

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 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 approve the agenda as presented. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the September 11, 2023 Regular Business Meeting Minutes and September 15, 2023 Special Called Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

Chairman Jensen recognized Vickie Davis as Employee of the Month for August 2023. Ms. Davis works in the Transit Department. Ms. Davis was unable to attend tonight's meeting and her certificate will be presented at the November regular business meeting.

Public Hearings:

Chairman Jensen called for a Public Hearing to hear any comments or concerns the public may have regarding alcohol license applications for the following businesses:

1. Dawnville Petro Inc. d/b/a St. Clair's, located at 1507 Dawnville Rd.
2. Beaverdale Petro Inc. d/b/a Five Points, located at 1281 Beaverdale Rd.
3. Saku 1971 Inc. d/b/a/ Food Mart located at 3385 Airport Rd.
4. Family Dollar Stores of Georgia LLC d/b/a Family Dollar #3983 located at 2709 Chattanooga Rd, Rocky Face.

There were no comments or concerns voiced regarding any of the applications. Chairman Jensen then closed the public hearings

Chairman's Report: Chairman Jensen noted that the County is continuing to apply for and have won several grants to make the county better. Jensen also noted that several public works safety projects have been completed.

Report from Commissioners:

Commissioner Jones, Staten, Robbins and Thomas did not have any updates to report for this month.

County Administrator Report:

County Administrator addressed the Board on the following; SPLOST Committee Meetings Progress and EMA has received a grant to purchase 600 additional weather radios. Sivick also noted that the Senior Center's attendance has gone up 121% increase from Jan 2023 to Sept 2023.

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August 2023 Financial Statement: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the August Financial Statement as presented by Chief Financial Officer Debbie Godfrey. Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) collections: August collections of \$1,219,665 were 10.19% greater than budgeted collections of \$1,106,858. This was 30.03% less than July collections of \$1,743,098 (which included a one-time collection of \$577,772). YTD collections of \$10,161,033 were 7.53% greater than PY collections of \$9,449,155 for the same time frame. TAVT collections: August collections of \$539,081 were 34.43% greater than July collections of \$401,006. YTD collections of \$3,738,775 were 6.91% greater than PY collections of \$3,497,018 for the same time frame. YTD actual revenues of \$27,246,948 were greater than projected revenues of \$23,790,919 by \$3,456,029 or 14.53%. YTD actual expenditures of \$35,914,876 were greater than projected expenditures of \$35,528,523 by \$386,354 or 1.09%. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

Public Comment:

No comments.

Alcohol Beverage License Applications: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the alcohol beverage applications for: Beaverdale Petro Inc. d/b/a Five Points, located at 1281 Beaverdale Rd., 2. Dawnville Petro Inc. d/b/a St. Clair's, located at 1507 Dawnville Rd., 3. Saku 1971 Inc. d/b/a/ Food Mart located at 3385 Airport Rd., 4. Family Dollar Stores of Georgia LLC d/b/a Family Dollar #3983 located at 2709 Chattanooga Rd, Rocky Face. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

Ratify – Change Order for Westside Park Lights: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to approve the change order request for \$61,000 with Musco Lighting. The project involves increasing light levels to 50 foot candles and added security and walking path lighting. The total cost is an additional \$61,000. This change order would increase the contract amount from \$307,000 to \$368,000.00. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

Agreement for Mowing at Clisby Austin House: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the agreement with David Holcomb and Justin Wills to mow the Tunnel Hill Battlefield property located within the City of Tunnel Hill. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Thomas, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

Resolution – Improve Mental Health Services for Georgia Citizens: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to approve the resolution that urges the Governor and General Assembly to continue efforts in the 2024 Session of the Georgia General Assembly to enhance Georgia citizens' access to vital mental health services, including state, additional co-responder units, and other resources to assist those with mental health and substance abuse disorders. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten, Robbins and Thomas in agreement.

Approve Engineering Services for Prater's Mill Project: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the bid from Gresham Smith for \$159,000.00. In June, the BOC accepted an Improving Neighborhood Outcomes in Disproportionately Impacted Communities grant from the State for enhancements to the Prater's Mill Historic Site. The first step in this project is to procure engineering and architectural services for the project. A Request for Proposals was advertised beginning August 30, 2023 on the County website, was advertised in the local paper on

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August 30th and again on September 6th, and was posted on the Georgia Procurement Registry. On the close date of September 27th, only one firm had submitted a proposal - Gresham Smith. The County met all the requirements and the County has done business with them in the past. Their fixed fee is \$159,000 which is in line with our project budget for these services. The grant will fund 100% of this fee. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Thomas, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

COVID-19 Mitigation in Georgia Confinement Facilities Grant: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the COVID-19 Mitigation in Georgia Confinement Facilities Grant. This is a grant program administered by Georgia Southern in conjunction with the Georgia Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control. Per grant guidelines we are allowed reimbursement up to \$100,000 for eligible expenses based on the size of the Whitfield County Detention Facility. We received the same grant in 2022 for \$50,000. No match is required. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Thomas, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

Grant Acceptance – 2023 COPS Technology and Equipment Grant Application: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to accept the federal COPS Technology and Equipment Grant for \$75,000 to purchase a mass spectrometer for the drug unit. The estimated cost of the equipment is \$93,775 and the additional funding required will come from the Sheriff's Forfeiture Fund. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Robbins and Thomas in agreement.

