



Coweta County Board of Commissioners

22 E Broad Street
Newnan, GA 30263
www.coweta.ga.us

Public Hearing / Regular Session

Minutes

Shannon Zerangue
Fran Collins
770.254.2601

August 6, 2024

6:00 PM

Commission Chambers

Coweta County Board of Commissioners

Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status
John Reidelbach	District 4 - Chairman	Present
Bill McKenzie	District 2 - Vice Chairman	Present
Paul Poole	District 1	Present
Bob Blackburn	District 3	Present
Al Smith	District 5	Present
Michael Fouts	County Administrator	Present
Kelly Mickle	Assistant County Administrator	Present
Sandy Wisenbaker	Assistant County Administrator	Present
Tod Handley	Public Works Administrator	Present
Nathan Lee	County Attorney	Present
Shannon Zerangue	County Clerk	Present

The Honorable Board of Commissioners of Coweta County, Georgia met in Public Hearing/Regular Meeting Session on Tuesday, August 6, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.
Commissioner-Elect Jeff Fisher was also in attendance.

Meeting Called to Order

Chairman Reidelbach called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Reidelbach led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation

Invocation was given by Commissioner Smith.

Notification of Location of Rules

Chairman Reidlbach explained that the rules governing the meeting could be found on the County's website as well as on the table located in the lobby outside the meeting room.

Regular Session

Awards and Presentations

1. Request from the Rotary Club of Newnan to Address the Board

Rotary Club President Clay Neely expressed appreciation to the Board for their continued support of the Club's annual fireworks program. He explained that following the tornado in 2021, it was necessary for the Club to relocate the program from Newnan High School during its reconstruction and the Board allowed them to utilize the Coweta County Fairgrounds. On July 4, 2024, the Club worked with Coweta County 911/EMA, Fire Rescue, and the Sheriff's Office, and was able to return to Newnan High School to host the event. Chairman Reidelbach expressed appreciation to the Rotary Club for their work in the community.

Approval of Minutes

2. Request Approval of the Minutes from the Public Hearing/Regular Meeting Session Held on July 16, 2024

Motion to: **Approve**

The Board voted to approve the minutes from the Public Hearing/Regular Meeting Session held on Tuesday, July 16, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bob Blackburn

SECONDER: Paul Poole

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

3. Request Approval of the Minutes from the Work Session Held on July 17, 2024

Motion to: **Approve**

The Board voted to approve the minutes from the Called Meeting/Work Session held on Wednesday, July 17, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bob Blackburn

SECONDER: Paul Poole

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Consent Agenda

4. Confirm Execution of an Agreement with Evidence Based Associates to Provide Services for Juvenile Court

Administrator Fouts explained that at the Commission meeting held on July 2, 2024, the Board voted to accept grant funds for the Coweta County Juvenile Court in the amount of \$108,728 through the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) and to execute an updated agreement with Evidence Based Associates, LLC (EBA) to implement programs to address the needs of felony youth who are typically committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice, and/or placed in short term residential facilities. Staff is in receipt of the updated agreement from EBA and is requesting that the Board confirm execution of the agreement.

Motion to: **Confirm**

The Board voted to confirm execution of an agreement with Evidence Based Associates, LLC to provide services for the Coweta County Juvenile Court.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bill McKenzie

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Supplemental and Non-Agenda Items

It was the consensus of the Board to approve the addition of one (1) Supplemental agenda item for discussion.

Public Hearing (The Chairman will call for any comments regarding the following items after each item is presented)

5. First Public Hearing Regarding the Proposed 2024 Millage Rates

Administrator Fouts explained that state law requires that the property tax rate or millage rate be set annually by the local governing authority, which is the Board of Commissioners in Coweta County. When the total digest of taxable property is prepared, Georgia law requires taxing authorities to compute a rollback millage rate for maintenance and operations that will produce the same total revenue based on the current year's digest that last year's millage rate would have produced had no reassessments occurred. If the millage rate to be considered is above that rollback rate, three (3) Public Hearings are required by law. Tonight is the first of the three (3) required Public Hearings, so no action is necessary by the Board at this time. He further explained that the second Public Hearing is scheduled for August 20th at 7:30 a.m. with the third and final meeting scheduled for August 20th at 6:00 p.m. followed by adoption of the millage rate.

