

**APPLING COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
TUESDAY-September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 @ 5:30 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Appling County Board of Commissioners held their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 5:30pm at the Courthouse Annex. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Leslie Burch. Present were Commissioners: Daryl Edwards, Doug Harris, Charlie Leggett, Randy Sellers, and Theodore Wilkerson. Also present were Chairman Burch, County Manager Al Meadows, County Attorney Tracy Brown and County Clerk Robyn Evans.

**WELCOME**

Chairman Leslie Burch welcomed all those in attendance and reminded everyone to silence their cellular devices.

**INVOCATION**

Commissioner Randy Sellers gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE**

Wayne Cannady led the group in the pledge.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Harris made a motion to approve the agenda with addition of "Item F: Contribution Agreement w/GA Association of Conservation Districts, Inc."; Commissioner Edwards seconded; unanimously approved.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. Regular Monthly Meeting 8/01/2023
- B. Called Meeting – Public Budget Hearing 08/17/2023
- C. Called Meeting – County Projects Review/Updates 08/24/2023
- D. Called Meeting – Public Budget Hearing 08/31/2023

Commissioner Wilkerson made a motion to approve all minutes listed above. Commissioner Harris seconded; unanimously approved.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**State of Emergency Status**

County Manager Meadows shared on August 30, 2023, the County and City both independently entered into a Local State of Emergency due to an event of critical significance, Hurricane Idalia. The county experienced at total of 28 significantly damaged dirt roads and many other roads that needed minor repair. "Our Road Dept worked throughout the Labor Day Weekend to effect repairs and had all but one complete by September 5, 2023. Last Wednesday, September 6, 2023, FEMA and GEMA representatives arrived in Appling County to assess damage. Our Road Superintendent, EMA, and I spent the afternoon showing these agencies the damage our county suffered. As of September 7, 2023, all roads were open and we will continue to monitor and maintain the road conditions. On Monday, September 11, 2023, the county and city declared the local state of emergency ended.

County Manager Meadows went on to state, "On September 11, 2023, I received confirmation that Appling County had been added to the list of 24 counties in South Georgia, that have been added to the Major Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance. This assistance will not only help with the cost incurred as a result of the hurricane but with mitigation actions as well. Details on this program will be forth coming."



## NEW BUSINESS

### A. AC Board of Education Appeal Hearing for Sales Ratio Study

County Manager Meadows advised the board that Appling County Board of Education appealed the Sales Ratio Study of 33.61% and is scheduled for a hearing on September 20, 2023 at 9:00 AM, in the commissioners' meeting room of the Annex. He stated that if the appeal is granted, it would raise the Sales Ratio by approximately one (1) point. This would increase the amount of taxes the public utilities pay the Board of Education and the County, and in turn will increase the revenue.

### B. Adoption of Appling County FY'2024 Budget

County Manager Meadows shared that the Board of Commissioners have held two (2) budget workshops and two (2) public input meetings to ensure the budget is accurate and transparent. All cost saving measures have been applied and every line item discussed. The estimated revenues for 2024 is \$23,090,209 and estimated budget total is \$23,090,209. A balanced budget.

County Manager then made a request to Chairman Burch, that he'd recommend a vote to adopt the proposed 2024 Appling County Budget. On a motion by Commissioner Harris; second by Commissioner Wilkerson; the budget was unanimously approved.

### C. Approve Resolutions to Set Millage Rates & Levy Taxes

County Manager Meadows read aloud the Resolutions to set the county's millage rate and approve the levy of taxes for FY'2024:

On a motion by Commissioner Edwards; second by Commissioner Harris; the Fire and Rescue millage rate of 0.47 was unanimously approved.

On a motion by Commissioner Harris, second by Commissioner Wilkerson; the School System millage rate of 12.243 was unanimously approved.

On a motion by Commissioner Sellers; second by Commissioner Harris; the County Maintenance millage rate of 11.924 was unanimously approved.

