

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
WARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2023  
5:00 p.m.**

**The Ware County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting, Monday, September 11, 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.**

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

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion was made by Commissioner Burse to approve the agenda 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.

**GUEST SPEAKER:   None**

**PROCLAMATIONS: NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY**

County Attorney Jennifer Herzog read the Proclamation declaring September 19, 2023 as National Registration Day in Ware County, Georgia and urged all eligible citizens to register to vote. Chairman Thrift asked if a vote was needed to accept the proclamation. County Manager Moye said that an official vote could be taken.

Commissioner Burse made a motion to vote to approve September 19 as the National Voter Registration Day. Commissioner Barnard seconded 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.

**EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH – MELISSA BENNETT**

Human Resources Director Theresa Bailey and County Manager Scott Moye presented County Payroll Administrator Melissa Bennett as the County Employee of the Month. She was given a \$100 check in appreciation for her dedication and loyalty

**CONSENT ITEMS:**

A. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Work Session    | August 14, 2023 |
| Public Hearing  | August 14, 2023 |
| Regular Meeting | August 14, 2023 |

Motion was made by Commissioner Pope to approve the meeting minutes as presented, with Commissioner Burse 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. Memorandum of Understanding with City of Waycross Midnight Basketball League**

Chairman Thrift asked if anyone from the City was in the audience. County Manager Moye said he has not seen anyone. He also told the Commission that he made the 2 revisions to the MOU that were mentioned during the Work Session about Law Enforcement being on the premises in paragraph 4 and 6. Commissioner Barnard asked if the parking lot should be included in paragraph 5 regarding housekeeping CM Moye said he could add that. Asst. County Attorney Herzog told Commissioner Barnard if he wants to make the motion he can add that as part of his motion.

Commissioner Barnard made a motion to accept the MOU for Midnight Basketball and add the parking lot to the housekeeping responsibilities for the City. He clarified that it would be the area immediately surrounding the gym, not the entire parking lot. 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.

**B. Resolution 2023-27: Approve MOU with the Georgia Recreation and Parks Association**

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Burse. Commissioner Pope seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion.

Commissioner Pope asked if County Manager Moye would give an explanation about the grant. CM Moye said this is the BOOST grant. It is a program sponsored by the Georgia Recreation and Parks Association for expanded educational opportunities for kids after school hours to expand their learning beyond being in school. Commissioner Pope asked if it expands and adds the program that is currently in place. CM Moye said it does.

Roll Call Vote:

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

**C. Purchase Request – Mower Equipment: Mower Max Boom – Gen 3**

Chairman Thrift stated this was the machine the Commission had discussed earlier and talked about getting two of them. He asked if there was a motion on this item. He also mentioned that Public Works Director Brooks had called the salesman to see if a discount would be offered for a purchase but has not received an answer yet. Commissioner Burse asked if they needed to wait to see what the price would be before committing to purchasing two tractors. Commissioner Barnard and Chairman Thrift stated that they would go with the quoted price and maybe there would be a discount for two.

Commissioner Barnard made a motion to purchase two of the Gen 3 Mower Max Booms at the price of \$270,000 each. Commissioner Pope seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion.

Commissioner Burse asked County Moye if these would be purchased with discretionary TSPLOST funds. CM Moye said they would. Commissioner Burse said he feels this would money be well spent. He appreciates Director Brooks bringing this equipment to the attention of the Commission, and the Chairman for suggesting that they purchase two tractors. Commissioner Barnard said he would like to emphasize that he wants two employees dedicated to these machines full time, not swapping them between dump trucks, road graders, etc.

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. Road Closing/Abandonment Request – Two End Road**

Chairman Thrift stated there was no opposition to this request and asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Lucas moved to close the road as described by Planning and Codes Director Shubert which is known as Two End Road. Commissioner Barnard seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion.

Commissioner Burse asked if the applicant is the same person who used to be Chairman of the

Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Barnard said that it is the same person.

Roll Call Vote:

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

**E. Hurricane Debris Collection and Disposal – CrowderGulf Notice to Proceed**

County Manager Moye explained that he is asking for a vote to issue the Notice to Proceed, so the Company can gear up. The following item Thompson Monitoring Services is a request for an emergency purchase of services for this company to monitor CrowderGulf. He said a representative from Thompson Monitoring Services in the audience. When that agenda item is up for discussion, the representative can answer questions for the Commission.

