

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
WARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, JULY 10, 2023
5:00 p.m.**

The Ware County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting, Monday, July 10, 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 Moyer; Assistant County Attorney Jennifer Herzog; County Clerk Melinda Brooks
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 Lucas seconding the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

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

GUEST SPEAKER:

Eugenia Dixon - Georgia Initiative for Community Housing

Ms. Dixon introduced herself to the Commission stating that she is new to the Housing Committee but wanted to introduce herself to the Commission. She invited the Commissioners and other County Officials to the Committee Meetings and said that she would periodically report back with updates.

PROCLAMATION: BOBBY BLUE SMITH

Fire Chief Dee Meadows read the proclamation honoring and memorializing the life of Ware County Fire Rescue Firefighter Bobby Blue Smith. A framed copy of the proclamation was presented to each of his parents at this time.

CONSENT ITEMS:

A. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Called Meeting	June 6, 2023
Work Session	June 12, 2023
Regular Meeting	June 12, 2023
Public Hearing	June 29, 2023
Called Meeting	June 29, 2023

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

AGENDA ITEMS

A. Library Boiler Replacement

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

Commissioner Barnard made a motion to accept the bid of \$56,213 to replace the library boiler to be paid with ARPA funds. Commissioner Lucas seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion. There was no 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. Resolution 2023-24: Approve Public Defender Contract for First Half of FY 2024

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Burse to approve the Public Defender Contract.

Commissioner Lucas seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion. There was no 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. Appointments – Ware County DFCS Board

County Manager Moyer reminded the Commission that Mary Alice Aldridge has been recommended to finish the unexpired term of Shelli Tyre, and Debi Jones has been recommended to be appointed to a full term to replace Betty Lee.

Chairman Thrift asked that the appointments be made in two separate motions and then asked for the first motion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lucas to appoint Mary Alice Aldridge to finish the term of Shelli Tyre which will expire June 30, 2024. Commissioner Barnard seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion. There was no 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.

Chairman Thrift asked for a motion on the second appointment.

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnard to appoint Debi Jones to the expired term of Betty Lee. This term will expire June 30, 2027. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion. There was no 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.

D. Rezoning Request – Parcel No. 069F01 010 B – Lynell Lane

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnard to accept the rezoning requests, with Commissioner Burse seconding the motion.

There was no discussion.

Roll Call Vote:

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

E. Road Closure Request – Mary Street

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Lucas to accept the request to close/abandon the platted portion of Mary Street from South Augusta Avenue to University Blvd (which has never been opened) with Commissioner Barnard seconding 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.

F. Road Closure Request

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnard to accept the request for closure of West Church Street with Commissioner Lucas seconding the motion and adding the condition that Public Works be given until the end of August to remove the culvert pipes and open up the drainage before the road closes.

There was no 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.

COUNTY MANAGER’S REPORT: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Lucas brought up the situation at the library and the fact there were strong feelings on both sides. He mentioned division and unity, but feels that in order to get along both sides will have to agree to disagree. He said he tried to keep his personal feelings out of it.

Commissioner Burse agreed that the issue has been contentious on both sides. He is of the opinion that you reason together. When there are strong feelings, you sound things out. He strongly feels that the Commission wouldn’t be pulled into that because there is a board in place to handle those issues. He said now that things seem to have settled down that the Commission needs to be unified and not push personal agendas.

Commissioner Lucas agreed and then asked the Chairman about getting bids for paving Cornelius Road and to find out what the Cornelius business and Moore business are willing to contribute.

Commissioner Burse thanked City Commissioner Davis and City Manager Rayford for attending the meeting. He also let them and the public know that the Bailey Street pool is slated to open Saturday, July 15.

Commissioner Barnard asked for an update on the Winn Clay Bridge project. County Manager Moye stated that the engineering crew was off the past week for the Fourth of July. He should be getting an update in the next day or so. They are supposed to be putting down the soil cement at the end of the month.

The Commission invited WWDA Director Jason Rubenbauer to give an update on area development. Mr. Rubenbauer said he is working with Suvi of the Finnish company ADARES to finish up the grant process for DCA while they work on finalizing their bond funding toward the

end of this year. He is still hopeful that the groundbreaking will be held the first quarter of 2024 with completion still expected to be in the third quarter of 2025. He referenced Mrs. Dixon of the Georgia Initiative of Community Housing saying this project will help because this company builds modular homes for single and multiple family homes. He said he has a meeting in Atlanta next week for a potential project for Ware County, but he couldn't disclose any details. He did say there are a lot of opportunities for the company, so there is a lot of excitement and willingness from landowners. He said there are several good things going, not just for Ware County, but for the whole region. Commissioner Burse asked him if there has been any interest in the Simmons building since that company is moving out. Mr. Rubenbauer said that the building has been put under contract for industrial use and will be occupied as soon as the Simmons company vacates the premises.

ADJOURN

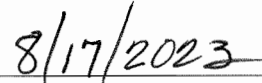
A motion was made by Commissioner Lucas to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 5:37 p.m., with Commissioner Pope seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Date proposed to be approved: August 14, 2023


Elmer Thrift, Chairman

ATTEST:


Melinda L. Brooks, County Clerk


Date

[SEAL]