Administrator Fouts presented the countywide tax digest and millage rate trend since 2000, provided a tax dollar breakdown based upon the 2023 millage rates, explained which departments are responsible for property values, assessments, and tax collection, noted that the Board of Education and municipalities have independent authority over their budgetary decisions and millage rates, and highlighted items that comprise the tax digest.

Administrator Fouts also explained the calculation of a mill of tax, provided an example of tax liability for a single-family home valued at \$350,000, and outlined the timeline for property assessments, setting of the millage rates by the Board of Education and the County, submission of the Tax Digest by the Tax Commissioner to the Georgia Department of Revenue, and adoption of the fiscal year budget.

Administrator Fouts explained that the proposed 2024 millage rate is lower than the rate that was advertised because of reductions in the draft Fiscal Year 2025 budget. The proposed general Maintenance and Operations (M&O) levy is 5.7 mills (6.118 mills was advertised). The proposed Fire District levy is 2.9 mills (unchanged from FY 2024), and the proposed Fire Bond levy is 0.195 mills (9.7% lower than FY 2024) [total 8.795 mills for unincorporated Coweta County]. He also briefly reviewed changes in the tax digest from 2023 to 2024.

Administrator Fouts highlighted the following four (4) steps to calculate the millage rate:

1. Development of a draft fiscal year budget based upon goals and expectations (service delivery)

2. Development of non-property tax revenue projections to support the draft budget
3. Calculation of property tax revenue needed from step 2 to balance the budget
4. Calculation of the millage rate using the data from step 3 and the current tax digest

During his presentation, Administrator Fouts fielded questions from Commissioner Smith, Chairman Reidelbach, and Commissioner McKenzie regarding the calculation of a mill based upon fair market value, the Board of Education's millage rate, calculation of the rollback rate, creation of a net neutral digest, continued work on the proposed budget, the Jail expansion project, new State and Superior Court judges along with their support staff, and when taxes are collected on new construction.

In conclusion, Administrator Fouts explained that the next Public Hearings regarding the proposed 2024 millage rates are scheduled for August 20, 2024 at 7:30 a.m. and August 20, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. followed by adoption of the millage rates (at the 6:00 p.m. meeting). The Public Hearing regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2025 budget will be held on September 5, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. followed by adoption of the budget on September 17, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

Chairman Reidelbach called for any comments in support of the proposed 2024 millage rates. There were none.

Chairman Reidelbach called for any comments in opposition to the proposed 2024 millage rates.

The following individuals spoke in opposition to the proposed millage rate citing concerns regarding a proposed 39% increase, inflation and current cost of living expenses, taxing people out of their homes, increased assessed home values, uncontrolled growth, time of the Commission meeting coinciding with the Board of Education's, scheduling one of the Public Hearings at 7:30 a.m., living on a fixed income, increased County expenditures, the local fair share that the State requires from the Board of Education, lack of efficiency in the local government, the need for deeper budget cuts, and additional tax revenues from liquor sales and new industry and residential developments, and the obvious "last ditch effort" to increase property taxes before new legislation takes effect in January.

- Ms. Yolanda Simmons, Fox Ridge Drive, Newnan
- Ms. Lauri Newsome, Craigwood Way, Newnan
- Mr. Craig Brazeal, West Cove Drive, Newnan
- Ms. Sylvia Hayes, Parrott Street, Newnan
- Ms. Evelyn Davis, Tillinghast Trace, Newnan
- Ms. Susan Calderon, Arbor Garden Circle, Newnan
- Mr. Paul Tully, Tinsley Way, Senoia
- Mr. George Hitchins, Summit Ridge Drive, Newnan

- Mr. James Rowland, Shoreline Circle, Newnan

Administrator Fouts explained that in accordance with the rules governing the meeting, the twenty (20) minutes allowed for comments in opposition had been exhausted.

