

County Meeting  
January 16, 2020 6:00pm  
Minutes  
Union County Courthouse

The meeting was called to order by County Clerk, Jennifer Mahan at 6:00 pm.

Ms. Mahan started by apologizing that Commissioner Paris was not present at the meeting. He had the crud that was going around and didn't want to take a chance on passing it on to those in attendance. At the point the decision was made Commissioner Paris would not be able to attend, it was too late to cancel the meeting. The Commissioner did not want attendees to show up to a meeting that was cancelled. Ms. Mahan went on to let everyone know that she was going to present everything on the Agenda as the Commissioner normally would, but nothing would be officially accepted or adopted. There will be a Called Meeting on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at 4:00pm in the Union County Courthouse, where Commissioner Paris will approve everything that was presented.

The invocation was given by Chaplain Bailey and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Gary Radcliff. All attendees were provided copies of the Minutes from the December 17, 2019 County Meeting, the December 27, 2019 Called Meeting, and the January 6, 2020 Called Meeting. These minutes will be officially approved at the January 21, 2020 Called Meeting.

Ms. Mahan announced there would be a slight change in the order of the Agenda. The second item, a Proclamation, would actually be presented first, due to those present to accept the Proclamation needing to get to another function. Ms. Cindy Bailey was present to accept the Proclamation for a Day of Prayer for the Women of Union County on February 15, 2020. Mrs. Bailey and others came to the front and then Mrs. Bailey gave a brief summary of the Proclamation stating that for centuries women have turned to prayer to gain wisdom and guidance for the needs of strength and protection of their families. She would like for all women to recognize the proclaimed day as a Day of Prayer.

Next, Ms. Mahan announced there had been a request made by a citizen for the County to make a presentation in a public meeting to provide an overview of the Union County Transit System.

Ms. Mahan stated that the Union County Transit System is operated by Union County Government from 8-4 Monday through Friday. There are two 8 passenger buses, both with wheelchair lifts, that are available for on call service. This means that passengers call the Transportation Office and schedule a time to be picked up and tell them where they need to go. These trips can be to any location in Union County including the grocery store, the pharmacy, doctors' appointments, or to work. The cost for this service is \$3.00 for the first mile and then 50 cents per additional mile. In FY2019 the Transportation buses made 6,423 trips for individuals within the community. Each year the ridership increases, FY2017 – 5,322 trips, FY2018 – 5,798.

Partial funding for this service comes from the Federal Department of Transportation through GDOT. This means that federal money is given to GDOT for them to distribute to counties.

There are different types of funding for different types of transportation systems in the State. The money that comes to Union County and surrounding counties, is from the Section 5311 Program which is for Rural Transit. Money is not made available to Union County for a regular bus route due to factors such as population, size of the City of Blairsville, and the fact that the distance from place to place is so great. For instance, if a regular bus stop was at the intersection of Highway 515 and Highway 325, there are not enough people within walking distance of this hypothetical bus stop to make it a feasible option. So, funding for rural counties is limited to on call trips only.

Since 2005, Union County Government, has applied for the 5311 Grant that is offered and they have received it each year. It is a 50/50 grant. Union County Government spends the funds up front for the cost of drivers, dispatchers, fuel, maintenance, and various other cost with relation to running the program. Then once a month they submit an invoice to GDOT for expenses they can be reimbursed for. GDOT operates on a July to June Fiscal Year, so the application for the FY2021 Grant was just submitted and Union County feels confident they should receive this grant as they have in the past. The Federal Share applied for is \$46,102 and Union County will have to match that same amount through revenue received from the ridership or make up the difference with county funds. Each year the funds requested increases a little. For FY2020, which is the Fiscal Year for GDOT that will end in July of this year, the grant was for \$41,787 with the same match amount. There will be an increase of 4,315 from FY2020 to FY2021.

Ms. Mahan then took this opportunity to summarize some issues that had been discussed in the past regarding the way the Union County Transit System operates.

First, there was a request a couple of years ago to station a transportation bus in Suches to be used by members of the community. After a public meeting, which had five people in attendance, none of whom planned on using the transportation bus, Union County decided to do a field study to see how many people would utilize the bus if it was stationed in Suches. In September of 2017 the Field Study started. In three months' time there was not one call for a ride from Suches to anywhere. It was decided that a bus would not be stationed in Suches, but in the event a citizen called and needed to be taken somewhere over here in Blairsville a bus from Blairsville would go and get them. Ashley Holland, the Transportation Director, was present and she stated so far, they have only had one person from Suches request and accept a ride.

Ms. Mahan said it has also been requested that discounts be given to different groups such as, the elderly, disabled, or veterans. Union County has checked with GDOT regarding doing this, and it is not possible due to the fact that the program receives federal funds. Everyone who rides has to pay the same price. The cost is very reasonable and is in line with surrounding counties.

