



Coweta County Board of Commissioners

Public Hearing/Regular Session

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

Shannon Zerangue
770.254.2601

Thursday, December 7, 2023

6:00 PM

Commission Chambers

~ Minutes ~

COWETA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Call to Order

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
John Reidelbach	District 4 - Chairman	Present	
Paul Poole	District 1 - Vice Chairman	Present	
Bill McKenzie	District 2	Present	
Bob Blackburn	District 3	Present	
Al Smith	District 5	Present	
Michael Fouts	County Administrator	Present	
Eddie Whitlock	Associate Administrator	Absent	
Kelly Mickle	Assistant 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 Thursday, December 7, 2023.

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 McKenzie.

Notification of Location of Rules

Chairman Reidelbach 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. 14211 Presentation from the Coweta County 4-H Club

Mr. Bill Hammond, 4-H Extension Agent, expressed appreciation to the Board for their continued support and funding for the 4-H program. He introduced Sigma Lambda Chi 4-H President Josie Roberson and Sigma Lambda Chi Vice-President Natalie Zern.

Ms. Roberson and Ms. Zern briefly shared their experiences with 4-H and Mr. Hammond presented the Board with a box of goodies as a token of their appreciation.

RESULT: ACCOMPLISHED**APPROVAL OF MINUTES****2. Minutes of Thursday, November 16, 2023**

The Board voted to approve the minutes from the Public Hearing/Regular Meeting Session held on Thursday, November 16, 2023.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Bob Blackburn, District 3
SECONDER: Paul Poole, District 1 - Vice Chairman
AYES: Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith**CONSENT AGENDA****3. 14189 Confirm Execution of a Proclamation Designating "Wreaths Across America Day" in Coweta County**

The Board voted to confirm execution of a proclamation designating December 16, 2023 as "Wreaths Across America Day" in Coweta County.

Chairman Reidelbach invited everyone to attend the wreath laying ceremony at Oak Hill Cemetery on December 16, 2023 at 10:30 a.m.

RESULT: CONFIRMED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Bob Blackburn, District 3
SECONDER: Bill McKenzie, District 2
AYES: Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith**4. 14201 Confirm Execution of a Deed Associated with Redemption of Property Located on Ishman Ballard Road, Newnan - District 2**

The Board voted to confirm execution of a Quit Claim Deed (QCD) to convey property located on Ishman Ballard Road, Newnan (Tax Parcel # 048-5031-014) unto Mobile Brokers Servicing, LLC as a matter of tax redemption (Note: redemption was paid by Mr. Elbert Walker).

RESULT: CONFIRMED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Bill McKenzie, District 2
SECONDER: Bob Blackburn, District 3
AYES: Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith**SUPPLEMENTAL AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS****Supplemental and/or Non-Agenda Items**

There were no Supplemental or Non-Agenda items to be added for discussion.

PUBLIC HEARING (The Chairman will Call for Any Comments Regarding the Following Items After Each Item is Presented)**5. Motion To: Public Hearing Regarding a Proposed Amendment to Appendix A. Zoning and Development - Fee Schedule**

Community Development Director Jon Amason explained that at the Commission

meeting held on November 16, 2023, the Board voted to continue the Public Hearing regarding a proposed amendment to *Appendix A. Zoning and Development, Appendix - Fee Schedule* of the *Coweta County Code of Ordinances*. Staff is seeking consideration from the Board to amend the Fee Schedule in the *Zoning and Development Ordinance* to reflect fees charged for additional development plan reviews. This is an effort to help encourage more complete development plan submittals that meet the *Coweta County Code of Ordinances* thus reducing staff workload and allowing the applicant to help pay for the additional resources to perform additional development plan reviews. Staff is proposing that the initial fee include three (3) development staff reviews and fees will be reassessed for each additional review at the discretion of the Community Development Director. He further explained that it is staff's goal to facilitate education of developers and design professionals to help them produce more complete submittal to meet Coweta County's standards. Therefore, staff is requesting that the Board consider implementing a trial policy to help incentivize the submittal of more complete plans that includes:

- Continuing the mandatory pre-submittal meeting with developers and design professionals
- Providing education awareness of Coweta County's standards
- Encouraging a complete design plan submittal to meet the County's standards
- Offering continual questions/answers as needed prior to the first submittal of plans
- Cutting the review period from twenty-one (21) days to fourteen (14) days based upon the number of comments (to be determined) from staff following submission of plans

In conclusion, Mr. Amason explained that staff is open to suggestions from the Board and is asking for direction regarding the fee schedule amendment along with the Board's support to help reduce the amount of time that it takes to get plan approval. Staff is also requesting consideration regarding implementation of an incentivization policy on a trial basis.

