

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2017, AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING #2, 214 W. KING 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:

R. Lynette Laughter, Chairman
Harold Brooker, Vice Chairman
Barry W. Robbins, Member
Roger Crossen, Member
Greg Jones, Member

Others Present:

Mark Gibson, County Administrator
Robert Smalley, Attorney
Citizens
Department Heads
Press

Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to amend the agenda. One (1) item was added from the potential additional items; (1. Region 1 Advisory Council Dept. of Behavioral Health & Development Disabilities -Stefanie Bramblett term to expire October, 2018). The motion was approved 4-0.

Chairman Laughter recognized Mrs. Beth Gomez as Employee of the Month for October 2017. Mrs. Gomez works in the Sheriff's Office and was recently named the 2017 Whitfield County Employee of the Year.

Government Finance Officers Association – Distinguished Budget Presentation Award:

Chairman Laughter presented Finance Director, Alicia Vaughn and Carol Roberts, Budget/Accounting Analyst with the GFOA'S Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. This award is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting and represents significant achievement by Whitfield County. The award reflects the commitment of the governing body and staff to meeting the highest principles of governmental budgeting. The Board congratulated Mrs. Vaughn and staff for their achievement.

Public Works:

Public Works Director Dewayne Hunt presented the Board with a simulated refund check of \$549,286 from the 2016 and 2017 LMIG's 30% match.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

- 1. Re-Appointment to the Dalton/Whitfield Joint Development Authority:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to re-appoint Mr. David Jolly to another two-year term. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins, Crossen and Brooker in agreement.
- 2. Re-Appointment to the Dalton/Whitfield Joint Development Authority:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to re-appoint Mr. Frank Robertson to another one-year term as the City/County appointee. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Brooker, Crossen and Robbins in agreement.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to approve the Budget Work Session Minutes of November 13, 2017, the Regular Business Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2017, the November 27, 2017 Work Session

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Minutes and the Budget Public Hearing Minutes of December 4, 2017. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Crossen, Jones, Brooker and Robbins in agreement.

FOR CONSIDERATION

1. **Acceptance of Donated Property:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to approve the property deed of gift from Betty Jane Edwards Foster and Smith Foster. The donation of the property is adjacent to Edwards Park and is to be used for soccer fields and related appurtenances and infrastructure. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Brooker, Crossen and Jones in agreement.
2. **Alcohol License Renewals - 2018:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to approve the 2018 Alcohol License Renewals. Exhibit "A" is a list of establishments currently in operation and holding a 2017 Alcohol License. There were not any reports of any violations regarding these establishments. The Accounting Department is in the process of doing criminal background investigations on all applicants to ensure there has been no change in status over the past year. The Accounting Department asked that all renewals be contingent upon a clear criminal history and payment of fees. It was noted that a status change would require further action by the Board. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins, Jones and Crossen in agreement.
3. **October 2017 Financial Statement:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to approve the October 2017 Financial Statement as presented by Finance Director, Alicia Vaughn. In discussion, Mrs. Vaughn reported that Local Option Sales Tax for October 2017 is \$784,264. October 2017 Local Option Sales Tax collections show a decrease of 3.2% compared to September 2017 collections. October 2017 collections show a decrease of 4.7% compared to October 2016 of \$822,758. October 2017 Year to date Local Option Sales Tax collections of \$8,113,802 show an increase of 5.5% compared to Year to date October 2016 and are \$20,468 over budget. Year to date actual Revenues of \$21,045,917 for October 2017 are over year to date projected revenues of \$19,783,178 by 6%. Year to date actual Expenditures of \$35,256,672 for October 2017 are under Year to date projected expenditures of \$36,389,738 by 3%. TAVT collections for October 2017 were \$131,779 budgeted revenues were \$143,750. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Crossen, Jones, Brooker and Robbins in agreement.
4. **Contract for Superior Court – Court Reporter:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the Independent Contractor's Agreement with Whitfield County and Connie L. Sargeant to perform the Duties of Court Reporter for Whitfield County Superior Court Judge Wilbanks. The motion was approved 4-0 with Commissioners Brooker, Jones, Robbins and Crossen in agreement.
5. **Resolution – Georgia Recreational Trails Program:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to adopt the resolution authorizing the submission of the Georgia Recreational Trails Program Grant for the Buzzards Roost/Grant Farm property. This grant application is for funding from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Recreational Trails Program in order to construct 8 miles of mountain bike trails and a parking lot. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Crossen, Brooker and Robbins in agreement.

