

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD MONDAY, JUNE 12, 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
Greg Jones, Member
Roger Crossen, Member
Barry W. Robbins, Member

Others Present:

Mark Gibson, County Administrator
Dan Strain, Attorney
Citizens
Department Heads
Press

Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Jones to amend the agenda. The motion was approved 4-0.

2 items were added from the potential additional items; (1. Discussion re: Animal Shelter, 2. John Carmichael)

Motion was then made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the amended agenda. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones, Brooker and Crossen in agreement. Approval of the agenda was unanimous.

Mr. Justin Brown was named the Whitfield County Employee of the Month for April 2017. Mr. Justin Brown works in the Whitfield County Sheriff's Office.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

1. **Re-appointment to the Whitfield County Merit System Personnel Board:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to re-appoint Jeff Riddlebarger to the Whitfield County Merit System Personnel Board for a term of five additional years. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins, Crossen and Jones in agreement.
2. **Re-appointment to the Whitfield County Department of Family and Children's Services Board of Directors:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to re-appoint James Stephens a five-year term to expire on June 30, 2022. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Crossen, Brooker, Jones, and Robbins in agreement.
3. **Re-appointment to the Dalton-Whitfield Library Board of Trustees:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to re-appoint John Hutcheson to the Dalton-Whitfield Library Board of Trustees to a three-year term to expire June 2020. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Jones, Crossen and Robbins in agreement.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to approve the Regular Business Meeting Minutes of May 8, 2017, Special Called Meeting May 22, 2017, Work Session Minutes of May 22, 2017 and the Special Called Meeting Minutes of May 30, 2017. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Crossen, Jones, Brooker and Robbins in agreement.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Chairman Laughter called a Public Hearing for the closing and abandoning a portion of Covington Drive.

Tom Minor who represents the Howalts spoke in favor of the road closing. Minor noted that no property owners or residents of adjacent properties have offered any objection to the closing of the portion of Covington Drive.

FOR CONSIDERATION

1. **Close and Abandon a Portion of Covington Drive:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to execute the Decision/Certification documents in order to close and abandon and to convey to adjacent owners a portion of Covington Drive with conditions, the motion at the May 8, 2017 Board of Commissioners regular business meeting a petition was accepted to close and abandon Covington Drive. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Jones, Crossen and Robbins in agreement. **(SEE EXHIBIT "A")**
2. **Superior Court – Drug Court Grant:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to approve the Conasauga Drug Court Grant in the amount of \$357,651 to cover the costs of the Drug Court. There is a \$39,739 match which would be made from expenditures out of the DATE funds (the coordinator's salary). The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins, Crossen and Jones in agreement.
3. **Superior Court – Technology Grant for Drug Court:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the Supplemental SubGrant award in the amount of \$2,499. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins, Crossen and Jones in agreement.
4. **Fire Department – Ratify Contract with NOVA for GeoTechnical Services:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to ratify the contract with NOVA for GeoTechnical Services. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Brooker, Crossen and Robbins in agreement.
5. **City of Varnell Annexation Request - Tax parcel 11-265-01-001:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Jones for no land use classification objection to the City of Varnell regarding tax parcel 11-265-01-001. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Crossen, Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
6. **Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Dalton – 911 Dispatch Services:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement between Whitfield County and the City of Dalton to provide

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dispatching services to the City of Dalton Police Department. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Crossen, Jones and Robbins in agreement. **(SEE EXHIBIT "B")**

- 7. April 2017 Financial Statement:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to approve the April 2017 Financial Statement as presented by Finance Director, Alicia Vaughn. In discussion, Mrs. Vaughn reported that Local Option Sales Tax for April 2017 is \$820,072. LOST percentage 2017 = 62.653%, Local Option Sales Tax for April 2017 show a decrease of .8% compared to Local Option Sales Tax Collections for March 2017; Local Option Sales Tax collections for April 2017 show an increase of .6% compared to April 2016 collections. April 2017 Year to date Local Option Sales Tax collections of \$3,167,379 are down 4.5% compared to Year to date April 2016. Year to date actual Revenues of \$9,570,079 for April 2017 are over year to date projected revenues of \$9,103,176 by 5%. Year to date actual Expenditures of \$12,980,777 for April 2017 are under Year to date projected expenditures of \$13,618,197 by 5%. TAVT collections for April 2017 were \$168,525, budgeted revenues were \$143,750. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Crossen, Jones, Brooker and Robbins in agreement. **(SEE EXHIBIT "C")**
- 8. Resolution – Tax Anticipation Note (TAN):** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins seconded by Commissioner Crossen to approve the Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) Resolution to regulate and provide for the issuance of the Whitfield County General Obligation Tax Anticipation Note, Series 2017 in the Maximum principal amount of \$4,428,000. The bid was awarded to First Tennessee Bank. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Crossen, Robbins and Jones in agreement. **(SEE EXHIBIT "D")**
- 9. Sheriff's Office – Camera Systems for Eight (8) Vehicles:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to award the bid to West Chatham Warning Devices for \$37,200. This purchase will be made with SPLOST funds. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Jones, Crossen and Robbins in agreement.
- 10. Sheriff's Office - Purchase of Two (2) 2017 Full-size SUV, 4x4 Vehicles:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the purchase of two (2) Full-Size SUV, 4x4 Vehicles for the Sheriff's office for \$78,252.00. It was the Sheriff's Office recommendation to purchase these vehicles from Hardy Chevrolet on Georgia State Contract at \$78,252. This purchase will be made with SPLOST funds. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins, Crossen and Jones in agreement
- 11. Sheriff's Office – Accept Donation and Purchase Ti Training System:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve a donation in the amount of \$85,000.00 from the Mashburn Foundation. With this donation a TI Training Simulator can be purchased to be used for all types of scenario decision making in Law Enforcement Training. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Crossen, Robbins, and Jones in agreement.
- 12. Public Works – Storm Drain Liner Projects (East Nance Springs Rd & Eastbrook Dr.):** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to approve bid from Chase Reline in the amount of \$117,809. WCPW requested bids for two culvert repair projects on East Nance Springs Rd and Eastbrook Dr., two (2) bids were received, Chase Reline Inc. \$117,809 and JPR Southeast LLC \$72,150. Chase Reline Inc. worked on a project in the past for WCPW on Greeson Rd in 2016, and met all requirements on the bid, JPR Southeast LLC did

