

County Meeting
February 17, 2022, 6:00pm
Minutes
Union County Courthouse

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Lamar Paris at 6:00pm. The Commissioner welcomed everyone to the meeting. The invocation was then given by Patrick Malone and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bill Walker. The minutes from the January 31, 2021, County Meeting were approved as presented.

Commissioner Paris asked members of the Navy Seabees to approach for recognition. He proclaimed March 5, 2022, as the United States Navy Seabee 80th birthday and asked that all citizens join in recognizing the service skill and determination that Seabees have shown their country and its citizens. Richard Hoibraten, retired Navy Seabee, spoke to his and others' experience and to their efforts to continue serving the United States and God. This Proclamation was signed at the Union County Courthouse on February 7, 2022, in the presence of all attending the Union County Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Paris approved an agreement addendum between Combined Public Communication and Union County for inmate telecommunications services at the Union County jail at no cost to the county.

Commissioner Paris adopted Resolution R-2022-05 to transfer 0.51 acres of surplus property located on the southern side of parcel number 085066 owned by the Union County Government to the Union County Development Authority for the purpose of them selling the property to a potential customer.

The Commissioner approved the following Business Licenses which are only issued for the purpose of collecting the Hotel/Motel Tax:

Caliendo Property Management
389 South Mountain Road

Caliendo Property Management
157 Beaver Run Road

Tworek Rental
341 Chestnut Cove Road

Long Shadows
534 Choestoe Trail

Alexis Moore requested to be placed on the Agenda to speak regarding public involvement in local Government. Ms. Moore stated, "Okay, all right, I have three minutes to tell you all the reasons why you want a town hall meeting, and I can talk really fast so please just bear with me. So um, all right, so I am Alexis Moore. I've become locally famous on accident um due to the

words of the commissioner and in the news I've been spoken about a lot for my involvement here coming to the meetings, and there's been a lot of discussion about why I'm here and what I'm doing. Um but the thing is, is that I am just a regular person. We all are just regular people coming here to the meetings. If you want to know who I am, you can find out more information about me at lessons with Alexis and you'll see I'm just a normal mommy. I'm a mommy that teaches piano to kids um and here in the room, we also have a gentleman that's lived his entire life in service to the community and I follow him around like a puppy trying to learn everything I can about him (You know I do). We have a woman over here who is an expert in codes and ordinances from which she worked with a commissioner board. We have a woman that is an expert in school board issues. We have a woman that is an expert in election Georgia election integrity issues, and we all just come here. We're not some organized group like in the news. They act like we're some organized group. We're not. We're just people, and it's actually really cool about what's going on because when we come together, we have so much more intelligence. My my personal niche is behavior uh I'm a behavior specialist. Um I teach self-awareness to children also. You can see all of that and that's what my niche is but we all have a different niche and I want to have you think about what it would be like if all of Union County came together with all of our combined interests and intelligences and passions um and created problem solving. What we could actually accomplish. Um I think it would be wonderful for neighbors to come together and actually meet each other face to face instead of on Facebook, and um and if you have an issue or something that you want to see happen, you can come to the town hall meeting. Oh, first Thursday. By the way, if I don't get it in in time, first Thursday every month at 6pm at compass point across from the school board. Uh, the first one will be March 3rd, 6 pm, at compass point across from the school board. Um, but just imagine what would happen if we all come together face to face and discuss things and and if you have something you want to say, you can bring, uh uh, come up and explain it. Bring a petition, and we can get it signed. Like for example, did you know that Coosa water comes out of the mountain? Fresh spring water. They have to add chlorine and fluoride and they don't want to add the fluoride, but they need us to sign a petition to get us to remove it and we can actually do that if we come together. So uh I just want to say I am really looking forward to seeing you guys at a town hall meeting and all of the things that we could actually do if we come together and put our minds to it. Uh first did I say that in under three minutes? William Mercer commented, "Yes Ma'm." Hey, all right, that was really good. Um, that's weird holding the microphone. Okay, I'm going to put it down now. First Thursday every month at compass point across from the school board at 6 00 pm. Okay the first one will be March 3rd and I have flyers over there if you would like to have some to pass them out."

Lamar Paris clarified that handouts provided in the future during a county meeting would need to be pre-approved by the Office of the County Commissioner. He further stated that handouts could be left out in the hall to be picked up by attendees.

