

**APPLING COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
June 4th, 2024 @ 5:30 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME/INVOCATION/PLEDGE

The Appling County Board of Commissioners held the regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, June 4th, 2024 at 5:30 PM in the Courthouse Annex.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Leslie Burch and he welcomed all those in attendance.

Commissioner Doug Harris gave the invocation and Ricky Barnes led the group in the pledge.

Present were Chairman Leslie Burch; Vice Chairman Charlie Leggett; Commissioners Randy Sellers, Theodore Wilkerson, Daryl Edwards and Doug Harris. Also present were County Manager Al Meadows, County Attorney Tracy Brown and County Clerk Robyn Evans.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Burch requested approval for the agenda as printed. County Clerk Robyn Evans stated that Terry Carter asked to be removed from public input. Commissioner Wilkerson requested Betty Miller be added to public input. Commissioner Edwards made a motion to approve the revised agenda; Commissioner Harris seconded; unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting- May 7th, 2024

Commissioner Harris made a motion to approve the minutes presented; Commissioner Wilkerson seconded; unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Loan Agreement/Resolution Community Development Block Agreement/Employee Incentive Program
County Manager Meadows shared the following: Jay Dhaliwal and Associates Inc., a local business, is in the process of a major construction and renovation of a convenience store, laundromat and fueling operations it owns in Baxley, Georgia. This project will create new employment opportunities in Appling County including jobs for low to moderate income persons. The business desires to borrow \$300,000 from the Community Development Block Grant / Employment Incentive Program /Revolving Loan Fund ("RLF Loan") that the Development Authority maintains to fund the Project. The Appling County Development Authority has determined that the project proposed by this business will develop and promote trade, commerce, industry and employment opportunities in Appling County. The Development Authority, in assisting with the proposed project will be acting in furtherance of the public purpose for which it was created. County Manager asked that David Douglas, Chairman of the Development Authority, explain this program to the Board. Judge Alex Johnson spoke instead and gave a brief overview of the utilization requirements and process for repayment of the funds. Georgia Department of Community Affairs administers this program and accepts payments on behalf of the county, which are returned back to the fund for further usage. Payments will be paid monthly for five (5) years, with 6% interest. Commissioner Leggett made a motion to approve the loan; Commissioner Sellers seconded; unanimously approved.

Approval of Annual Lease Agreement w/Pineland BHD

County Manager Meadows shared that the lease for the Pineland Building, located on South Main Street, will expire on June 30th, 2024. Pineland Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities organization wishes to remain a tenant and requests to renew their lease at the current rent of \$2300 per month for one year, (\$20,700 annual). County Attorney Tracy Brown requested to table this agreement until some changes were made to the lease agreement. Commissioner Wilkerson made a motion to table this item; Commissioner Edwards seconded; unanimously approved.

Approval of Annual Lease Agreement w/Department of Human Services (DFCS)

County Manager Meadows addressed the Board regarding lease for the DFCS building, located on Highway #341 West, will expire on June 30th, 2024. Department of Family and Children Services wishes to remain a tenant and requests to renew their lease at the current rate of \$5458.33 per month, for one year (\$49,000 annual). The item presented was a memo from Department of Human Services requesting the renewal. Attorney Tracy Brown requested to see a copy of the lease before the Board approved and signed. Commissioner Leggett made a motion to table this item; Commissioner Harris seconded; unanimously approved.

Applying Hospital Authority Board Member Terms Expiring

County Manager Meadows shared that the County has two seats on the Hospital Authority Board, that are set to expire on July 31, 2024. They are Mr. Lee Lewis and Mr. Perry White. Both are willing to serve another term. Commissioner Leggett responded that he wasn't aware of this and he'd like some time to consider other candidates. Commissioner Harris stated that the by-laws referenced the Board be given 30 days in advance of expiring terms. Commissioner Harris made a motion to table this item for further consideration; Commissioner Leggett seconded; unanimously approved.

