

County Meeting  
Union County Courthouse  
November 16, 2023. 6:00pm  
Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Lamar Paris at 6:00pm. The invocation was given by David Dyer, Fire Chief and EMA Director and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bill Walker. The minutes from the October 19, 2023 County Meeting and the November 9, 2023 Called Meeting were approved as presented. Attendees were provided with copies of the minutes.

The first item on the agenda was a Proclamation for Gracian Sabo and The Paw Project Day. In early 2019 Gracian Sabo from Boyscout Troop 101, began the daunting task of making his dream a reality. Gracian saw a need in the community for a bigger and better off-leash dog park where citizens and visitors could take their dogs to roam and play safely in an area made for them. He completed hours of research, visited other outdoor dog parks in the area, created pamphlets and brochures, and polled people in the community. All his hard work resulted in a new off-leash dog park being completed in April of 2020 next to the Union County Farmers Market, which is referred to as the Farmers Barket Dog Park. Commissioner Paris then proclaimed October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023 as “Gracian Sabo and The Paw Project Day” in Union County. This proclamation was signed and presented to Mr. Sabo on October 31<sup>st</sup> at the new dog park.

The next item was a proclamation for “Retired Educators Day”. There are more than 142,000 retired educators in Georgia, with 32,000 being members of the Georgia Retired Educators Association. The retired educators of Georgia donate thousands of hours of volunteer service and make invaluable contributions to the welfare of their respective communities across the state. It is appropriate that a day be designated for citizens to express their appreciation for the contributions that retired educators have made and continue to make for the betterment of human lives and for society. The Commissioner proclaimed November 5, 2023 as “Retired Educators Day” and called upon the citizens of Union County to observe that day in an appropriate manner honoring retired educators. This proclamation was signed in the Commissioner’s Office on November 1, 2023. Commissioner Paris added that being an educator is a hard job and that everyone has their favorite educator. He is honored that his sister and mother are both retired educators and he is proud of them.

The Commissioner accepted an agreement between Tyler Technologies, Inc. and Union County for accounting software and support. This agreement has an effective date of October 24, 2023 and includes a one-time fee of \$74,110 for conversion and implementation and then the cost will be \$50,269 annually.

Commissioner Paris accepted an agreement between Carter Engineering Consultants, Inc. and Union County for structural and civil engineering services, preliminary structural calculations, and conceptual alternatives for repairs and/or replacement of the bridge on Fisher Field Road. This agreement has an effective date of October 26, 2023, and the amount is \$8,000. GDOT inspects all bridges in Union County every few years. This year upon inspecting this particular bridge, Union County Government was notified this bridge needed repaired or completely

replaced. GDOT also dropped the allowable tonnage to cross the bridge to 3-tons. There are several trucks that go over this bridge that weigh ten to eleven tons. So, the repair or replacement of this bridge is of the utmost importance. The work this company is doing is the first step in determining if Union County will be able to repair the bridge or if it must be replaced entirely. Commissioner Paris expanded that this is one of those things that happens in county government; everything is going great and then someone calls and says a bridge is out. This is the only way that these people have to get across the river. GDOT let the bridge remain open while Union County is working on a plan for repair or replacement.

The Commissioner accepted an agreement between Point Dog Digital and Union County for professional services for public outreach and information services related to Union County SPLOST Programs in the amount of \$59,500. This agreement had an effective date of October 6, 2023. This is being done in response to the overwhelming requests for more information and transparency related to the SPLOST programs and projects. This contract will be paid for from SPLOST Administration Funds.

Commissioner Paris accepted an agreement amendment between CorrectHealth Union, LLC and Union County for inmate health services at the Union County Jail. This is a renewal of a 12-month contract effective January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, for a contractual amount of \$188,658.43. At the January 19, 2023 County Meeting the Commissioner accepted an agreement with CorrectHealth Union, LLC in the amount of \$169,809.14. Then in July, CorrectHealth Union, LLC had to increase the amount of the contract for the remainder of 2023 to \$188,658.43 to cover the cost of having nurse availability at the jail on the weekends. The Sheriff felt they could no longer make it without nurse availability on the weekends. The cost for this upcoming year has not increased.

Attendees were provided a copy of the list of Business Licenses that were issued in Union County from October 16, 2023 to November 12, 2023 for the purpose of operating a short-term rental within Union County. The Commissioner approved all Business Licenses contained on the list provided and the list will be made a part of the minutes. Commissioner Paris stated there has been a slight decrease in the number of short-term rental applications. Some of them are even selling their units because the market has slowed, and the market is not as good as it was.

Union County held a Public Hearing on November 9, 2023 at 5:00pm to discuss and answer any question regarding the proposed budget. Everyone was provided with a copy of the proposed budget attached to the agenda. The Commissioner stated that he was proud of the staff, elected officials, and all county employees who work hard to keep operation costs as low as possible and maximize revenue. Commissioner Paris then approved Resolution R-2023-31 to adopt the FY2024 Budget in the amount of \$27,053,216.

