

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
WARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, January 9, 2023
5:00 p.m.**

The Ware County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting, Monday, January 9, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. in the Ware County Commission Chambers, 305 Oak Street, Suite 201 Waycross, Georgia 31501 with Chairman Elmer Thrift presiding.

CALL TO ORDER	Chairman Elmer Thrift
COMMISSIONERS PRESENT	Commissioner Steve Barnard Commissioner Leonard Burse Commissioner Timmy Lucas Commissioner Jerry Pope
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT	None
STAFF PRESENT	County Manager Scott Moye; Assistant County Attorney Jennifer Herzog
PRESS	Danny Bartlett, WJH
INVOCATION	The invocation was waived from the Work Session
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE	The Pledge of Allegiance was waived from the Work Session

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Commissioner Burse to approve the agenda as presented, with Commissioner Pope seconding.

All Commissioners responded “aye” to approve the agenda.

GUEST SPEAKER: None

CONSENT ITEMS:

A. Approval of Meeting Minutes	
Called Meeting	December 6, 2022
Work Session	December 12, 2022
Public Hearing	December 12, 2022
Regular Meeting	December 12, 2022

Motion was made by Commissioner Barnard to approve the meeting minutes as presented, with Commissioner Pope seconding.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jerry Pope-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-aye; Commissioner Steve Barnard-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

Appointments for Calendar Year 2023

A. Vice-Chairman – Ware County Board of Commissioners

Chairman Thrift stated that Commissioner Barnard's term expired, and he wanted to be relieved of this duty. He said Commissioner Burse had asked to be appointed in his place.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lucas to appoint Commissioner Burse as Vice-Chairman of the Board of Commissioners with Commissioner Barnard seconding the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jerry Pope-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-aye; Commissioner Steve Barnard-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

B. Ex-Officio Member to Downtown Waycross Development Authority

Chairman Thrift stated that Commissioner Pope is currently on the DWDA and asked if there was a motion to keep him on this board.

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnard to keep Commissioner Pope as the Ex-Officio member of the Downtown Waycross Development Authority with Commissioner Burse seconding the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jerry Pope-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-aye; Commissioner Steve Barnard-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

C. Southern Georgia Regional Commission Board of Directors

Chairman Thrift stated he currently serves on this board and would be accepting of remaining on the board. He asked if there was a motion on this item.

A motion was made by Commissioner Burse to keep Chairman Thrift on the Southern Georgia Regional Commission Board of Directors, with Commissioner Lucas seconding the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion.

Roll Call Vote:

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jerry Pope-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-aye; Commissioner Steve Barnard-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

D. Ex-Officio Member to the Okefenokee Regional Library Board of Trustees

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnard to keep Commissioner Lucas as the Ex-Officio Member to the Okefenokee Regional Library Board of Trustees, with Commissioner Pope seconding the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jerry Pope-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-aye; Commissioner Steve Barnard-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

Agenda Items

A. Appointments to the Okefenokee Regional Library Board of Trustees

Chairman Thrift stated there were four (4) positions to be considered. One of these was for the Ex-Officio which left only three (3) positions to be filled. He then asked Commissioner Lucas for his recommendations for appointees.

Commissioner Lucas thanked the community for the support as there were twelve or thirteen applicants for these three positions. First he recommended that Ms. Tawanna Harris be reappointed to the board, then he recommended Mrs. Karla Parker be appointed to the second position. For the third position, he recommended Mrs. Evelyn Denton. He then asked if any of the appointees would like to address the Commission. Mrs. Harris thanked the Commission for her recommendation and promised to serve in the best interest of the people and the community. Mrs. Parker introduced herself as a retired educator and thanked the Commission for her recommendation. Mrs. Denton also stepped forward to state her appreciation for the recommendation and offered to do her best.

Commissioner Barnard offered that there are several boards needing members and asked that the community come forward and advise the Commission if there is interest in becoming a board member. Commissioner Pope asked CM Moye if these resumes would remain on file. He stated they would be kept for touching base as positions become available. Commissioner Burse also expressed his gratitude to the community for applying because it is a great thing to serve your community in any capacity. He also thanked the library director, Mrs Martha Powers-Jones, for bringing to light the lack of minority representation as it is important in the future for the board to have a cross section of the community represented. He also asked to verify that these are one (1) year terms. Mrs. Powers Jones stated that two (2) of the terms are for four (4) years. One of the positions is to fill an unexpired term. The Ex-Officio term is for one (1) year.

County Attorney clarified that Commissioner Lucas's recommendation is for Ms. Tawanna Harris to be appointed for another four-year term. The unexpired term of Andy Wall which expires

December 31, 2023 would be filled by Mrs. Karla Parker, and she could be reappointed at that time. The position held by Cassie Clemmons would be filled by Mrs. Evelyn Denton for a four-year term. Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lucas to reappoint Ms. Tawanna Harris to a four-year term; appoint Mrs. Karla Parker to Mr. Andy Wall's position; and appoint Mrs. Evelyn Denton to a four-year term with Commissioner Burse seconding the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jerry Pope-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-aye; Commissioner Steve Barnard-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

B. Trembling Earth Ballfield Spraying

Chairman Thrift said he thought the job should be rebid. and asked for a motion. Commissioner Barnard made a motion to rebid the spraying job, but there was no second.