Randy Boland requested to be placed on the agenda to speak regarding local government. [Mr. Boland inaudible] Mr. Paris stated, "You have to hold the microphone pretty close. I know that's difficult." Mr. Boland commented, "Can you hear me? An unknown audience member stated, "Not really." I just came up here tonight to thank ya'll." Mr. Boland attempted to use the microphone. An unknown audience member said, "It's not on." Alexis Moore stated, "I think I turned it off, I'm sorry." Mr. Boland turned the microphone on and stated, "Is that better? I just I

live in Union County. I've been back here since 1980, and um we're in such a better place than in many counties. There's much to be thankful for, and um I'm going to tell you a few that I'm thankful for. Thanks to Mr. Commissioner Paris. He's done a great job. Union County has [inaudible] many people great facilities and low property taxes. [inaudible.] If you check out 159 counties, we're rated very low on our property taxes. I don't have time to touch on all the facilities but think about Union County Farmer's Market. I doubt there's anybody in here that has not been there. It brings close to three thousand people every weekend all over Georgia. I was on the road sales and there's people in Madison, Georgia that said, "Oh, you live in Blairsville. You see we go up on weekends to the farmers market because it's such a great farmers market." Thanks to Lamar. Um at the farmer's market we have a cannery, off-leash dog off-leash dog park, and county historic buildings - which is a monument to uh the heritage of Union County. We have a wonderful horse arena, public health department, our driver's license center, an incredible Union County Community Center, Butternut Creek Golf Course and pro shop, and of course The View, the pickleball facility and Union County Sports Center, the two full the two full-time gymnasiums, each share department vehicles and equipment, ambulances and new fire department equipment, offices and facilities and upgrades to the recycling center and transfer station. There has been E911 upgrades and improvements, but these are things that we need when we need them. I can't say enough about Meeks Park. It has something for everyone. It's got five pavilions, walking trails for over five miles, a skateboard park, a basketball court, seven ball fields and playgrounds, and some beautiful kinetic sculptures, the 18-hole golf course, of course fishing, kayaking, and canoeing. In Suches, there is a community center, pickleball facility, and walking trails too. The Union County uh Senior Center - I don't know if y'all have visited that, but it's a great place. So, you should be proud to live in Union County, I am. There's no other rural county compared to what we have done and continue to do with our SPLOST and property tax dollars. It's evident. I just don't understand why some people can't see it. I see those things. Well, then it's no one's fault but your own. So, here's the bottom line - if you don't like it here, leave. [inaudible] I want to thank him for five o'clock in the morning driving up to the mountains and putting on Facebook, that 129 is not clear. That's when it snows. It's at four o'clock in the morning, and he puts it on Facebook before he drives up. Personally, I think he's done great job."

County Attorney Mercer interjected at the 3-minute mark, "Mr. Boland. Thank you Mr. Boland."

Commissioner Paris then stated, "Thank you Mr. Boland. I want to make just a couple of comments on a couple of things that have transpired in this week. Uh, we've had uh we continue to have some serious traffic accidents in the county, and I know that's nothing we can solve here but we can let you be thinking about that and think when you come to a stop sign or you come to the intersection. We had one just this week that came off of the hill at Owltown. I've never known of a wreck there. It's I mean, it's it's a good place to have one but people are always really careful. I don't know if they lost their brakes or what, but the helicopter had to come and pick them up. I haven't gotten a recent report. Uh, we're having several accidents and rollover accidents right at the McDonald's intersection there on 515 and 129, and and there's others in the county too. Um, most time it involves speeding of some amount of some kind. I want to thank the Sheriff's Department and all the work that they do um looking after the speeders. It's uh, it's unbelievable the number of people that they're catching speeding on 515. They're going over 80

to 90 to 100 miles an hour. It's just uh, it's unbelievable and so we appreciate the great job they're doing, and I just want to remind everybody else to be aware, to be careful, and let's look after everybody including ourselves. I also in regarding this, I wanted to thank the Union General Hospital and one of the items that Mr. Boland mentioned was the helicopter service and we're blessed with working with Union General in a progressive way and their people with a helicopter service. We were able to negotiate a free helicopter service for the whole citizenry of Union County, and I don't know, it depends on where you live but I live down the Murphy Highway (Commissioner Paris meant Gainesville Highway) and just about every afternoon and sometimes during the night, sometimes during the day - that's the kind of direct line from there going to Gainesville. Ok, and sometimes going to Atlanta, and of course they're going to Chattanooga. They're going they're going this way, but uh we're really blessed to have that service here in the county and we appreciate the hospital and everybody else that has worked so hard to make that happen. Also, uh if you had the opportunity this week to go to the transfer station or the last couple of weeks, uh you will see that it's continuing to change and continuing to improve. Uh, we're it's been a difficult job taking over the operation of this, and we knew it was going to be difficult. We just didn't know it was all going to happen at one time. But we were real pleased the job that's being done over there now, and I think we'll continue to see improvements made - cleanups made over the next few months as we continue to improve things over there. Uh, I mentioned this last month but also just thinking again our youth basketball season. Thank you guys for all y'all done with that. Um, it's being finalized over 305 active participants, 42 teams utilizing the new Union County Recreation Department Sports Center double gym located near the Union County Health Department on the Gooch Bypass. Uh, there have been a lot of other things going on, but we'll uh try to try to get with them the next time. But uh at this point in time the meeting is officially adjourned and what I'm going to do that we didn't do last time because of time constraint - and we've got a little bit extra time because we had a shorter meeting schedule this time.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:



Jennifer Mahan, County Clerk

Approved this 29th day of March, 2022



Lamar Paris, Commissioner