The Commissioner announced there is a Called Meeting scheduled for November 30, 2023 to adopt the new ordinance pertaining to Commercial Gun Ranges and to adopt the revisions to the ordinances pertaining to Tattoo and Body Piercing Establishments and the Alcohol Ordinance. Commissioner Paris also let attendees know that Fire Station 13 is complete and is a beautiful facility. Monday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, was the first day the building was open and staffed. This station cuts down the response time to emergencies in this area by nine to ten minutes. It will

also have a positive impact on ISO Ratings for homes in this area. The Ribbon Cutting was scheduled for November 17, 2023. The new Elections and Voter Registration facility is still in progress and should be complete by the first or second week of December. The Commissioner stated that there were a lot of great veteran's events held on Veteran's Day. The High School did an incredible presentation and recognition for veterans and there was also one hosted by the Rotary Club at the Community Center. That night there was also a wonderful veterans recognition held in Young Harris. The Commissioner was honored to attend all three events as they showed the spirit the community has for its veterans.

Commissioner Paris then asked Renee Deibert to speak briefly regarding the Electronics Recycling and Document Destruction event that was held on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Ms. Deibert stated that Union County had been holding this event once a year for quite a while. Citizens can bring their electronics to be recycled and also their paper documents that need to be destroyed or shredded. The event was held at the Sports Center from 10-12 on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October. There were nine volunteers present to help citizens unload their electronics and their papers to be destroyed. The shredding of papers and documents was done on site, and this event was a huge success. Ms. Deibert thanked Matt White, Manager of the Transfer Station, for his involvement and hard work in organizing this event. This event was such a success that the citizens have asked to have this event more than just once per year. So, in response to that, Union County has planned for two of these events in 2024. The first one will be held on April 13, 2024 and the second will be held on October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024. It will be moved to the Transfer Station in the upcoming year for easier access for the public. Ms. Deibert asked for questions from those in attendance.

Question 1 – What are the dates again?

Ms. Deibert – April 13<sup>th</sup> and October 19<sup>th</sup>

Commissioner Paris then asked Matt White to come up and talk briefly about the new glass recycling machine at the Transfer Station. Mr. White stated that the machine is from a company that has been around for 30-40 years. This machine turns the glass into gravel or sand. The sand can be used by the Road Department and the gravel can be used in the parks for mulch and walkways. Anything you can use pea gravel for the glass gravel can be used for. The Transfer Station goes through about 40 tons per month of glass, so the machine will pay for itself in about three years by not having to dispose of the glass. Containers of the processed glass were passed around for those in attendance to see.

Commissioner Paris stated that he attended the groundbreaking for the new elementary school that morning at 11:00am. The grading is in progress and the site of the school is beautiful. Most of the grading is complete and they are doing some curb work now. The Commissioner thinks the new school should be ready for the 2025 school year. Since our community is growing related to the job opportunities that are now available in Union County, the school is having to grow. Union County Schools has one of the lowest millage rates in the State of Georgia and they are doing a lot of work with a relatively small amount of money. This project will be completed without the school system incurring any debt. The school system is out of debt and will continue to be. Union County also has a few projects that are planned to be done in the next three to four years. Commissioner Paris said the county is currently debt free and will continue to be. He is

glad to make improvements, but at the same time be able to pay as they go and not burden the taxpayers.

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

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Mahan  
Jennifer Mahan, County Clerk

Approved this 21<sup>st</sup> day of December, 2023  
Lamar Paris  
Lamar Paris, Commissioner



## Union County Short-term Rental Licensees

Oct 16, 2023 – Nov 12, 2023

BROWN ROBERT & GAYLE  
72 reece creek ct  
blairsville, GA 30512

GIBSON THOMAS & MARTHA  
54 COPPERHEAD CT  
Blairsville, GA 30512

GIBSON THOMAS W & MARTHA J  
42 Copperhead PKWY  
Blairsville, GA 30512

GUST MICHELE  
1206 Cindy Cove Road  
Blairsville, GA 30512

LEVINE CRAIG  
215 Sullivan Trail  
Blairsville, GA 30512

MOOT GERRIT V II & STACY D  
302 Trackrock Acres  
Blairsville, GA 30512

Ronald Dyer  
225 Mayberry  
Blairsville, GA 30512

STILL JEFFREY GRANT & HOPE  
HUTCHISON  
2497 Murphy Hwy  
Blairsville, GA 30512

WEBB RONALD & BERTHA  
660 KNIGHTS WAY  
Blairsville, GA 30512

Eric & Erica Nompleggi  
1109 Flat Rock Gap Road  
Blairsville, GA 30512

GIBSON THOMAS W & MARTHA J  
18 Copperhead Court  
Blairsville, GA 30512

GSH INVESTMENTS LLC  
40 Angel Hart Ln  
Blairsville, GA 30512

LAPLANT, THOMAS AND STEPHANIE  
41 Bunks Way  
Morganton, GA 30560

MERKEL JR WILLIAM LEWIS  
107 McCullers road  
Blairsville, GA 30512

RODRIGUEZ JAVIER & MELISSA ESKERT  
MARIA LOURDES ESKERT  
406 Highpoint Trail  
Blairsville, GA 30512

Ronald Dyer  
277 Mayberry Lane  
Blairsville, GA 30512

ULRICH DONNA DALIMONTE & JEROME M  
225 Cavender Mountain View  
Suches, GA 30572