

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2023, 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
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 Jones and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to amend the agenda to include the potential additional item, 1. Rezoning Recommendation – Danny Edwards Parcel 12-296-02-047. The amended agenda was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Thomas, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the May 8, 2023 Regular Business Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten, Thomas, and Robbins in agreement.

Chairman Jensen recognized Kara Currin as Employee of the Month for March 2023. Ms. Currin works at the Sheriffs Office.

PRESENTATION:

Margaret Thigpen, Director of the Convention & Visitors Bureau gave an overview of the economic impact travel and tourism had for Whitfield County in 2022.

Chairman's Report: Chairman Jensen noted that the current 2020 SPLOST will end October of 2024. Jensen further noted that a SPLOST Committee will be chosen to review potential projects and if any Citizens are interested in being on the Committee to contact County Administrator Robert Sivick. Members will be appointed at the next BOC meeting in July. Jensen also spoke about the amount of grants Whitfield County received in 2022, over 21 grants totaling \$6.2 M, currently the County has received \$4.08 M for the month of June.

Report from Commissioners:

Commissioner Jones, Staten and Thomas did not have any updates to report for this month. Commissioner Robbins reported that the Dalton-Whitfield Library has begun their summer reading program and will be hosting STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) events throughout the County Schools.

County Administrator Report:

County Administrator Robert Sivick noted that the Whitfield County Joint Comprehensive Stakeholder Committee meeting will be held on June 15, at the Cossen Community Center at Riverbend Park. Sivick also informed the audience that the Conasauga Shakespeare Coalition will be performing Two Gentlemen of Verona on June 15 and 16 at Praters Mill. Sivick also noted Whitfield County EMA will be giving away weather radios at the Senior Center to County Citizens on June 21 beginning at 9:30 a.m.

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April 2023 Financial Statement: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the April Financial Statement as presented by Comptroller James Garvin. Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) collections: April collections of \$1,156,696 were 4.5% greater than budgeted collections of \$1,106,858. This was 14.75% less than March collections of \$1,358,718. YTD collections of \$4,740,389 were 2.75% greater than PY collections of \$4,611,196 for the same time frame. *TAVT collections: April collections of \$534,151 were 2.25% greater than March collections of \$522,568. April collections include annual IRP receipts of \$106,893. Net of these, collections were 18.25% less than March. YTD collections of \$1,845,336 were 3.25% greater than PY collections of \$1,788,863 for the same time frame. YTD actual revenues of \$13,406,278 were greater than projected revenues of \$12,030,389 by \$1,375,889 or 11.50%. YTD actual expenditures of \$17,274,976 were greater than projected expenditures of \$17,235,101 by \$39,877 or .25%. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Thomas, Jones, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

Public Comment:

Vicky Alt addressed the Board opposing the renewal of the County Administrators contract.

Dalton-Whitfield-Varnell Unified Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments: Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the text amendments to the Unified Zoning Ordinance. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Thomas, Jones, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

Resolution – Reverend Clayton Brown Memorial Road: Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to designate a portion Beaverdale Road, NE from Cleveland Highway to 735 Beaverdale Road, NE with the Honorary Name of “Reverend Clayton Brown Memorial Road”. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

County Administrator Contract Renewal: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to renew Robert Sivick’s employee contract with Whitfield County for 2 (two) years. The contract also increases his current salary 5%. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten, Thomas and Robbins in agreement.

Alcohol Beverage License Application: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to deny the alcohol beverage application for AARYA Food & Fuel Inc., d/b/a Kwik Ser 4 located at 2900 Airport Rd due to distance requirements. The motion was approved 3-1, with Commissioners Robbins, Thomas and Jones in agreement. Commissioner Staten was in dissention.

State Grant Acceptance Edwards Park: Motion was approved by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to accept the Improving Neighborhood Outcomes in Disproportionately Impacted Communities grant for the rehab of the Edwards Park tennis and pickle ball courts. This award is being funded with the State’s federal ARPA dollars. The total grant award is \$878,994 and the County will use \$100,000 of its own ARPA funds as match. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten, Jones and Thomas in agreement.

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State Grant Acceptance Praters Mill South Side: Motion was approved by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to accept the Improving Neighborhood Outcomes in Disproportionately Impacted Communities grant for the improvements to the south side of Prater's Mill Historic Site which will include parking, restrooms, and a walking track. This award is being funded with the State's federal ARPA dollars. The total grant award is \$1,909,341 and the County will use \$100,000 of its own ARPA funds as match. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten, Jones and Thomas in agreement.

State Grant Acceptance Judicial ARPA: Motion was approved by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to accept a State ARPA grant from the Judicial Council of Georgia for the Conasauga Circuit. The award amount is \$150,000 for audio/visual improvements at the Murray County Courthouse. Murray County will be responsible for all expenditures. Whitfield County will act as the fiscal agent and will request grant funds and reimburse Murray County when funds are received. The grant period is June 1 through December 31, 2023. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten, Jones and Thomas in agreement.

