

County Meeting  
December 21, 2023, 6:00pm  
Minutes  
Union County Courthouse

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Lamar Paris at 6:02 pm. The Commissioner welcomed everyone to the meeting. The invocation was then given by Mack Mason, Union County Sheriff, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bill Walker. The minutes from the November 16, 2023 County Meeting, November 30, 2023 Called Meeting, which dealt with the three ordinances, and the December 11, 2023 Called Meeting were approved as presented. Attendees were provided with copies of the minutes.

The first item on the agenda was a presentation from Sid Turner with the Sons of the American Revolution. He presented awards to a Firefighter, Sheriff's Deputy and EMS Personnel.

Mr. Turner stated that he is the Vice President of the Blue Ridge Mountains Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution. He then introduced Steve Weaver, the President of the Blue Ridge Mountain Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution. Mr. Weaver explained that Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) is the largest male lineage organization in fifty states. Members trace their ancestry to a patriot that served to establish the nation. Their mission is patriotic, historic, and educational, and the public service awards presented highlight their support for the local Union County Fire Department, Law Enforcement, and EMS. They also recognize Towns, Fannin and Gilmer Counties.

Mr. Weaver turned the meeting back over to Sid Turner.

The award presentations and Mr. Turner's comments are summarized as follows:

The first award was the Law Enforcement Commendation. Mr. Turner called up Major Shawn Dyer. Major Dyer serves in the Sheriff's Office and is also Assistant Police Chief for the City of Blairsville. He works two full time positions in law enforcement and is also a dedicated family man with a tremendous family tree that dates back to the 1830s in Union County. Major Dyer is a well-rounded professional that has the respect and admiration of the Sheriff and the Sheriff's Office staff. He has the confidence and capabilities to be successful in his command position as Major in the Sheriff's Office. Major Shawn Dyer is well connected in the law enforcement community which assists him in performing his duties and responsibilities. He also carries the confidence and respect in his role with the residents of Union County. There are many times that he successfully closed cases and met residents' needs in a quick and timely manner. All the Sheriff's Office employees call him day and night in situations that may need special attention or guidance. As a member of the Sheriff's Office, Major Dyer's confidence, capabilities, and skills have made him an asset to the Sheriff's Office and the community.

Sheriff Mack Mason approached the podium and stated that he did not have the words to thank Major Dyer for what he has done for the Sheriff's Office and the county. Major Dyer came to work for the Sheriff's Office when Sheriff Mason took office eleven years

ago. The Sheriff's Office was shorthanded, and Shawn would come in and work whenever he was needed. Sheriff Mason said he worked so many hours he had to be made a full-time employee. The Sheriff said each year when Mr. Turner comes and requests he name someone to receive this award it is hard because the Sheriff's Office has so many good people. Major Dyer shines out, and the Sheriff stated he had been around this a long time. He further stated that Shawn is the most dedicated law enforcement officer he has ever seen. He will work any day and anytime and is a blessing to the Sheriff and to the county. The Sheriff closed by saying he was glad Major Shawn Dyer was getting this award tonight.

The second award was the Fire Safety Commendation. Jeff Fortenberry was not present to receive his commendation, and his award was given to Commissioner Paris for presentation at a later date.

The third award was the Emergency Medical Service Commendation. He called up Adrian Stroud. Adrian has been an advanced EMT with Union General EMS for over six years. His patient care, ability, knowledge base, and overall performance exceeds his years of experience. He serves as the B Shift Backup Supervisor and the Supply Manager for the entire department. He ensures that crews have everything needed to respond to around 6,000 calls per year. Adrian's consistency as an employee, his quality of patient care, and hard work to see the fleet is well supplied make him a worthy candidate for this award.

Mr. Turner then asked Adrian Stroud to remain at the podium and he asked Mrs. Kendra King to come up as well. Mr. Turner stated that Mr. Murray King was a member of their Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution and had had a heart attack and needed emergency medical service. While Mr. King did not survive, his widow, Kendra King, was so impressed with the professionalism shown by the paramedics that she and the Sons of the American Revolution created the Murray King Memorial Award in his honor. Mrs. King came up and thanked Adrian for his dedicated service to Union County. She stated that in his six years in this important position, Adrian Stroud had nearly duplicated the standards and priorities of Murray King in his 32 years at his job. In closing, Mrs. King said she applauded Mr. Stroud and was happy to present him with the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Murray King Award.

Commissioner Paris said it was an honor to see these people recognized for their hard work and dedication by being presented these awards from the Sons of the American Revolution.

Commissioner Paris accepted an agreement between Geo-Hydro Engineers, Inc. and Union County to perform subsurface exploration and a geotechnical engineering evaluation for the bridge replacement on Fisher Field Road in the amount of \$6,750. This agreement had an effective date of November 29, 2023. This was just another phase of the emergency replacement of Fisher Field Bridge. As stated at the December 11, 2023 Called Meeting this bridge is listed on GDOT's inventory and is inspected by them every two years. This bridge is the only access for a residential area of approximately 18 homes. As noted in the last inspection completed by

GDOT, this bridge did not meet acceptable standards to remain in operation. As a result of this, a sign was posted immediately stating that there is a 3-ton maximum load that can cross the bridge as an interim measure. GDOT has since put the county on notice that should immediate action not be taken; they will have no choice but to close the bridge. This is basically an impossibility. In layman's terms, Geo-Hydro Engineers will be doing testing related to the ground surface, the subsurface, groundwater, and the flow of the water under the bridge. They will then prepare an engineering report presenting the results of the exploration. This report will provide Union County with evaluations and recommendations concerning site preparation, general foundation recommendations, groundwater elevations and their effect on the proposed construction and remedial measures necessary to manage soft or loose soils if they are encountered. Commissioner Paris stated the County feels positive with the way things are going so far. The bridge has already been ordered.

