

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION
WARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, MARCH 11, 2024
3:30 p.m.**

The Ware County Board of Commissioners held a Work Session, Monday, March 11, 2024 at 3:30 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 Leonard Burse, Commissioner Jerry Pope, Commissioner Sammy Hendricks, and Commissioner Timmy Lucas
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT	None
STAFF PRESENT	County Manager Scott Moye; Assistant County Attorney Jennifer Herzog; County Clerk Melinda Brooks
PRESS	Danny Bartlett – Waycross Journal Herald
INVOCATION	The Invocation was given by Danny Bartlett
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE	The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Elmer Thrift

APPOINTED COMMISSIONER

Sammy Hendricks was appointed to fulfill the unexpired term of District 4 Commissioner vacated by former Commissioner Steve Barnard who qualified to run for Probate Judge in the upcoming election. He was sworn in by Probate Judge Calvin Bennett.

GUEST SPEAKER(S):

Pennie Crumbley – Griffin Drive

Mrs. Crumbley spoke to the Commission again about paving Griffin Road.

Bob Gosse – 3610 Nabers Drive – He found out today that a person is trying to put up an RV park in a residential neighborhood in the Pebble Hill area. He doesn't want it because it will affect the value of his and his neighbors' homes. Commissioner Pope asked him where in Pebble Hill as he was unaware of an RV park being put in. Mr. Gosse said it would be on Augusta Springs Rd. He said the owner moved a mobile home and replaced it with concrete pads for RV parking. Commissioner Lucas asked Planning and Codes Director Shubert to explain to the Commission what he knows about this case. Director Shubert said he issued a stop order because the park does not meet standards. There is not enough property. The owner was planning to speak to the Commission because he had bought the boxes and had plans before the ordinance was passed. He wanted to know if he could get vested interest. Director Shubert said he couldn't grant that and gave the guidelines When the owner asked

about being grandfathered in, Director Shubert said he doesn't meet the parameters.

Ryan Deal – 3682 August Springs Rd – He doesn't want the RV park to be built.

AGENDA ITEMS:

A. Resolution 2024-04: Approve ACCG Intern Grant Program Agreement

County Manager Moye told the Commission that the agreement is with ACCG to reimburse the County for an intern to work with Planning and Codes and be exposed to other functions of local county government. The Chairman asked about the intern being with Human Resources. County Clerk Melinda Brooks explained Ware County was awarded the Verizon Intern Grant which was only offered to counties of a certain population that had never been a grant recipient and Ware County. The grant allows up to 200 hours at the rate of \$15/hour all of which will be reimbursed by ACCG as will the tax and worker's comp fee. The intern will work on a specific project with the Planning and Codes department to build a database of old records that were moved over from the old building to the new admin building by scanning and using a specific software. ACCG will visit Ware County to ensure the project is being completed as per the grant guidelines. The intern will be under the clerk's supervision during the completion of this project.

Commissioner Burse thanked the clerk for her pursuit of this grant and getting the funds for this project.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

B. Resolution 2024-05: Approve MOU with the City of Waycross

County Manager Moye told the Commission this Resolution approves the MOU with the City of Waycross for recreational programs and services at Bailey Street Park and Memorial Park.

Commissioner Pope said the City received a grant of over \$2 million to start recreation programs in the city. This would give the programs back to them while in the planning stage. If they sign, they will take over both parks. Hopefully they will keep the pool open. 2024 is the last year that Ware County Recreation Department will have the pool open. The funds previously spent on the two city parks will drift to Trembling Earth.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

C. Resolution 2024-06: Approve YMCA Pool Management Agreement for Bailey Street Pool

County Manager Moye stated the Resolution approves an agreement with the YMCA for management services of the Bailey Street Pool. He said the YMCA will manage for \$12,000. If they can get lifeguards, the pool will be open May 28 through August 3. Recreation services will terminate end of the 2024 calendar year. The City of Waycross will provide security.

Chairman Thrift stated an advisory committee for the Rec. Dept. could make recommendations as to what the County needs. He said he would feel better about it if the committee could come to the Commission and tell them what is needed.

Commissioner Burse said from what he understands the members of an advisory board can lose interest when their kids are no longer playing rec ball, or they may have a personal agenda.

Probate Judge Calvin Bennett spoke up and said he was on the advisory board several years ago and always had a good response from parents. He explained that parents would talk to the board and that the board helped plan Trembling Earth.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

D. Resolution 2024-07: Approve Ware County Retirement Vesting Schedule Amendment

County Manager Moye explained this is to change vesting schedule from 10 years to 5 years. This item was discussed at the Commissioners Retreat. The vesting schedule sets when an employee qualifies to take all of the retirement funds when he or she leaves employment with Ware County. ACCG sent a letter showing that most counties have 5-year plans. Human Resource Director Theresa Young stated that Ware County is the only county that has a 10-year plan.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

E. Airport Property Easement for Georgia Power

Georgia Power has requested an underground easement to run power from transmission line underground and set a transformer on the airport property to the proposed location of future BETA charging station. County Manager Moye asked County Engineer Wallace to verify number of charging stations. Engineer Wallace stated there would be 2 charging stations for automobiles and 1 for aircraft. He stated the Augusta airport was picked for the BETA program as well.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

F. Comprehensive Transportation Plan Update Proposal

County Manager Moye explained Ware County received a proposal from ATLAS about one year ago to update the 2000 comprehensive transportation plan. He explained the County can get more attention for grants if this plan is in place because the experts have studied the needs. Also the community is involved in the public hearings. The cost is \$250,000.