Timber Harvesting Ordinance

County Manager Meadows discussed the County's Timber Harvesting Ordinance, which hasn't been updated in several years. Commissioner Harris drafted an updated version, for the Board's review, that addresses the problems faced today, such as road and ditch damage with respect to timber operations. The primary function of a Timber Ordinance is to ensure compliance with laws related to harvesting timber and preserving the forest resources and our rural roads. Discussion was held regarding how reports of damage would be reported and resolved. Commissioner Edwards spoke, stating he'd like to see the permits available on-line and a \$5,000 surety bond required. Once approved this ordinance will be sent electronically to all known timber harvesters that operate in our county and posted on the County's website and social media pages.

Reschedule FY'2025 Work Session (6/18)

County Manager Meadows announced that the scheduled Board of Commissioners budget work session is currently on June 18th, 2024. Due to that also being a county-wide election day, he recommends moving the workshop to June 17th, 2024 or eliminating that meeting and keeping the second one scheduled for June 25th, 2024. Commissioner Wilkerson made a motion to move the June 18th, 2024 Budget Session to Monday, June 17th, 2024 at 10:00 AM; Commissioner Harris seconded; unanimously approved.

Reschedule Regular Monthly Board Meeting (7/2)

Due to the July 4th holiday falling during this week on a Thursday, County Manager Meadows would like consideration to move the meeting to July 9th at the regular time of 5:30 PM. Commissioner Edwards made a motion to approve this change; Commissioner Sellers seconded; unanimously approved.

Intergovernmental Agreement for Employment and Placement of School Resource Officers

Per County Manager Meadows, Appling County has an Intergovernmental Agreement that renews every five (5) years, between the County, Appling County Sheriff's Office, and the Appling County School District. All parties have reached a mutual agreement concerning the hiring and placement of seven (7) School Resource Officers, as well as the appropriate division of costs between the District and County. The terms of this agreement shall be five years beginning July 1, 2024 and end June 30, 2029. The County's portion is 30 %; Board of Education pays 70% of the positions and costs associated with the positions. Sheriff Mark Melton addressed the board, explaining the agreement and costs associated. Commissioner Sellers asked if this was included in the Sheriff's budget; Sheriff Melton replied that it was. Commissioner Edwards asked if the program has worked well and the Sheriff replied that it has. Commissioner Harris made a motion to approve the agreement; Commissioner Wilkerson seconded; unanimously approved.

PUBLIC INPUT

Charles Siddon asked the Board for David Carter Road to be paved. Stated he'd requested this for years and would like the Board to consider this request again. He also mentioned that the road sign was missing again and needs to be replaced.

Betty Miller spoke to the Board regarding her family history and relation to "The Day That Shook Georgia", the explosion at a chemical plant in 1971 in Woodbine, GA. She requested the Board's support with promoting the various memorial activities related to this explosion including a documentary, establishing a national monument, school curriculum, etc.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE – Mark Melton

Sheriff Melton mentioned the timber cut and sale from a previous meeting – stating that it was approved but wasn't aware if there had been any movement on this subject. He stated since the adjacent properties were cutting their timber, the Sheriff's office was wide open to anyone. He mentioned that the fencing was a part of the original approval as well.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS- Dwight Watts

Mr. Watts stated he's replaced two failed air conditioning units this week and a request to add outside lighting at the Registrar's office. He's also working on quotes for the roof at Appling Heritage Center. He also mentioned that his department is still driving the same old trucks from 2008.

PARKS & RECREATION- Timmy McGuirt

Mr. McGuirt gave updates stating that parking was actually an issue during the past weekend's tournaments due to so many in attendance. He stated they would be holding the first swim meet of the season and will begin swim lessons including a toddler class. Chairman Burch asked if there were any events that constitute a need for medical personnel to be needed on site. Mr. McGuirt stated that there are no requirements for them to be on site, they are close by if needed.

