

**MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M. AT THE COURTHOUSE BOC MEETING ROOM LOCATED AT 205 N. SELVIDGE STREET**

**REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING**

The Chairman called the meeting to order.  
Pledge of allegiance to the Flag  
Roll call to determine quorum

**The following members were present:**

Jevin Jensen, Chairman  
Barry W. Robbins, Vice-Chair  
Robby Staten Member (ABSENT)  
John Thomas, Member  
Greg Jones, Member

**Others Present:**

Robert Smalley, County Attorney  
Robert Sivick, County Administrator  
Department Heads  
Citizens  
Press

**Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Thomas and Jones in agreement.**

**Approval of Consent Agenda Item:** Approve any budget amendment for 2022 as needed by our financial auditors and in compliance with all state regulations for approved items and passing votes from last month's public Board of Commissioners meeting.

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the October 6, 2022 Regular Business Meeting and October 21, 2022 Special Called Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Thomas in agreement.

**Chairman Jensen recognized Phillip Bowling as Employee of the Month for September 2022. Mr. Bowling works in the Fire Department.**

**Chairman's Report:** Chairman Jensen informed the audience about the Northwest High School Drama team winning the regional championship on October 29<sup>th</sup>, and are headed to the State Finals to be held November 19<sup>th</sup> in Warner Robbins, the recent agreements of the Service Delivery Strategies (SDS) by Whitfield County and the Cities of Dalton, Tunnel Hill, Varnell and the Town of Cohutta for a 10 year term and DCA has approved the extension of the current SDS until February 28, 2023, and also noted the upcoming run-off election is on Tues. Dec. 6.

**Report from Commissioners:**

Commissioner Jones and Thomas did not have any reports. Commissioner Robbins noted he will attend a Library Board meeting on Thursday, November 17, 2022.

**County Administrator Report:** County Administrator Robert Sivick read a congressional letter of thanks from Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene for the County's assistance during the recent flooding in Summerville, GA, he updated the Board on the transition of the Senior Center from City of Dalton to Whitfield County and noted the Non-Profit Grant Committee will meet on Nov. 22 to finalize the funding amounts to the non-profit recipients and the Committees recommendations to the BOC. Sivick also noted the Continuity of Operations Plan workshop was held in Ringgold during October was presented by GEMA and that participants learned a variety of COOP methodologies and best practices and helped provide each government department with the knowledge and skills to plan for emergencies and guides on how to create a Continuity of Operations Plan and how to move forward after creating the plan.

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**September 2022 Financial Statement:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to approve the September Financial Statement as presented by Finance Director James Garvin. Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) collections: September collections of \$1,224,609 were 15.25% greater than budgeted collections of \$1,062,500. This was 7.75% greater than August collections of \$1,136,925. YTD collections of \$10,673,764 were 12.5% greater than PY collections of \$9,495,742 for the same time frame. TAVT collections: September collections of \$398,643 were 11% less than August collections of \$447,944. YTD collections of \$3,895,661 were 3% less than PY collections of \$4,020,949 for the same time frame. YTD actual revenues of \$27,069,877 were greater than projected revenues of \$25,577,316 by \$1,492,561 or 5.75%. YTD actual expenditures of \$37,979,467 were greater than projected expenditures of \$37,126,062 by \$853,405 or 2.25%. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

**First Reading – Chapter 13, Site Construction Standards:** Chairman Jensen informed the Board and public of the proposed amendment to Chapter 13 of the Code of Ordinances of Whitfield County to be amended by eliminating the redundancy for public road design standards and driveway location requirements as currently outlined in Chapter 14 of the Code of Ordinances of Whitfield County, and for other purposes. No action was taken on this item.

**First Reading – Chapter 14, Site Design:** Chairman Jensen informed the Board and public of the proposed amendment to Chapter 14 of the Code of Ordinances of Whitfield County to be amended by redefining public road design standards and driveway location requirements, and for other purposes. No action was taken on this item.

**First Reading – Chapter 15, Subdivision Regulations:** Chairman Jensen informed the Board and public of the proposed amendment to Chapter 15 of the Code of Ordinances of Whitfield County to be amended by adding the county engineer's certificate of approval with respect to ingress/egress for final minor subdivision plats, and for other purposes. No action was taken on this item.

**Alcohol License Renewals - 2023:** Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the 2023 Alcohol License Renewals. The Sheriff's Office is conducting background investigations on all establishments currently in operation and holding a 2022 Alcohol License, issuance will be contingent upon completed investigations and payment of license fees. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Thomas and Robbins in agreement.

**City of Varnell Annexation Request:** Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Jones for no land use classification objection to tax parcel number 11-263-01-136. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Thomas in agreement.

**City of Varnell Annexation Request:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Thomas for no land use classification objection to tax parcel numbers 11-264-02-006 and 11-264-02-011. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Thomas in agreement.

**Town of Cohutta Annexation Request:** Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Jones for no land use classification objection to tax parcel number 11-134-06-002. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Thomas in agreement.

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**Rezoning Recommendation:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the rezoning request of Christopher Byrd to rezone from Rural Residential (R-5) to General Agriculture (GA) a tract of land totaling 56.46 acres located at Muse Road, Resaca, Georgia. Parcel (13-243-02-000). The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

**Rezoning Recommendation:** Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to deny the request of Jeff Pickens to rezone from Low Density Single Family Residential (R-2) to Rural Residential (R-5) a tract of land totaling 0.55 acres located at 1131 Mount Vernon Road, Tunnel Hill, Georgia. Parcel (27-089-05-000). The motion was approved 2-1, with Commissioners Robbins and Thomas in agreement. Commissioner Jones dissented.