In response to a question from Commissioner Smith, Mr. Amason explained that staff does provide a checklist for developers/design professional prior to their submittal of plans for review.

Commissioner Smith explained that every county has a different checklist based upon their design standards, and suggested that staff develop a survey at the end of the approval process to offer developers/design professionals an opportunity to provide feedback about the process.

In response to a question from Chairman Reidelbach, Mr. Amason explained that staff's proposal associated with a reduction in the time to review plans is based on business days not calendar days.

Chairman Reidelbach explained that should the Board choose to implement an incentivization policy, he would like the trial period to be long enough that staff can provide statistical data to the Board regarding its success rate.

Commissioner McKenzie asked about reducing the plan review time to ten (10) or eleven (11) days [which is equivalent to two (2) weeks in business days] to further incentivize more complete development plans.

Mr. Amason explained that further reduction of the number of days for review is a future goal, however, limited staffing is a challenge.

In response to a question from Commissioner McKenzie, Assistant Community Development Director Ben Sewell explained that based upon the type and size of a project, six (6) comments from staff regarding a plan submittal might be

reasonable to move those plans forward in the queue for a reduced review period.

Commissioner McKenzie explained that as a new Commissioner, he has learned that numerous departments are involved in the plan review process and he was surprised at the number of staff comments on a large project that he recently reviewed.

Mr. Amason explained that some plan changes submitted are reasonable and logical, but this does add to the "back and forth" between staff and the developer/design professional. It only takes a few of these situations to bog down the review process.

Commissioner McKenzie expressed appreciation to staff for the tremendous job they do considering the challenges with staffing levels. He explained that positions may need to be added in the future to make the process easier to understand especially for an individual citizen that wishes to accomplish a construction project.

In response to a question from Commissioner Poole regarding staffing to accomplish the proposed review schedule, Mr. Amason explained that staff hopes to have a Plan Review Associate position filled by the end of the year.

In response to a comment from Chairman Reidelbach regarding the trial basis to provide the Board with statistical data, Administrator Fouts explained that staff is requesting that the Board consider amending the *Zoning and Development Ordinance* to incorporate the new plan review fees and separately establishing a trial incentivization policy associated with plan review periods. He suggested a six (6) month trial period as a possibility.

In response to a question from Commissioner Poole regarding development activity with current interest rates, Mr. Amason explained that staff has seen a very minimal decline in proposed developments throughout the county.

Chairman Reidelbach called for any comments in support of or in opposition to the proposed ordinance amendment. There were none.

The Board voted to close the Public Hearing regarding a proposed amendment to *Appendix A. Zoning and Development, Appendix - Fee Schedule of the Coweta County Code of Ordinances* associated with development plan review fees.

RESULT:	PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Bob Blackburn, District 3
SECONDER:	Bill McKenzie, District 2
AYES:	Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith

14132 Continuation of a Public Hearing Regarding a Proposed Amendment to the Zoning and Development Ordinance Associated with Fees for Plan Reviews

The Board voted to execute an amendment to *Appendix A. Zoning and Development, Appendix - Fee Schedule of the Coweta County Code of Ordinances* associated with fees for development plan reviews as presented by staff. In addition, the Board voted to grant staff the authority to reduce the development review period from twenty-one (21) business days to ten (10) business days on a six (6) month trial basis for plans that generally comply with the *Ordinance* (from 5 to 10 comments).

RESULT:	EXECUTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Bill McKenzie, District 2
SECONDER:	Al Smith, District 5
AYES:	Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith

REGULAR SESSION

PUBLIC COMMENT (Items on the Agenda)

Public Comments Regarding Items On the Agenda

Chairman Reidelbach called for comments regarding any items on the agenda. There were none.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6. 14133 Request Approval/Execution of a Proposed Amendment to Chapter 30. Environment, Section 30-36 of the Coweta County Code of Ordinances Associated with Final Stabilization Requirements for Issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy

Administrator Fouts explained that at the Commission meeting held on November 16, 2023, staff presented a request for the Board to consider amending the policy associated with final stabilization requirements for issuance of certificates of occupancy (CO) to reduce subjectivity required by the Community Development staff during months when permanent vegetation is difficult to achieve or is not achievable. At that meeting, the Board voted to defer a decision until December 7, 2023. Upon further review, staff is requesting that the Board consider amending the *Coweta County Code of Ordinances* to add verbiage associated with final stabilization requirements for issuance of a certificate of occupancy. The proposed amendment requires either sodding of all soil disturbance areas with the exception of typical landscaping areas that have been permanently mulched or that the property owner or permittee sign an acknowledgement form that provides the responsibilities of the property owner regarding final stabilization.

