

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2021, AT 6:00 P.M. AT THE WINK THEATRE LOCATED AT 115 W. CRAWFORD 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
John Thomas, Member
Greg Jones, Member

Others Present:

Robert Smalley, County Attorney
Department Heads
Citizens
Press

Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to amend the agenda removing items # 23. Fire Department – HVAC, & #24. Animal Shelter – Change Order #1, and to add an Executive Session for Potential/Pending Litigation. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Thomas, and Robbins in agreement.

Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve August 9, 2021 Regular Business Meeting, August 12, 2021 Special Called Meeting August 16, 2021 Special Called Meeting, August 17, 2021 Special Called Meeting, August 18, 2021 Special Called Meeting, August 30, 2021 4:00 p.m. Special Called Meeting and the August 30, 2021 5:00 p.m. Special Called Meeting minutes as presented. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Thomas, and Robbins in agreement.

Chairman Jensen recognized Ms. Brooke Brady as Employee of the Month for July 2021. Ms. Brady works in the E-911 Department.

Chairman's Report: Chairman Jensen noted public budget meetings will begin soon.

Report from Commissioners:

Commissioners Thomas and Staten did not have any updates to report for this month. Commissioner Jones noted pavement has gone down on Mt. Vernon Road. Commissioner Robbins noted the Dalton-Whitfield Library is offering all library services without the need for an appointment.

July 2021 Financial Statement: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve the July 2021 Financial Statement as presented by Finance Director James Garvin. Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) collections: July collections of \$1,035,582 were 8% greater than budgeted collections of \$958,333. This was 7% less than June collections of \$1,112,723. YTD collections of \$7,353,975 were 15.5% greater than PY collections of \$6,361,219 for the same timeframe. TAVT collections: July collections of \$421,936 were 11.5% less than June collections of \$475,977. YTD collections of \$3,146,141 were 21% greater than PY collections of \$2,596,065 for the same timeframe. YTD actual revenues of \$18,720,937 were greater than projected revenues of \$16,950.813 by \$1,770,124 or 10.5%. YTD actual expenditures of \$28,141,780 were less than projected expenditures of \$29,154,077 by \$1,012,298 or 3.5%. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Thomas, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comments on agenda items.

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PRESENTATION:

2020 Auditors Discussion & Analysis – Mauldin & Jenkins: James Bense from Mauldin and Jenkins gave a brief overview of the independent auditors report, review of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, financial statements, footnotes, compliance reports, and audit scope and procedures to the Board regarding the 2020 audit. Bense noted the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report will be available later this fall.

First Reading Ordinance – Farm Wineries: Chairman Jensen informed the Board this ordinance will amend Chapter 3 Alcohol Beverages by creating new sections 3-25 and 3-26 allowing farm wineries and to provide licensure in Whitfield County. No action was taken at this time.

BOARD APPOINTMENT

Appointment to the Highland Rivers Governing Board: Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to appoint Tom Brown to the Highland Rivers Governing Board to a three year (3) term to expire June 30, 2024. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Thomas and Robbins in agreement.

Petition to Close and Abandon Audrey Drive and a Portion of Timmy Lane: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to accept the petition to close Audrey Drive and a portion of Timmy Lane located in Land Lot 147 of the 9th district and 3rd section of Whitfield County, Georgia. The acceptance of the petition sets in motion the process required by Georgia Law, that requires the County to notify adjacent property owners and to hold a public hearing after which a decision can be made to close and abandon Audrey Drive and a portion of Timmy Lane. The public hearing for this petition will be held at the next regular Board of Commissioners meeting on October 11, 2021, at which time a decision can be made to close and abandon Audrey Drive and a portion of Timmy Lane. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Thomas and Robbins in agreement

Rezoning Recommendations: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the following rezoning requests recommended by the planning commission: request of **Kenneth Adams to rezone from Heavy Manufacturing (M-2) to Rural Residential (R-5) a tract of land totaling 0.13 acres located at 111 Powell Drive, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-334-09-005), Joe Donald and Mary Ann Newton to rezone from Rural Residential (R-5) to General Agriculture (GA) a tract of land totaling 7.22 acres located along Mark Brown Road, Parcel (09-140-08-000), Troy Overby Sr. to rezone from General Commercial (C-2) to Rural Residential (R-5) a tract of land totaling 4.13 acres located at 4753 Tammy Dr. Parcel (09-147-04-004), Juan Vasquez to rezone from General Commercial (C-2) to Low Density Single-Family Residential (R-2) a tract of land totaling 0.83 acres located at 2710 Pleasant Drive. Parcel (12-213-01-007), William Voyles to rezone from General Agriculture (GA) to Rural Residential (R-5) a tract of land totaling 13.81 acres located at 153 Stancil Road. Parcel (11-014-02-000) and to deny the rezoning request of Antonio Rodriguez to rezone from Rural Residential (R-5) to General Commercial (C-2) a tract of land totaling 0.52 acres located along Orange Drive. Parcel (12-251-02-031).** The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Thomas, Jones and Robbins in agreement.

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City of Varnell Annexation – parcel 11-263-01-184: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Robbins for no land use classification objection to tax parcel 11-263-01-184. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Thomas, and Robbins in agreement.

Ratification of MOU with City of Dalton for Distribution and Administration of Monoclonal Antibody Therapy in Whitfield County Correction Center: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to ratify the agreement with the City of Dalton to provide the County Detention Center with access to Dalton's regeneron monoclonal antibody treatment. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones, Staten and Thomas in agreement.

Probate and Superior Courts – Private Probation Services Contract: Motion was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Staten to renew the contracts with Georgia Probation Services, Inc. for both Probate and Superior Court for probation services for defendants convicted in Whitfield County Probate and Superior Courts. One change to the contracts was the monthly probation supervision fee increased from \$41.00 to \$46.00 paid by the probationers. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Thomas and Robbins in agreement.

Clerk of Superior Court – Deed Imaging QuickLink System: Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve up to \$500,000 to digitize historic documents and land deed records. This project may be eligible for ARPA funds, if its not eligible they will bring this item before the BOC to consider another funding source. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Staten, Jones, Thomas and Robbins in agreement.

Juvenile Court – Court Attorney Contract: Motion was made by Commissioner Staten and seconded by Commissioner Robbins to approve the Independent Contractor's Agreement between Whitfield County Juvenile Court and Stephen Blevins. Mr. Blevins will provide legal representation in all indigent cases as determined by the Whitfield County Juvenile Court. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Thomas, Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

Engineering Department – Courthouse Renovation Change Order #1: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to ratify the change order to purchase and install access control hardware for the Courthouse. This is an essential security measure due to the Public Defender and the District Attorney being in the same building. Odin Integrated Technologies will install the system for \$261,265 of which a \$50,000 allowance was included in the Courthouse Renovation Contract, the Change order is for the remaining \$211,265. This Courthouse project was included in the 2020 SPLOST however it may be an eligible ARP (American Rescue Plan) project, if it isn't eligible for ARP, the 2020 SPLOST funds will be utilized. The motion was approved, 4-0, with Commissioners State, Robbins, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

Engineering Department – Courthouse Renovation Change Order #2: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to ratify a change order in the amount of \$89,936 in ARP (American Rescue Plan) funds for Bipolar ionization and HEPA filtration at the Courthouse. The motion was approved, 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

Engineering Department – Riverbend Park Change Order #2: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to ratify a change order in the amount of \$27,670.50 in ARP (American Rescue Plan) funds for Bipolar ionization and HEPA filtration for the new community center. The motion was approved, 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Staten, Thomas and Jones in agreement.

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Engineering Department – Drainage Study North Gillum Drive: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Staten to approve Atlas Technical Consultants LLC to surveying the North Oaks to Gillum Drive Basin for \$17,600. Atlas will perform a topography and location survey of the drainage path from Cleveland Hwy to the North Bypass. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones, Thomas and Staten in agreement.

Public Works – Purchase (2) Gradall Excavators: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the purchase of two (2) Gradall XL4100 V Hydraulic Excavators from Tractor and Equipment Company for \$853,612. This purchase was approved in the 2020 SPLOST referendum. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Thomas, Jones, Robbins and Staten in agreement.

Speed Bump Request – Joy Joyce Meadow Park Subdivision: Ms. Joyce brought a signed petition from the Meadow Park Subdivision neighbors in favor of a speed bump on their road. Chairman Jensen directed Public Works Director Dewayne Hunt to provide the BOC with a design concept and cost estimate for possible installation of a speed bump on the road.

Whitfield County Department Goals Update:

1. Transit – Director Diane Franklin updated the Board on the progress of the Transit departments goals. Goal #1 Increase DHS/Fare Box Ridership From Jan-July 2020 Farebox 7,422. Jan –July 2021 Farebox 13,723 46%. Goal #2 Increase Community Awareness Instagram/Facebook campaigns were successful, Partnered with Elections providing free transportation to courthouse to vote, Transported for COVID-19 vaccinations 25. Goal #3 Decrease County Match Currently uses Whitfield County Public Works for minor repairs (brakes, oil changes) Labor Charges Saved. Community Partners, Crossplains, Bridgeway, Dalton Senior Center, NW GA Regional increasing ridership.

2. E-911 – Director David Metcalf updated the Board on the progress of E-911 goals. Goal #1 Promote job satisfaction through employee training. Each employee completes 4 training classes. Create a new career path for telecommunicators. Goal #2 Continue to reduce overtime. Reduce OT by 3%. Still on track to reduce the OT budget. Will have 2 new employees released from training in October to help with staff shortages. Goal #3 Improve community relations and promote more awareness in the school system. Provided educational material for 13 county elementary schools.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Larry Swanson addressed the Board regarding TAD (tax allocation districts) in Whitfield County. Mr. Swanson suggested the BOC hold an informational session on TADs for the public.

Debra Gordon asked the Board regarding vaccine mandates. Ms. Gordons opinion was for it to be an individual choice. Chairman Jensen noted Whitfield County does not have a vaccine mandate.

Comment from FACEBOOK from Elizabeth Lane. Ms. Lane commented the BOC should stop spending and lower property taxes, the records update is only helpful to bankers and realtors, this money should be for law enforcement and schools.

Comment from FACEBOOK from Chriseia Gregory: Ms. Gregory commented that Whitfield County desperately needs a mental health facility.

Comment from FACEBOOK from Lateefa Conner: Ms. Conner commented she is in favor of ARP funds being used towards mental health in NW Georgia.

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Executive Session – Potential and Pending Litigation: Motion was made by Commissioner Robbins and seconded by Commissioner Jones to go into executive session to discuss potential and pending litigation. Present for the meeting were Chairman Jevin Jensen, Commissioners Robbins, Jones, Thomas and Staten, County Attorney Robert Smalley, Human Resources Director Jacqueline Carlo, and County Clerk Blanca Cardona. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Jones, Thomas and Staten in agreement.

Motion was then made by Commissioner Robbins and Thomas to come out of executive session. The motion was approved 4-0, with Commissioners Robbins, Thomas, Jones and Staten in agreement.

ADJOURN Unanimous

JEVIN JENSEN, CHAIRMAN
WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BLANCA CARDONA, COUNTY CLERK

DATE: / /