Commissioner Burse asked County Manager Moye if parts of the existing plan would stay in place. It is a big price but a big undertaking. Moye said parts will be subbed out to others. There will be committees made up of County and City residents.

Commissioner Pope asked if the City has agreed and if all six tasks would be worked on at once. County manager Moye said he had spoken to the City Manager who is supposed to attend the 5 p. m. meeting. He said yes they would look (at all six tasks) at the perimeter road and truck traffic.

Commissioner Pope asked about funding. County Manager Moye said it would be funded through Regional TSPLOST because it has regional impact. Commissioner Pope said it was past time to have it done.

Chairman Thrift added that since he has been going to the Regional Commission meetings he has learned that it is something that needs to be done to get funding from the federal government and other sources for the County.

County Manager Moye stated that Coffee County/City of Douglas does this and gets quite a bit of money.

Commissioner Burse said that Coffee County is proactive instead of reactive, and Ware County can wait until things happen to take action. He pointed out that trains are longer now than in 2000. He asked County Engineer Wallace to give an explanation.

Commissioner Pope said the DOT/federal government will send money if they Ware County is planning. Commissioner Lucas commented that if the GDOT/federal government sees that Ware County is serious, then they will take Ware County seriously.

County Engineer Wallace explained that federal highway funds (instead of being distributed through GDOT) are being sent to local governments through a competitive application process. The more activities the County has going on, the higher the score on application and the greater the chance of getting federal funds.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

G. Drainage Pipe Upgrades on Lewis Davis Road & McDonald Road

County Manager Moye stated that this item was put on the agenda per the Chairman's request. He asked for the drainage pipes under Lewis Davis Road and McDonald Road be upsized to 48" concrete pipe due to the water volume. The current pipe is 24" metal. Photos and a quote were attached.

Commissioner Pope said the County should do a drainage study. Farmers put water out on McDonald that goes to Clough Bay. He wants to check it out before opening. Chairman Thrift said the canals are already there. The land has been cleared. Only the dirt needs to be dumped.

Commissioner Burse asked if the irrigation made an already existing problem worse. He wondered if the farmers should help out with the expense. The Chairman said they should not pay because they have paved their own roads and they pay a lot in taxes. Commissioner Burse asked if that would fix the problems. He said that the County needs to get it right before paving to avoid having to redo later. He doesn't think large pipes should be put in to send water to small pipes.

The Chairman asked Engineer Wallace to explain. Mr. Wallace asked if the pipes would need to be upsized to keep water off Clough Bay.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

H. Alcohol License Request

Planning & Codes Director James Shubert explained that Mr. Glenn Eric Guy has constructed a new business (a new metal building) at 120 Sawdust Trail, a billiards pool hall. He has applied for a license to sell beer, wine, and liquor. He has no disqualifiers. No smoking will be allowed inside. Commissioner Hendricks spoke up and stated it is a nicer place, not a dive.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

COUNTY MANAGER ITEMS:

County Manager Moye explained to the Commission that during the February 12th meeting, a motion was made to approve the non-aeronautical property leases. No second was made, but everyone voted, and the motion passed unanimously. The Commission will need to ratify the decision which means the vote will need to be taken again to ensure that the vote is legal and proper for the minutes. This will happen during the regular meeting at 5 p. m.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Burse welcomed Commissioner Hendricks to the Commission and congratulated him on his appointment. The others Commissioners joined him in welcoming Commissioner Hendricks as well.

Commissioner Pope mentioned that he would like to give engineering staff permission to go ahead and survey Cornelius and Paschall Road to determine if Right of Way has to be acquired before paving can begin.

Chairman Thrift admonished Commissioner Pope (District 2) for pandering for votes by making this suggestion regarding Cornelius Road (District 4) and Paschall Road (District 3).

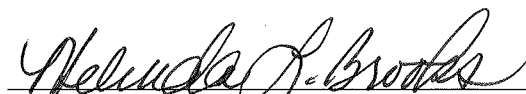
ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Commissioner Burse to adjourn the Work Session, with Commissioner Pope seconding the motion at 4:48 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

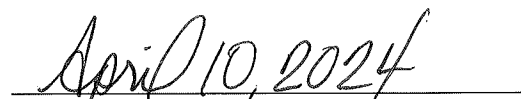
Date proposed to be approved: April 8, 2024



Elmer Thrift, Chairman



Melinda L. Brooks, County Clerk



Date