ROADS & BRIDGES – Carroll Weaver

Mr. Weaver gave updates stating that Oscar Tippins project is complete and ditch work is in progress. He stated that some of the ditches haven't been pulled in a long, long time but they are doing the best they can and it may take a little while. He also shared that bush cutters were in full swing but it would also take some time to get figured out because they've been neglected for some time.

LANDFILL- Robert Eunice

Mr. Eunice shared that the recent tire drive brought in 60 tons of tires, with about 55 tons being hauled elsewhere. He also stated that household trash drop-off has decreased but he still thinks the County should accept items that won't fit into household receptacles.

FIRE DEPARTMENT/DIVE TEAM- Linton Deloach

Mr. Deloach shared the basic firefighter class is wrapping up with twelve (12) graduates for the County and four (4) for the City. He stated they are looking at two (2) potential surplus tanker trucks and would utilize those at the southern end and one at northern end of the County. The Dive Team is training with new electronics and gear.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Wilkerson made a motion to close the regular meeting and enter into executive session; Commissioner Edwards seconded; unanimously approved.

Commissioner Harris made a motion to end executive session and re-enter the regular meeting; Commissioner Wilkerson seconded; unanimously approved.

Commissioner Harris made a motion to extend legal-council to include the Board of Elections; Commissioner Edwards seconded; unanimously approved.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Meadows presented a certification plaque to Commissioner Randy Sellers for completing Commissioners Training through the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia. County Manager Meadows shared with the Board, "On Mar 6th, Commissioners Wilkerson, Edwards, Harris, Leggett, and I traveled to Atlanta for an office visit with the Chairman of the Ga Dept of Transportation, Russel McMurray. The purpose of the visit was to update the Commissioner of the progress in Appling County and to share our vision for growth. We were able to have the entire GDOT Senior Staff to listen to our plan to improve quality transportation in Appling County and to offer their suggestions and possible assistance for future projects. The trip paid huge dividends for Appling County. On April 5th Mrs. Ann Purcell, the Vice Chairman of the State Transportation Board informed me that Appling County would receive an additional \$325,000 for road construction. On May 30th I received a letter from GDOT that stated Appling County would receive an additional \$150,000 under the Safety Action Plan (SAP) to assist in replacing 20.5 miles of road striping. This funding of \$475,000 was above and beyond the normal state funds received and was much appreciated Chairman McMurray and Mrs. Ann Purcell were impressed with the Commissioners and the commitment they displayed for our county.

The 4th of July fireworks this year will be held at the tractor pull area at 9 pm on 29 June. This will be advertised in the News Banner the last three weeks of June. We had a great turn out last year and I look forward to seeing you all there this year."

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

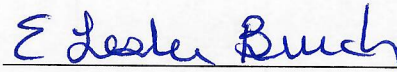
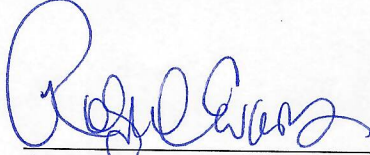
Chairman Burch thanked everyone present for their attendance. He then invited Knicole Lee, FNP to speak regarding "Stop the Bleed and Narcan Training". She stated this training was put into place to address the ongoing opioid epidemic and the respective kits will be placed on each firetruck in the city and county. Mrs. Lee stated that the amount of Narcan having to be utilized continues to grow and the potential for fentanyl exposure is very heightened. She advised this training is available to all departments, churches, etc. at no cost to the city or county.

ADJOURN

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Robyn Evans, County Clerk

Leslie Burch, Chairman



ATTEST



**APPLING COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CALLED MEETING/BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES
June 17th, 2024 @ 10:00 A.M.**

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME/INVOCATION/PLEDGE

The Appling County Board of Commissioners held a called meeting on Tuesday, June 17th, 2024 at 10:00 AM in the Courthouse Annex, in order to discuss the proposed FY'2025 County Budget.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Leslie Burch and he welcomed all those in attendance.

Commissioner Edwards gave the invocation and County Manager Meadows led the group in the pledge.