Rocky Face Ridge – Grant Resolution: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the contract with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources for a grant of financial assistance of \$50,000 for the Rocky Face Ridge Summit project. Whitfield County applied for this funding in 2020 for the development of a trail to the summit at Rocky Face Ridge Park. For the grant, a 50% match is required. Motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Thomas and Robbins in agreement.

GA State Public Safety and Community Violence Reduction Grant: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to accept Public Safety and Community Violence Reduction Grant that is being funded by the State of Georgia's ARPA funds. The County was awarded \$1,246,837.90. The grant will fund the salary and benefits required to hire law enforcement employees for the same positions that existed on January 27, 2020 but were unfilled as of March 3, 2021 up to a maximum amount of \$1.5 million. This is not funding for newly created positions. If awarded, the funding would start sometime in 2023, depending on when the employees were hired, and would end October 31, 2026. At that time it would become the responsibility of the County to maintain the funding. No match is required or scored. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Robbins, Jones and Thomas in agreement.

IT Website Redesign Bid Award: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to award the bid to Revize to redesign the County's website and host for \$82,900. Revize stood out giving a fresh design without the use of templates. They are also providing features that can replace existing services and add many new features that will increase citizen engagement. The goal of the project is to have an informative yet easy to navigate Web site. Revize's proposal includes a free redesign in year four. The 1st year cost of \$82,900.00 includes the annual fee of \$12,700 which is for tech support, CMS software updates, unlimited users, unlimited training, web site health checks, and web hosting (unlimited storage space). Backup and security are also included. The cost of year two and ongoing is \$12,700. Revize has designed many Georgia City's and County's Websites and they have the understanding of how local government functions. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones, Staten and Thomas in agreement.

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Sheriff's Department – Vehicle Surplus: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the following vehicles for surplus and to auction on GovDeals.com after checking the needs of other county departments. The following vehicles are being replaced with new vehicles. Vehicle Surplus – 11F02-2FABP7BV6BX157368 2011 Ford Crown Victoria 132065 mileage, 11F15-2FABP7BY8BX157372 2011 Ford Crown Victoria 161921 Mileage, 10F42-2FABP7BV6AX143761 2010 Ford Crown Victoria 155435 mileage, 13F33-1FAHP2M8XDG123298 2013 Ford Taurus 181553 mileage, 13F29-1FAHP2M88DG123297 2013 Ford Taurus 145707 mileage, 15F121-1FAHP2MK1FG133698 2015 Ford Taurus 120020 mileage, 13F20-1FAHP2M84DG123295 2013 Ford Taurus 132118 mileage, 14F55-1FAHP2MK4EG1 64717 2014 Ford Taurus 145858 mileage, 01F78-1FTRF18WX1NB31204 2001 Ford FI50 250535 miles. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Thomas, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

Public Works – Vehicle Surplus: Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve to declare surplus and auction on govdeals.com a 2012 Ford F-250 crew cab 4wd s/n 1FD7W2B60CEC12703. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Thomas, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

State Contract Extension for Personnel at DA's Office: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the State of Georgia Prosecuting Attorney's Council of Georgia State Paid Reimbursed Personnel Contract. Whitfield County has chosen to continue their agreement with the Prosecuting Attorney's Council of Georgia for the services of the District Attorney's Office for the Conasauga Judicial Circuit. The contract is an extension of the current PAC contract. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

Parks & Recreation – Edwards Park Sewer Upgrade: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to approve repairs on sewer pumps over 20 years old at Edwards Park restrooms not to exceed \$50,000 from the contingency fund. One has been rebuilt but now needs repairs again. Dalton Utilities inspected and recommended replacements. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones, Staten and Thomas in agreement.

Fire Department – Station 1 Bathroom Remodel: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to approve the low bid from Graphite Construction for demolition of the existing bathroom and construction new restrooms in the amount of \$56,222.09 and Alternate of \$15,258.00 if needed. This is a SPLOST 2020 project. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones, Thomas and Staten in agreement.

Rezoning Recommendation: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the following recommendations of the planning commission approving the rezoning requests of; **Garland Barnes to rezone from Low-Density Single-Family Residential (R-2) to Rural Residential (R-5) a tract of land totaling 1.52-acres located at 400 Sam Love Road. Parcel (12-150-07-000), Nicholas Tucker to rezone from Low-Density Single-Family Residential (R-2) to General Agriculture (GA) a tract of land totaling 20-acres located along Bowers Road. Parcel (09-036-07-000), Danny Edwards to rezone from Rural Residential (R-5) to General Commercial (C-2) a tract of land totaling 0.81 acres located at 211 Florence Ave, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-296-02-047) (County) (3-0). First heard on March 27 by Planning and Zoning. Additional surveys and plans were submitted at May 22 meeting.** The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten, Thomas and Robbins in agreement.

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PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Patel voiced his disagreement in the denial of the alcohol application for AARYA Food & Fuel Inc., d/b/a Kwik Ser 4 located at 2900 Airport Rd.

ADJOURN Unanimous



BLANCA CARDONA, COUNTY CLERK



JEVIN JENSEN, CHAIRMAN
WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

DATE: 7/10/2023