

County Meeting
February 15, 2024, 6:00pm
Minutes
Union County Courthouse

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Lamar Paris at 6:00 pm. The invocation was given by Fire Chief, David Dyer, and the Pledge of Allegiance was let by Mike Merrit of the American Legion. The minutes from the January 18, 2024 County Meeting and the January 29, Called Meeting were approved as presented.

The American Legion requested to be placed on the agenda for a presentation. Commissioner Paris asked the representatives from the organization to come up front.

Commander of the American Legion, Mike Merritt's comments are summarized as follows:

Commander Merrit and his wife, Kathy Merritt, Senior Vice-Commander, both served in the Air Force for 25 and 26 years, respectively. While in the military they were always told where they were going to reside, and once they retired no one told them where to go. Commander Merrit stated that while they were trying to decide where to put down their roots, they had the opportunity to visit with his wife's parents who were campground hosts at Brasstown Bald. During one of their visits, they decided to make Blairsville, Union County their home and they love everything about the community. Commander Merrit, on behalf of the American Legion, presented Commissioner Paris with a plaque to show their appreciation for his support in their Veteran's Benefits Seminars. They stated that the Commissioner was always there for them and backing them up. They also appreciated his support of the Veterans Building, including the tank. Commander Merrit closed by expressing his appreciation for all that Commissioner Paris does for the veterans and that he does not think the Commissioner realizes how important he is to the community and the veterans.

Commissioner Paris thanked the American Legion and the Merritt's stating it is great to have people here who devote their lives to making it a better place to live for veterans and the citizens. Union County is blessed to have people like them in the community who really care about what is going on in the county and its citizens.

Paige Thornton approached the podium, and her comments are summarized as follows:

Ms. Thornton stated that she came to Commissioner Paris six years ago and he encouraged her to learn how to be a non-profit for her calling, which is combat veterans. She said she has come such a long way in these six years. She presented the Commissioner with a chip of honor from the Veterans Affairs and the Senate Committee. She closed by stating that she is a better person because of the Commissioner's encouragement.

The Commissioner accepted the Statewide Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement between the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) and Union County. The purpose of this agreement is to provide the framework to support mutual assistance in managing an emergency or disaster occurring within any political subdivision that is a

participating party of this agreement. Fire Chief, David Dyer, was present to answer any questions related to this agreement during the Question-and-Answer portion of the meeting.

The Commissioner accepted a Rental Agreement between the State Properties Commission on behalf of the Department of Drivers Services and Union County for the use of office space located at 37 Chase Drive, Blairsville, GA 30512 in the amount of \$1.00 per year. The duration of this lease will be from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 with the option to extend the agreement for five successive, one year, renewal periods. The facility that houses the Department of Drivers Services is located in the trailer on the Glen Gooch Bypass in front of the Health Department.

Attendees were provided a copy of the list of Business Licenses that were issued in Union County from January 15, 2024 to February 11, 2024 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. Currently there are a total of 555 active Short-term Rentals in Union County. The county's limit on Short-term Rentals is 760 and there are only 555. Commissioner Paris stated that it seems like the Short-term Rental problem has slowed up some.

The Commissioner accepted an Accountability Courts Grant, grant number Y24-8-024 for funds for the Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant in the amount of \$152,082. The grant period is from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

Commissioner Paris adopted Resolution R-2024-06 to Terminate the Declaration of Local Emergency that was declared by Resolution R-2023-27 on August 31, 2023. The Commissioner advised that questions could be directed to Fire Chief, David Dyer regarding this as well.

The Commissioner accepted Seminole Road into the county-maintained road system. This road is approximately 1,200 feet long. Property owners submitted all the required right of way and paid Union County to bring the road up to county specifications.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Mahan, County Clerk

Approved this ____ day of _____, _____

Lamar Paris, Commissioner