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Burse with Commissioners Barnard and Lucas simultaneously seconding the motion.

Commissioner Pope stated the Commission had approved a contract for CrowderGulf a few months ago, and he wanted to be sure this would get them started. County Manager Moye said the contract is written where it can be extended annually which is what the Commission did back in either February or March. Chairman asked the County Manager if the County has to pay any of that expense. He answered that FEMA reimburses the County.

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. Thompson Monitoring Services – Emergency Purchase of Services**

Ken Forrester of Thompson Monitoring Services explained to the Commission that anytime a debris contract is activated, FEMA requires a third party monitoring service to monitor and document the debris for FEMA reimbursement. He explained that only storm debris would be picked up from the public right of way and disposed of. After a few more questions from the Commission, Assistant County Attorney Herzog explained that because of the emergency conditions of this situation the County Manager is asking to go outside of the normal purchasing policy so the Commission would be approving that federal declaration of emergency. She also stated that the County does not currently have a contract in place with Thompson Monitoring, so she is asking that Mr. Forrester provide the County with a standard contract. If the Commission will give the County Manager and her approval, they can make sure the wording is good and get it executed by the Chairman.

Commissioner Barnard asked if it was just bypassing the bidding process. Asst. County Attorney Herzog explained that due to the Federal emergency and because the County wants to get this service going for the citizens as soon as possible. County Manager Moye said that Lowndes County bid this out a little over a year ago, and Thompson Monitoring is who they chose. In a sense, Ware County is piggybacking off of the Lowndes bid. Commissioner Burse asked if this is a contract that would be reimbursed by FEMA, and CM Moye said it would. Commissioner Barnard asked Mr. Forrester if his company would bill the County who would pay the bill. Afterwards, FEMA would reimburse the County. He advised that was correct.

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

Commissioner Barnard to accept Thompson Monitoring Services and give the County Manager and County Attorney handle the details of the contract. Commissioner Pope 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:**

County Manager Moye just wanted to remind everyone of the date. He still remembers 22 years later where he was when he got the news.

The Chairman asked that everyone remember the people of Morocco who have suffered an earthquake.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Lucas asked for an update on Paschall Road from County Engineer Wallace. He said he communicated the desire of the Commission to the property owner who rejected the counteroffer. He did ask Engineer Wallace if the height of the hedge could be lowered to about three feet off of his property. He told the Chairman that the Mower Max Booms that were just approved for purchase could be used to bring that hedge down to the requested height. That could be used as a compromise. There would visibility across the radius from a vehicle which would make that a safer curve to navigate. He acknowledged that they are still in a negotiation process. Commissioner Barnard asked if the County would have to go his property to cut the hedge. Engineer Wallace said yes, but a construction easement from the property owner would allow that. He did say that the property owner is concerned about a transfer of the property to the County. He doesn't seem to understand that it is just a right of way that he would not be blocked from accessing the property. Engineer Wallace asked how the Commission felt about the three-foot hedge. Commissioner Barnard said he didn't think it was worth it. It would grow right back. Commissioner Lucas said he felt it would be a good idea. The Chairman thought the hedge would be back by springtime.

Commissioner Barnard asked Engineer Wallace how things were coming on Winn Clay. He said he hoped paving would start very soon. There has been some washing going on because there isn't very much grass. However, the rainfall has been so heavy it is washing the seeds to the ditch. Due to the slopes, it is important that the grass gets established.

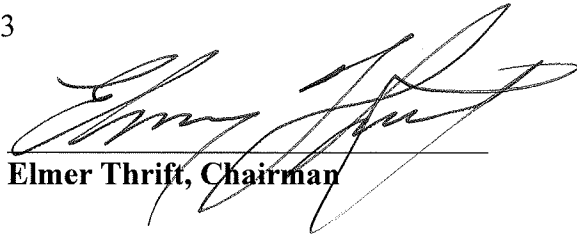
**ADJOURN**

A motion was made by Commissioner Lucas to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 5:34 p.m., with Commissioner Pope 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.

Date proposed to be approved: October 23, 2023

  
Elmer Thrift, Chairman

**ATTEST:**

  
Melinda L. Brooks, County Clerk

10-24-2023  
Date

**[SEAL]**