Agreement with NWGRC (Northwest Georgia Regional Commission) for Senior Center Programming/Funding: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to partner with the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission to provide meals, nutrition education, and wellness programming. The MOA outlines this partnership and the responsibilities of the County and of the NWGRC. As part of this agreement, the NWGRC will reimburse the County \$8 for each qualified meal. If approved, this agreement and funding will remain in effect through June 30, 2024 or upon exhaustion of funds. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioner Robbins, Staten, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

Agreement with JFP Properties Group/Coahulla Creek Villages: Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Jones to postpone this item. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioner Robbins, Staten, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

Finance – Budget Amendment for Wells Fargo Utilities & Rent: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve a budget amendment in the budget for the utilities line by \$243,884 and amend the budget for the lease payments by \$30,480. The Wells Fargo Utilities Expense line is over-budget by \$210,507 currently due to the true-up on actual utilities expense from the prior year. This is a requirement of the lease agreement. Also, we have 2 more months to pay at \$16,688.34 per month for the 2023 year. The Wells Fargo Lease Expense line is over-budget by \$20,320 due to the increased lease payment of \$5,080 since July. There will be 2 more months of this increased payment for 2023. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Robbins and Thomas in agreement.

Budget Amendment for Human Resources: Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve a budget amendment for the Human Resources budget for the following items: 1) \$34,160 - Bakertilly Contract -> Search Company, 2) \$20,433 - Perf Pro Software -> For 2023. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Robbins and Thomas in agreement.

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Information Technology – Storage Array Replacement: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve purchasing the HPE Alletra 5030 storage arrays from Wrightcore for \$138,470.36. The existing storage arrays (HPE Nimble) are going End-of-Life and Support the middle of 2024. These arrays are located at the Admin data center and at the 911 center. These are critical to our virtual environment because they contain all the servers and data for the County. We submitted a capital request for 2024, but to take advantage of the year end pricing we can save \$19,673.00 by purchasing before HPE's year-end in October. The original quote for 2024 was \$158,143.00 and new quote is \$138,470.36. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Thomas, Jones and Staten in agreement.

Information Technology – Cisco UCS Server Replacement: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve replacing voice servers in October 2023 to take advantage of year-end savings through Disys Solutions for \$65,109.18. Cisco Voice UCS servers are going end-of-life and support in October 2023. Voice is vital to the daily County operations. We originally put this as a capital request for 2024 which totaled \$75,734.58. We asked for a new quote since Cisco's year end is in October. The updated quote totaled \$65,109.18. A savings of \$10,625.40. Managing our own voice system is still the most cost effective method even replacing hardware every 5 to 6 years. Disys Solutions is a state contract vendor. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Thomas, Jones and Staten in agreement.

Information Technology – Cyber Security PEN Test: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve Global Perceptive Solutions, Inc. assessing the County's network security controls and protective measures for \$12,950.00. The IT Department seeks to have an outside vendor scan both inside and outside networks to identify and correct any vulnerabilities. It will also scan firewalls, servers, and sampling of workstations. WiFi would also be tested. The scans would be from inside the network and outside of the network. Testing to see if domain admin rights can be gained undetected. Due to the sensitive nature of network security we have selected the same vendor we used in 2021. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Thomas, Jones and Staten in agreement.

Engineering – Design and Installation of Traffic Signal Beaverdale Rd: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve North Cherokee Electric for installation & design for this intersection for \$151,575.00. In the interest of the safety of the traveling public, and to achieve expedited installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of Beaverdale Rd and Boyles Mill/Goodhope Rd, County Administrator Sivick has declared this item to be an emergency purchase. In anticipation of the possible need for a signal, the attached quote was obtained from North Cherokee Electric in July. At that time, the decision of the County Engineer was to wait until other intersection improvements were completed and gauge their effectiveness before deciding whether to install a traffic signal, which presents a new traffic pattern with sometimes undesirable side effects. However, in light of continued accidents due to increased driver speeds and driver errors with regard to stop signs and a "caution" light, it has become necessary to install this traffic signal in order to control the flow of traffic through the intersection by removing certain driver decisions. The presence of the signal will also allow the enforceable speed limit on Beaverdale Road to be reduced within a certain distance of the signal. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Robbins, Jones and Thomas in agreement.