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not meet the specification required to complete each of the two projects. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Jones, Brooker, Crossen and Robbins in agreement.

- 13. Parks and Recreation – Cleaning Contract:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to approve the cleaning contract with Above and Beyond for \$29,520.00. Parks and Recreation put to bid cleaning the park restrooms and furniture at the new community center. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Jones, Crossen and Robbins in agreement.
- 14. Rezoning Recommendation:** Motion was made by Commissioner Crossen and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the rezoning request of Jeff McDonald to rezone a track of land (parcel 12-102-11-000) containing a total of 15.61 acres, from Rural Residential (R-5) to Low Density Single Family Residential (R-2). The Planning Commission has recommended that the Board approve the rezoning. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Jones, Crossen, and Robbins in agreement.
- 15. Proposed Question Re: Tax Exemption for the Elderly:** Darryl Long came forward and addressed the Board and the Citizens in attendance regarding his efforts to have the Board of Commissioners to allow the Senior Citizens of Whitfield County to have the same exemptions as the City of Dalton Public Schools and Whitfield County Schools exemptions. Mr. Long advised the Board and the Citizens that there will not be a vote on this issue during tonight's meeting. Mr. Long noted to the Board and Citizens that the amount of exemptions are different between the City of Dalton Public Schools and Whitfield County Schools. Mr. Long noted that in order to send the proper information to the Legislation they would put the vote off until next month.
- 16. Animal Shelter:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Crossen to hire a part-time person at the Animal Shelter for six (6) months. The motion was approved 3-1 with Commissioners Crossen, Brooker and Jones in agreement. Commissioner Robbins was in dissention.
- 17. John Carmichael:** Mr. John Carmichael spoke before the Board to inform them of an incident his family had with Hamilton EMS d/b/a Whitfield Emergency Medical Services(WEMS) refusing to transport his mother-in-law to Murray Medical. Mr. Carmichael noted that (WEMS) stated that it is their policy not to transfer outside of the boundaries of Whitfield County. Mr. Carmichael noted that the Citizens deserve better service from WEMS given the amount that is paid by the County for its services.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Savannah Warren came forward and spoke on behalf of WEMS. Ms. Warren noted that WEMS follows the policies of the Emergency Medical Services Quality Review Committee which was implemented by Whitfield County in 2009.

Darryl Long came forward and asked the Board to look into WEMS so that another incident like Mr. Carmichael's doesn't happen again.

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Randy Russel from Valic requested the Board put their defined contribution plan out for bid. Vice-Chairman Harold Brooker noted that the possibility of an RFP for the contribution plan may be added to the August regular business agenda.

Major John Gibson addressed the Board regarding the Animal Shelter. Gibson noted that the Board should consider putting animal control laws in place to hold irresponsible pet owners accountable. Gibson noted that the Sheriff's Office has the resources to enforce the laws but the Board would have to put the laws into effect. Gibson suggested a spay and neuter program, and possibly a County ordinance to regulate breeders. Gibson noted that having laws in place would help the euthanasia rate at the Animal Shelter go down.

Annette Lafuze who resides at 249 Courtney Circle, came forward and asked the Board to implement some of the guidelines from TargetZero.

Debra Smith spoke to the Board about a situation she encountered recently with a dog that had been hit by a car. Ms. Smith noted that the owner chose neither to have the dog have surgery nor euthanize it, ultimately Ms. Smith had to have the dog put down. Ms. Smith asked if there were any laws in place for veterinarians to contact law enforcement if they know of a situation like the one she went through. Chairman Laughter replied that there are animal cruelty laws in effect and law enforcement should have been called to help prevent this situation from occurring.

Elizabeth Bleach came forward to speak to the Board. Ms. Bleach suggested to the Board that they implement a spay and neuter program to help with the pet overpopulation in Whitfield County.

Mickey Burrows came forward to say that veterinarians are mandated by law to report animal abuse/cruelty.

Rita Burrows came forward to speak to the Board. Ms. Burrows noted that she would like to see a new animal shelter built.

ADJOURN Unanimous

R. LYNETTE LAUGHTER, CHAIRMAN
WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BLANCA CARDONA, COUNTY CLERK

DATE: / /