The Board execute an amendment to *Chapter 30. Environment, Article II. Soil Erosion, Sedimentation and Pollution Control, Section 30-36. Inspection and Enforcement* of the *Coweta County Code of Ordinances* associated with final stabilization for issuance of certificates of occupancy.

RESULT:	EXECUTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Paul Poole, District 1 - Vice Chairman
SECONDER:	Bill McKenzie, District 2
AYES:	Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith

7. 14196 Request Appointments to Various Boards/Authorities

The Board voted to appoint Mr. James Amey as the 5th District representative to the Newnan-Coweta County Airport Authority for the term beginning January 1, 2024 and expiring December 31, 2027.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Al Smith, District 5
SECONDER:	Paul Poole, District 1 - Vice Chairman
AYES:	Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith

NEW BUSINESS

Bids and Contracts

8. 14210 Request Approval/Execution of an Updated Memorandum of Understanding with Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency

Administrator Fouts explained that at the Commission meeting held on November 5, 2019, the Board voted to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency relating to applications for grants under the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) and the Georgia EMGrantsPro system. The MOU is part of the Subgrantee (County) application and profile record in the Georgia EMGrantsPro system. The MOU states that the County is responsible for compliance with all of the related Acts, state and federal laws and regulations, policies and directives as a condition for acceptance and expenditures of DHS FEMA funding. At the Commission meeting held on January 23, 2020, the Board voted to execute an amendment to the MOU to add the new EMA Coordinator as the Alternate Agent. On September 16, 2022, the DHS announced a cybersecurity grant program specifically for state, local, and territorial governments. GEMA has been designated as the grant administrator and as a result, GEMA is requiring governments that plan to submit applications for the cybersecurity grant to submit an updated MOU.

The Board voted to execute an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) associated with grant applications to allow the County to apply for US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) grants.

RESULT:	EXECUTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Al Smith, District 5
SECONDER:	Bill McKenzie, District 2
AYES:	Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith

9. 14214 Request Approval/Execution of an Agreement Associated with the Transfer of Property Located Along Belk Road, Newnan - District 2

Administrator Fouts explained that Coweta County Fire Rescue currently provides fire protection and emergency medical services throughout the county facilitated by staff and equipment located at fifteen (15) stations. Several of the current stations were constructed on property donated to the County in the 1970s and 1980s prior to the transition from volunteers to a full-time professional fire department, and before the constant population growth that initiated in the late 1990s. The Insurance Services Office (ISO) is an independent company that serves insurance companies, communities, fire departments, and insurance regulators through programs like the fire suppression rating system. ISO analyzes data from communities and creates ratings that calculate how well-equipped fire departments are prepared for fire suppression. The score is called an "ISO Fire Rating" and ranges from 1-10; 1 being the best protection and a 10 being unprotected or the highest risk. The rating is based on an extensive evaluation of staffing, equipment, station locations, training, water service, and community risk. The Coweta County Fire Rescue Department's current ISO Fire Rating is 3/9. According to ISO criteria, the 3 rating generally applies to all properties within 5-miles of a fire station and 1,000 feet from a hydrant. The 9 rating applies to properties that do not meet those two criteria. Since the initial ISO Fire Rating of 9/10 in 1975, Coweta County has continued to enhance staffing, training, facilities, and equipment in the 911 and Fire Rescue Departments. Despite the underlying growth in the community, these combined efforts have proven effective in reducing the ISO rating to the current 3/9. This reduction has translated to savings for homeowners through reduced insurance costs for properties that meet the criteria. However, as growth and development continue, areas outside of 5-mile coverage have negatively impacted some property owners. Therefore, to maintain response levels and enhance protection for properties outside of the 5-mile coverage areas, the Board authorized

staff in 2022 to begin identifying property to relocate or build new facilities. The first two priorities were stations # 5 (Smokey Road) and # 10 (Highway 85 - Senoia). GIS analysis was used to determine the best potential locations for these stations without impacting existing properties. Property for Station # 10 was acquired in October of 2022 and bids for construction are pending. Staff has been working with the owners of property along Belk Road for Station # 5 since May of 2023. The parties recently finalized terms outlined in a proposed real estate transfer agreement which include the following:

- The sellers shall deed 3.79± acres along Belk Road to the County prior to January 31, 2024.
- In lieu of a 50-foot buffer, the sellers shall design a 10-foot landscape strip along the northern property line between the parcels. The 50-foot buffer shall still apply to other adjacent properties.
- Prior to January 31, 2025, the County shall design and construct a left turn lane on Belk Road, a deceleration lane, and a new access road onto the property at no cost to the sellers.