Commissioner Burse asked the County Attorney to verify that the spraying was bid out last year for a period of one (1) year with the stipulation that the contract could be extended for two (2) consecutive years if the Commission elected to do so, but would have to be bid out after three (3) years. County Attorney Herzog advised that the advertised bid and the contract does have that language. Commissioner Burse then asked for the Recreation Department Director to step up and update the Commission on the work of the current company that is spraying the fields. Director Lance Adamson stated that although the company had gotten a late start, they were 90% caught up. Everything that was promised has been done, and there has been a 100% turn around in the condition of the fields. Commissioner Burse then asked the County Attorney if the contract were to be extended, would it be for the same price. She stated that it would. She also pointed out that the Chairman has the ability to second the motion if he so desires. Then there could be discussion and a vote taken. At this point, the Chairman seconded the motion to rebid the spraying job. He then asked if there was discussion any.

Commissioner Burse asked the Rec. Dept. Director if he has a good working relationship with the current contractor holder. Mr. Adamson responded that he does. Commissioner Lucas then asked Mr. Adamson if he felt confident that the work would continue to be performed at the current level of quality. He responded that he does feel confident and added that when there is a question of what to do the current sprayer always gives assistance. He further stated that the results of the work can be seen on the fields. Commissioner Burse reiterated that there had been some discrepancy in the beginning about other bidders not meeting qualifications, and he doesn't want to get in that situation again. If the wording is in the contract to extend for one year, he wants to keep everything going right. Mr. Adamson spoke up that he is very satisfied with the service that has been received up to this point. Commissioner Lucas spoke up and said that the current contractor has only had nine (9) months to work on the fields and there has been a 100% turn around. He has ridden out to inspect the fields and liked what he saw. He doesn't want to stop a man in the middle of a project before he has had a chance to finish it.

Chairman Thrift responded that the wrong issue was being discussed. The high bid was accepted last time. He has been in business for over 40 years, and the low bid is what was always chosen where he came from. He reiterated the lowest or best bid. He further stated that he understood the

positions of Commissioners Burse and Lucas. Although the current contractor has done a good job, he feels the local guy with the low bid should have an opportunity. He asked the County Attorney if the Commission would be in line if it was not rebid. Her response was that at that current point in the meeting there was a motion and a second to rebid, so the Commission is in proper procedure to discuss that and take a vote on it.

Commissioner Burse addressed the Chairman stating that the previous discrepancy was not in regards to the lower bid, but rather the bidder not meeting the qualifications. He pointed out the Chairman's earlier statement about always choosing the lowest or best bid, and in some instances the lowest bid is not the best bid. As stewards of the taxpayers' money, Commissioners have to do what is in the best interest of the County. He reiterated the language in the contract allows for it to be extended, but at the end of the third year it would have to be rebid.

Chairman Thrift said he felt it should be rebid. He asked for a vote as there had already been a motion and a second.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-no; Commissioner Jerry Pope-no; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-no; Commissioner Steve Barnard-yes; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-yes.

C. 2023 GDOT LMIG Project List

Commissioner Barnard stated that during the break, after speaking with the County Manager and County Attorney, the Commissioners came to the consensus that they could do a ride through to look at the roads and determine what needs to be done before making the decision on how to spend the \$2 million. Commissioner Pope added that they would be accompanied by the County Manager and the County Engineer.

The Chairman stated the Commission would look at those roads and determine which ones would be done and which ones would not be done. Commissioner Barnard asked the County Manager if this could happen by Friday, to which he replied that it could. Chairman Thrift stated this item would be tabled. County Attorney Herzog reminded him that a motion was needed.

Commissioner Barnard made a motion to table the item, and Commissioner Lucas seconded the motion.

All Commissioners voted in favor by saying aye. Chairman Thrift stated the motion has been tabled.

D. Purchase Request – WCSO Patrol Vehicles

The Chairman asked for a motion to buy three (3) Tahoes. Commissioner Lucas made a motion to buy the three (3) Tahoes as recommended by the Sheriff and include the language not to exceed \$10,000 for the equipment for each one. The Chairman asked the County Manager if the money was appropriated from the 2014 funds, and Mr. Moyer stated that it was and that the price is a state contract price. Commissioner Barnard seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion. Commissioner Burse wanted to clarify that the language about what was not to exceed \$10,000. Commissioner Lucas responded it was referring to the lights, radios, and other equipment that the deputies and the Sheriff need in their patrol vehicles. Commissioner Burse then asked what is the normal amount for that equipment. Commissioner