Motion to: Close the Public Hearing

The Board voted to close the first Public Hearing regarding the proposed 2024 millage rate. Chairman Reidelbach announced that the second Public Hearing regarding the proposed 2024 millage rate is scheduled for August 20th at 7:30 a.m. and the third Public Hearing will be held on August 20th at 6:00 p.m. Following the close of the third Public Hearing, the Board will vote to adopt the 2024 millage rates.

RESULT: (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Bill McKenzie

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Regular Session

Public Comments Regarding Items On the Agenda - This is also time for anyone that wishes to address the Board regarding cases heard at the Public Hearing conducted by the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Chairman Reidelbach called for comments regarding any items on the agenda.

Administrator Fouts explained that the applicant representative for Bride Lake

Productions is present to field any questions from the Board regarding a request to close a portion of Cedar Creek Road for filming (agenda item # 13).

Recommendations from Community Development and/or the Board of Zoning Appeals

6. Request Filed by Khaja Nooruddin for an Extension Associated with a New Package Beer and Wine License for Property Located at 1253 Lora Smith Road, Newnan - District 4

Business License Coordinator Joy Thompson explained that at the Public Hearing held on August 8, 2023, the Board granted Khaja Nooruddin, operating Serv Best Food Mart (Served Best, Inc.), a New Package Beer and Wine License for property located at 1253 Lora Smith Road, Newnan, subject to specific conditions. These conditions included obtaining a Land Disturbance Permit (LDP) within twelve (12) months from the date of

approval by the Board (before August 8, 2024). Additionally, Serv Best Food Mart (Served Best, Inc.) is required to be fully operational within eighteen (18) months of approval by the Board, which is February 8, 2025. She further explained that on May 30, 2024, the Business and Alcohol License Division received a formal request from Khaja Nooruddin for an extension of these deadlines. The request seeks a twelve (12) month extension to obtain the Land Disturbance Permit (LDP), extending the deadline to August 8, 2025. In addition, a six (6) month extension has been requested for the store's opening, pushing the operational deadline to August 8, 2025.

In response to questions from Chairman Reidelbach, Project Manager Mike Lokhandwala explained that delays have occurred because of a combination of issues. The property was not acquired until the fourth quarter of 2023, the necessary surveys to begin construction drawings did not begin until January 2024, a required methodology study and a traffic study were delayed until March 2024 because of school schedules and holidays, and the addition of a left-turn lane is required by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). The civil engineering plans have been submitted to the County, but no plans have been submitted to GDOT because the applicant wanted to wait for comments from County staff following the first round of plan review. Those comments were received last week, and the applicant intends to submit plans to GDOT next week. In addition, he does not believe it is feasible that the store can be open and operational by February 2025. He believes it will take an additional twelve months (12) to complete the project.

Public Works Director Handley explained that the traffic study was necessary not only to identify whether additional lanes were needed, but also, to determine if the development would impact the timing of an existing traffic signal at Lora Smith Road and SR 34.

In response to a question from Commissioner Smith, Ms. Thompson explained that the current ordinance requires that newly constructed businesses with a package sales license be operational within six months unless an extension is granted by the Board. Should the Board choose to grant the twelve (12) month extension to obtain the LDP and a six (6) month extension on the alcohol license, both tasks (LDP and store opening) will be required to be completed at the same time (August 8, 2025). She also explained that there have been very few requests for new construction of convenience stores for several years, but the trend has increased recently. Lastly, this will be the second request for an extension associated with an alcohol license that the Board received since 2023.

