

**MINUTES FOR THE RESCHEDULED REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 2021, AT 6:00 P.M. AT STAGE 123 LOCATED AT 123 W. GORDON STREET**

**RESCHEDULED 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  
Greg Jones, Member

**Others Present:**

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

**Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to amend the agenda adding three (3) additional items to the agenda. (1) Kronos Migration, (2) Utility Easement for Dalton Utilities – Riverbend Park, (3) Public Comment – Mrs. Lily Clark. Item # 19. C – Engineering Department – Riverbend Park Customer Choice Power Service, and 22. d Public Works – Truck Shed Repair were removed from the agenda. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten and Robbins in agreement.**

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the March 8, 2021 regular business meeting, March 15, 2021 and March 22, 2021 special called meeting minutes. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, and Robbins in agreement.

**Chairman Jensen recognized Mr. Christopher Guay as Employee of the Month for February 2021. Mr. Guay works at the Sheriff's Office.**

**PROCLAMATION**

**Week of the Young Child** – Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to proclaim April 10-16, 2021 as the Week of the Young Child in Whitfield County, Georgia. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten and Jones in agreement.

**Chairman's Report:** Chairman Jensen noted today is the special run-off election for District 3 County Commissioner between Shane Day and John Thomas. Jensen updated the Board and attendees on the Countys continuing response to COVID-19. Jensen noted hospitalization and new cases decreased and vaccinations increased in our area. Jensen also updated the Board on the litter program and safety improvements of hazardous houses in the community.

**Report from Commissioners:**

Commissioner Jones informed the Board that he went on a ride-along with Public Works Director Dewayne Hunt to look into several drainage issues around the County. Jones noted the recent rains had affected several drainage ditches.

Commissioner Staten did not have any updates to report to the Board.

Commissioner Robbins did not have any updates to report to the Board.

**Report from County Administrator:**

County Administrator Mark Gibson updated the Board on a potential sale of property at Riverbend Park Drive, the Courthouse remodel update, and departmental operating costs reductions.

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**February 2021 Financial Statement:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the February 2021 Financial Statement as presented by Finance Director James Garvin. Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) collections: Per the IGA, the County's LOST percentage has adjusted downward from 61.555 to 60.457%, effective January 2021. This is the final downward adjustment prior to renegotiation of LOST proceeds among the County and various municipalities. February 2021 collections of \$896,731 were .5% less than budgeted collections of \$903,133. This was 3% less than January, 2021 collections of \$925,846. YTD February 2021 collections of \$1,823,026 were 6.5% greater than same-period 2020 collections of \$1,714,845. TAVT collections for February 2021 were \$324,574 or 11.5% less than January 2021 collections of \$367,584. YTD February 2021 collections of \$692,159 were statistically equal to same-period 2020 collections of \$692,862. YTD February 2021 actual revenues of \$4,966,581 were less than projected revenues of \$5,148,965 by \$182,383 or 3.5%. YTD February 2021 actual expenditures of \$6,875,614 were less than projected expenditures of \$7,830,092 by \$954,478 or 12%. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

1. Mrs. Lily Clark who resides at 2309 Winnwood Drive addressed the Board regarding safety issues in her neighborhood. Mrs. Clark requested of the Board to install sidewalks or possibly speed bumps on her road. Mrs. Clark further noted semi-trucks drive down her road due to the business down the street. Mrs. Clark also noted the area was zoned residential prior to it being a commercial area. Mrs. Clark thanked the Board for their willingness to represent their community.

**Ordinance – Whitfield County Broadband Ready Community:** Motion was approved by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to adopt the Broadband Ready Community Ordinance. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

**Limited Power of Attorney for 520 School Street:** Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to grant WP South Acquisitions LLC limited power of attorney for 30 days. This grants WP Acquisitions LLC, to undertake all legal and lawful steps necessary under the laws and regulations of the City of Dalton, County of Whitfield and State of Georgia, to obtain a variance pertaining to the property 520 School Street in such manner as deemed advisable and necessary by the Company. And to do all things necessary in owner's name and stead for the limited purpose of obtaining the variance sought by Company. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Robbins and Jones in agreement

**Appointment of Emergency Management Agency Director:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to name David Metcalf as the EMA Director for Whitfield County. Chairman Jensen and the Commissioners congratulated Mr. Metcalf on his appointment. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

**Finance – 2020 Final Budget Amendment:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the 2020 budget amendment as presented by Finance Director, James Garvin. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten and Jones in agreement.

