

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2021, AT 6:00 P.M. AT STAGE 123 LOCATED AT 123 W. GORDON 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:

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 Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the agenda as presented. 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 January 11, 2021 regular business meeting. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, and Robbins in agreement.

Chairman Jensen recognized Ms. Latasha Heflin as Employee of the Month for December 2020. Ms. Heflin works in the Public Defenders Office.

Georgia Emergency Management Agency – Professional Certified Emergency Manager Certificate:

Tim Reeve, AREA 6 Coordinator for GEMA (Georgia Emergency Management Agency) presented Jeff Ownby with his Professional Managers Certificate (Professional Certified Emergency Manager Ga-PCEM). Reeve noted the Professional Manager (Professional CEM) must complete all training requirements for Basic Certified Emergency Manager and Advanced Certified Emergency Manager this includes 22 FEMA Independent Study Courses, 24 GEMA Emergency Management Courses. Professional Managers must have a minimum of (5) years of service in emergency management, participate in the development and implementation of a full scale exercise. Professional Managers must have 150 hours of additional emergency response training and (5) contributions to the field of Emergency Management (i.e. Instructor, Publications, AV Products, Special Projects, Pilot Programs, Public Speaking. Mr. Ownby is currently serving as Interim Director for Whitfield County's Emergency Management Agency. The Board congratulated Mr. Ownby on his achievement.

ALCOHOL BEVERAGE LICENSE APPLICATION PUBLIC HEARING:

Chairman Jensen called for a Public Hearing to hear any comments or concerns the public may have regarding an application for a Package Malt Beverage/Wine License for Jay Tobacco Beverages located at 2211 E. Morris Street, Dalton, GA. Chairman Jensen noted on site inspection by the Whitfield County Sheriffs Office revealed Calvary Baptist Church is located within 600 feet of the establishment, applicant asked the Church for an affidavit of no objection but the Church declined to issue one. Per the Whitfield County's Alcohol Ordinance Chapter 3 Section 3-5 Distance of business from schools, churches, etc. No license shall be issued hereunder where the place of business of the applicant is located within a distance of 600 feet of the nearest public library or branch of a public library or within a distance of 600 feet of the nearest church or public park, or within a distance of 600 feet of a school ground or college campus; provided, however, that at a public hearing the Board of Commissioners may waive the distance requirements of this section if satisfactory evidence shall be

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produced before the Board of Commissioners that no adverse effect to property values or the use of the facilities for the purposes aforesaid would occur if the license were granted. (Code 1979, §7-3-3 1; Ord. of 10- 13-03, § 3) State Law reference- Location restrictions, O.C.G.A. §3-3-21. The applicant has attached a letter from a local realtor in hopes that the Board waive the distance requirement.

Spencer Singleton who owns the property where the applicant NAD Traders Inc. has submitted the application for the licenses came forward to speak in favor of the business.

There were no other questions or concerns. Chairman Jensen declared the public hearing closed.

Report from Commissioners:

Commissioner Jones did not have any updates to present to the Board.

Commissioner Staten noted the trade center operations are normal.

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

Report from County Administrator:

County Administrator Mark Gibson updated the Board regarding Fire Services, the 2% reduction of departmental budgets, quarterly budget amendments and provided a list of property & structures owned by the County.

December 2020 Financial Statement: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the December 2020 Financial Statement as presented by Finance Director James Garvin. 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 to 60.457%. December 2020 collections of \$1,147,370 were 24% greater than budgeted collections of \$925,000. This was 23% greater than November 2020 collections of \$933,286. YTD December 2020 collections of \$12,153,696 were 9% greater than same-period 2019 collections of \$11,159,405. TAVT collections for December 2020 were \$367,109. This was 21.5% greater than November 2020 collections of \$301,976. YTD December 2020 collections of \$4,431,315 were 33.5% greater than same-period 2019 collections of \$3,315,794. YTD December 2020 actual revenues of \$52,517,486 were greater than projected revenues of \$49,620,812 by \$2,896,674 or 6%. YTD December 2020 actual expenditures of \$47,529,722 were less than projected expenditures of \$48,933,985 by \$1,404,263 or 3%. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Ed Painter who resides at 908 W. Tyler Street questioned the Board about the recent TAD referendum recently passed by the General Assembly. Painter noted the Board took action in March 2020 to ask the General Assembly to add this to the November General Election. Chairman Jensen noted the General Assembly took action during 2021 and the referendum is to be placed on the March 16, 2021 Special Election. Painter further noted that instead of only precincts in District 3 being open for the Special Election now all of the precincts in the County will be open.