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6. **2018 Budget Adoption:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to adopt the 2018 budget as presented by Finance Director Alicia Vaughn. The total general fund revenues and fund balance for FY2018 is \$47,352,857 with a \$608,934 surplus, special revenue funds are \$13,696,035 with a \$374,243 surplus, capital project funds of \$27,475,463, debt service fund of \$610,394, and proprietary funds of \$842,860. District Attorney Bert Poston addressed the Board in regards to jail costs for the County. In discussion Chairman Laughter noted that there had been a change to the DA's budget that was posted initially and the DA's budget that's presented today. Chairman Laughter noted that the Board had previously looked into the possibility of an ankle monitoring program to reduce the jail population and to also change a part-time position into a full-time position to reduce costs in the DA's budget. District Attorney Bert Poston noted that jail costs are driven by jail population and that around ten years ago there was a jail population crisis and an ankle monitor program was put in place. However, the caseload began to go down and the program was ended. Poston noted that recently the DA's caseload has gone up 20% and if the jail population can't be controlled that would require an expansion of the jail and would entail construction costs. The Board advised DA Poston if the full-time position would not produce any cost savings that the position would convert back to a part-time status. Poston is in agreement and will revert the position without attrition. Chairman Laughter then asked if the Board had any further comments on the 2018 budget. Commissioner Robbins noted that he would like to look further into what can be done with the Convention Center although local legislation prevents any cuts in funding. There may be other avenues that could be explored. The motion was approved 4-1, with Chairman Laughter also voting to approve the budget as presented and Commissioners Crossen, Jones and Brooker in agreement. Commissioner Robbins was in dissention.
7. **Fire Department – Revised Automatic Aid Agreement w/Catoosa County:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the revised Automatic Aid agreement with Catoosa County. The original agreement was approved at the August 14, 2017 Board of Commissioners meeting and then was forwarded to the ISO (Insurance Services Office) who requested additional verbiage in the number of responders. The item was updated with "Catoosa Emergency Services will respond a minimum of four (4) personnel" and "Whitfield County Fire Department will respond a minimum of four (4) personnel," in two respective places in the document. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Jones, Robbins and Crossen in agreement.
8. **Fire Department – Automatic Aid Agreement w/Walker County:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the Automatic Aid agreement with Walker County. This agreement will enable both departments to get emergency responders on scene in the quickest and safest manner, the covered area will border fire stations No. 6 and No. 9. The specific streets will be determined by both respective Fire Chief's and the information will be coordinated with the 9-1-1 centers. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Jones, Robbins and Crossen in agreement.
9. **Public Works Department 2018 Bids:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve all of the following Public Works bids for 2018. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Brooker, Crossen and Robbins in agreement.

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- a. Boot Allowance Program – Approve the bid from Discounts Sporting Goods Dalton, Georgia. Allowance per county employee is \$125.00, anything above the allowance amount is the responsibility of the employee.
- b. Concrete and Concrete Accessories – Public Works only received one bid from Murray Mix of Chatsworth for these items.
- c. Tongue and Groove Concrete Pipe Bid – Public works received one bid from Fronterra Precast for these items.
- d. Crushed Stone – Public Works bid out crushed stone to be used in the Public Works Department and only received one bid form Vulcan Material in Dalton, Georgia.
- e. Gas and Oil – Petroleum Traders Corporation of Fort Wayne, Indiana was the low bidder for gasoline in the amount of \$1.0158 per gallon and diesel in the amount of \$1.0153 per gallon.
- f. Rental of Tandem Truck and Operator –Jackson Trucking of Chatsworth, Georgia was the sole bidder for these items.
- g. Road Striping – Public Works bid out road striping to be used in the Public Works Department. Parker Traffic Marking of Cleveland, Georgia was the sole bidder.

10. **Whitfield County Soil Erosion, Sedimentation and Pollution Control Ordinance:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to approve the revised definition in the Whitfield County Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division and Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission require Local Issuing Authorities to update their soil erosion ordinances to meet the State’s General Construction Permit and the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act. The definition of Final Stabilization needs to be revised to meet the State’s minimum requirements. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners, Brooker, Jones, Crossen and Robbins in agreement.

11. **Amendment to the Whitfield County Code of Ordinances – Chapter 7.5:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve an amendment to Article III of Chapter 7.5 of the Whitfield County Code of Ordinances, entitled “Noise,” by amending section 7.5-41(c), to add a new subsection (4) therein to provide that agricultural processes or agricultural activities within agriculturally zoned parcels shall be otherwise exempted from the provisions of that section; and for other purposes. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Brooker, Robbins and Crossen in agreement.

12. **Dalton-Whitfield CDC – Debt Repayment:**

Motion was made Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to approve to pay off half of the debt that was created when the Dalton-Whitfield Community Development Corporation authority fell behind on their reimbursement payments to the City of Dalton for salary and benefits for their leased employees. The City of Dalton and Whitfield County jointly fund the DWCDC and Dalton City will pay half of the debt and the County will pay the other half. The County also reduced their funding request for FY2018 by \$7,500.00 which is half of the \$15,000.00 that they were paying each month to the

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City of Dalton for the debt. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Brooker, Crossen and Robbins in agreement.

13. **Lease Agreement – Ruby Falls Billboard:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to enter into a billboard lease agreement with Ruby Falls, LLC for \$1,200 annually. The billboard is located at the east side of I-75 at mile marker 336 on Whitfield County property. The lease states that Whitfield County will be able to place an ad of their choice on the billboard one month per quarter or up to four times a year. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Crossen, Brooker, Jones and Robbins in agreement.
14. **Re-Appointment to the Region One Planning Board of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to appoint Stefanie Bramblett to fill the unexpired term of Pam Massingale to expire October, 2018. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins, Crossen and Jones in agreement.

PUBLIC COMMENT

David Pennington came forward to ask for what the revenues were five years ago and what they are now. Pennington also asked to see the total amount that has been spent on Carbondale Business Park.

Cathy Holmes came forward to address the Board. Holmes noted that the Tax Assessors Offices' assessment process is flawed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to enter into an Executive Session in order to discuss Property Acquisition, and Personnel. Present for the meeting were, Chairman R. Lynette Laughter, Commissioners Jones, Robbins, Crossen, Brooker, County Administrator Mark Gibson, County Attorney Robert Smalley, Fire Chief Edward O'Brien, Human Resources Director Jackie Carlo and County Clerk Blanca Cardona. Jackie Carlo was not present during the property acquisition portion of the executive session and Edward O'Brien and Blanca Cardona were not present during the personnel portion of the executive session. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Crossen, Brooker and Jones in agreement.

Motion was then made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commission Crossen to come out of Executive Session. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Crossen, Brooker and Jones in agreement.

ADJOURN Unanimous

R. LYNETTE LAUGHTER, CHAIRMAN
WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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BLANCA CARDONA, COUNTY CLERK

DATE: / /