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**Finance – 2021 Budget Amendment:** Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the 2021 budget amendment as presented by Finance Director, James Garvin. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

**Rezoning Recommendation:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the recommendation of the planning commission to approve the request of David Philips to rezone from Rural Residential (R-5) to General Commercial (C-2) a tract of land totaling 1.99 acres located at 196 Sporting Way, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-334-01-001). The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

**Rezoning Recommendation:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the recommendation of the planning commission to approve the request of Kyle Hudson rezone from Low Density Single Family Residential (R-2) to High Density Residential (R-7) a tract of land totaling 0.6 acres located at Goodwill Drive, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-241-09-011). The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

**Rezoning Recommendation:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to table the request of Anna Bryant to rezone from Rural Residential (R-5) to General Commercial (C-2) a tract of land totaling 1.56 acres located at 502 Lafayette Road, Rocky Face, Georgia. Parcel (27-163-01-037). The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

**Property Acquisition:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the purchase for 19.34 acres off the South Dalton Bypass from AMQ Farm LLC of Birmingham, AL. The purchase of this property is for additional space for the new recreation complex in South Whitfield County. Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funds will be used to purchase this property. The motion was approved 3-0 to not exceed the price of \$4,200.00 per acre, pending further negotiation and appraisal with Commissioners Staten, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

**CGI Communications Agreement – 2021 County Video Tour Agreement:** Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to enter into agreement with CGI Communications to produce a series of streaming online videos highlighting all Whitfield County has to offer its residents, visitors and businesses. This is a free service to Whitfield County. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones and Staten in agreement.

**Parks & Recreation – Riverbend Park Field Equipment:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the all low bidders that have met bid specifications for field equipment. The parks and recreation department opened bids on April 6<sup>th</sup> for the following items and recommended acceptance of bidders BSN - Alumagoals 18 and 21 foot \$5,590, Sock Nets \$1,000, Benches \$8,400, LScreens \$2,600 Total \$17,590, Bill Fritz- Goal Posts \$6,562.84, 24 foot Soccer goals \$2,181.71, Foul Poles \$2,956.24, Volley Ball System \$3,535.66 Total \$15,236.45 Premium Park Products- Bleachers \$9,468, Winning Teams- Backstop Padding \$2,335, Portable Fencing \$13,975.00 Total \$16,310, Bliss Products- Pitcher Mounds \$17,980 Total Expenditures for Riverbend Park Equipment \$76,584. This equipment will be purchased with the 2020 voter approved SPLOST funds. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten and Jones in agreement.

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**Engineering Department – SPLOST Hill Road Project 3.10 Bid:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the bid from Bartow Paving, Inc. for \$2,760,188.35. This 2007 SPLITS project will improve the vertical blind spots, improve drainage, rebuild and add sidewalks to make pedestrian use safer. The motion was approved, 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

**Engineering Department – Hill Road Utility Relocation Agreement:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the utility relocation expense of \$350,566 payable to Georgia Power. The improvements to Hill Road conflict with existing power poles owned by Georgia Power. Georgia Power has determined that most of the poles affected are not on the County right of way. The agreement between the County and Georgia Power authorizes them to move their facilities with the County paying them 87.14 % of the cost. Funding is from the 2007 SPLOST. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones and Staten in agreement.

**Engineering Department – SR 71 & Maple Grove:** Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to allow County Administrator Mark Gibson to sign the indemnification form for the Georgia Department of Transportation for work being done on State Route 71 and Maple Grove Road. The motion was approved, 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Robbins and Jones in agreement.

**Fire Personal Protective Equipment Purchase:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the purchase of personal protective equipment from Ten-8 for \$47,060. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

**Fire Department SPLOST Fire Engine Equipment Purchase:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the low bids or acceptable alternate for items needed to outfit two new Fire Engines. The total amount from SPLOST will be up to \$279,477.20. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

**Update of the Title VI Program for Whitfield County Transit Service:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the update of the Title VI Program for Whitfield County Transit Service. As a sub-recipient of Federal Transit Administration funding, Whitfield County is required to maintain a Title VI program. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

**Public Works Boom Mower Purchase:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the bid for \$134,337.00, from Flint Construction and Forestry Division, for the purchase of one (1) John Deere 6150E with an Alamo Samuria Boom Arm Mower attachment. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

