

**HABERSHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
6:00 P.M., MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2023
HABERSHAM COUNTY COURTHOUSE
JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM
295 LLEWELLYN STREET
CLARKESVILLE, GA 30523**

The Habersham County Board of Commissioners held a regularly scheduled meeting on January 16, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in the Commission Conference Rom of the Administrative Building located at 130 Jacob’s Way, Clarkesville, GA 30523.

Present were Chairman Ty Akins, Vice Chairman Bruce Harkness, Commissioner Dustin Mealor, Commissioner Jimmy Tench, Commissioner Bruce Palmer, County Manager Alicia Vaughn, County Attorney Donnie Hunt, County Clerk Brandalin Carnes, staff, members of the media and the public.

Commissioner Akins called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Harkness lead the invocation.

Commissioner Palmer lead the pledge of allegiance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Akins, seconded by Commissioner Palmer and voted unanimously (5-0) to amend the agenda with the following changes:

1. Remove item c “Consider/Approve Design Change Order for Fire/EMS Headquarters Administration Facility” from New Business
2. Remove item g “ Consider/Approve IGA with City of Baldwin for Animal Control Administration & Enforcement” from New Business
3. Add item k “Consider/Approve Resolution 2024-01-001 Authorizing Transfer of Mountain Judicial Circuit Supplement of the Juvenile Court Assistant District Attorney Position and for Other Purposes” to New Business

COMMISSION OFFICER ELECTION FOR 2024

- a. Chairman

A nomination was made by Commissioner Mealor for Commissioner serve as Commission Chair for 2024. This nomination was seconded by Commissioner Harkness. No further nominations were made. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

- b. Vice Chairman

A nomination was made by Commissioner Mealor for Bruce Harkness to service as Commission Vice Chair for 2024. This nomination was seconded by Commissioner Mealor. No further nominations were made. Motion carried 3-2 with Commissioner’s Palmer and Tench dissenting.

PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- a. Employee Spotlight & Citizen Recognition
 1. Sonya Turgeon, Senior Center Transportation Administrative Assistant
 2. Lauren Pemberton, Senior Center Program Coordinator
 3. Joshua Haynie, Legacy Link Care Provider
- b. Outcome of 2023 Audit: Chris Hollifield, Rushton & Co
- c. Commission Planning Retreat Scheduled for January 26, 2024.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. CU-24-01- Application By Mark Hagen for Conditional Use of Property at 1651 Double Bridge Road (Parcel#108 004A) for Small Welding Shop

Motion by Commissioner Harkness, seconded by Commissioner to deny the conditional use application as submitted. Motion carries 3-2 with Commissioner Tench and Commissioner Palmer dissenting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- a. Peggy Fortson: Review of 2023 Accomplishments of Habersham County Pickleball Club, Inc.
- b. Kathryn Warwick: Community Support for Building New Habersham County Animal Shelter

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Commissioner Mealor to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried 4-1 with Commissioner Harkness dissenting.

- a. Consider/Approve Minutes for December 18, 2023 Commission Work Session
- b. Consider/Approve Minutes for December 18, 2023 Commission Meeting
- c. Consider/Approve Transfer and Assignment of Airport Hangar H-1 Lease
- d. Consider/Approve Ratification of Purchase of 2017 Ford F-250 For Animal Control
- e. Consider/Approve Ratification of Purchase of 2016 Ford E-350 Bus for Senior Center
- f. Consider/Approve Alcohol Sales Application/Renewal for:
 1. The Orchard Golf and Country Club LLC located at 1057 Orchard Drive, Clarkesville- Malt Beverage, Wine and Distilled Spirits Consumption on Premises
 2. Leo Das LLC dba A to Z Grocery located at 1723 Crane Mill Rd, Alto- Malt Beverage Package Sales
 3. Old Batesville Store Restaurant located at 11801 Hwy 197N, Clarkesville- Malt Beverage and Wine Consumption on Premises

REPORTS:

- a. Planning Commission: D. Higgins, Chairman
- b. Board of Tax Assessors Report: Michael Larson, Vice Chairman
- c. County Manager's Report: Alicia Vaughn

APPOINTMENTS:

GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION

1-Year Term Expiring 01/31/2025

Note: Must be Commission Chair or other Commission Member if Chair Cannot Serve

1. Bruce Palmer (Term Expiration): At-Large Appointment

Motion by Commissioner Harkness, seconded by Commissioner Mealor, and voted unanimously (5-0) to reappoint Commissioner Palmer as the Commission Representative for the Georgia Mountain Regional Commission.

CHESTATEE CHATTAHOOCHEE RC&D

1-Year Term Expiring 12/31/2024

1. John Hendrix (Term Expiration)-At-Large Appointment

Motion by Commissioner Tench, seconded by Commissioner Mealor, and voted unanimously (5-0) to appoint Jimmy Kowalski to the Chestatee Chattahoochee RC&D.

LIBRARY BOARD

2-Year Term Expiring 6/30/2025

1. Jennifer Garrett- At Large Appointment

Motion by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Mealor, and voted unanimously (5-0) to table the appointment for the Library Board till next month's meeting due the lack of any applicants for the vacancy.

RECREATION BOARD

Appointments Will Serve Remainder of 5-Year Terms

1. Andrew Gailey (Resignation-Term Expires 12/31/25)- Commissioner Palmer's Appointment

Motion by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Commissioner Harkness, and voted unanimously 5-0 to appoint Cassie Head to the Recreation board.

