

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2020, AT 6:00 P.M. BY ACCESSING THE FOLLOWING LINK [HTTPS://LIVESTREAM.COM/ACCOUNTS/25637515/EVENTS/7960637](https://LIVESTREAM.COM/ACCOUNTS/25637515/EVENTS/7960637) AND VIA THE WHITFIELD COUNTY WEBSITE WWW.WHITFIELDCOUNTYGA.COM

VIRTUAL – REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

The meeting was streamed online for public simultaneous access at Whitfield County’s website www.whitfieldcountyga.com. Whitfield County is currently under a public health state of emergency as the community responds to the COVID-19 pandemic and in an effort to adhere to the guidelines set forth by the CDC; this virtual meeting was held through video teleconferencing. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(g) every effort will be made to have the public participate in the meeting and can be livestreamed using the following link: <https://livestream.com/accounts/25637515/events/7960637>.

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
Greg Jones, Member

Others Present:

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

Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to amend the agenda to add the potential additional items #1. Rocky Face Ridge Park Preventative Burn, #2. 2021 Aerial Photography Update. The Board also postponed the budget public hearing until December 22, 2020 along with the adoption of the 2021 budget. The motion was approved 4-0, with Chairman Laughter and Commissioners Jones, Brooker and Robbins in agreement.

Chairman Laughter recognized Ms. Leigh-Ann Cleary, as Employee of the Month for October 2020. Ms. Cleary works at the Sheriff’s Office.

Chairman Laughter called for a moment of silence for Commissioner Roger Crossen who passed away November 17, 2020. Commissioner Crossen was serving his second term as District 3 Commissioner.

Proclamation

1. **Roger Blake Crossen Day December 14, 2020:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to proclaim December 14, 2020 as “Roger Blake Crossen Day” in Whitfield County, Georgia. The motion was approved 4-0, with Chairman Laughter and Commissioners Brooker, Jones and Robbins in agreement.
2. **Naming of Riverbend Park Community Center:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve naming the Riverbend Park Community Center in honor of Commissioner Roger Crossen. The motion was approved 4-0, with Chairman Laughter and Commissioners Brooker, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2020 regular business meeting, November 30, 2020 Special Called Meeting and the December 7, 2020, 2021 Budget Public Hearing. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Brooker and Robbins in agreement.

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BOARD APPOINTMENTS

1. **Re-Appointments to the Dalton-Whitfield Joint Development Authority:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to re-appoint David Jolly and Frank Robertson to the Dalton-Whitfield JDA. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones and Brooker in agreement.
2. **Appointment – Board of Tax Assessors:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to appoint James Gordon to fill the remainder of Jerry Gibson's term which will expire on June 30, 2024. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones and Brooker in agreement.

FOR CONSIDERATION

1. **Pension Amendment:** Motion was made by Commissioners Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to postpone the pension amendment vote until December 22, 2020. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioner Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
2. **Alcohol License Renewals - 2021:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the 2021 Alcohol License Renewals. Exhibit "A" is a list of establishments currently in operation and holding a 2020 Alcohol License. There have not been any reports of violations regarding these establishments and criminal background investigations were done on all applicants to ensure no change in status over the past year. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins, and Jones in agreement.
3. **City of Dalton Annexation Request:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins for no land use classification objection to tax parcel number 12-179-02-058. The motion was approved 2-1, with Commissioners Jones, and Robbins in agreement. Commissioner Brooker dissented.
4. **Donation of land to State Properties Commission:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the donation of 7.77 acres to the State Properties Commission. The state of Georgia will build a new Department of Drivers Services on the donated site. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
5. **Call for Election – Commissioner District 3:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve asking the Election Superintendent to call and conduct a special election to be held within District 3 voting precincts on March 16, 2020. The special election is to fill the unexpired term of Commissioner Roger Crossen which will expire on December 31, 2022. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
6. **Lease Agreement – 201 W. Waugh Street:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Jones to enter into a lease agreement with Barrett Enterprises, LLLP, for approximately 4000 sq. ft. of Level 2 of 201 W. Waugh Street, Dalton, GA, for the Board of Elections and the Victim/Witness Assistance Program. The term of the lease begins on January 1, 2021 and ends on December 31, 2021 with the monthly rental amount per month of \$5,750.00 for the term of the lease. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

