

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
WARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2023
5:46 p.m.**

The Ware County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting, Monday, October 9, 2023, at 5:46 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; County Clerk Melinda Brooks
PRESS	None
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 Barnard to approve the agenda 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.

GUEST SPEAKER: None

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH:

Michelle Matthews, Communications/Training Officer with E-911 was recognized as the Ware County Employee of the Month by Human Resources Director Theresa Bailey and County Manager Scott Moye. Also present was her nominating supervisor, EOC Chief Commander Fay Cooper. Ms. Matthews received a \$100 check in appreciation of her dedication.

AGENDA ITEMS

A. Bid Award – 2023 Emergency Roadway Repairs

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion on this item and then asked for a vote.

Commissioner Barnard made a motion to accept the bid award for 2023 Emergency Roadway Repair with the Scruggs Company. Commissioners Pope and Burse simultaneously seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion, then he asked the County Manager if the contract be extended (percentage) if more repairs were needed. County Manager Moye said that it cannot because there is a cap at \$200,000.

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. Dixie Union & Telmore - Dixie Union Road Drainage Repairs Project

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnard to accept the bid for the Dixie Union Road and Dixie Union – Telmore Road Drainage Repairs Project. Commissioner Lucas seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion. Commissioner Barnard said if action isn't taken now to fix these roads, there will be bigger problems within a year. He said he rode out to the area the previous day, and the situation is starting to deteriorate fast.

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. Funding Request – Okefenokee Gateway Getaway Sponsorship

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Lucas to accept the funding request for the Okefenokee Gateway Getaway Sponsorship as presented by Jason Rubenbauer of WWDA in the amount of \$2,500. Commissioner Barnard seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there is any discussion. Commissioner Burse asked if there needed to be a stipulation that the money would be going to the Development Authority. Mr. Rubenbauer stated it would be easiest to make the check payable to the Okefenokee Swamp Park. Assistant County Attorney advised that it would be best to make the check payable to the Waycross Ware County Development Authority and let that agency forward the money to the Swamp Park since it is a private organization.

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. Approval Request – Ware County Subdivision Regulations Text Amendment

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

Commissioner Pope made a motion to approve the Ware County Subdivision Regulations text amendment with the addition of the leash law as discussed (*Director Shubert said he would add the letter R under section M to the regulations with the wording that the leash law applies to the lots within the RV park.*). 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.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT:

He asked for clarification on what the Commission wants for Paschall Road: to pave it or just clear the blind curve and put up a stop sign. Commissioner Barnard suggested getting with the Fullard family to see they would be interested in selling enough property to pave all way through instead of stopping at their landline.

Commissioner Pope asked the Chairman had it not been discussed for Engineer Wallace to come up with a preliminary design and come back to the Commission with a paving plan. The Chairman said it had, but he's not sure that the paving needs to go all the way through. He said he may have to back up on that a little bit and maybe only look at paving that first one-half (1/2) mile from Smith Road. He said there are other roads like Slash Pine that need paving worse than Paschall Road does. He then asked how long is Paschall Road. County Manager Moye said that it looks to be just a tad over a mile. He said up to the first cattle gap is 4,500 feet. Commissioner Barnard suggested putting Paschall Road on the list to be paved, but it should put behind those that are already in line. Commissioner Burse said that he understands there are other roads needing to be paved, but Mr. Littlejohn has been complaining for 15 years and is understandably upset when other roads are paved before his.

Chairman Thrift reiterated that there may not be money for the whole road, so paving half a road could be the way to go. County Engineer Wallace spoke up and said the GIS Coordinator Dustin Minchew checked Paschall Road on his program, and it is 1.4 miles in length. Chairman Thrift asked Engineer Wallace what he thought that would cost to pave. He said he could use the numbers from the Regional TSPLOST list; however, the regional committee increased the cost numbers that he had used possibly because the projects are so far in the future. The Chairman asked Mr. Wallace if he thought the residents would donate the land for the right of way to have it paved.

Commissioner Barnard told him that could be something for him to look at when putting together the cost of the project. The Chairman told him to get a price. He then asked if the road wouldn't be paved all the way through, if the 80-foot requirement would be necessary. Engineer Wallace said they can try it like they have before, but it doesn't always work out well. Sometimes the back slopes can be a little steep.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Lucas wanted to know where things stand with Tory Circle. He also stated he had received a home visit and several phone calls from a resident who has property on Arnold Road and said the ditches haven't been pulled in a while. Public Works Director Michael Brooks said he could address that and asked if the property was on Arnold Street. He said that he and Planning and Codes Director James Shubert could both speak about it. He asked Commissioner Lucas if he had visited Arnold Street. When the Commissioner answered in the affirmative, Director Brooks asked if he saw the cars parked in the way. Commissioner Lucas said he did. Director Brooks responded

that the cars are in the way, and the grader won't fit down the street. There is only a 30-foot right of way, and the grader won't fit with the cars parked in the way. Commissioner Burse stated the cars need to be moved. Director Brooks said the cars do not have tags. Commissioner Lucas said the Sheriff's Office may need to send a deputy out to put a little orange sticker on the cars. Commissioner Pope said Ware County Police Chief Shubert, who is also Planning and Codes Director can do the same. Commissioner Lucas asked Chief Shubert if he could put the stickers on. *His answer was inaudible due the Chairman still explaining to Commissioner Lucas that Shubert is a County Police same as a deputy. It is assumed that he said he would.* Director Brooks noted that one of the cars has a dog tied to it. Commissioner Lucas did not know that and was glad the dog didn't hurt him.

Commissioner Barnard said that Tory Circle is on the Regional list. County Manager Moyer said it is on the LMIG list. Director Brooks said that Tory Circle is currently being surveyed.

Chairman Thrift asked about the Albany Avenue Overpass Project. County Manager Moyer said they are in the process of working on the horizontal design of the overpass. They have a coordination meeting with CSX coming up to work on issues that they foresee. Commissioner Barnard asked when would a projected price tag be given. County Manager Moyer said once they meet with CSX and come up with another preliminary plan if anything has changed and then recalculate. They thought there may be a price increase; however, if CSX doesn't have as much ROA as originally thought that price will come down close to original.

The Chairman asked the County Manager if he had anything from DOT on the US 1 overpass. County Manager Moyer said at the last meeting they have been doing more borings because they had to pull back and get out of their right of way. He believes they have made written contact with the property owners. They had to extend the project for up to 13 months to do more geotechnical work and make a design change because of CSX requirements.

The Chairman asked about closing the crossing on Brunswick Hwy. County Manager said he would check to see if the plan is still to hold the public hearing because he wants to advertise that to the public for at least 2 weeks.

Commissioner Burse wanted to remember the people in Israel. Commissioner Barnard wanted to mention to please remember Danny Bartlett's daughter in prayer due to recent kidney transplant.


ADJOURN

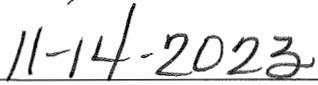
A motion was made by Commissioner Pope to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 6:18 p.m., with Commissioner Burse seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Date proposed to be approved: November 13, 2023

ATTEST:


Melinda L. Brooks, County Clerk


Elmer Thrift, Chairman


Date