**Public Works Gradall Purchase:** Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the purchase of (1) gradall in cash now to be reimbursed with SPLOST funds and to purchase (2) gradalls at a later date. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

**Public Works Truck Purchase:** Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the purchase of (3) ¾ ton pick-up trucks and (1) ½ truck for \$162,918

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from Ford of Dalton. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

**Public Works – Infrastructure Repair:** Motion was approved by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to Authorize the CFO to advance up to \$500,000 from the general fund to the public works 2020 SPLOST line for immediate use for authorized projects and to be repaid as collections are received based upon the priorities set forth in the intergovernmental agreement. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten and Jones in agreement.

**Rocky Face Ridge Archeological Study:** Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to accept the proposal from TRC Environmental, Inc. for archeological evaluation and metal detecting at the Grant Farm for \$11,850.00. According to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources the Grant Farm contributes to the National Register of Historic Places and recommends this archeological study to determine if the proposed construction would adversely impact any battlefield features. The motion was approved 3-0 with Commissioners Jones, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

**Engineering Department – GPS Receiver Purchase:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the purchase of a GPS receiver for \$5,030. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones and Staten in agreement.

**Superior Court – Domestic Violence Grant:** Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to support the Conasauga Judicial Circuit Domestic Violence program. The Court was awarded a 3 year grant for \$167,224 with a 25% (\$41,806) match grant to be covered by using D.A.T.E funds. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

**Emergency Powers – Chairman:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve Chairman Jensens renouncement of the Declaration of Emergency and Activation of County Emergency Plan that was signed on March 18, 2020, to include section 'D' of emergency Chairman powers: Evacuations, Direct transportation routes/close roads, Suspend alcohol, firearms, flammable liquids (gas) sales, Suspend any County law or ordinance and to reaffirm Whitfield County's State of Emergency until such time Governor of Georgia has lifted overall Georgia state of Emergency. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

**Update on REConnect Advisory Board:** Chairman Chris Shiflett of the REConnect advisory board informed the Board of the Advisory Boards recommendation. Shiflett noted the purpose of the Advisory Board was to review both the County and City recreation departments athletic operations to determine if possible consolidation would be beneficial to both County and City residents. Shiflett further noted the Advisory Boards recommendation is for City and County youth sports begin a combined pilot youth sports program-beginning fall of 2021 to benefit taxpayers and enhance services to participating children in the community with Whitfield County recreation administering the program. Shiflett also noted the City has agreed to begin charging registration fees to participate in youth sports. Shiflett went on to say this recommendation is contingent upon approval by the Dalton Recreation Commission. No action was taken by the Board at this time.

**Whitfield County Department Goals Presentations:**

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1. Transit Department – Director Diane Franklin presented the departments goals for 2021 to the Board. Franklin noted the departments goals are to increase DHS/Fare Box ridership 50%, make the community aware of the Transit Departments services, and to decrease the County’s matching funds.
2. Public Relations/Communications – Mitch Talley presented the departments goals for 2021 to the Board. Talley noted the departments goals are establish a citizen hotline, make monthly phone calls to department heads, and to increase Whitfield County’s social media presence.
3. Engineering – County Engineer Kent Benson presented the departments goals for 2021 to the Board. Benson noted the departments goals were to decrease plan review time for building inspection, increase public education and improve City-County Teamwork to benefit all of Whitfield County.

**Kronos Migration:** Motion was approved by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to table this item until the next Board meeting in May. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones and Staten in agreement.

**Utility Easement for Dalton Utilities – Riverbend Park:** Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to grant a 50 foot wide utility easement to Dalton Utilities to be located along the south property line of Riverbend Park in order to shorten and simplify the connection of these utilities to the park. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioner Robbins, Jones and Staten in agreement.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

1. Daryl Long noted the building inspections office does a good job.
2. Mary Thelma Norris addressed the Board regarding the recommendation from the REConnect Advisory Board asking to reconsider charging the sports participation fee for youths in the City of Dalton.
3. Richard Gazaway asked the Board to consider purchasing electric vehicles.
4. Jackie Killings asked the Board to consider only combining 1 or 2 sports rather than all of youth sports.

**ADJOURN** Unanimous

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JEVIN JENSEN, CHAIRMAN  
WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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BLANCA CARDONA, COUNTY CLERK

DATE: / /