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7. **Intergovernmental Agreement with Dalton Utilities for Sewer at Riverbend Park:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to ratify the Intergovernmental Agreement between Dalton Utilities and Whitfield County to extend water, natural gas and sanitary sewer infrastructure to unincorporated areas of Whitfield County not currently served. This agreement states that Dalton Utilities will further extend such services to the future site of a large recreational complex located along Collins Road and the South Dalton Bypass. Utility extensions to and within the recreational facility will be extended from existing infrastructure capable of supporting this new customer's water, natural gas and wastewater needs. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
8. **Library – COVID Expenditures:** The Board directed County Administrator Mark Gibson to contact Library Director Darla Chambliss and find out what personnel protective equipment they are requesting for the library.
9. **Magistrate Court Vehicle Purchase:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the purchase of a two (2) mid-size SUVs for Magistrate Court from Ford of Dalton for \$28,997. Wade Ford of Smyrna, GA had the lowest bid of \$28,997, but Ford of Dalton agreed to match it under the local vender privilege provision since their bid of \$29,102 was within 4% of the low bid. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Jones and Robbins in agreement.
10. **Resolution – Strongly Encouraging the Use of Masks in Public Generally and Ordinance – Requiring the Use of Masks within Whitfield County Facilities and Vehicles to Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the resolution that strongly encourages the use of masks in public and adopting the ordinance requiring the use of masks within indoor Whitfield County Facilities and Vehicles to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Brooker and Robbins in agreement.
11. **EMA- Mobile Command Unit:** The Board took no action on this item.
12. **Public Works – Declaration of Surplus:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the declaration of surplus of a 2011 Ford F-150 Pickup from Public Works and a 2010 Ford Fusion from Magistrate Court. These vehicles will be auctioned on GovDeals.com. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
13. **Parks and Recreation – Lighting for Riverbend Park:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to enter into a contract with Musco Sports Lighting, LLC for sports lighting at Riverbend Park with related supplies and services for \$1.2 M. This contract is through Sourcewell Contract #071619-MSL and is a 2020 SPLOST project. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Jones and Robbins in agreement.
14. **Parks and Recreation – Edwards Park Tennis Court Fence Bid:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to approve the low bid of \$27,500 from Signature Tennis Courts for re-installing the fence at the Edwards park tennis courts. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

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15. **Edwards Park –Turf Mounds bid:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to approve the purchase of eight (8) mounds from The Perfect Mound at \$4,405 each for a total of \$35,240, and to purchase two (2) mounds from Bliss Products at \$4,625 each for a total of \$9,250. The total amount for ten (10) mounds is \$44,490.00. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
16. **Fire Department – Declaration of Surplus:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve two vehicles from the Fire Department to declared surplus and placed on GovDeals.com. This will include a 1999 International 4900 Series Fire Engine and a 2000 Model Dodge Extended Cab Pick-up Truck. The motion was approved 3-0, with Chairman Laughter and Commissioners Brooker and Jones in agreement.
17. **Fire Department – Purchase of three (3) Pick-up Trucks:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the purchase of three (3) F250s for the Fire Department from Ford of Dalton for \$40,087 each for a total of \$120,261. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
18. **Engineering – Riverbend Park Buildings Contract:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the bid for construction of a new 33,000 sq. ft. gymnasium/community center building, a 3,640 sq. ft. concessions building, and a 2,450 sq. ft. restroom pavilion at the new Riverbend Park. The lowest qualified bidder was Momon Construction at \$5,559,883.00. The motion was approved 3-0 with Commissioners Jones, Brooker and Robbins in agreement.
19. **Engineering – Courthouse Renovation Contract:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the low bid from Multiplex, LLC in the amount of \$4,538,000. This bid is for the interior demolition and renovation of the 1961 portion of the Courthouse, approximately 45,000 sq. ft., with the exception of the Main Courtroom and partial exception of the Juror Assembly room. This is a Tier I 2020 SPLOST project. The project will involve demolishing interior walls and removing all plumbing, electrical, and HVAC systems. The remains of the 1961 exterior wall will also be removed and the floors extended to eliminate the existing cavity between that wall and the current brick exterior wall. The space will then be renovated with all new plumbing, electrical, HVAC, data, and fire protection systems. The contractor will install new doors, floors, trim, lighting and plumbing fixtures, and finishes. The bid package was set up with a base bid price and no alternates/deductions. The lowest responsive, qualified bidder is Multiplex, LLC at \$4,538,000.00. This price corresponds to approximately \$100.84 per square foot. The motion was approved 3-0 with Commissioners Jones, Brooker and Robbins in agreement.
20. **Riverbend Park Grading Change Order #1:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve change order #1 for \$120,167. This change order is associated with clearing, grubbing, and grading a larger area around the main soccer field. The work will be done in order to have room for bleachers and other amenities and to create a facility that can host larger crowds for high school and college games. Due to the location and topography, additional trees must be cleared and approximately 10,000 cubic yards of additional earthwork done. In addition, there will be an increase in drainage pipe and structures, along with associated erosion control pay items. We have also added a cross drain pipe under the back entrance drive to handle roof and surface drainage from the gym and surrounding area. Approval would increase the contract amount from \$2,145,081.74 to \$2,265,248.74. The motion was approved 3-0 with Commissioners Jones, Brooker and Robbins in agreement.