Present were Chairman Leslie Burch; Vice Chairman Charlie Leggett; Commissioners Randy Sellers, Theodore Wilkerson, Daryl Edwards and Doug Harris. Also present were County Manager Al Meadows and County Clerk Robyn Evans. County Attorney Tracy Brown was not in attendance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Burch requested approval for the agenda as printed. Commissioner Harris made a motion to approve the agenda; Commissioner Sellers seconded; unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Presentation and Review of Proposed FY'2025 County Budget

County Manager Meadows addressed the Board, citizens present, and candidates of the upcoming election. He stated that "we are a blessed county and the resources we are entrusted with take time an effort to ensure all needs are met efficiently." "This is the first budget workshop meeting for the County's 2025 budget." "The goal for today is to hear from our Tax Assessor and several of the departments with the largest share of the budget and for the Board to consider how to best invest in Appling County."

County Manager Meadows shared that the Tax Revenue for the new budget has not been received yet but growth is expected. Ms. Myrna Taylor began by sharing for her department.

Ms. Taylor stated that July 15th is the deadline for the Tax Digest to be given to the Tax Commissioner. She shared that GMA is working on commercial schedules and urban land but it's a long process. Ms. Taylor stated that agricultural growth has taken place with chicken houses and subdivisions being developed. The GMASS evaluation should be completed in 2025. Commissioner Harris asked about solar panels and if they were considered farming/agricultural, to which Ms. Taylor replied that the panels are usually found on farmland but the panels are actually considered personal property. Commissioner Edwards stated that the County has a twenty 20 plus/minus year lease with the Development Authority to allow solar panels. Commissioner Harris said that land-use zoning ordinances are needed to identify when land is being used for certain purposes such as solar, bit coin mines, etc. and can be categorized and taxed accordingly.

Several other department heads explained increases in their budget requests. Timmy McGuirt (Parks and Recreation) reminded the Board that expenses do occur upfront for hosting tournaments. District games out-of-pocket costs were \$5,320 but generated \$15,241 – this money doesn't go back to the recreation budget; it goes into the general fund. Commissioner Leggett asked the County Manager and LaFonda Solomon (Administration office) if the recreation expenses could be reimbursed from the revenue income and the remainder to go back into the general fund. Ms. Solomon stated the money can't be added back as it has to be shown as revenue but she would talk to the County auditors to get a better understanding. Other discussion in relation to this topic was discussed.

Carroll Weaver (Roads and Bridges) asked for two new labor positions and shared that the price of equipment parts and fuel have increased a lot. He stated that metal pipe is steadily increasing, as well. Discussion was held for various other concerns such as if enough funds were being budgeted for items such as equipment and striping. Commissioner Sellers asked about equipment for packing roads, a water truck, etc. Commissioner Edwards asked about the number of employees which Mr. Weaver replied currently remains at thirty-four (34); previously there have been forty-three (43) employees. Mr. Weaver shared that he and the County Manager are working on options for spraying, a possible gradall purchase, water truck, etc.

Dwight Watts (Buildings and Grounds) admitted his budget was overspent due to failed air conditioning units and expansion of pest control to include fire department buildings. He stated that he and his staff usually handle HVAC work themselves, which saves the county money.

A previous timeline for the FY'2025 Budget Cycle was amended on a motion by Commissioner Harris; seconded by Commissioner Sellers; unanimously approved.

Changes are to omit 6/25 meeting; Add 7/9 for a budget work session at 3:00 PM and 8/6 for another budget work session.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Meadows reminded everyone to vote in the election the following day and shared the 4th of July fireworks would be held Saturday, June 29th, 2024 at the tractor pull area about 9:30 PM.

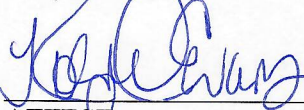
CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman Burch thanked everyone for their attendance.

ADJOURN

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM.

Robyn Evans



ATTEST



Leslie Burch, Chairman