Engineering – High Density file Storage for District Attorney: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the purchase of the high density file storage from Ernie Morris for \$32,181.24. The Victim Witness area of the District Attorney's office needs high-

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density file storage in order to keep and maintain an ever-increasing number of files in their file room. The purchase of these storage units was planned for the Courthouse renovation project, but the purchase was not made then. In order to complete the renovation of their area, Victim Witness needs these high-density files. Ernie Morris is the only vendor we could locate and obtain a quote from. Their quote is for \$32,181.24, which includes delivery and installation. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Thomas and Robbins in agreement.

Engineering – Re-roofing Law Enforcement Center Contract Amendment: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the change order for \$30,991.00 and adjust the contract value to \$1,934,701. Upon removing the existing roof membrane flashings from the walls, the contractor discovered that it was glued to gypsum sheathing board. When removing this membrane it peels the gypsum board facer off. This gypsum board is no longer an acceptable surface for installation of new membrane per the manufacturer's warranty requirements as the new membrane needs to be fully adhered and attached at the base 12" on center and the metal studs are on 16" centers, thus requiring plywood to be installed. The cost to install plywood to the required walls is \$30,991.00. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Thomas, Staten, Jones, and Robbins in agreement.

Rezoning Recommendation: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the following recommendation of the planning commission approving the rezoning request of; **Danny and Phyllis Grant to rezone from General Commercial (C-2) to Rural Residential (R-5) a tract of land totaling .42 acres located at 1638 Old Mill Creek Road, Rocky Face, Georgia. Parcel (12-306-18-000).** The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten Jones, Thomas and Robbins in agreement.

Rezoning Recommendation: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the following recommendation of the planning commission approving the rezoning request of; **request of Connie Middleton to rezone from Estate Residential (R-1) to General Agricultural (GA) a tract of land totaling 231.57 acres located at 389 Coley CLF, Rocky Face, Georgia. Parcel (12-302-03-000) to include the following conditions 1. No commercial poultry or swine production. 2. No manufactured homes.** The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Thomas and Robbins in agreement.

City of Varnell Paving Request: Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the County Public Works department to help repair and/or repave Cemetery Road in Varnell. Varnell does not have Public Works department and will reimburse Whitfield County up to \$25,000 for materials. Varnell approved 4-1 vote in September. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Thomas, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

Indigent Burial Rates: Motion was approved by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Staten to amend the Indigent Burial Ordinance. This amendment sets the rates as follows: 1. \$800 for cremation and \$2,100 for burial with plot, which the county will pay if no family members are found or the family has no funds to pay for the funeral. The amendment also states that a property search be conducted and to file liens for known relatives, and if any are found to allow the County to recoup costs in the future. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Thomas, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

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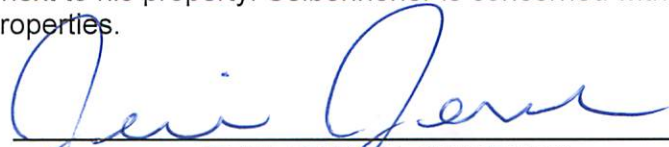
Engineering – MicroSurfacing Bid Award: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to Award the bid to Asphalt Paving Systems for an amount up to \$650,000. Micro-Surface is an asphalt product that seals and provides a new driving surface on the road while extending the life of the underlying pavement for about 7 years on average. Public Works has identified approximately 10 miles of roads for which this product is a good option to preserve and extend the life of existing asphalt before a full resurfacing will need to be done. Bids were advertised for 30 days and 2 bids were received. The low bid was from Asphalt Paving Systems for \$650,000 at \$4.82 per square yard for the Micro Surfacing and \$7.67 per gallon for asphalt tack coat. A requirement of the bid is to complete paving by the end of the year unless weather prevents it. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioner Staten, Robbins, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

Magistrate Court – Private Probation Services Contract: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to enter into contract with Georgia Probation Services, Inc. for general probation services, fine collection services and other probations services for persons convicted of certain misdemeanors in Magistrate Court. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten, Robbins and Thomas in agreement.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Gary Seibenhener who resides at 3769 Cleveland Hwy addressed the Board about the possibility of industrial poultry houses being constructed next to his property. Seibenhener is concerned with the environmental impacts to the surrounding properties.

ADJOURN Unanimous



JEVIN JENSEN, CHAIRMAN
WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



BLANCA CARDONA, COUNTY CLERK

DATE: 11/13/2023