### D. Appling County Dept. of Family & Children Services (DFCS) County Budget Agreement

This agreement recognizes the amount the Board of Commissioners allocated from the 2024 Budget for DFACS, \$31,000, and how these funds are managed. The Appling County Board of Commissioners will issue funds to DFACS at the end of each month to reimburse expenditures. County Manager Meadows recommended the Board accept the Foster Care Guidelines Financial Policy dated July 01, 2023 in relation to this fund allocation. On a motion by Commissioner Harris; second by Commissioner Wilkerson; the agreement was unanimously approved.

### E. Southeast Health District Agreement

County Manager Meadows shared the agreement covers Ms. Fani Orellana and Ms. Elaine Tuten's part-time salaries, for providing services mentioned in the agreement. The services are provided through the Extension Services supervised by Becky Collins as a part of the Coalition for a Healthy Appling County. Ms. Yvonne Sellers receives summary reports from Becky Collins to submit with an invoice to the Southeast Health District. They reimburse us for those salaries for providing the services to our communities under the Healthy Outreach Grant. County Manager Meadows recommended a vote to accept the Southeastern Health District Agreement in the amount of \$22,000 for July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. Commissioner Sellers made a motion to approve the agreement; Commissioner Edwards seconded; unanimously approved.



F. Contribution Agreement w/GA Association of Conservation Districts, Inc.

The Contribution Agreement with GA Assoc. Of Conservation Districts, Inc. was presented to the Board in the amount of \$49,000, which is Appling County's share of the agreement expiring on September 30, 2025. The partnership serves to facilitate the implementation of planned conservation practices. Commissioner Harris made a motion to approve the agreement; Commissioner Edwards seconded; unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC INPUT** - There was no public input at this meeting.

**SHERIFF'S REPORT**

Chief Gene Davis expressed his appreciation for County employees working recent storm, Hurricane Idalia – “the county folks stepped-up” and the Road Department staff “worked their butt off”. He invited the Board to attend the Sheriff's Department quarterly employee luncheon.

**RECREATION DEPT.** - No updates were given at this meeting.

**ROADS & BRIDGES** – Brooks Johnson

Mr. Johnson, Road Superintendent, thanked the Sheriff's office staff, Fire Department, EMA, and various private citizens for their hard work before, during, and after the storm – Hurricane Idalia. Mr. Johnson stated, “when you've got a team, you can move mountains”, “the work in the county was unbelievable and folks should be proud”. Mr. Johnson made note that 88 roads were impassable at some point, some closed temporarily and others up to several days. He stated there were many, many downed powerlines in the way, while workers tried to clear trees from roads, repair roads, and assess roads. Mr. Johnson stated that he was very proud of his guys for working 'til they could barely go. He stated they are still assessing weaknesses found during the storm response and on-going efforts will continue to strengthen roads, etc.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion was made by Commissioner Edwards to close regular session of the meeting and enter into Executive Session; seconded by Commissioner Leggett; unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Leggett to close Executive session and re-enter regular session of the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Sellers; unanimously approved.

Personnel issues were discussed but no action was taken.

Discussion was held regarding the County accepting bids for the sale of the current Pineland building property at 755 South Main Street, Baxley, GA. Commissioner Leggett made a motion to approve and open the bidding process; second by Commissioner Sellers; unanimously approved.

**COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT**

County Manager Meadows spoke to the Board, “I would like to publicly thank my staff, Ms. Robyn Evans and Ms. LaFonda Solomon for the long hours and dedication that it took to develop this budget. Ensuring the needs of the county are being met while always being cost conscience with the tax payers' monies is quite a task. Without their support, this would not have happened.”

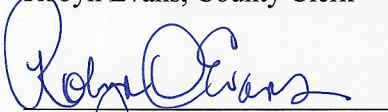
**CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

Chairman Burch also expressed appreciation for the everyone's hard work in relation to Hurricane Idalia. Ms. Dedra Hewitt thanked County Manager Meadows and Chairman Leslie Burch for the storm coverage.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business or discussion the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Robyn Evans, County Clerk



ATTEST

Leslie Burch, Chairman