Administrator Fouts explained that the scale of a project generally affects the timing to obtain a Land Disturbance Permit (LDP). When the Board initiated the 12-month requirement to do so, it was an effort to ensure that projects got started within a reasonable time. The market dictates the availability of professional engineers, surveyors, etc., and staff has no control over that.

Motion to: **Grant**

The Board voted to grant a twelve (12) month extension to obtain a Land Disturbance Permit (August 8, 2025) and a six (6) month extension to open a convenience store (August 8, 2025) as requested by Khaja Nooruddin associated with a New Package Beer and Wine License for property located at 1253 Lora Smith Road, Newnan.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Bill McKenzie

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

7. Request Acceptance of Roadways and a Deed of Open Space Restriction Associated with Property Located in the Chapel Hill Subdivision, Phase 2 - District 5

Administrator Fouts explained that DRB Group Georgia, LLC has submitted a Deed of Open Space Restriction and a request for acceptance of roadways located in the Chapel Hill Subdivision, Phase 2 for consideration by the Board of Commissioners. The plat reflects 8.46± acres of open space along with several streets. Prior to tonight's meeting there were concerns with acceptance of the Deed of Open Space Restriction and that any discussion or decision regarding the request may need to be deferred until the next Commission meeting.

Community Development Director Jon Amason explained that according to the inspection reports, any concerns have been resolved, and the Board may consider the request.

Motion to: **Accept; Execute**

The Board voted to accept Chapel Hill Parkway extension (699.85 LF), Bellamy Cove extension (373.01 LF), Scout Way extension (372.66 LF), Fayme Court extension (497.84 LF), Jericho Way (977.63 LF), Armour Pass (354.61 LF) and associated drainage structures and right-of-way into the Coweta County Public Roads System, to place the constructed improvements into a three (3) year maintenance period, and to execute the Deed of Open Space Restriction for Chapel Hill Subdivision, Phase 2.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Alphonso Smith

SECONDER: Paul Poole

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

8. Request Approval/Execution of a Proposed Amendment to Chapter 18. Businesses, Article II, Occupation Taxes and Regulatory Fees of the Coweta County Code of Ordinances

Administrator Fouts explained that at the Commission meeting held on June 18, 2024, the Board voted to adopt amendments to *Chapter 18. Businesses, Sections 18-39, 18-40, 18-41, 18-43, and 18-45* associated with removal of the Business Tax Rate Review and Appeal

Committee to divert such requests to the Board of Commissioners. Since that time, staff has discovered that *Section 18-70* also makes reference to the Business Tax Rate Review and Appeal Committee and is requesting that the Board consider amending this section.

Motion to: **Execute**

The Board voted to execute an amendment to *Chapter 18. Businesses, Article II, Occupation Taxes and Regulatory Fees, Division 1. Generally, Section 18-70* to remove a reference to the former Business Tax Rate Review and Appeal Committee.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Paul Poole

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Unfinished Business

9. Request Appointments to Various Boards/Authorities

No action was taken by the Board regarding appointments to various boards and authorities.

New Business

Bids and Contracts

10. Request Approval/Execution of an Agreement with MCI/Verizon for Relocation of Fiber Optic Cable Along the CSX Railroad Right-of-Way Associated with Phase 1 of the Madras Connector Project - District 3

Public Works Administrator Handley explained that Phase 1 of the Madras Connector Project will begin at US 29 and extend in an easterly direction across CSX Railroad and Herring Road using a bridge to cross both. On September 19, 2023, the Board voted to execute a relocation agreement with Lumen/Level 3 for fiber optic cable within the CSX right-of-way (ROW). A second fiber optic cable, owned by MCI/Verizon, is in the CSX ROW and requires relocation.

In response to questions from Chairman Reidelbach, Mr. Handley explained that engineering work for the Madras Connector Project was started in 2017, and MCI was

actively installing fiber optic cables along railroads across the country in the late 1990s-2000s. Regulations mandate that any funding for utility relocation not located within the County's rights-of-way or the Georgia Department of Transportation's (GDOT) rights-of-way is the County's responsibility.

