

County Meeting
June 16, 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 Pam Hawkins, SPLOST Director and Project Coordinator, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Pat Schmidt. The minutes from the May 19, 2022 County Meeting were approved as presented.

Commissioner Paris introduced Ralph Robinson from TV 4 out of Murphy who was present to record the meeting.

The Commissioner accepted an agreement between Aulick Engineering, LLC and Union County for civil engineering services for the Farmers Market property including the eight or nine acres that fall in the flood plain. This is a preliminary permitting requirement for potential use and further improvements to the property. The cost of this agreement is \$9,600.00 with an effective date of May 18, 2022.

Commissioner Paris accepted an agreement between Gardner Spencer Smith Tench & Jarbeau and Union County for design and engineering services not to exceed \$150,000 for a potential new Union County Voter Registration and Elections Facility. The effective date of this agreement is May 31, 2022. Our project managers would like to get the RFP (Request for Proposal) out for this project by the fall, so it can be open by January of 2024. This has been a consideration for several years. All of these plans will have to be approved by the Georgia Secretary of State, but the idea is to save money and also make voting as convenient as possible. The idea of this location is to utilize the parking area of the existing New Sports Center, add one additional gym on the right side to also be available for voting, and build alongside the new gym the voting offices for the Election Board and Voter Registration. This would allow moving early voting from the courthouse, where it often interferes with the court system, to the new facility.

The Commissioner approved a contract between Freeman Gas and Union County for propane services in the amount of \$1.89 per gallon from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. Last year's rate was \$1.399 per gallon so the cost only increased \$0.49 per gallon, which is very reasonable.

Commissioner Paris accepted a Deed of Easement between Mark White Miller and Rochelle Denee Miller and Union County, Georgia for 0.04 acres as shown on a plat of survey completed by Cleveland & Cox Land Surveying, LLC, Roger L. Owenby dated May 12, 2022. This easement was given by Union County to the property owners for the access road into the rental cabins that are located on Farmers Market Way adjacent to the putt-putt golf course across from the new Aldi's that is under construction.

The Commissioner accepted an Accountability Courts Grant for Enotah Felony Drug Courts Supplement Grant in the amount of \$30,832.00. The grant period is from October 1, 2020 to March 31, 2023. This project is supervised, and most funding comes from the State of Georgia.

Commissioner Paris accepted a grant award from the Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank by and through the State Road and Tollway Authority to Union County in the amount of

\$1,000,000 to fund a portion of preliminary engineering and construction costs for the roundabout construction at the intersection of Pat Haralson Drive and Deep South Farm Road which is the intersection at the hospital. The estimated cost of this project will be anywhere from 2 to 3 million dollars based on utility movement cost. The County has applied for further grant funding and will utilize SPLOST funds. The Commissioner stated this is an example of a project that if the Transportation SPLOST had passed the County would have had all the costs and would not have to take any out of the county funds.

Commissioner Paris approved a Notice of Award of contract dated June 16, 2022 for construction of the Union County Gun Range Project to Milestone Construction, LLC in the amount of \$3,780,000.00. The only other bid received was from Charles Black Construction Company in the amount of \$4,894,000. Approximately 90% of the bid price will be paid by grant funds. We hope this project can begin in September.

The Commissioner approved a Notice to Commence work for Colditz Trucking, Inc. in accordance with the contract dated May 20, 2022 on May 25, 2022. The work shall be fully complete on or before August 7, 2022.

Commissioner Paris accepted a contract between Colditz Trucking, Inc. and Union County for asphalt resurfacing of multiple roads through the Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant in the amount of \$1,280,011.20 with a contract effective date of May 19, 2022. GDOT will pay \$762,000, while Union County is only required to pay \$384,000. Union County is paying an additional \$133,000 from SPLOST funds in order to pave the same amount of miles that were paved last year. As presented at the last meeting the roads to be paved are as follows:

Cooper Gap Road – 1.18 miles
Jones Creek Road – 1.47 miles
Kiutuestia Creek Road – 1.27 miles
Cook Henry Road – 1.25 miles (entire road)
Trackrock Gap Road – 1.08 miles
Jewell Mason Road – 0.54 miles

Commissioner Paris stated that Union County got competitive bids for this project. In the past the county was able to share the paving with two or three different companies, but GDOT decided, this year, they wanted it to be put out to bid.