Ordinance Amendment – Meetings of the Board of Commissioners (Administration): Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve Article IV of Chapter 2 of the Code of Ordinances, relating to meetings of the Board of Commissioners by repealing the entire existing Article IV and replacing with a new Article IV. The motion passed 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

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Alcohol Beverage License Application:

Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the Alcohol Beverage Application for a Package Malt Beverage/Wine License for Jay Tobacco Beverages located at 2211 E. Morris Street, Dalton, GA. The Board waived the distance requirement of Whitfield County's Alcohol Ordinance Chapter 3 Section 3-5 Distance of business from schools, churches. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten and Jones in agreement.

Correction of December 22, 2020 Special Called Meeting Minutes: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the correction of the December 22, 2020 special called meeting minutes. During the December 22, 2020 Special Called Meeting of the Whitfield County BOC, the Board approved an amendment to the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) Defined Benefit Plan for Whitfield County employees effective January 1, 2021. The class of Eligible Employees that was approved was Classes 5 & 6, but the minutes reflected Classes 4 & 5. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten and Jones in agreement.

Whitfield County Trash Task Force: Chairman Jensen asked the Board and meeting attendees for suggestions for ways to engage our citizens to be more involved in the appearance of their surrounding areas. Jensen noted the Board receives several calls regarding litter in the County and would like to find more effective solutions whether it be more volunteers, community services workers or more employees at the Public Works department picking up litter on the weekends.

Rezoning Recommendation: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the recommendation of the planning commission to approve the request of Leonard T. Cochran Jr. to rezone from Neighborhood Commercial (C-1) to Rural Residential (R-5) a tract of land (parcel 11-307-32-000) containing a total of 0.49 acres located at 1117 Beaverdale Road. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

Rezoning Recommendation: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the request of Zaria Mesa to rezone from Low Density Single Family Residential (R-2) to Rural Residential (R-5) a tract of land totaling 0.38 acres located at 214 Hewitt Drive, Dalton, Georgia, parcel (12-242-01-060), but with the condition they have a permanent foundation and for the single family detached home to have a securely attached permanent masonry foundation. The planning commission had recommended to deny this request. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

Rezoning Recommendation: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the recommendation of the planning commission to approve the request of Riverstone Construction to rezone a tract of land from General Agriculture (GA) to High-Density Residential (R-7) (parcel 12-089-02-000) containing a total of 17.46 acres located at 2610 Cleveland Hwy. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

City of Tunnel Hill Annexations: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten for no land use classification objection to tax parcel numbers 28-307-17-000, 28-307-10-010, 12-038-02-029, 12-038-02-024, 12-038-02-033. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

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City of Dalton Annexation – parcel 12-251-10-100: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten for no land use classification objection to tax parcel number 12-251-10-100. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

City of Varnell Annexation – parcel 11-228-05-006: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten for no land use classification objection to tax parcel number 11-228-05-006. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

Juvenile Court – Court Attorney Contract: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the Independent Contractor’s Agreement between Whitfield County Juvenile Court and Cody Newsome. Mr. Newsome will provide legal representation in all indigent cases as determined by the Whitfield County Juvenile Court. The motion carried, 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

Animal Shelter MOU with Atlanta Humane Society: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the MOU with the Atlanta Humane Society. The motion was approved 3-0 with Commissioners Jones, Staten and Robbins in agreement

Cisco Support Renewal: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to renew Cisco support with Disys Solutions Inc. through the state contract price of \$27,182.72. Cisco Support covers the hardware responsible for wired and wireless network communications as well as voice. This equipment is essential for daily operations. The support has four hour replacement coverage for critical network and voice components and next day for less critical equipment. Licensing and technical support is included in this agreement. The IT Department reduced the coverage amount by purchasing network switch gear to cover several components instead of electing support. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones and Staten in agreement.

Reappointment for Whitfield County seat on Region 1 EMS Council: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to postpone appointing a member to the Northwest Georgia Region 1 seat of the Emergency Medical Services Council. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

Fire Department Uniforms: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the purchase of employee personal protective Nomex Uniforms from Cintas in the amount of \$52,750.00. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Staten and Robbins in agreement.