In response to a question from Commissioner McKenzie, Mr. Handley explained that the County's portion of the project is funded by the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST). The County is receiving Federal and State funds for the project and staff has requested additional Federal funding.

Motion to: **Execute**

The Board voted to execute a relocation agreement with MCI/Verizon associated with Phase 1 of the Madras Connector project and authorize payment of the costs for the required relocation.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Bill McKenzie

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Additional Action Items

11. Request Approval to Extend Hours of Operations at the Transfer Station and the C&D Landfill

Administrator Fouts explained that in addition to the compactor site program, the County operates a transfer station and a construction and demolition (C&D) landfill located at 164 Essie Mae Walker Road. The landfill is currently open to the public and private haulers from 9:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m. (gate closes at 4:00 p.m.) on weekdays and from 8:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. (gate closes at 2:15 p.m.) on Saturdays. To serve additional customers on Saturdays at this facility, staff is requesting to extend closing hours from 2:15 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. (gate closes at 4:30 p.m.). If approved, the new hours of operation will begin on Saturday, August 10th. In addition, staff has received a request from a private hauler to consider opening the transfer station at 6:00 a.m. on weekdays to allow for disposal of loads before beginning their daily routes. Staff recommends that the Board consider establishing early hours for all private haulers beginning on October 1, 2024, from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., and then open to the public as usual at 9:00 a.m.

In response to questions from Commissioner McKenzie, Administrator Fouts explained

that there is currently an unfilled vacancy at the transfer station, and staff will either fill that position or use some of the part-time staff already working at compactor sites. He also explained that the associated cost to extend the hours of operation should be covered by the projected volume brought by the private haulers.

Motion to: **Approve**

The Board voted to approve the following new hours of operation for the Transfer Station and the C&D Landfill:

- 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (gate closes at 4:30 p.m.) on Saturday beginning August 10, 2024
- 6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. on weekdays for private haulers
- 9:00 a.m. - 4:15 (gate closes at 4:00 p.m.) on weekdays for the public

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Paul Poole

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

12. Request Approval/Execution of a Right-of-Entry Associated with Removal of Trees at 55 Pineview Drive, Sharpsburg - District 4

Administrator Fouts explained that staff received notification that dead pine trees located on County property pose a potential hazard of falling on a home at 55 Pineview Drive, Sharpsburg. Following a site visit, staff confirmed that eight (8) dead pine trees pose a potential hazard to the homeowner's residence and property.

Motion to: **Execute**

The Board voted to execute a Right-of-Entry with Mr. Thomas Storey associated with removal of trees located at 55 Pineview Drive, Sharpsburg.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Paul Poole

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

13. Request Approval to Temporarily Close a Portion of Cedar Creek Road for Filming - District 3

Administrator Fouts explained that Bride Lake Productions is requesting to close a portion of Cedar Creek Road from Monday, August 12 through Saturday, August 17, 2024, from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. each day. In addition, they are requesting to close the north curb

lane of Paces Landing Trace from Cedar Creek Road to Paces Landing Court on the same dates and times. This request was originally approved by the Commission meeting held on May 21, 2024, for planned filming in June, but actor availability caused the production to be postponed. All the necessary paperwork has been submitted to the County and a representative from the filming company is present to field any questions from the Board regarding the closure and any concerns associated with school and work traffic.

Mr. Kyle Carey, location manager/applicant representative, explained that the request is for full lane closure from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. each day on Cedar Creek Road between Paces Landing Drive and Ashley Creek Drive. The filming location is the historic New Macedonia Baptist Church and cemetery. To position the necessary equipment on one side of Cedar Creek Road, leave the opposite side open for emergency vehicles, and for the safety of the production crew, a full road closure is being requested for this portion of the roadway. School buses will be able to exit from either the east (Paces Landing Drive) or west (Ashley Creek Drive), depending on which direction they need to travel and will be allowed through if the road is closed at any time.

