

**HABERSHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
6:00 P.M., TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2022
HABERSHAM COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING
COMMISSION CONFERENCE ROOM (MAIN FLOOR)
130 JACOB'S WAY, CLARKESVILLE, GA 30523**

A special called meeting of the Habersham County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, January 4, 2022 at 6:00 P.M. in the Commission Conference Room (main floor) of the Habersham County Administrative Building. Present were Chairman Dustin Meador, Commissioner Bruce Harkness, Commissioner Bruce Palmer, Commissioner Jimmy Tench, Commissioner Ty Akins, County Clerk Brandalin Carnes, department heads, staff, members of the media and public.

County Attorney Donnie Hunt and Interim County Manager Alicia Vaughn were absent.

Chairman Meador called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Harkness lead the invocation.

Commissioner Harkness lead the pledge of allegiance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **Election of Commission Chairman:** Motion made by Commissioner Meador, seconded by Commissioner Akins to nominate Commissioner Palmer as the Commission Chairman.

Commissioner Palmer-Yea
Commissioner Meador-Yea
Commissioner Harkness-Yea
Commissioner Akin-Yea
Commissioner Tench-Nay

Motion Carries 4-1.

- b. **Election of Commission Vice Chairman:** Motion made by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Commissioner Meador to nominate Commissioner Harkness as Commission Vice Chairman.

Commissioner Palmer-Yea
Commissioner Meador-Yea
Commissioner Harkness-Yea
Commissioner Akin-Yea
Commissioner Tench-Nay
Motion carries 4-1.

- c. **Discussion of County Manager Finalist:** Motion made by Commissioner Mealor, seconded by Commissioner Akins to name Alicia Vaughn as the finalist for the County Manager position.

Commissioner Palmer-Yea
Commissioner Mealor-Yea
Commissioner Harkness-Yea
Commissioner Akin-Yea
Commissioner Tench-Nay

Motion carries 4-1.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Tench questioned members of the Commission as to why he was informed by Joe Elam that Commissioner Akin and Commissioner Palmer went to a meeting with Baldwin that he was not informed about, and that his not being invited was age discrimination. Much discussion was had between Commissioner Tench and the other members of the Commission. An email had been sent out to all of the Commissioners requesting two Commission volunteers to attend a work session being had with the city of Baldwin as well as informing of a full meeting of both the Board of Commissioners and the City of Baldwin Council afterwards. Commissioner Mealor and Commissioner Harkness had responded about their inability to attend, and Commissioner Palmer and Commissioner Akins volunteered to do so. An email was sent out later cancelling the meeting between the full Board of Commissioners and full Baldwin City Council until a later date, however the work group itself was not cancelled. Commissioner Palmer asked Commissioner Tench why he didn't respond to the email asking for volunteers, to which Commissioner Tench stated that his computer hasn't been working. Commissioner Harkness offered that IT could put an app on Commissioner Tench's phone so he can get his emails easier, as they have done this for him personally.

Commissioner Tench states that he wants everyone to know that they are exempt from school tax. He states that the school system can only get 2 cents, user tax and sales tax. He stated that the one pushed through via LOST is illegal, as you can't get SPLOST for school systems. Commissioner Palmer responded that LOST was a legislative amendment by the state and that Commissioner Tench would have to argue with the governor over that.

Commissioner Harkness stated that he would love to see more people get involved with making applications to the open appointments that the county has for its various boards and commissions. He says that he realizes that it doesn't have a lot of recognition, but he personally would back the people come election time that have served and volunteered for their community. Wade Rhodes asked the Commission to consider allowing people such as himself that don't live inside the county but who have property inside the county to serve on the boards, committees, and authorities. The Commission stated that they would inquire with the county attorney regarding this. Mr. Rhodes also suggested advertising for the openings at the location

Commissioner Palmer stated that he would like to thank the citizens and the Commission for their confidence in him as the Commission Chairman for the next year and that he will strive to do the best job he possibly can.

Commissioner Harkness stated that he promises to work hard for the citizens and county taxpayers and that he wants to do what helps the citizens, their children and grand children by bringing jobs to the county and keeping taxes low. Even though he didn't receive a full consensus by the board, he wants to try to work with everyone to the best of his ability to gain the trust and acceptance of everyone on the commission.

ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Mealor, seconded by Commissioner Akin and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:21 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

By: _____

Chairman Bruce Palmer

Attest: _____

Deputy Clerk Brandalin Carnes