Should the Board choose to execute the real estate transfer agreement, staff will work with the architect of record for Fire Station # 10 to make minor modifications to the existing design for Fire Station # 5 to accommodate this site. Construction of the new station will likely begin around September-October of 2024.

In response to questions from Commissioner Smith, Administrator Fouts explained that the new Fire Station # 5 will be very close to the city limits of Newnan, but will still be located within the jurisdiction of the County. He further explained that although the County has previously pursued an automatic aid agreement with the City of Newnan, this has never come to fruition. Though the County has automatic aid agreements with other jurisdictions, the agreement with the City of Newnan is for mutual aid. Additionally, the County has requested that the City provide sewerage service to the new Fire Station, and they have declined.

Commissioner Smith expressed his desire for the County to continue to pursue an automatic aid agreement with the City of Newnan.

Chairman Reidelbach explained that staff presented a request directly to Newnan Utilities to provide sewerage service to the new Fire Station, but received a response that they will only agree to do so if approved by the City Council.

Commissioner Poole explained that the County provides EMS service for the City of Newnan, and Commissioner McKenzie explained that since the majority of the EMS calls are inside the city limits, the proximity of the new Fire Station (to the City of Newnan) will improve response times.

Chairman Reidelbach explained that staff will continue to pursue sewerage service for the new Station.

The Board voted to execute a Real Estate Transfer Agreement with Virginia Singh, Rupinder Kaur, and Jujhar Singh associated with conveyance of 3.79± acres located along Belk Road to Coweta County.

RESULT:	EXECUTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Bill McKenzie, District 2
SECONDER:	Al Smith, District 5
AYES:	Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith

Additional Action Items

10. 14200 Request Approval/Execution of a Right-of-Entry Associated with Storm Drain Repairs at 295 Mapledale Trail, Sharpsburg - District 4

The Board voted to execute a Right-of-Entry with Mr. William Fine for the purpose of performing storm drain pipe maintenance for property located at 295 Mapledale Trail, Sharpsburg.

RESULT:	EXECUTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	John Reidelbach, District 4 - Chairman
SECONDER:	Bob Blackburn, District 3
AYES:	Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith

11. 14215 Request Approval/Execution of a Right-of-Entry Associated with Storm Drain Repairs at 75 Brooke Place and 125 Daisy Place, Newnan - District 2

The Board voted to execute a Right-of-Entry with Mr. Mark Livingston and with Mr. Michael Stewart for the purposes of performing storm drain repairs for properties located at 125 Daisy Place, Newnan and at 75 Brooks Place, Newnan, respectively.

RESULT:	EXECUTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	John Reidelbach, District 4 - Chairman
SECONDER:	Bob Blackburn, District 3
AYES:	Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith

PUBLIC COMMENT (Items Not on the Agenda)

Public Comments Regarding Items Not on the Agenda

Chairman Reidelbach called for comments regarding any items not on the agenda.

The following individuals addressed the Board regarding their beliefs that the current voting machines (ballot marking devices/BMDs) are vulnerable to being hacked, do not provide verifiable results, foster a lack of voter confidence, and are significantly more expensive than previous voting systems/methods. They requested that the Board place their request to offer voters an option to use hand-marked, hand-counted paper ballots on the agenda for consideration.

* Ms. Linda Menk, Avondale Circle, Newnan

* Mr. Alan Brady, Barrington Overlook, Sharpsburg

* Mr. Ed Palmer, Gray Girls Road, Senoia

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 a real estate issue.

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 Attorney Lee, and County Clerk Zerangue.

RESULT: **APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER: Bob Blackburn, District 3
SECONDER: John Reidelbach, District 4 - Chairman
AYES: Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith

REGULAR SESSION

Motion To: **Return to Regular Session**

The Board discussed a real estate issue during Executive Session and voted to return to Regular Session.

RESULT: **APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER: Bob Blackburn, District 3
SECONDER: John Reidelbach, District 4 - Chairman
AYES: Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith

AFFIDAVIT

Motion To: **Execute Affidavit and Resolution for Executive**

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

RESULT: **EXECUTED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER: Bob Blackburn, District 3
SECONDER: Al Smith, District 5
AYES: Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith

ADJOURNMENT

Motion To: **Adjourn**

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting.

RESULT: **APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER: Bob Blackburn, District 3
SECONDER: Bill McKenzie, District 2
AYES: Reidelbach, Poole, McKenzie, Blackburn, Smith