It has also been asked that the bus drivers offer the service of helping the elderly and disabled out of their homes and into stores and things like that. This is not possible. Union County Transit and all 5311 programs are curb to curb service providers. This means that the individual rider must be able to get out of their home by themselves and into their various locations by themselves. The drivers will help passengers from their door and into the bus if necessary or they will help you on the wheelchair lift. They will also help with getting groceries into the bus or to passengers' front porch upon returning home. If a passenger requires assistance doing their

shopping or getting into stores or doctors' offices the rider must have an aid with them to help do these things. The driver cannot leave the bus to help the rider into doctors' appointments to sign in or to help actually do the shopping in stores. If the assistance of an aid is necessary, the aid rides the bus free of charge.

Ms. Mahan asked if there were any questions regarding the Union County Transit Systems and there were none.

The next item presented was Resolution R-2020-02 to Set the Alcohol License Fee Schedule. The only change will be the fee for the building inspection and that will increase from \$35.00 to \$50.00.

Another Resolution, R-2020-03, will be approved to Fix Qualification Fees for County Offices for the 2020 Elections. The fees will be as follows and will also be published in an upcoming edition of the North Georgia News.

Commissioner	\$2,918
Tax Commissioner	\$1,492
Clerk of Superior Court	\$1,492
Magistrate Judge	\$1,492
Probate Judge	\$1,492
Sheriff	\$1,492
County Coroner	\$155
County Surveyor	\$54
Board of Education	\$108

Resolution R-2020-04 will also be approved to extend the Emergency Moratorium on Applications for Multi-Family Unit Developments that was enacted on August 6, 2019. This Emergency Moratorium will be extended for up to an additional 120-days from December 4, 2019. The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission is working to establish wording for the ordinance and Union County is currently waiting on them to complete this.

The next item presented was the Union County Government Purchasing Manual. This is the new Purchasing Manual for Union County that sets forth purchasing policies and procedures for all departments and offices under Union County Government. It will go into effect on January 21, 2020, once approved at the Called Meeting and supersedes all previous purchasing instructions and policies. The purpose of this was to update and improve the purchasing manual.

Ms. Mahan then presented the Firefighter Property Program (FPP) Cooperative Equipment Agreement and Procedures between the Georgia Forestry Commission and Union County Government. The Military has surplus equipment that can be used by the Fire Department for fighting fires and emergency services and they want local fire departments to be able to use this equipment. This program is administered through the Georgia Forestry Commission. Union County is contracting with them so they will have the opportunity to obtain some of this surplus equipment.

The award of the FY2019 Local Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) in the amount of \$13,033 with a 50% match for the Union County Fire Department was presented. The Fire Department receives this grant each year which comes through the state from the federal government and the funds will be used for training and equipment.

Ms. Mahan presented an Agreement for Indigent Defense Services between the Public Defender Office of the Enotah Judicial Circuit and Union County, Lumpkin County, White County, and Towns County. The cost to Union County is \$113,526.7 for FY 2019-2020. Union County has committed an additional \$20,000 to this agreement to have a Public Defender assigned to Union County five days per week.

The next item presented was a Warranty Deed dated June 20, 2019 to transfer 9.502 acres more or less of surplus property from Union County Government to the Union County Development Authority. The property is located in Land Lots 294 and 295, 9<sup>th</sup> District, 1<sup>st</sup> Section of Union County. This is the Shotgun Range Property located on Highway 515 East.

Ms. Mahan presented a Settlement Statement and Warranty Deed between Union County and Gooch Trucking Co., Inc. and Johnny and Lucretia Collins for the purchase of 12.009 acres, more or less, located in the 9<sup>th</sup> District, 1<sup>st</sup> Section, Land Lot 172 of Union County in the amount of \$150,000. This is for the Soccer Field Property that was discussed at the December 17, 2019 County Meeting. The company that had the water plant owned the property where the Soccer Fields are located, and Mountain United Soccer Association (MUSA) has been organizing soccer practices, games, and tournaments for kids and adults for many years. Since the Union County Recreation Department does not offer soccer or have space for soccer fields this is a great way for soccer to be available in the county. MUSA will be entering into a 10-year lease with Union County to use this property. With this lease they will be able to apply for grants to update the fields and make other improvements.

A Quitclaim Deed was presented between LN Acquisitions, LLC to Union County Government for all that tract or parcel of land lying in Land Lots 285, 286, and 291, 9<sup>th</sup> District, 1<sup>st</sup> Section of Union County being Tract 1, containing 0.95 acres, Tract 1A, containing 0.29 acres, and Tract 1B, containing 0.20 acres more or less. This is for the road known as Madeline Way. Years ago, when this subdivision was developed it was agreed that if the road leading up to the entrance of the subdivision was built to county specifications then the county would take over the beginning portion of the road. Once the development was complete the developer never made contact with the county to transfer the road. This Quitclaim Deed follows through with that agreement from years ago.

At the Called Meeting on January 21, 2020 Commissioner Paris will accept Madeline Way into the county-maintained road system. The road was built to county specifications and all requirements have been met.

Ms. Mahan presented the following two Business Licenses and they will be approved at the January 21, 2020 Called Meeting:

Holly Hill Cabin – 65 Dallas Hill Road  
Bear Feet Cabin – 21 Settler’s Trace

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:28pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Jennifer Mahan, County Clerk

Approved this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lamar Paris, Commissioner

DRAFT