Fire Department Surplus Vehicles: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to surplus three (3) vehicles from the Fire Department, a 2001 Ford Excursion with 171,000 miles, a 2001 Ford Expedition with 191,000 miles, and a 2006 Ford Explorer with 150,000 miles and to be placed on GovDeals.com. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

Public Works – Purchase of Madvac Litter Vacuum: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the purchase of a 2021 Exprolink Madvac litter vacuum collector from Environmental Product Group in Atlanta, Ga. The purchase will be utilizing the Sourcewell program, contract #122017-EXP, at the cost of \$16,135.00. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten and Jones in agreement.

Public Works – Surplus Vehicles: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to surplus two (2) single axle dump trucks from Public Works; a 2004 GMC 7500

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Model, Single Axle Dump Truck and a 2004 GMC 7500 Model, Single Axle Dump Truck, and to be placed on GovDeals.com. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

Re-Appointment to the Dalton Convention Center Authority: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to re-appoint Cathy Snyder to a one-year term to expire on January 31, 2022. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten and Jones in agreement.

Coroner Supplement: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve a \$75.00 supplement for the four (4) employees of the Coroner's Office. The funds for this supplement will come from other budget items within the Coroners budget. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

Whitfield County Department Goals Presentations:

1. Animal Shelter – Director Diane Franklin presented the departments goals for 2021 to the Board. Franklin noted the departments goals were to reunite animals with their owners, promote spaying and neutering, and continuing positive placement of animals.
2. Parks and Recreation – Director Brian Chastain presented the departments goals for 2021 to the Board. Chastain noted the departments goals are to continue to have the lowest fees compared to surrounding counties of \$25 and come in under budget, continue to expand the level of public information and involvement in recreation by registering 4,000 kids and bringing new tournaments to area, and keep our parks and facilities clean and neat for citizens to enjoy.
3. Information Technology – Sr. Systems Engineer Larry Taylor presented the departments goals for 2021 to the Board. Taylor noted the departments goals were to increase response time for service desk requests close 94% in 3 days or less, end-point threats, stop threats, educate end users, promote cyber security awareness, 100% of end points with latest protection software and 10% or less of test phishing to users clicked and identify and minimize downtime, 99% uptime with backup network at key locations.
4. Emergency Management Agency – Interim Director Jeff Ownby presented the departments goals for 2021 to the Board. Ownby noted the departments goals were to secure grant opportunities of \$65 thousand or more, hold more response training for public safety agencies in Dalton, Tunnel Hill, Cohutta and Varnell and Whitfield County up to 22 events or more and hold more public safety exercises up to 6 or more.

Presentations:

Northwest Georgia Health Department Vaccine Update – Infectious Disease Director Ashley Deverell informed the Board the Health Department has administered 20,000 vaccines. Deverell further noted COVID-19 testing has moved to Edwards Park which has allowed the Health Department to repurpose the facility to an additional vaccination site.

Community Development Corporation – Director Reed Fincher informed the Board of the various services they provide in Whitfield County. Fincher noted they provide safe and affordable housing to citizens in need. Fincher further noted additional services they provide are, rapid rehousing where they pay up to three (3) months for qualified citizens, rental assistance with CBDG funding in Dalton City limits and housing counselors to those interested in purchasing homes.

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PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Shannon Bearfield who resides at 1715 Van Way NW, Dalton Georgia addressed the Board. Ms. Bearfield noted the Board did not increase the Health Department budget during a time when employees are already spread too thin. Ms. Bearfield suggested for the Board to increase the budget of the Health Department. Ms. Bearfield went on to say the County could allow County Firefighters to work at the vaccination clinics during their off duty hours.
2. Debra Gordon who resides at 1404 Rosewood Circle Unit 35, Dalton GA, asked the Board to open the Library. Chairman Jensen noted the Board is not over the Library but will get in contact with the Director and ask when they plan to reopen.

Executive Session – Personnel and Real Estate: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to go into executive session to discuss Personnel and Real Estate Matters. Present for the meeting were Chairman Jevin Jensen, Commissioners Robbins, Jones, and Staten, County Attorney Robert Smalley, County Administrator Mark Gibson, Human Resources Director Jacqueline Carlo, County Engineer Kent Benson, Animal Shelter Director Diane Franklin and County Clerk Blanca Cardona. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones, and Staten in agreement.

Motion was then made by Commissioner Jones and Staten to come out of executive session. The motion was approved 3-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones and Staten in agreement.

ADJOURN Unanimous

JEVIN JENSEN, CHAIRMAN
WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BLANCA CARDONA, COUNTY CLERK

DATE: / /