

MINUTES FOR THE VIRTUAL SPECIAL CALLED MEETING OF THE WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD MONDAY NOVEMBER 30, 2020, AT 5:00 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

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 Execution Session portion of the meeting will be closed to the public.

SPECIAL CALLED 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
Greg Jones, Member

Others Present:

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

Motion was made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners, Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

FOR CONSIDERATION:

- 1. Public Pension Discussion for Public Safety:** The Board discussed the possibility of changing the pension retirement age for the Sheriff's Office Deputies and Firefighters from 60 to 55 plus 25 years of service. Fire Department Chief O'Brien and Major John Gibson both spoke about the physical demands of working in law enforcement and public safety. O'Brien noted that firefighters work annually 2,756 hours whereas a typical 40-hour workweek per year is 2,080. Major Gibson also noted that for older Deputies injuries sustained on the job are harder to bounce back from. Kale Hodes ACCG Retirement Services Director informed the Board if they were to change the age of retirement for the Deputies and Firefighters it would cost \$87,000, but he recommends \$94,000. The current amount paid this year to the Whitfield County Pension Plan was \$1.9M. The Board took no action on this item.
- 2. Executive Session – Litigation:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Brooker to enter into an executive session to discuss litigation. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Brooker, Robbins and Jones in agreement. Present for the executive session was Chairman Lynn Laughter, Commissioners Robbins, Brooker and Jones, County Attorney Robert Smalley, County Administrator Mark Gibson, County Engineer Kent Benson, Public Works Director Dewayne Hunt and County Clerk Blanca Cardona.

Motion was then made by Commissioner Brooker and seconded by Commission Jones to come out of Executive Session. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, 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: / /