Lucas replied that it can run as high as \$15-18,000, depending on the specific items that are chosen. He stated that the Sheriff promising not to exceed \$10,000 is being very conservative. Commissioner Barnard asked for the Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor, Barry Cox, to come forward and answer some questions. He asked if some of the equipment, such as cages, can be transferred to the new vehicle. Mr. Cox stated the reason for the low price is that there are two vehicles with blown engines that have equipment that the Sheriff wants to use on the new Tahoes. Commissioner Barnard then asked the price difference between the Tahoe and the Ford F150 truck. Mr. Cox responded that there isn't a lot of price difference, but the Tahoe may be a little more expensive. The Sheriff had talked about trying the Ford pickup, but right now they are hard to find. CM Moyer stated that he has also spoken with the Sheriff. He was told by the dealership to put an order in but nothing could be promised. These Tahoes just became available possibly because so many more departments do use the Tahoe because of space and convenience. However, these three aren't guaranteed to be available. Commissioner Barnard asked if the Sheriff still had several vehicles to surplus out. Mr. Cox replied there are some vehicles that have been brought to him. He hopes to have a surplus sale by March. There are some Crown Vics on the list, and he feels the Tahoes with the blown engines will be included as well.

Chairman Thrift said there was a motion and a second, so he called for a vote:

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jerry Pope-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-aye; Commissioner Steve Barnard-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

E. Discussion & Possible Action Concerning Walnut Lane Extension

Commissioner Lucas called the residents of Walnut Lane in attendance to address the Commission. Three residents stepped forward (without giving names) and stated they did not want to see the street opened up. They felt that the traffic would continue to flow to Dorothy Street to miss the train just as has always happened.

Commissioner Lucas made a motion to table this item and include Walnut Lane in the ride along for the LMIG list, with Commissioner Barnard seconding it. When the Chairman asked for a vote, Commissioner Burse advised they needed to discuss it. He asked why would the item be tabled when he is in agreement with other Commissioners and the residents that it wouldn't make sense to open up the road. The money could be better spent on other streets. The Chairman agreed that he didn't see a reason to open up that street. Commissioner Barnard asked the other Commissioners if they had driven out and assessed the situation. Commissioner Pope and Chairman Thrift stated they had checked it out. Commissioner Lucas stated that he would like to see another opening closer to US Hwy 1 because once CSX does what it's going to do, part of ABC Avenue will be lost. Commissioner Burse asked Commissioner Lucas if he felt that it would not be a good idea to open up Walnut Lane. Commissioner Lucas said he did not feel that would be a good idea. He stated he wants to open a road from Cherokee Avenue to Wacona Drive instead of opening one from Wacona Drive to Cherokee Avenue. He withdrew his motion to table to the item.

Commissioner Burse made a motion that Walnut Lane not be opened, with a second from Commissioner Pope.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jerry Pope-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-aye; Commissioner Steve Barnard-no; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

F. Appointment – Ware County Board of Health

County Manager Moye told the Commission that this is for the reappointment of Mrs. Ola Smith. Commissioner Lucas made a motion that Mrs. Ola Smith be reappointed to the Ware County Board of Health. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jerry Pope-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-aye; Commissioner Steve Barnard-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

G. Appointment – Waycross-Ware County Development Authority

Chairman Thrift stated this is to replace James Willis on the WWDA board for the term beginning January 1, 2023 and expiring on December 31, 2025.

Commissioner Pope made a motion to appoint Dan Good to the Waycross-Ware County Development Authority, with Commissioner Barnard seconding the motion.

Chairmen Thrift asked for discussion. Commissioner Pope said that he would be good and he knows what to do.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jerry Pope-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-aye; Commissioner Steve Barnard-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

H. Road Closure /Abandonment: Portions of Country Club Blvd & East Ware Street

Chairman asked for a motion. Commissioner Barnard made a motion to close/abandon portions of Country Club Blvd and East Ware Street. Commissioner Lucas seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jerry Pope-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-aye; Commissioner Steve Barnard-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT:

Mr. Moye told the Commission that he had three things to mention. First he stated he had given the Commissioners a summary report of the ARPA funds that have been received and the expenditures. This is the balance of what is left, and he does not know of any more ARPA funds to be received. Secondly, he gave a note regarding the elected official personal financial disclosure that is due for 2022. The deadline to submit is June 30, 2023. The last thing was to ask everyone to keep their fingers crossed an GO DAWGS.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Lucas asked if the Ware County High School Football Team had been congratulated on winning the State Title at the last meeting. General responses were yes.

Commissioner Burse told the Commission that he would like to congratulate and welcome the new County Clerk, Mrs. Melinda Brooks. He stated there has not been a clerk since he began serving on

the Commission Board and he looked forward to a good working relationship. Other Commissioners welcomed her as well.

Commissioner Barnard said the project in Jamestown is moving along. Dirt is being hauled in, and a temporary bridge is in place.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Commissioner Burse to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 5:42 p.m., with Commissioner Lucas seconding the motion.

All Commissioners voted aye.

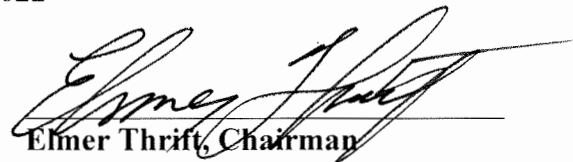
Date proposed to be approved: February 13, 2022

ATTEST:



Scott M. Moye, County Manager

[SEAL]



Elmer Thrift, Chairman

02-15-2023
Date