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21. **Engineering – Tax Commissioner Drive Through Equipment and Millwork Bid:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve bids from Graphite Construction LLC for \$125,000 drive through equipment and \$48,000 for millwork of the space within the Tax Commissioners building located at Riverburch Way. This bid is for the purchase and installation of drive-through equipment and related accessories for the new Tax Commissioner building on Riverburch Way. The drive-through will have 2 lanes. This bid includes purchase and installation of a bullet resistant window with transaction drawer as well as a pneumatic tube pedestal with concrete island. Also included are awnings for the two lanes. The millwork bid is for the fabrication and installation of millwork throughout the new Tax Commissioner building on Riverburch Way. The lowest responsive bidder is Graphite Construction, LLC at \$48,000. The motion was approved 3-0 with Commissioners Jones, Brooker and Robbins in agreement.
22. **Amendment to the Stormwater Management Ordinance:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and Seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the amendment of the Stormwater Ordinance. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GAEPD) is requiring a revision to the post construction stormwater management ordinance in order to remain in compliance with the County's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Phase II Permit. The minimum requirements have been updated in the post construction stormwater ordinance and local design manual regulating new development and redevelopment. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
23. **October 2020 Financial Statement:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to approve the October 2020 Financial Statement as presented by Finance Director James Garvin. Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) collections: Per the IGA, the County's LOST percentage for 2020 remains at 61.556%. It was last adjusted from 62.653% to 61.556% in 2019, down from a starting point in 2013 of 64.851%. The rate will next adjust downward in 2021. October 2020 collections of \$1,042,612 were 12.7% greater than budgeted collections of \$925,000. This was 10.3% greater than September 2020 collections of \$906,403. YTD October 2020 collections of \$10,073,040 were 9.3% greater than same-period 2019 collections of \$9,218,682. TAVT collections for October 2020 were \$381,283. This was 4.2% less than September 2020 collections of \$397,876. YTD October 2020 collections of \$3,762,229 were 39.0% greater than same-period 2019 collections of \$2,706,761. YTD October 2020 actual revenues of \$29,711,719 were greater than projected revenues of \$29,068,470 by \$643,249 or 2.2%. YTD October 2020 actual expenditures of \$38,524,210 were less than projected expenditures of \$39,765,318 by \$1,241,109 or 3.1%. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Jones, and Robbins in agreement.
24. **Tax Assessor's Office Furniture Bid:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the bid from OneSource in the amount of \$19,508.80 for furniture at the Tax Assessors office. The Tax Assessors Office recently relocated to 303 W. Waugh Street. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
25. **County Extension - Purchase of One (1) Used 2014 Mini-Bus:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the purchase of One (1) 2014 Used Starcraft Mini-Bus through the Bus Center – Atlanta in the amount of \$45,650. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins, and Jones in agreement.

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26. **Road Dedication – Duckworth Road:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to accept the dedication of Duckworth Road from the Dalton-Whitfield Joint Authority into the County Road System. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
27. **Resolution – Amending the Subdivision Regulations:** This item was postponed for a later date.
28. **Rocky Face Ridge Park Preventative Burn:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the preventative burning at Rocky Face Ridge Park. Chuck Arnold with the Georgia Forestry Commission contacted Jess Hansen about the possibility of doing a preventative burn on the area of the forested area of the park where there is a large amount of fuel and debris poses the greatest risk of an un-contained fire. The proposed burn area contains multiple trails that will be used extensively when the park opens. The debris represents a safety issue where the area is difficult to traverse; the burn area is approximately 55 acres. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
29. **Engineering Department – 2021 Aerial Photography Update/LIDAR:** Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the 2021 Aerial Photography and LIDAR project. Funding will not be needed until 2021, but a commitment letter is due by the end of December 2020. The last aerial photography update was 2018 and will be 3 years old in 2021. The aerial photography is used extensively at 911 for the dispatching of calls, in the Tax Assessor's office for the appraisal of property, in our online mapping system where residents can make their own maps and in desktop mapping systems in multiple County departments. Georgia Mountains Regional Commission is coordinating an aerial photography project for 2021 that includes many counties in north Georgia. The large project area for this project means that we are able to purchase the photography at a significantly reduced rate. Georgia Mountains and the Georgia State Geographic Information Officer are coordinating the LIDAR project. The City of Dalton has agreed to pay \$8,554 (1/3 of the total cost) and Dalton Utilities has expressed interest where they would purchase the imagery for \$8,554 (1/3). The final cost to the county may be \$8,554 but we are responsible for the entire contract amount until such time as the partners contribute, This is a repeat scenario of acquisition strategy used in 2018. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.
- Executive Session – Personnel:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to go into executive session to discuss Personnel Matters. Present for the meeting were Chairman Lynn Laughter, Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones County Attorney Robert Smalley and County Administrator Mark Gibson. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

ADJOURN Unanimous

JEVIN JENSEN, CHAIRMAN
WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BLANCA CARDONA, COUNTY CLERK

DATE: / /