2. Alan Irvin (Resignation-Term Expires 12/31/25)- Commissioner Mealor's Appointment

Motion by Commissioner Mealor, seconded by Commissioner Harkness, and voted unanimously (5-0) to table this Recreation Board appointment until next month.

3. Darrell Jones (Resignation-Term Expires 12/31/24)- Commissioner Harkness' Appointment

Motion by Commissioner Harkness, seconded by Commissioner Mealor, and voted unanimously (5-0) to appoint Angela Haughton to the Recreation Board.

AIRPORT COMMISSION

3-Year Term Expiring 2/1/2027

1. Ken Schubring (Term Expiration)- Commissioner Tench's Appointment

Motion by Commissioner Tench, seconded by Commissioner Harknes, and voted unanimously (5-0) to appoint Lawrence Bridges to the Airport Commission.

2. Justin Schapansky (Term Expiration)- Commissioner Akins's Appointment

Motion by Commissioner Akins, seconded by Commissioner Mealor, and voted unanimously (5-0) to reappoint Justin Schapansky to the Airport Commission.

3. Christopher Limbach (Term Expiration)- Commissioner Mealor's Appointment

Motion by Commissioner Mealor, seconded by Commissioner Harkness, and voted unanimously (5-0) to reappoint Christopher Limbach to the Airport Commission.

DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

6-Year Term Expiring 02/19/2030

1. Gail Thaxton (Term Expiration)- Commissioner Palmer's Appointment

Motion by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Commissioner Harkness to reappoint Gail Thaxton to the Development Authority. Motion carries 4-1 with Commissioner Tench dissenting.

2. Sidney Roland (Term Expiration)- At Large Appointment

Motion by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Commissioner Harkness, and voted (5-0) to reappoint Sidney Roland to the Development Authority.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. First Reading of Amendment to Article II ("Open Burning") of Chapter 30 ("Fire Prevention and Protection") of the Habersham County Code of Ordinances

Commissioner Akins informed everyone that this is the first of two required readings and that no vote would occur until the February 19th Commission meeting. Commissioner Akins read the amendment allowed.

- b. Consider/Approve IGA with Tallulah Falls for Donation of Drone for Emergency Services

Motion by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Commissioner Harkness, and voted unanimously (5-0) to approve.

- ~~e. Consider/Approve Design Change Order for Fire/EMS Headquarters Administration Facility~~ New Business item "e" was removed during the adoption of the agenda.

- d. Consider/Approve Task Order #9 With Lead Edge Design Group for Airport ROFA Project

Motion by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Commissioner Mealor, and voted unanimously (5-0) to approve.

- e. Consider/Approve Amendments to Resolution 2023-12-001 Setting 2024 Qualifying Fees for Election

Motion by Commissioner Mealor, seconded by Commissioner Harkness, and voted unanimously (5-0) to approve.

f. Consider/Approve IGA with City of Alto for Animal Control Administration & Enforcement

Motion by Commissioner Mealor, seconded by Commissioner Palmer, and voted unanimously (5-0) to approve.

~~g. Consider/Approve IGA with City of Baldwin for Animal Control Administration & Enforcement~~ New Business item “g” was removed during the adoption of the agenda.

h. Consider/Approve IGA with City of Clarkesville for Animal Control Administration & Enforcement

Motion by Commissioner Mealor, seconded by Commissioner Palmer, and voted unanimously (5-0) to approve.

i. Consider/Approve IGA with City of Cornelia for Animal Control Administration & Enforcement

Motion by Commissioner Mealor, seconded by Commissioner Palmer, and voted unanimously (5-0) to approve.

j. Consider/Approve IGA with City of Mt. Airy for Animal Control Administration & Enforcement

Motion by Commissioner Mealor, seconded by Commissioner Palmer and voted unanimously (5-0) to approve.

k. Consider/Approve Resolution 2024-01-001 Authorizing Transfer of Mountain Judicial Circuit Supplement of the Juvenile Court Assistant District Attorney Position and for Other Purposes

This item was added during the adoption of the agenda.

Motion by Commissioner Harkness, seconded by Commissioner Mealor, and voted unanimously (5-0) to approve.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion by Commissioner Harkness, seconded by Commissioner Mealor to go into executive session for Personnel, pursuant to O.C.G.A § 50-14-3(b)(2) and Property Disposal, pursuant to O.C.G.A §50-14-3 (b)(1).

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Commissioner Harkness- aye
Commissioner Akins- aye
Commissioner Mealor- aye
Commissioner Tench-aye
Commissioner Palmer-aye

Motion carries unanimously (5-0) to enter executive session at 8:06 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Akins, seconded by Commissioner Harkness, and voted unanimously (5-0) to come out of closed session at 9:01 p.m.

County Attorney Donnie Hunt reported that all matters discussed in executive session were limited to those matters allowed by the laws of the State of Georgia and asked for a motion authorizing the Chairman to make such a representation under oath on the affidavit.

Motion by Commissioner Mealor, seconded by Commissioner Palmer, and voted unanimously (5-0) to adopt the representation authorizing such affidavit as per the Attorney’s recommendation.

ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Harkness, seconded by Commissioner Akins, and voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____
Commission Chairman Ty Akins

Attest: _____
County Clerk Brandalin Carnes

DRAFT