**Special Use – Jimmie Mason:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to approve the request from Jimmie Mason for a special use permit on a tract of land totaling 7.50 acres zoned General Agriculture (GA) located on Colonial Way, Dalton, Georgia. Parcels (13-050-29-000 and 13-050-30-000) The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

**Resolution – Improving Neighborhood Outcomes in Disproportionally Impacted Communities:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the grant application resolution for the Improving Neighborhood Outcomes in Disproportionally Impacted Communities Grant that is being funded by the State of Georgia's ARPA funds. The purpose of the grant is to fund development or improvement of parks and recreational facilities in Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs). Whitfield County has 4 QCTs. Only the northernmost QCT includes County park facilities. The maximum award is \$2 million per project and multiple projects are allowed. County admin would like to submit two projects - Edward Parks tennis court and pickle ball court improvements and Prater's Mill walking track, restroom, and parking lot improvements. Although a match is not required, it is encouraged. Therefore, County admin requests that a cash match of \$200,000 (\$100,000 for each project) be approved. This funding would come from the \$6 million remaining in County unrestricted ARPA funds. The grant deadline is November 18, 2022 and grant announcements are scheduled for early 2023. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones and Thomas in agreement.

**Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund Grant Terms & Conditions:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to approve The Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund for Eligible Revenue Sharing Counties Grant. This is an ARPA-related grant, and like ARPA, the approved funding amount of \$100,000 for Whitfield County was pre-determined. It was only necessary to indicate that the County desired the funds. Also as with the original ARPA grant, these funds are to be received in two equal amounts of \$50,000 over this year and next. The first \$50,000 has been received. Under this program, recipients have broad discretion on uses of funds, similar to the ways in which they may use funds generated from their own revenue sources. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Thomas, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

**Whitfield County Transit Service 5311 Grant Application:** Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the submittal of the application to GDOT for the FY2024 Section 5311 Grant. The grant will provide aid in the transit service operations and is 50% federally funded with a 50% match required from local governments. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Thomas, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

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**Approval of Judicial Council ARPA Grant Funding CY 2023 - Conasauga Judicial Circuit:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to accept the State ARPA grant from the Judicial Council of Georgia. The purpose of the grant is to address the backlog of cases, particularly those involving serious felonies. The award amount is \$239,582 and covers various costs such as Senior Judges, jury costs, and a new DA investigator. The grant period is January-December 2023. The County may re-apply for a second year of the grant in the fall of 2023. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Thomas, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

**EMA Mobile Command Vehicle Rpair:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to approve the bid from TEN-8 Fire and Safety for repairs to the EMA Mobile Command Vehicle for \$41,852.60. EMA previously had \$50,000 set aside in capital for repairs and upgrades to the MCV. The manufacturer of the MCV quoted us \$49,725 for repairs. After 5 months and several MCV events later the manufacturer needed to give us an updated quote. The updated quote was for \$64,967.62. EMA decided to put the repairs out for bid and received one bid from TEN-8 Fire and Safety for \$41,852.60. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Thomas in agreement.

**EMA – Motorola Service Agreement Contract:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to renew the service contact with Motorola for support and services for Emergency Services for a three year term not to exceed \$817,964.53. The current agreement will expire on December 31, 2022, without this agreement the EMA radio system would be difficult and expensive to use. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

**Engineering Department – Courthouse Security Cameras:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to approve Sheriff's Department request to purchase and install security cameras throughout the three floors of the renovated portion of the Courthouse for \$78,500.60, as well as install a duress system for \$58,045.00 in the secure areas of same. Odin Integrated Technologies of Dalton will do the installation and this purchase will be funded by SPLOST 2020 funds. The motion was approved, 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

**Carbondale Business Park – Tree Removal Bid:** Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the contract with Southern Right of Way Clearing, LLC for \$55,000 for tree removal at the Carbondale Business Park. The JDA posted the bid the month of September for the DOT right of way, to thin and remove trees along the interstate. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

**Tax Assessor- Commercial Property Digest Consulting Contract:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to enter into a contract with GMASS for \$82,250 for a complete update of all commercial and industrial properties including cost schedules, land and building type tables, and neighborhood and location adjustment factors. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Thomas, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

**Discussion of 2023 Budget Meeting Dates:** The BOC discussed possible dates for budget workshops for the 2023 budget. They considered November 28 & 29 at 5pm inside the Wells Fargo Building as possible dates. Public notices will be sent out prior to the exact meeting dates and time.

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**Project Status Updates:** County Engineer Kent Bensen updated the Board on the status of the following projects;

1. Houston Valley Road Roundabout Quote
2. Options to improve safety on Dawnville Beaverdale Road
2. Dawnville/State Route 286 Intersection GDOT Project

**Notification of Road and Highway Superintendent Sole Finalist:** Chairman Jensen noted that Steve Bratton has been named as Road and Highway Superintendent for Whitfield County. Mr. Bratton has worked in the Public Works Department for five (5) years and was the second in command under Mr. Hunt.

**Re-Appointment for Whitfield County Board of Health:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to re-appoint Bucky Broadrick to the Whitfield County Board of Health. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Thomas, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Vicky Alt addressed the Board about her concerns with chicken houses.

Matt Coker, who resides at 4485 Cohutta Varnell Rd. thanked the Board for streaming the planning commission meetings on FaceBook.

Debra Gordon who resides at 1404 Rosewood Circle Unit 35, Dalton GA, addressed the Board about littering.

**ADJOURN** Unanimous



JEVIN JENSEN, CHAIRMAN  
WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

  
BLANCA CARDONA, COUNTY CLERK

DATE 12/12/2022