In response to a question from Commissioner Smith, Mr. Carey explained that the area that they are requesting to temporarily close is approximately 400-feet.

In response to concerns expressed by Chairman Reidelbach regarding notification of the closure, Administrator Fouts explained that signage is required to be posted to alert the neighbors, a detour plan must be submitted, and public safety and the school system must be notified. He also clarified that based on the hours stipulated, the detour closure that was provided to the Board in May is different from what has currently been submitted.

Regarding the detour and closure, Mr. Carey explained that previously they had planned to film a few nights then return later in the season for additional filming. Now, they wish to film all the scenes at one time and not have to return with another request to close the roadway. In addition, a Sheriff's deputy will be posted at each end of the closure, an emergency lane will also be available, and signage has been in place for a couple of weeks notifying residents of the closure.

In response to a question from Commissioner Blackburn, Mr. Carey explained that he is not aware of any need to close Cedar Creek Road in its entirety and a Coweta County Sheriff's deputy will be posted at each end of the closure.

Public Works Administrator Handley explained that staff contacted the Transportation Manager with the Coweta County School System, and she explained that if the road opens no later than 6:00 a.m. it should not be a problem for school bus access.

Motion to: **Approve**

The Board voted to temporarily close a portion of Cedar Creek Road and the north curb lane of Paces Landing Trace from Cedar Creek Road to Paces Landing Court from Monday, August 12 through Saturday, August 17, 2024, from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. for filming by Bride Lake Productions.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Alphonso Smith

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

14. Request Approval/Execution of a Resolution to Establish Compensation for Hearing Officers Related to Tax Appeals in 2025

Administrator Fouts explained that State law provides that taxpayer disputes involving the value of uniformity of a parcel of non-homestead real property with a fair market value in excess of \$500,000 as shown on the taxpayer's annual notice of current assessment may appeal to a hearing officer. State law also provides that hearing officers shall be compensated by the County for time expended in hearing appeals at a minimum rate of \$100 per hour for the first hour and not less than \$25 per hour for each hour thereafter. Staff has drafted a resolution to establish compensation for hearing officers related to tax appeals in Coweta County.

Motion to: **Execute**

The Board voted to execute a Resolution to Establish Compensation for Hearing Officers Related to Tax Appeals in Coweta County in 2025 in accordance with State law.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Paul Poole

SECONDER: Bill McKenzie

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

15. Request Appointment of ACCG Legislative Voting Delegate for the 2024 Conference Business Session

Motion to: **Approve**

The Board voted to appoint Chairman Reidelbach to serve as voting delegate for the Business Session of the ACCG Leadership Conference being held on Thursday, October 10, 2024, in Athens-Clarke County.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bill McKenzie

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

16. Request to Set a Public Hearing on September 5, 2024 Regarding the Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Budget

Motion to: **Set a Public Hearing**

The Board voted to set a Public Hearing on Thursday, September 5, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2025 budget.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Alphonso Smith

SECONDER: John Reidelbach

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

17. Discuss Unpaved County Maintained Roads

Administrator Fouts explained that in 2008, the Board of Commissioners adopted a policy regarding the process and requirements for paving unpaved/gravel roads. Since this policy was adopted, there have been a few roads that have met the qualifications and were subsequently paved as part of transportation SPLOST. Staff has recently received a few inquiries regarding the paving of unpaved County-maintained roads. To better understand the potential cost of paving the unpaved/gravel County-maintained roads, the GIS and Public Works staff worked jointly to develop a list and related maps of unpaved County maintained roads (private roads and easements are not included). Staff determined that there are 111 County-maintained gravel/unpaved roads consisting of 51.73± miles serving 590 homes. He noted that many of the roads on the list do not meet the 2008 criteria to be considered. Based on current pricing, it would cost approximately \$1.5-\$2 million per mile to pave these roads, depending on right-of-way, utilities, and other factors.

