

# **WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

## **MINUTES OF THE CALLED MEETING HELD**

**MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2020 AT 4:30 P.M.**

The White County Board of Commissioners held a Called Meeting on Monday, April 27, 2020 at 4:30 p.m. This meeting was conducted by teleconference due to the COVID-19 health emergency. The meeting, agenda, and teleconference instructions were advertised to the public and the meeting was conducted within the guidelines provided by emergency order of Governor Brian Kemp. Present for the meeting were: Chairman Travis Turner, Commissioner Terry Goodger, Commissioner Lyn Holcomb, Commissioner Edwin Nix, Commissioner Craig Bryant, County Manager Jason Cobb, Outgoing County Manager Michael Melton, Finance Director Jodi Ligon and County Clerk Shanda Murphy.

Chairman Turner called the meeting to order.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Rev. Tim Morgan, Faith Lutheran Church and representing the White County Ministerial Alliance – provided the invocation.

Chairman Turner provided a welcome and introduction of Mr. Jason Cobb, County Manager effective April 27, 2020 and expressed the Board's appreciation to outgoing County Manager Michael Melton.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Goodger there was a unanimous vote to adopt the meeting minutes of the:

- Work Session & Called Meeting held February 24, 2020 – Including Executive Session Minutes;
- Called Meeting held March 2, 2020 – Including Executive Session Minutes;
- Called Meeting held March 9, 2020 – Including Executive Session Minutes;
- Called Meeting held March 12, 2020 – Including Executive Session Minutes;
- Called Meeting held March 24, 2020;
- Called Meeting held March 26, 2020;
- Called Meeting held March 30, 2020 – Including Executive Session Minutes; and
- Called Meeting held April 2, 2020.

Chairman Turner asked that Mr. Melton advise the Board and Mr. Cobb on the results of his conversation with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) regarding the process of assigning weight limits to some of the secondary county roads which are being badly damaged by heavy truck traffic (February 24, 2020 Meeting Minutes). Mr. Melton stated that he would forward the subject email to everyone.

Mr. David Murphy, Director of Public Safety, introduced Fire Chief Seth Weaver who was sworn in earlier in the day. Mr. Weaver expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve in this role. Mr. Murphy expressed appreciation to former Chief Norman Alexander and

April 27, 2020 – Called Meeting Minutes (continued)

congratulated him on his retirement. Chairman Turner expressed the Board's appreciation, as well to Mr. Alexander for his years of dedicated service.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Holcomb, seconded by Commissioner Nix there was a unanimous vote to adopt a Multi-County All Hazard - All Emergency Mutual Aid Assistance Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Benning, Georgia.

Mr. Bryan Payne, Chief Appraiser, presented quotes received for a new four-wheel drive vehicle for the Assessor's Office.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Holcomb, seconded by Commissioner Bryant there was a unanimous vote to approve the purchase of a 2020 4WD Ford Explorer from Jacky Jones Ford in the amount of \$28,991.14 – to be paid from SPLOST and to approve the surplus of the 2005 Ford Escape currently assigned to the Assessor's Office. Mr. Payne advised that the 2006 Jeep Liberty would be transferred from the Assessor's Office to the Senior Center.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Nix, seconded by Commissioner Goodger there was a unanimous vote to approve a letter of request for the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission (GMRC) to assist in preparing an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant application for the White County Development Authority to develop a strategic economic development plan for White County.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Goodger, seconded by Commissioner Bryant there was a unanimous vote to appoint Ridley Kinsey and John Yarbrough to the White County Development Authority for a six (6) year term to expire June 30, 2026 (previously held by John Erbele and one vacant position), to appoint Dustin Hulsey to the remainder of a six (6) year term to expire June 30, 2024 (previously held by Ginevra Boyes), and to re-appoint John Ziemer to a six (6) year term to expire June 30, 2026.

Commissioner Nix discussed the partial closing of Claude Sims Road which had taken place over 20 years ago for safety reasons, blocking access through Claude Sims Road to Highway 129 North. Chairman Turner explained that the Board had been discussing the reopening of the bridge at Claude Sims and redesigning the road to access Tesnatee Gap Valley Road. Commissioner Goodger noted that the bridge had already been inspected and would be utilized and Commissioner Nix stated there may be a cemetery in the vicinity.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Holcomb, seconded by Commissioner Goodger there was a unanimous vote to engage Carter & Sloope Engineering to develop a preliminary design plan (moderate in nature) and timeline for the re-provisioning of Claude Sims Road.

Ms. Jodi Ligon, Finance Director, presented the monthly Financial Status Report (see attached).

Ms. Ligon presented a spending freeze resolution to the Board for consideration.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Nix, seconded by Commissioner Holcomb there was a unanimous vote to adopt County Resolution 2020-04:

**WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2020 -04**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS IMPLEMENTING A  
SPENDING FREEZE  
FOR THE REMAINDER OF FISCAL YEAR 2020**

WHEREAS, due to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the White County Board of Commissioners is considering a proactive action regarding current expenditures; and

WHEREAS, tax revenues are expected to decline as a result of the shelter-in-place and social-distancing orders enacted by Governor Brian Kemp; and

WHEREAS, a spending freeze aimed at giving White County Officials and staff time to assess revenues and expenditures will be enacted immediately; and

NOW THEREFORE, effective immediately, the White County Board of Commissioners will institute a spending freeze for the remainder of the fiscal year on all goods and services that are not considered “essential” for daily operations of departments and for providing “essential” services to its citizens. Purchases related to the public health and safety needs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic are considered essential.

BE IT RESOLVED, for the duration of the spending freeze, all procurement for goods and services must be reviewed for approval by the County Manager and the Finance Director before purchases are made.

Adopted this 28<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2020.

**WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

s/Travis C. Turner

Travis C. Turner, Chairman

s/Terry D. Goodger

Terry D. Goodger, District 1

s/Lyn Holcomb

Lyn Holcomb, District 2

s/Edwin Nix

Edwin Nix, District 3

s/Craig Bryant

Craig Bryant, District 4

Attest: s/Shanda Murphy

Shanda Murphy, County Clerk

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Following discussions regarding temporary closures made as a result of the COVID-19 health emergency – the following actions were taken:

- Upon a motion made by Commissioner Goodger, seconded by Commissioner Holcomb there was a unanimous vote to reopen Yonah Preserve hiking / biking trails and lake effective May 1, 2020 – keeping the pavilion and restroom facilities closed, establishing appropriate signage prohibiting gatherings and requiring social distancing, removing picnic tables from the pavilion area, and allowing SORBA to evaluate trails prior to opening for any necessary maintenance;
- Upon a motion made by Commissioner Goodger, seconded by Commission Holcomb there was a unanimous vote to re-open outside recreation at the White County Recreation Department (Asbestos Road) to include pickleball courts - but not to include ballfields; and
- Upon a motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Holcomb there was a unanimous vote to bring county offices back to full staff (from 50/50) effective May 4, 2020 – with the date offices (and lobbies) would be re-opened to the public to be determined at a later time. It was noted that required safety measures for bringing full staff back into office areas would be communicated to departments.

There were no public comments submitted.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Nix, seconded by Commissioner Goodger there was a unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting.

The minutes of the April 27, 2020 Called Meeting are hereby approved as stated this 1st day of June, 2020.

## **WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

s/Travis C. Turner

Travis C. Turner, Chairman

s/Terry D. Goodger

Terry D. Goodger, District 1

s/Lyn Holcomb

Lyn Holcomb, District 2

s/Edwin Nix

Edwin Nix, District 3

s/Craig Bryant

Craig Bryant, District 4

s/Shanda Murphy

Shanda Murphy, County Clerk