The Commissioner accepted an agreement between the Georgia Department of Transportation and Union County for grant funding from the Georgia Transit Trust Fund Program in the amount of \$33,088.00. The duration of this grant is for 24 months beginning on December 14, 2023. During the 2021 legislative session, the Georgia General Assembly passed HB 511 establishing a Georgia Transit Trust Fund. These funds are to be distributed to counties with transit service that are not covered by the Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority. Union County is not covered under the Transit Link Authority; therefore, it is eligible to receive \$33,088 from the Georgia Transit Trust Fund Program. As part of receiving this, Union County Transportation had to provide the Transit Trust Fund Program with a list of what they planned on spending the money on. They have two years to spend the funds, which can only be spent on the transit program. The list of needs can be changed up to one time during the two years. Therefore, if something comes up unexpected in the next two years, the list can be amended. The list provided contains things like computers, backup and dash cameras for both buses, office furniture and appliances.

Attendees were provided a copy of the list of Business Licenses that had been issued in Union County from November 13, 2023 to December 17, 2023 for the purpose of operating a short-term rental within Union County. Commissioner Paris approved all Business Licenses contained on the list provided, and this list will be made a part of the minutes. A total of 15 new STR Licenses were issued since the last County Meeting. The total housing units with active STR Licenses is 551. The Commissioner thanked Laura Jenkins, STR Enforcement Officer, for the important work she does in helping maintain compliance in the area of STRs.

Commissioner Paris accepted an Option to Purchase Right of Way (ROW) from High Mountain Land, LLC located at 63 Pleasant Hill Road in the amount of \$841.00 for 168.17 square feet. This Right of Way will be utilized in the construction of the Pat Haralson Roundabout. This ROW will be a small corner located at the intersection of Pat Haralson Memorial Drive and Pleasant Road. Pursuant to the terms contained in this Option to Purchase Right of Way, Union County is executing the option to purchase said right of way.

The Commissioner accepted Accountability Courts Grant number J24-8-066 for supplemental funds for Enotah Mental Health Court in the amount of \$15,000. The grant period is from November 1, 2023 to November 1, 2024.

Commissioner Paris accepted Accountability Courts Grant number K24-8-010 for Local Law Enforcement in the amount of \$6,725.00. The grant period is from January 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024.

The Commissioner accepted Accountability Courts Grant number K24-8-009 for Local Law Enforcement in the amount of \$16,108.00. The grant period is from January 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024.

Commissioner Paris adopted the County Meeting Schedule for 2024. Attendees were provided a copy of the meeting schedule. In 2024 the monthly County Meetings will be held on the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm in the Union County Courthouse, Courtroom A as they have been for many years. Occasionally the room within the courthouse has to be changed, but will always be in Courtroom A, if at all possible.

Summarized below are the Commissioner's closing comments:

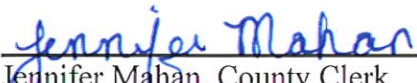
The new voting building opened, not for business, but to get everyone moved in.

Even with all the projects going on, Union County Government does not have any debt.

Commissioner Paris stated that last month he approved a contract with Pointdog.digital to produce videos about several of the SPLOST projects. Some people have asked why the county is spending \$59,500 on videos and if the Commissioner is doing this because he wanted to campaign? The Commissioner said this has nothing to do with that. This is something that has been in the works for a long time. Union County has a SPLOST designee that works with the county on all SPLOST projects. He came to the county and recommended doing videos related to the SPLOST projects. There have been some complaints from citizens regarding people not understanding the SPLOST projects. It was decided by the county and the SPLOST designee to move forward with doing the videos. There will be short videos of ten to twelve of the different SPLOST projects. This way the public can see very clearly what the SPLOST projects are and what they are doing. Then if they have any questions the county will certainly be able to answer them. The videos will hopefully be ready in the next 60 days.

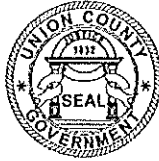
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Mahan, County Clerk

Approved this 18<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2024

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



**Union County Short-term Rental Licensees**  
**Nov 13, 2023 – Dec 17, 2023**

AJB SITUATIONSHIP LLC  
236 Gordon dr  
Morganton, GA 30560

BURKE JUSTIN E & KRISTEN K  
221 High Country Ln  
Morganton, GA 30560

HARRIS RANDALL A & TERRI B  
9 Thunder Rd  
Blairsville, GA 30512

HAYDEN, GARRY & OLGA  
983 Bruce Mountain Rd  
Morganton, GA 30560

MARIA FRANKLIN ANTONIO  
125 Franklin Hills Way  
Blairsville, GA 30512

MOSPANYUK PETER & VALENTINA I  
MURACHEVA  
2428 State Hwy 60  
Suches, GA 30572

Sakhr Youness  
573 Mull Lane Ext  
Morganton, GA 30560

YOUNG ROBERT E & BARBARA  
181 Acorn Lane  
Blairsville, GA 30512

BABB TODD & WILLIAM  
315 Dosier Dr  
Blairsville, GA 30512

FAMTASTIC LLC  
232 NOTLA VISTA I  
BLAIRSVILLE, GA 30152

Hathaway, Lucas Daniel & Morgan Leigh  
494 Scouts Overlook Lane  
MORGANTON, GA 30512

KIRBY ROBERT  
260 Memory Lane  
Blairsville, GA 30512

MARIA FRANKLIN ANTONIO  
274 Franklin Hills Way  
Blairsville, GA 30512

PACE ANDREW MICHAEL & CARLY CROWE  
66 Toccoa Trail  
Suches, GA 30572

VIERA MICHAEL A & LAURA H  
38 BLOSSOM VALLEY  
BLAIRSVILLE, GA 30512