Currently, there is no funding designated for these roads to be paved. Staff is seeking the Board's direction regarding this issue.

Commissioner Smith explained that he received a request from the residents of Barber Circle for the County to pave the roadway. A gas pipeline and overhead electrical lines traverse the road, and he believes this creates a hardship for the people living on the unpaved road. Therefore, the County should pave the roadway to alleviate the hardship.

In response to a question from Chairman Reidelbach, Administrator Fouts explained that Barber Circle does not meet the criteria required in the current policy that was adopted by the Board (August 5, 2008), and the Board would need to consider amending the policy.

The cost to pave all 51.73± miles would be in excess of \$70 million, and there are currently no budgeted funds allocated to accomplish this.

Commissioner Smith explained that he believes in this instance the location of the utilities is the factor that should be considered regarding paving of this roadway.

Administrator Fouts further explained that the roadway would need to be brought up to

County standards and that does not simply include asphalt.

Commissioner McKenzie explained that the 2nd District contains more unpaved/gravel roads than any of the others. He has also received requests from citizens for unpaved/gravel roads to be paved. There is no funding in the budget to accommodate these requests; however, he supports possibly revisiting the policy.

In response to a question from Chairman Reidelbach, Public Works Administrator Handley explained that currently the estimated cost to pave Barber Circle is \$300,000, including design and right-of-way acquisition.

Commissioner Smith discussed why he feels that the location of the utilities is pertinent with Chairman Reidelbach and Commissioner Poole.

Motion to: **Revisit Current Policy**

The Board voted to revisit the current policy on paving unpaved/gravel roads (adopted by the Board on August 5, 2008) at a future meeting.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Supplemental and Non-Agenda Items

18. Request Approval to Temporarily Close Sargent Main Street for the Purposes of Replacing a Failed Drain Pipe - District 2

Administrator Fouts explained that replacement of a failed storm drain pipe that diagonally crosses the intersection of Sargent Main Street with Sargent Railroad Avenue will require temporary closure of the intersection. During the work, traffic will be detoured around the work area on the surrounding roadway network.

Public Works Administrator Handley explained that if approved, the work to replace the failed drain pipe will begin immediately.

Motion to: **Approve**

The Board voted to temporarily close Sargent Main Street for the purposes of replacing a failed drain pipe.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bill McKenzie

SECONDER: John Reidelbach

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Public Comments Regarding Items Not on the Agenda – This section is for any public comments regarding items NOT on the agenda. Each speaker will be respectfully heard by the Board without public display or approval/disapproval from the audience. The Board will not engage with the speaker during his/her comments. The Board will listen to any questions or comments and take them into consideration.

Chairman Reidelbach called for comments regarding any items not on the agenda. There were none.

Executive Session - In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 50-14-4

Motion to: Enter into Executive Session

The Board voted to enter into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing personnel, real estate, and litigation issues.

Members in attendance included Chairman Reidelbach, Commissioner Poole, Commissioner Blackburn, Commissioner Smith, and Commissioner McKenzie. Staff members in attendance included Administrator Fouts, Assistant Administrator Mickle, Assistant Administrator Wisenbaker, Public Works Administrator Handley, Attorney Lee, Community and Human Resources Director Palmer, and County Clerk Zerangue. Commissioner-Elect Jeff Fisher (1st District) was also in attendance, but exited the meeting prior to discussion regarding a litigation issue.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Bill McKenzie

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Regular Session

Motion to: Return to Regular Session

The Board discussed personnel, real estate, and litigation issues during Executive Session and voted to return to Regular Session.

RESULT: (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Bill McKenzie

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Affidavit

Motion to: **Execute**

The Board voted to execute an Affidavit and Resolution for Executive Session.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bob Blackburn

SECONDER: Paul Poole

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Adjournment

Motion to: **Adjourn**

The Board voted to Adjourn.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Bill McKenzie

AYES: John Reidelbach, Bill McKenzie, Paul Poole, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith