

HABERSHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES
6:00 P.M., MONDAY, JULY 19, 2021
HABERSHAM COUNTY COURTHOUSE
JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM
295 LLEWELLYN STREET
CLARKESVILLE, GA 30523

A meeting of the Habersham County Board of Commissioners was held on Monday, July 19, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the Jury Assembly Room of the Habersham County Courthouse in Clarkesville, Georgia.

Present: Chairman Mealor; Commissioner Bruce Harkness; Commissioner Jimmy Tench; Commissioner Bruce Palmer; County Attorney Donnie Hunt; Interim County Manager Alicia Vaughn; Deputy Clerk Brandalin Carnes; County Department Directors; Individuals from the media and public.

Chairman Mealor called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Commissioner Harkness lead the invocation.

Commissioner Harkness lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Harkness seconded by Commissioner Palmer and voted unanimously to adopt the agenda.

PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Presentation of Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) to Habersham County EMS Director/Fire Chief Chad Black and Sheriff Joey Terrell from Hazel Cording with WCHM Radio.
2. Recognition of Commissioner Tench & Commissioner Palmer's completion of courses necessary for designation as Certified County Commissioners.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

By permitting opponents or speakers to present public comment to the county, the county does not acquiesce or waive its ability to challenge to the legal standing of the speaker(s) in the event of litigation.
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1. Z-21-01 Austin Nifong has applied for a map amendment to change the land use district of an approximately 13.64 acre tract located at 212 Lawrence Street from LI, Low intensity District to MI, Medium Intensity District for a 64 unit townhouse development (Map 110 Parcel 074).

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- a. **Mike Beecham:** Planning and Development Director, Mike Beecham, stated that concerns from citizens and staff lead to the requirement of a traffic study. After reviewing the traffic study there are still concerns regarding the roadway, however the property meets the comprehensive land development ordinances, has city water and sewer available, the developer is not asking for any variances, and the same use was approved for a similar property immediately adjacent, therefore the planning department recommends approval. The Planning Commission did not have a hearing on the matter as it was tabled on May 4th with a request from the Planning Commission for completion of a traffic study, then tabled on June 1st per the applicants request to allow time to finish the study, and then on July 5th there was not a quorum of the Planning Commission available to hear the matter. Per state law the Planning Commission only has 45 days to take action before forwarding the matter to the Board of Commissioners without a recommendation.
- b. **Jason Smith:** Mr. Smith is a civil engineer representing Austin Nifong in this matter. He states the Comprehensive Land Development Resolution defines the property in question as being MI as it has public water and sewer available and is considered a “transitional” area. He informed that the proposed use of this property falls within the CLDR and other county requirements and a precedence has been set in that the board approved a nearby property for the exact same use. Mr. Smith went on to say that there are few alternative areas of the county that that have public water and sewer where a development such as this one can be built. He went on to say that traffic will be a complaint no matter where it is located in the county, but there is an obvious need for rental housing. He says that if you look at online, there are no rental units available within a 5 mile radius of Cornelia.
- c. **Doris Jones:** Lives on Chase Rd. Has concerns regarding increased traffic and security issues.
- d. **Carol Means:** Mrs. Dorothy Jones’ daughter. Has concerns regarding increased traffic.
- e. **Cheryl Kawolski:** Concerns regarding advertisement of the zoning hearing.
- f. **Dorothy Sellers:** Lives on Chase Rd. Has concerns regarding increased traffic.
- g. **Lundy:** Ms. Dorothy Sellers’ daughter. Has concerns regarding increased traffic & advertisement of zoning hearing.
- h. **Ronnie Hamlin:** Lives on Chase Rd. Has concerns regarding the increased traffic as well as resulting noise.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

During this time, members of the public are invited to address the Commission on any Agenda item other than those listed as Public Hearing. If you signed up to speak at the meeting tonight, you will have three minutes. If your name is listed on the Agenda, you will have five minutes.

- 1. **Peggy Fortson:** Pickleball Complex Funding
Has started process of becoming a 503(c) organization and an official club for Habersham County in the Pickleball Association. The players are holding a fundraiser on August 8th at 2:00 p.m. with Parks & Recreation in the form of a Round Robin demonstrating the sport and a silent auction. Had several questions for the Commissioners regarding their

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expectations and requirements needing to be met for the pickleball players to get funding approval. The Commission referred her to consult with Interim County Manager Alicia Vaughn.

