In addition, the project will require "almost" no realignment of the road itself, according to Emery.

The new bridge will replace the historic three-span bridge that has been in place for over 50 years.

"We're ready to go to the bid phase of the project," Emery said, "but not before we know what we're going to do with the old steel (that is part of the current bridge)."

Commission Chairman Ricky Wolfe suggested holding a public meeting

"to hear what the people have to say."

It would be similar to the meeting held when the project was first announced at which citizens were given the opportunity to vote on the design they preferred.

In other business, the Commissioners discussed replacing the lights in the parking lot at Callaway Stadium.

A recent hail storm destroyed 70 percent of the lights.

County Financial Officer Scott Turk recommended

replacing the destroyed lights with LED lights that would be more energy efficient.

The new lights, which would cost approximately \$13,000 above the \$17,000 the county's insurance will pay to cover the damage, would save the county over \$100,000 over a 10-year period.

"From the energy savings alone we could pay for the new lights in 22 months," Turk said.

The Commissioners discussed the annexation of two county properties

into the City of LaGrange.

The first property is located at Ethel Kite Elementary School.

The Ethel Kite site, which covers 17 acres, is actually located on four separate properties, two of which would be annexed into the city.

LaGrange City Manager Tom Hall was present at the meeting. He pointed out that the easternmost boundary of the Ethel Kite site marks part of the original city limits of LaGrange when the city was

»»» Continued on Page 5 »»»

County Commissioners Discuss Salem Road Bridge Project, Annexation At Work Session

Continued from Page 3.

established in 1828.

The second property consists of 450 acres on Whitesville Road and I-85 which includes six existing businesses.

Emery told the Commissioners that the loss of revenue from licenses, fees, etc. if that site is annexed into the city would amount to approximately \$2,400 a year.

County Manager Tod Tentler reported on the progress of the new state patrol headquarters building under construction on LaFayette Parkway.

Construction of the building should be finished by the end of the year according to Tentler.

The state patrol will turn its existing property on Hamilton Road back to the county when the new building is completed.

The county deeded the current site to the state of Georgia in 1973 for construction of the present-day building.

"That's a valuable property," Tentler said, "whatever we decide to do with it."

Stephanie Butcher, who is the Extension Department Coordinator for Coweta County and is serving in the same capacity in Troup County on an interim basis, introduced the new Agricultural and Natural Resources agent Brian Maddy.

Maddy taught at Troup High School for 22 years.

"I'm looking forward to expanding the extension program," he told the Commissioners.

Tentler also gave an overview of the county's retirement plan transition.

For all county employees who were employed as of March 1 of this year, there will be no changes.

For those hired after March 1st, the county will donate two percent of salary toward retirement. The employee has the choice of adding two more percent. If that is done, the county will match that for a total of six percent.