The Commissioner adopted an Emergency Moratorium on the acceptance, processing, and consideration of applications for Business Licenses for short-term rentals. The Emergency Moratorium will have an effective date of August 16th, 2022 and will be in effect for 180 from that date. Union County has started the process of examining and amending the existing Hotel/Motel Tax Ordinance. The reason for the delay in the moratorium taking effect 60 days from this meeting is to allow time for those who may already be in the process of either purchasing or remodeling homes to be used as a short-term rental to get their Business License.

Commissioner Paris approved the following Business Licenses, which are only issued for the purpose of collecting the Hotel/Motel Tax.

Eanes Rental

14 Happy Hollow Lane

Hurley Rental

495 Pat Colwell Road

Tumminello Rental

145 Rushing Water Drive

Your Happy Place

99 Deer Run Road

The Commissioner asked Laurie Brothers to come to the podium. Ms. Brothers requested to speak regarding election information and multi-family housing tax consequences. Commissioner Paris reminded her that the time limit was three minutes.

Ms. Brothers stated, "Elections are held at the county level where there are issues in the election. It is a county that should be taking the responsibility to address the issues not the Secretary of State. Our county has the authority not the SOS. That is why I am speaking to you today. A recount on June 1st Dekalb County revealed drastic changes for Georgia Primary Election candidate Michelle Long Spears. The gateway pundit has an image that showed three times the votes decreased eerily similar to the 2020 election. The highly skewed results on this primary election were of great concern to citizens across our county and state. Voter confidence is as low as it has ever been. If we hope to continue to have voters participate in future elections, we have to do whatever it takes to assure justice and restore confidence in the process. On Wednesday, May 25th, I spoke to Jill at the Commissioner's Office inquiring how to process an Open Records Request for elections. She told me to fill it out on the county website and she would get it to the right place. I requested vote cast records. Did you receive it? Directly emailing Libby Stevens, Election Board Supervisor, I also requested a copy of the physical ballots. What we really need is a forensic audit, just like in 2020. So, I requested that as well. I don't get it. Union County certified three days after the election. Why were they in such a hurry to certify? Was the certification meeting published? It is interesting. In the monthly meeting Libby said that she drove down to the SOS Office on Tuesday and there was a sign on the door saying they were going to be out of the office all week. Imagine, the SOS Office being closed right after an election. We requested a hand count, but she refused our request saying she would only take orders from the SOS. That is so strange to me. I heard recently that Pickens County, on the other hand, is going to hand count the physical ballots. Everyone in that county is on board including Senator Gooch, their rep, and the County Attorney. Thank God Pickens County has the integrity to go the extra mile to guard the freedom of their citizens. I hope citizens in Union County will have the same opportunity. Your oath, Mr. Commissioner, is to be faithful to the citizens of Union County, is it not? As a United States citizen and a resident of Georgia, I am here now making an official request that a hand count of the ballots of Union County be performed. Citizens, we the people, the only thing that can stop the corruption is you. The time to speak up is now. Mr. Commissioner please listen to my request. Our fundamental freedoms as a people are at stake and to God be the glory. And, I, multi-family housing is going to increase our taxes."

Commissioner Paris commented that Union County is in the process of developing a noise ordinance. It will not be far reaching but it will be adequate for a first-time ordinance. It will be fair and reasonable and will be necessary to help supplement the short-term rental issues. With short-term rentals sound seems to be the biggest complaint that the county receives. The Sheriff asked for a noise ordinance, so Union County Government is in the process of doing that. The Scottish Festival was a huge success. Commissioner Paris stated that all those that attended

seemed to enjoy it and the entertainment was incredible. The Farmers Market had their second weekend of the season with a large crowd even with a festival going on and then today they had one of the first UGA canning plant training sessions. An individual from UGA came in and trained the people on different kinds of canning processes they could use in the canning plant. The roof is on the Moccasin Road convenience center located behind Poteete's Store and near Fire Station Four. The county has been working on that for about a month to 6 weeks. This project should be completed within 60 days, and this will be a convenience center like the one at Highway 325 where you take your garbage and your recyclables.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Mahan, County Clerk

Approved this ____ day of _____, _____

Lamar Paris, Commissioner