2. **Wade Rhodes:** States that Habersham County has some great industry, schools, municipalities and county government. He is disappointed in the humiliation that county employees have been put through in the past several meetings. Issued a challenge to Mr. Doug McDonald to focus on positive things for the community rather than negative.
3. **Doug McDonald:** Mr. McDonald chose to withdraw from public comment.
4. **Bill Miles:** Requests that the County to act on promise to maintain KIA monument. The Commission has referred this to Facilities Director, Mike Bramlett, to look into what actions and materials are necessary to get this started and include it going forward on the budget.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Commissioner Harkness seconded by Commissioner Palmer and voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda.

- a. Consider/Approve the Minutes of the June 21, 2021 Meeting
- b. Consider/Approve the Minutes of the June 21, 2021 Executive Session
- c. Consider/Approve the Minutes of the June 28, 2021 (3:30 p.m.) Called Meeting
- d. Consider/Approve the Minutes of the June 28, 2021 (3:30 p.m.) Called Meeting Executive Session
- e. Consider/Approve the Minutes of the June 28, 2021 (6:00 p.m.) Called Meeting
- f. Consider/Approve the Minutes of the July 8, 2021 Called Meeting
- g. Consider/Approve the Minutes of the July 8, 2021 Called Meeting Executive Session.
- h. Consider/Approve USFS Land Use Agreement at Habersham County Airport
- i. Consider/Approve CRRSA Act Funding for Airport
- j. Consider/Approve FY 2022 Tentative Allocation for Airport Easements & Obstruction Removal

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- k.** Consider/Approve Warning Siren Grant Application
- l.** Consider/Approve Fee Schedule Change for Senior Center Wellness Classes

REPORTS:

- a.** Fiscal Status: Tim Sims, Finance Director
- b.** Manager's Report: Alicia Vaughn, Interim County Manager
- c.** HMC Report: Tyler Williams, CEO/President of HMC

APPOINTMENTS:

HOSPITAL AUTHORITY- 3-year term

- 1. Teri Newsome- Term Expires 6/30/2021- District 5 Appointment
Tabled at June, 21, 2021 meeting until November 15, 2021 meeting
- 2. Kerry Loudermilk- Term Expires 6/30/2021- Commissioner Palmer's (District 1) Appointment

Motion by Commissioner Palmer seconded by Chairman Meador and voted unanimously to table appointment until August 16th Commission meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a.** Consider/Approve Old Courthouse Demolition

Motion by Chairman Meador seconded by Commissioner Tench and voted unanimously to table this item until the September 20th Commission meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a.** Consider/Approve FY 2022 Habersham County School Board Millage Rate Adoption

Tax Commissioner June Black provided Financial Director Tims Sims the approved school board millage rate. The rate decided on by the school board was 12.566 which was a roll back.

Motion by Chairman Meador seconded by Commissioner Harkness and voted unanimously to approve

- b.** Consider/Approve Agreement for CVIOG to Conduct County Manager Executive Search.

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Motion by Chairman Mealor seconded by Commissioner Palmer and voted unanimously to approve contract with CVIOG to Conduct County Manager Executive Search.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion by Chairman Mealor, seconded by Commissioner Palmer to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing Personnel, pursuant to O.C.G.A § 50-14-3(b)(2); Litigation, pursuant to O.C.G.A §50-14-2; Cyber Security, pursuant to GA H.B. 134 (2021) at 8:25 p.m.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Commissioner Tench- yea
Commissioner Harkness- yea
Chairman Mealor- yea
Commissioner Palmer- yea

MOTION PASSES

Reconvened in Executive Session at 8:33 p.m.

Present: Chairman Dustin Mealor; Commissioners Bruce Harkness, Bruce Palmer and Jimmy Tench; County Attorney Donnie Hunt; Interim County Manager Alicia Vaughn and Deputy Clerk Brandalin Carnes

Motion by Chairman Mealor seconded by Commissioner Palmer and voted unanimously to come out of closed session at 9:26 p.m.

County Attorney Donnie Hunt reported that all matters discussed in Closed Session were limited to those matters allowed by the laws of the State of Georgia and asked for a motion authorizing the Chairman to make such a representation under oath on the affidavit.

Motion by Chairman Mealor seconded by Commissioner Palmer and voted unanimously to adopt a resolution authorizing and directing the chairman to execute an affidavit in compliance with O.C.G.A Section 50-14-4, and that this body confirm that the actions of the board in closed session were, as required by law.

Motion by Commissioner Tench seconded by Commissioner Mealor and voted unanimously to make an offer to Appoint Brandy Carnes to the County Clerk position.

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ADJOURN 9:27 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Palmer seconded by Chairman Mealor and voted unanimously to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,

By: _____
Chairman Dustin Mealor

Attest: _____
County Clerk Brandalin Carnes